

While it is again truly unfortunate that we couldn't gather somewhere as a group, it is a privilege for me to compile the efforts of all of you. I wasn't able to "get out" at all – chalked up 22 species in my yard....Late October was a bit of a gamble weather wise – most of the state had at least some decent opportunity on Saturday and less so on Sunday to get out and look. But those fronts are what "brings birds in" (or drives them out...) so maybe the timing was "perfect".

Collectively, we found 164 species over the weekend (October 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>).

There was at least one report for 35 of the 93 counties, again with better coverage east and central than far west or southwest.

The top county list was Lancaster with 120 species reported, Douglas (79), Scotts Bluff (78) and Lincoln (75) were the only other counties to reach 75 species. Eight other counties broke the 50 species mark including Burt (59), Dakota (55), Dodge (57), Hall (51), Keith (53), Madison (52), Pierce (54) and Sarpy (69).

The most reported species (number of counties reported in) including Dark-eyed Junco (24), Canada Goose (23), Blue Jay and Northern Cardinal (22), Red-tailed Hawk, European Starling and American Robin (21), Killdeer, Red-bellied Woodpecker and Downy Woodpecker (20). Interestingly – only two of those species were in the "top ten" in the Spring big weekend (Starling and Blue Jay). 38 species were reported from just one county (some by multiple observers, others a single lone reporter).

Group-wise – Waterfowl (27 species including all three scoter species and Long-tailed Duck), Shorebirds (16 species), sparrows (18 – 19 with House Sparrow) and Warblers (just 3 species).

Surprises (in my opinion – or otherwise just cool stuff)

- All three scoter species found in the state on one day, some of them in multiple locations – pretty cool
- Long-tailed Duck at Lake Ogallala
- Lingering grebes – 5 species found
- Whooping Crane – one report that couldn't be shared regrettably
- American Woodcocks – back yard woodcock reports in Douglas, Buffalo and Lincoln County, literally in back yards in Omaha, Kearney and North Platte – I think two different birds/yards in Kearney
- Loons – Common and Pacific both reported on the weekend, I think the Red-throated was found a day or two later
- Black-billed Magpies – reported in 4 counties including Banner, DAKOTA, Keith and Scotts Bluff – most surprising was the Dakota County report and the numbers reported downstream from the dam at McConaughy where numbers in the 20's and 30's were reported by several different observers.
- A couple late mimids – one Brown Thrasher and one Gray Catbird

Surprising Misses (not considering distribution of birders – again – in my opinion)

- No goldeneye – just a hair too early to get them I guess
- Greater Prairie-chicken
- Gulls – have to say that 5 gull species was a bit of a let down for the time of year

- Turkey Vulture – were several over my yard on the 23<sup>rd</sup> – must have knew what was coming on the 24<sup>th</sup>/25<sup>th</sup>
- Golden Eagle – missed again – missed them in Spring also
- Pinyon Jays – can't believe I am calling that a surprising miss, but they were known to be present before, remained out of sight during, and then popped back up the day after

I have attached the spreadsheet – which includes two worksheets (tabs at the bottom).

The first worksheet (“Tally” tab at bottom) can be used for “county ticks” for those that participate in the annual county list stuff, or those pursuing “all 93” if you don’t already have a way to record them. If you enter a “1” in a county it “does the math” by county (how many “ticks” you have in that county – at the top) and by species (how many counties you have seen the species in and what percentage of counties – at the left in columns B and C). That is actually what I had made that sheet for. This time I included the 216 species reported on eBird previously during the last two weeks of October (across the last ten years).

The second worksheet (“Species List” at the bottom) includes just the species that were reported during the weekend.

Great job everyone – hopefully I won’t have to produce a “second annual” spring version of this in 2021.....

Thanks

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