

# 2023 Spring Bird Count Report

*submitted by Elizabeth Link*

The 2023 Spring Migration bird count in Greensboro took place on April 29. The weather was fairly benign, with a low of 52 and a high of 72. Winds were from the south, with light breezes and occasional gusts between 1-23 mph. Skies were partly cloudy, with a trace of rain in the morning.

Birds reported represented 130 species, a number that is right within our average range over the last 50 years of the count. The number of individual birds, at 6,364, was down from our long-term average of 7,265. A lot of the wintering birds had pulled out – this is only the 2<sup>nd</sup> year since 1957 that we have reported no gulls or terns. Most wintering waterfowl had also left, with just a few species in small numbers, and notably 1 Red-breasted Merganser, found.

Another no-show was the Bald Eagles, a bird that didn't appear on our spring count until 1994, but which we've only missed twice since then. We know there are some around, but they didn't show up on count day.

Double-crested Cormorant numbers have trended upward over the years. We had zero, 1, or 2, in every year from 1957 to 1987, after which the numbers generally grew, to our all-time spring high of 447 in 2017. In the years since 1987 numbers have ranged back and forth between double digits and triple digits. This year we had 104, compared to 22 last year, so it's hard to say that there's an "average" for these birds.

Among overwintering land birds, there were a few Ruby-crowned Kinglets, and one Brown Creeper still hanging out. We had 126 Yellow-rumped Warblers, though, which is within our average range for the species.

Speaking of warblers, we did pretty well this year, with 25 species of warbler, a little above our average of 21. Notables included a Cerulean Warbler, 2 Wilson's Warblers, and 3 Yellow-throated Warblers. Yellow-throated Warbler has an interesting history on the count. After showing up every year from 1947 to 1977, we went from 1978 to 2005 without having it on the count, and in the years since 2005 it has only showed up 6 times. Wilson's Warbler has shown up in 14 of the years since 1957, and Cerulean in only 8 years since 1957.

I always have to comment on the Vulture situation, and this time the Turkey Vultures presented a slightly larger cohort (64) than the Black Vultures (52). Did you know that the name for a group of Vultures changes depending on what activity they're engaged in? A group of flying Vultures is a kettle, roosting Vultures is a committee, and feeding Vultures is a wake. And with that bit of trivia I'll close this report.

Many, many thanks to all our counters, as always I am grateful for your efforts! Thanks to: Carolyn Allen, Lynn Allison, Chris Bame, Rick Bardolph, Heather Buttonow, Frank Cashwell, Lori Combs, Scott Combs, Megan Damico, Scott Depue, Jim Eldrett, Scott Futrell, Jim Gant, Carol Jones, Asha Khopkar, Todd Kilb, Megan Kyle, Lynne Gray, Elizabeth Link, Henry Link, Clarence Mattocks, Linda Melendez-Kilb, Roberta Newton, Lane Oldham, Sandy Post, Anne Presnell, David Pretzsch, Judy Roy, Wallace Sills, Lou Skrabec, Melanie Stadler, Ann Steighner, Linda Sumner, Paul Sumner, Gale Sykes, Emily Talbert, Ann Van Sant, Matt Wangarin, Stella Wear, Tom Wear, George Wheaton, and Melissa Whitmire.

And as always, thanks to George Wheaton for his compilation of the historical spring count results, from which I dig out these averages and trends. This year's information will be added to the results and posted on the bird club website.

The results for the count are below.

### Species Count

Common name	Number
Canada Goose	305
Wood Duck	10
Blue-winged Teal	4
Mallard	99
Hooded Merganser	2
Red-breasted Merganser	1
Wild Turkey	7
Pied-billed Grebe	2
Rock Pigeon	38
Mourning Dove	121
Chimney Swift	95
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	8
Killdeer	12
Spotted Sandpiper	15
Solitary Sandpiper	14
Lesser Yellowlegs	2
Common Loon	1
Double-crested Cormorant	104
Great Blue Heron	35
Green Heron	16
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron	1
Black Vulture	52
Turkey Vulture	64
Osprey	10
Sharp-shinned Hawk	2
Cooper's Hawk	3
Red-shouldered Hawk	39
Broad-winged Hawk	2
Red-tailed Hawk	8
Barred Owl	5
Belted Kingfisher	7
Red-headed Woodpecker	9
Red-bellied Woodpecker	91

Downy Woodpecker	50
Hairy Woodpecker	8
Northern Flicker	15
Pileated Woodpecker	9
American Kestrel	2
Great Crested Flycatcher	55
Eastern Kingbird	23
Eastern Wood-Pewee	5
Acadian Flycatcher	3
Eastern Phoebe	46
White-eyed Vireo	41
Yellow-throated Vireo	9
Blue-headed Vireo	3
Warbling Vireo	2
Red-eyed Vireo	132
Blue Jay	94
American Crow	299
Fish Crow	38
Common Raven	5
Tree Swallow	78
N. Rough-winged Swallow	35
Cliff Swallow	27
Purple Martin	61
Barn Swallow	42
Carolina Chickadee	190
Tufted Titmouse	193
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	16
Cedar Waxwing	48
White-breasted Nuthatch	55
Brown-headed Nuthatch	47
Brown Creeper	1
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	102
Carolina Wren	227
House Wren	49

Gray Catbird	92
Brown Thrasher	59
Northern Mockingbird	113
European Starling	300
Eastern Bluebird	154
Veery	2
Gray-cheeked Thrush	1
Swainson's Thrush	4
Hermit Thrush	3
Wood Thrush	40
American Robin	219
House Sparrow	27
House Finch	118
American Goldfinch	218
Chipping sparrow	115
Grasshopper Sparrow	7
Field Sparrow	15
White-crowned Sparrow	1
White-throated Sparrow	166
Savannah Sparrow	4
Song Sparrow	70
Swamp Sparrow	6
Eastern Towhee	112
Yellow-breasted Chat	11
Bobolink	9
Eastern Meadowlark	25
Orchard Oriole	18
Baltimore Oriole	6
Red-winged Blackbird	54
Brown-headed Cowbird	78
Common Grackle	115
Ovenbird	45

Worm-eating Warbler	6
Louisiana Waterthrush	3
Northern Waterthrush	7
Blue-winged Warbler	1
Black-and-white Warbler	45
Prothonotary Warbler	7
Common Yellowthroat	57
Hooded Warbler	6
American Redstart	35
Cape May Warbler	3
Cerulean Warbler	1
Northern Parula	59
Bay-breasted Warbler	1
Blackburnian Warbler	1
Yellow Warbler	7
Chestnut-sided Warbler	2
Black-throated Blue Warbler	32
Palm Warbler	2
Pine Warbler	74
Yellow-rumped Warbler	126
Yellow-throated Warbler	3
Prairie Warbler	22
Black-throated Green Warbler	3
Canada Warbler	1
Wilson's Warbler	2
Summer Tanager	12
Scarlet Tanager	26
Northern Cardinal	361
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	5
Blue Grosbeak	16
Indigo Bunting	37

Total Individual Birds: 6,364

Total Species: 130