BIRDS IN THE SAGINAW BAY AREA

DECEMBER 1, 1996-FEBRUARY 28, 1997

Compiled by: Ron Weeks

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Compiler's Note: Once I had confirmed this summary had been discontinued, I realized just how hard it would be to recover all the information not recorded. So, I am again willing to compile with what time I can squeeze into my schedule. There will be no judgments...all interesting records will be summarized whether I believe them or not. This does not mean, however, that the state compiler will publish them. If you are not aware, a list of species that must be documented for each period has been published. This list includes seasonal rarities as well as birds requiring documentation for any season. The stated policy is that sightings of these listed species that arrive without documentation will not be printed in Michigan Birds and Natural History. I will ask for no such documentation but will forward it with this summary to the state compiler if you send it to me. In some cases, I may send you a post card if I feel you may not realize that the bird is listed. Also, be aware that in the near future the mailing list may be restricted to contributors. After its demise, this newsletter was taken out of the Chippewa Nature Center budget. I'll be back in August. -Ron

Summary: The winter of 1997 was described as uneventful by most observers. Despite all these comments, a respectable 99 species were reported by local observers. The most interesting report was of a female Barrow's Goldeneye seen by Gary & Tess Nelkie at the mouth of the Tawas River. Also notable was an adult Lesser Black-backed Gull seen by David Peters at Shiawassee NWR. Unusual birds for the winter season included February Merlins in two Bay County locations, a Short-eared Owl from Shiawassee NWR, Eastern Bluebirds from Saginaw and Midland Counties, White-crowned Sparrows from the Iosco and Bay City CBCs, Lapland Longspurs from Shiawassee NWR and Bay Port, and a mid-winter Eastern Meadowlark at Shiawassee NWR.

Waterfowl numbers were lower than usual with Common Mergansers being reported in much lower numbers from its normal power plant haunts. Oldsquaw and White-winged Scoters were again report in fair numbers off of the Iosco shore by Bob Bell. One duck that was reported in record numbers was Common Goldeneye with 3340 reported from the Karn Plant on 12/21 by Joe & Grant Soehnel.

Bald Eagles continue to do well with good numbers reported again from MCV and Shiawassee as well as in Iosco County. Moderate to below average numbers of the buteos and other raptors were reported for the period. A **Red-shouldered Hawk** near Brant was the only report of the species which must now be considered rare in winter and unfortunately even in summer.

Gulls numbers were unimpressive this year as no large congregations were reported from the Saginaw River. David Peters and Myles Willard were the only ones to tally any white-winged gulls finding two **Glaucous** and one **Iceland Gull** in a flooded field in northern Bay County. **Great Black-backeds** were present in decent numbers and all of the gulls disappeared once again during the first weeks of February.

Snowy Owls were around again this winter with over a half dozen birds reported. Barred Owl and Saw-whet Owl went unreported. I do hope that in the case of the Barred Owl that this is due to lack of effort and the species' habit of being reluctant to call at times. Interestingly, Red-headed Woodpeckers were more common than usual with eleven different birds reported for the period.

Passerines logged in impressive numbers included Horned Larks and Snow Buntings. Reports of Golden-crowned Kinglets, Red-breasted Nuthatches, and Northern Shrikes were scarce. Some observers also reported lower than usual numbers of American Tree Sparrows and American Goldfinches. Bohemian Waxwings were apparently not around as none were reported. Winter finches were virtually absent with no reports of crossbills or grosbeaks and only one sighting each of Common Redpoll and Pine Siskin.

