

# Chequamegon Chirps



February, 2018 Volume 37 Number 2

February meeting 7 P.M. at the Medford Library

Last month's program was going to be on reflections and planning—which got cancelled due to the weather. So, we'll try again, assuming the roads and weather will be better this time. In addition, Joe will present a short program about the effect of Barred Owls in some western areas. The meeting would be a good time to pay the \$18 yearly dues or mail them to Cam Scott at N3566 Grover Drive Withee, 54498.

Most of this issue is taken up with data from the six 2017 Audubon Christmas Bird Counts organized by local compilers and whose counters are mostly club members. The circles are listed from left to right in north to south orientation which show some definite trends in different species. Weather was moderate with the highs near or in the 20's for Clam Lake, Owen and Spencer. Gilman, Medford and Willard were downright cold with lows in the -20 to -25 and "highs" around -10. While 12-17 was darkly overcast for the Spencer and Owen, there was no precipitation for any of the counts.

Totals for the six counts, which total 1,060 square miles are this. Two hundred twenty four and  $\frac{3}{4}$  hours by counters plus feeder counters resulted in 58 species and 16,854 individuals. As in all years there are some results that suggest trends, some great finds, some unexpected omissions and some head scratchers. Birds, being what they are, and randomness both play into the numbers. Let's start out with some of the suggested trends. This year Blue Jays, American Crows, Horned Larks, White-breasted Nuthatches, Snow Buntings, Red-tailed Hawks, Mourning Doves, Red-bellied Woodpeckers, American Tree Sparrows, Dark-eyed Juncos, Northern Cardinals, House Finches and American Goldfinches all showed stronger numbers in the more southern circles. That could mean these are on the edges of their territories at this time of year, differences in habitat for some species such as Snow Buntings or happenstance in the way birders and birds connected on that particular day. Here are the species that were more numerous on the more northern counts. Common Ravens, Red-breasted Nuthatches, and Pine Grosbeaks were more common north than south. Most of these trends aren't nice, neat (cont. p 3)

**2017 Audubon Christmas Bird Counts organized by local compilers**

<b>Summary 2017</b>	<b>Clam Lake 12-22</b>	<b>Gilman 01-01</b>	<b>Medford 12-30</b>	<b>Owen 12-17</b>	<b>Spencer 12-17</b>	<b>Willard 12-31</b>
Party Hours	28.25	37.25	38	34.25	50.25	36.75
Total Species	27	32	36	37	41	37
Total Individuals	1009	1718	2778	4295	3894	3160
Canada Goose					CW	
Wood Duck			1			
Mallard			203			
Common Goldeneye	4					
Ring-necked Pheasant					2	3
Ruffed Grouse	2	4	15	3	3	
Wild Turkey	13	131	183	55	101	159
Bald Eagle	2	9	12	38	2	15
Northern Harrier					1	
Sharp-shinned Hawk			1	1	CW	
Cooper's Hawk					2	1
Northern Goshawk						1
Accipiter Species				1		
Red-tailed Hawk		3	3	7	7	17
Rough-legged Hawk		3	1	2	2	7
Golden Eagle		1				
American Kestrel				1	9	
Merlin						1
Rock Pigeon		459	68	440	965	284
Mourning Dove	5	32	121	186	275	187
Great Horned Owl					3	2
Snowy Owl					1	
Barred Owl	2		2	1	1	1
Belted Kingfisher					2	
Red-bellied Woodpecker	1	5	19	10	13	26
Downy Woodpecker	8	22	53	50	30	40
Hairy Woodpecker	14	16	29	15	21	19
Pileated Woodpecker	3	6	2	5	11	4
Woodpecker species	2	1	1			2
Northern Shrike	1	2	5	2	3	4
Blue Jay	61	54	47	77	90	128
American Crow	14	46	101	114	193	155
Common Raven	24	34	13	6	9	4
Horned Lark				8	3	11
Black-capped Chickadee	185	254	375	443	300	270
Tufted Titmouse				1		2
Red-breasted Nuthatch	50	7	15	4	20	7
White-breasted Nuthatch	11	15	37	50	45	37
Brown Creeper	2			1	2	
Golden-crowned Kinglet	11	3		3	2	4
American Robin	1	2				

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European Starling		24	46	1348	717	282
Cedar Waxwing		2	6			
American Tree Sparrow		4	1	58	27	181
White-throated Sparrow	1					
White-crowned Sparrow				1		
Dark-eyed Junco		23	48	111	111	152
Oregon Junco (form)					2	
Snow Bunting		39	130	432	7	106
Northern Cardinal			10	31	61	29
Pine Grosbeak	72	14	6			
Purple Finch			2	3	15	16
House Finch			33	2	24	3
Red Crossbill	107					
White-winged Crossbill	6	2			3	
Common Redpoll	386	272	563	109	105	474
Hoary Redpoll			2			
Pine Siskin	4	154	245	54	113	7
American Goldfinch	17	52	217	443	251	356
House Sparrow		23	162	186	345	163

lines, but numbers open to interpretation. Fortunately, some of our northern visitors were present this year after being conspicuously absent last winter. Common Redpolls were common. Pine Siskins numbers weren't as strong, but still present on all counts. Red Crossbills showed up on the Clam Lake count and White-winged Crossbills in limited numbers were counted there, Gilman and Spencer. Pine Grosbeaks brightened three northern counts. As per every year, there are memorable finds. Those included a Golden Eagle at Gilman, Merlin and Tufted Titmouse at Willard, White-throated Sparrow at Clam Lake, White-crowned Sparrow at Owen.

As in each year, a few of the numbers are kind of wacky. How in the heck were American Robins recorded in the two most northern counts and nowhere else? Happenstance is a factor in these numbers which, when you think about it, is kind of a fun factor. It keeps one from taking little bits of the data too seriously. But it doesn't detract from the total volume of data that has been collected over nearly 40 years for some of the counts. A tip of the hat for all participants and especially compilers—Ken, Connie, Joe, Gayle and Keith. Only ten months to next year's count!

Editor Chequamegon Chirps

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#### CLUB CONTACTS

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#### **February and March events**

Full moons March 2 and 31

Great Horned Owls caring for hatchlings

Maple sap may be only weeks away

Bear cubs born

Day length noticeably