COMMON LO	ON:			
1	1/5	Tawas River mouth, Io	DP, MW	Only report.
HORNED GRE	EBE:			
No reports.				
DOUBLE-CRE				
2	12/3	Dow Corning Pond, Ba	RA	
1	12/21	Midland CBC, Mi	/X	
4	12/28	Bay City CBC, Ba		Allenger of a graph of
		d through period at Karn Plant, Ba	(J&GS).	
GREAT BLUE	HERON:			i letti Mil
1	12/23	Midland, Mi	RA	7. 7. 7. 7. 7. 7. 7. 7. 7. 7. 7. 7. 7. 7
2	12/28	Bay City CBC, Ba		Four tp at Karn (J&GS).
16	12/12	Shiawassee NWR, Sa	DP	One straggler on 1/2.
1	2/1	Bay Port area, Hu	TB	. *
BLACK-CROY				
1	1/20	Karn Plant, Ba	J&GS	Immature.
TUNDRA SWA				
500	12/13	Bay Port area, Hu	TB	NT
18	12/28	Bay City CBC, Ba		New count high.
2	2/9	Karn Plant, Ba	JS	
MUTE SWAN				NT
21	12/28	Bay City CBC, Ba	***	New count high.
6	2/20	Nayanquing PT WA, Ba	JG	
		ough period at Karn Plant, Ba (J&	GS).	
SNOW GOOSI			DD	
1	1/2	Shiawassee NWR, Sa	DP	First arrivals.
3	2/20 tp	Shiawassee NWR, Sa	DP	
CANADA GO		CI : NIVID Co	DP	Peak.
12651		Shiawassee NWR, Sa		. FCdK. Ideas, 1972, 1985
		vere recorded on the Bay City CBC	, Da.	
Common th		oa.		n de la companya de La companya de la co
WOOD DUCK	12/21	Midland CBC, Mi		Only report.
GREEN-WING		12.00		omy reports the first transfer of the
1	2/26	Shiawassee NWR, Sa	DP, BG	First return.
AMERICAN B			21,20	
199	12/5	Shiawassee NWR, Sa	DP .	Peak.
MALLARD:	1213	Sinawassee IT WIG Su		
	8 at Shiaw	assee NWR, Sa on 12/5 (DP). Con	nmon through peri-	od.
NORTHERN P			3 1	
1	12/21	Karn Plant, Ba	J&GS	
i	12/21	Midland CBC, Mi		
i	2/20	Shiawassee NWR, Sa	DP	
NORTHERN S				•
68	12/5	Shiawassee NWR, Sa	DP	25 left on 12/12.
1	12/21	Midland CBC, Mi		Also seen 12/20 (GZ).
GADWALL:		1		
35	12/21	Midland CBC, Mi		
AMERICAN V	VIGEON:			
2	2/24	Shiawassee NWR, Sa	DP	
CANVASBAC	CK:			
1	12/28	Bay City CBC, Ba		
REDHEAD:				
12	12/10	Dow Corning Pond, Ba	RA	
1	12/28	Bay City CBC, Ba		
1 male	12/28 tp	Tawas River, Io	GN	The second secon
8	2/25	Hampton Twp, Ba	JS	Returning birds.
RING-NECKE				
1	12/28	Bay City CBC, Ba		

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GREATER	SCAUP:				
1	2/25	Hampton Twp, Ba	JS		
LESSER SC.	AUP:				
3	12/10	Dow Corning Pond, Ba	RA		
13	2/25	Hampton Twp, Ba	JS		
SCAUP SP.:			*.71	Compatible of the State of the Compatible Co	
1	12/28	Bay City CBC, Ba		and parties according to	
OLDSQUAV	V:			er leifegefold ou ll en	
140, 118	12/6,7	Tawas Pt SP, Io	BB		
3	12/20	Tawas Pt SP, Io	BB	the state of the s	
1	12/28	Bay City CBC, Ba		Found in Karn Plant.	
WHITE-WIN	NGED SCO	TER:			
5,2	12/6,7	Tawas Pt SP, Io	BB		
150	12/7	Three Mile Park, Io	BB	Scoter central!	
This bird	used to be u	inreported in winter, but is no	w regular before i	ce-up.	
COMMON (
3340	12/21	Karn Plant, Ba	J&GS	Peak count.	
This cour	t of a single	e raft of birds represents the hi	ighest SBA count	ever. These birds are probably around in great	
numbers	most vears l	but are often too spread out to	count accurately.		
2300	12/28	Bay City CBC, Ba		New count high.	
BARROW'S		•			
1 female	12/30	Tawas River, Io	G&TN		
Gary writ	es "Annear	ed with a group of 200+ Com	non Goldeneyes ar	nd Mergansers. However, noted that the female	
Barrow's	kent a dista	ance from the rest of the flock.	If documentation	is submitted and accepted by the MBRC, this	
		cepted record for the SBA.		• •	
BUFFLEHE		copica record for the 5211.			
12	12/12	Tawas Pt SP, Io	GZ	Peak count.	
2	12/28	Bay City CBC, Ba			
2	2/25	Hampton Twp, Ba	JS	Spring returnees.	
HOODED M				A conditional and several apprilate with an according	
HOODED IV.			who will a of tack that the train	To other resident with a default of the field of course of the course of	
12	12/21	Midland CBC MI			
12 1	12/21	Midland CBC, Mi Bay City CBC, Ba		and the second s	
4	12/28	Bay City CBC, Ba	and the Middle Gro	ounds. Ba (JS).	
4 Also repo	12/28 orted from T	Bay City CBC, Ba Cawas Pt SP, Io on 12/6 (BB) a	and the Middle Gre	ounds, Ba (JS).	
4 Also repo COMMON N	12/28 orted from T MERGANS	Bay City CBC, Ba 'awas Pt SP, Io on 12/6 (BB) a ER:		ounds, Ba (JS).	
4 Also repo COMMON I 1041	12/28 orted from T MERGANS 12/5	Bay City CBC, Ba Tawas Pt SP, Io on 12/6 (BB) a ER: Shiawassee NWR, Sa	and the Middle Gro	ounds, Ba (JS). Lower than usual.	
4 Also repo COMMON I 1041 177	12/28 orted from T MERGANS 12/5 12/21	Bay City CBC, Ba Cawas Pt SP, Io on 12/6 (BB) a ER: Shiawassee NWR, Sa Midland CBC, Mi			
4 Also repo COMMON I 1041 177 1849	12/28 orted from T MERGANS 12/5 12/21 12/28	Bay City CBC, Ba 'awas Pt SP, Io on 12/6 (BB) a ER: Shiawassee NWR, Sa Midland CBC, Mi Bay City CBC, Ba		Lower than usual.	
4 Also repo COMMON I 1041 177 1849 RED-BREAS	12/28 orted from T MERGANS 12/5 12/21 12/28 STED MER	Bay City CBC, Ba Fawas Pt SP, Io on 12/6 (BB) a ER: Shiawassee NWR, Sa Midland CBC, Mi Bay City CBC, Ba RGANSER:	DP	Lower than usual.	
Also repo COMMON N 1041 177 1849 RED-BREAS	12/28 orted from T MERGANS 12/5 12/21 12/28 STED MER 12/7	Bay City CBC, Ba Fawas Pt SP, Io on 12/6 (BB) a ER: Shiawassee NWR, Sa Midland CBC, Mi Bay City CBC, Ba RGANSER: Tawas Pt SP, Io		Lower than usual. Also lower than usual.	
4 Also repo COMMON N 1041 177 1849 RED-BREAS 2 4	12/28 orted from T MERGANS 12/5 12/21 12/28 STED MER 12/7 12/28	Bay City CBC, Ba Fawas Pt SP, Io on 12/6 (BB) a ER: Shiawassee NWR, Sa Midland CBC, Mi Bay City CBC, Ba RGANSER:	DP	Lower than usual. Also lower than usual.	
Also repo COMMON N 1041 177 1849 RED-BREAS 2 4 RUDDY DU	12/28 orted from T MERGANS 12/5 12/21 12/28 STED MER 12/7 12/28 ICK:	Bay City CBC, Ba Fawas Pt SP, Io on 12/6 (BB) a ER: Shiawassee NWR, Sa Midland CBC, Mi Bay City CBC, Ba RGANSER: Tawas Pt SP, Io	DP	Lower than usual. Also lower than usual.	
Also report COMMON N 1041 177 1849 RED-BREAS 2 4 RUDDY DU No report	12/28 orted from T MERGANS 12/5 12/21 12/28 STED MER 12/7 12/28 ICK: is.	Bay City CBC, Ba Fawas Pt SP, Io on 12/6 (BB) a ER: Shiawassee NWR, Sa Midland CBC, Mi Bay City CBC, Ba RGANSER: Tawas Pt SP, Io	DP	Lower than usual. Also lower than usual.	
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4 Also repo COMMON N 1041 177 1849 RED-BREAS 2 4 RUDDY DU No report TURKEY V	12/28 orted from T MERGANS 12/5 12/21 12/28 STED MER 12/7 12/28 ICK: is. ULTURE:	Bay City CBC, Ba Fawas Pt SP, Io on 12/6 (BB) a ER: Shiawassee NWR, Sa Midland CBC, Mi Bay City CBC, Ba CGANSER: Tawas Pt SP, Io Bay City CBC, Ba	DP BB ed from Delaware	Lower than usual. Also lower than usual. Late for Tawas. & State St. (MW per DP) and from M-46 and St.	
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4 Also report COMMON N 1041 177 1849 RED-BREAS 2 4 RUDDY DU No report TURKEY V Two sepa Andrews usual firs BALD EAG 10 Good num beach at N NORTHERN Scattered SHARP-SHI 1 1 Ron Ann COOPER'S	12/28 orted from T MERGANS 12/5 12/21 12/28 STED MER 12/7 12/28 ICK: is. ULTURE: irate sightin (Steve Dus. t push of T LE: 12/5 mbers also r Bay City SF N HARRIER I sightings t INNED HA 12/6 12/21 12/21 elin had on HAWK:	Bay City CBC, Ba Tawas Pt SP, Io on 12/6 (BB) a ER: Shiawassee NWR, Sa Midland CBC, Mi Bay City CBC, Ba RGANSER: Tawas Pt SP, Io Bay City CBC, Ba regs of single birds were reported hane per DP) both in Saginaw Vs. Shiawassee NWR, Sa reported from MCV, Mi, Bay CRA, Ba in December (fide JG a R: hrough period. WK: Tawas Pt SP, Io Eagle Run, Io Midland CBC, M	DP BB cd from Delaware and Taware delay delay be a point of the early delay be a point of the	Lower than usual. Also lower than usual. Late for Tawas. & State St. (MW per DP) and from M-46 and St. ate of 2/20! This is about a month ahead of the Peak count. as Pt, Io. Doing well of late. Also reported from Where is Eagle Run?	

Winter 96-97

GOSHAWK: DP Only report 1/26 e. of Pigeon, Hu 1 RED-SHOULDERED HAWK: **Doug Reeves** Brant Twp, Sa 2/7-10 This bird was observed by Doug's whole family (Greg, Gordon & Dianne) and Dan Morris. Dan's dad is a conservation officer who has run my plates before at Gratiot-Saginaw. Dan and his dad have found many hawk nests in that area in the past including Broad-winged and Goshawk! RED-TAILED HAWK: Shiawassee NWR, Sa DP Peak count. 19 1/10 David reports that a dark morph bird stayed through the period. I assume that this is the same bird that has wintered there for several years now. **ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK:** 2/14 Shiawassee NWR, Sa DP Peak count. Scattered sightings through period. AMERICAN KESTREL: Scattered sightings through period. MERLIN: per JS Four Mile & Salzburg, Ba 2/15 1 This bird was struck by a car and died shortly thereafter. The bird was turned into Sandy Miner and photographs indicate it was an adult female. Dow Corning Pond, Ba RA Are these birds already moving with the spring migration or winter residents? RING-NECKED PHEASANT: Scattered sightings through period. RUFFED GROUSE: Reported from Tawas Point, Shellenbarger Road, and Eagle Run in Io (BB); the Tuscola SGA, Tu (MW, DP) and Midland, Mi (RA). WILD TURKEY: Iosco CBC 55 Also reported from Midland by Ron Annelin, but missed on the CBC. BOBWHITE: No reports. AMERICAN COOT: Only report. Bay City CBC, Ba 12/28 Apparently none overwintered in MCV, Mi this year. **COMMON SNIPE:** No reports. **BONAPARTE'S GULL:** Peak count. JS 12/19 Saginaw River, BA 414 Last report. Karn Plant, Ba J&GS 1 12/21 RING-BILLED GULL: DP Impressive winter tally. Shiawassee NWR, Sa 477 12/5 Late for Tawas. BB Tawas Pt SP, Io 1 12/6 J&GS Karn Plant, Ba 100 12/21 Returnees at Shiawassee NWR, Sa on 2/20. HERRING GULL: A devoted counter. DP 1423 12/5 Shiawassee NWR, Sa Absent as usual during the first three weeks of February in Bay City, Ba (fide JS). ICELAND GULL: $1 1^{st} w$ Whitefeather & State Rds, Ba MW, DP 1/5 These birds were found in a flooded field-not on Saginaw Bay. GLAUCOUS GULL: MW, DP Only report. Whitefeather & State Rds, Ba 1/5 2 ad None reported from Bay City this winter! LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL: Shiawassee NWR, Sa DP 1 ad 12/5 GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL: Rare inland. Midland CBC, Mi 12/21 1 Peak count. Karn Plant, Ba J&GS 14 12/21

Singles also from the Tawas Pt (12/6 &20) and the Au Sable River mouth (12/7), Io (BB). ROCK DOVE: Common through period. MOURNING DOVE: Common through period. EASTERN SCREECH OWL: Reported from the Midland and Bay City CBCs. DATE (Bridge, 2004) the time (I and October GREAT HORNED OWL: Reported on nest on 2/6 at Shiawassee NWR, Sa. Scattered sightings through period. SNOWY OWL: Shiawassee reports included one 11/21 and one present from 12/29 through 1/15 that was joined by second bird on 1/7. Two were also reported from the Bay City CBC, Ba. Possibly these same two birds were reported from the Karn Plant, Ba (J&GS). Tom Beachy also reported 4 through the period in the Bay Port area. BARRED OWL: No reports. **SHORT-EARED OWL:** Shiawassee NWR, Sa DP 12/26 SAW-WHET OWL: No reports. BELTED KINGFISHER: TB 12/13 Bay Port area, Hu J&GS 1/20 Karn Plant, Ba 1 Shiawassee NWR, Sa DP 2/20 RED-HEADED WOODPECKER: TB Bay Port, Hu tp TB 6 Caseville, Hu tp 2 12/21 Iosco CBC thru Jan St. Charles, Sa DP Interestingly, these birds are regular in winter in Io and Hu. RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER: This control is recome affective and of meet Scattered sightings through period. DOWNY WOODPECKER: Common through period. HAIRY WOODPECKER: Scattered sightings through period. NORTHERN FLICKER: One to two were seen through the period at Shiawassee NWR, Sa (DP). Midland CBC, Mi 12/21 PILEATED WOODPECKER: Midland CBC, Mi 12/21 HORNED LARK: DP Shiawassee NWR, Sa 140 1/15 David reports they were paired off singing on 2/14. High than usual. Midland CBC, Mi 170 12/21 BLUE JAY: Common through period. AMERICAN CROW: Common through period. COMMON RAVEN: Bob Bell reported multiple birds at Shellenbarger Rd (3), Iargo Springs (2) and Fountain Creek (2)-all in Io. One was also tallied on the Iosco CBC. BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE: Common through period. **TUFTED TITMOUSE:** Common through period. **RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH:** Midland CBC, Mi 1 12/21 G&EP Linwood, Ba 1 Apparently scarce this winter. Not reported by Bob Bell or the Iosco CBC!

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Common through per	iod.			
BROWN CREEPER:				
Scattered sightings the	rough period.			
CAROLINA WREN:				
	Cat Lake, Tu	MW nor DD		
	NO. 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10			
1 2/16	Mannion & Shattuck, Sa	per DP		
GOLDEN-CROWNED K	INGLET:			
Very few reports this		err and the face of the face of		
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EASTERN BLUEBIRD		D D	Cincin a an latter data	
	Brant Twp, Sa		Singing on latter date.	
1 2/24	w. Midland, Mi	RA		
AMERICAN ROBIN:				
4 2/12	East Tawas, Io	GN		
7 2/15	near Edenville, Mi	Doug & Dian	ne Deeves	
		Doug & Dian	ilic Recycs	
BOHEMIAN WAXWIN	NG:			
No reports.				
CEDAR WAXWING:				
Scattered sightings the	rough period			
NORTHERN SHRIKE:	rough portou.			
NURTHERN SHRIKE:		1 1 0 01	NIVID Co (DD) and each of	Cab a ab man
Scattered sightings the	rough period. Reports of indivi	iduals from Shiawas	ssee NWR, Sa (DP) and each of	the three
reporting CBCs.				
EUROPEAN STARLING	7:			
Trash bird through pe				
YELLOW-RUMPED W	ARBLER:			
No reports.				
NORTHERN CARDINA	L:			
Common through peri				
AMERICAN TREE SPA		THE PERSON AND INSTRUMENTS OF THE PERSON AND THE PE	per de la company de la compan	and an included
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WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH:

30

2/26

Hampton Twp, Ba

GS

PURPLE FINCH:

3

12/21 Iosco CBC

Getting hard to get.

Also reported from Huron County (TB).

HOUSE FINCH:

Common through period. CBC numbers were down this year but it is too early to say whether the decline is a part of normal population and census variation or due to the disease that is plaguing this species in some parts of the country.

AMERICAN GOLDFINCH:

Common through period. Lower numbers than usual this year.

COMMON REDPOLL:

1 12/21

Midland CBC, Mi

The lone ranger.

PINE SISKIN:

1 12/28

Bay City CBC, Ba

Another lone ranger.

EVENING GROSBEAK:

No reports.

HOUSE SPARROW:

Common through period.

TOTAL: 99 species

RECORDS FROM OUTSIDE THE SBA

1 ? US 27-Higgins Lake area

Ethie Blackman

OBSERVERS:

RA BB TB JG BG JH	Ron Annelin (MCBC Compiler) Bob Bell Tom Beachy Jack Gillespie Bob Grefe Jeanne Henderson (BCCBC Compiler)	the control of	DP EP GP GS JS MW	Ellen Peterson Glenn Peterson Grant Soehnel Joe Soehnel Myles Willard
GN	Gary Nelkie		GZ	Gerald Ziarno
TN	Tess Nelkie			

ABBREVIATIONS

Ba	Bay County	NC	Nature Center
CBC	Christmas Bird Count	NWR	National Wildlife Refuge
fem	female	Sa	Saginaw County
Hu	Huron County	SBA	Saginaw Bay Area
im	immature	SL	Sewage Lagoons
Io	Iosco County	SP	State Park
MCV Pond	Midland Cogeneration Venture Pond	tp	through period
Mi	Midland County	Tu	Tuscola County
	NOT DEMONSTRATE THE ACT.		