



Conservation Through Education
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By the Numbers... and Birds

2022 Christmas Bird Count with Bill Kaempfer & Cuneyt Yilmaz

A fairly chilly December 26th marked the 46th North Pinellas Christmas Bird Count. CBCs are a tradition all over North and Central America dating back to the year 1900. Each count is a census of the entire bird population inside the count circle of 15 miles in diameter. For the North Pinellas CBC, the count circle is centered at US 19 and Tampa road meaning almost all of Pinellas County north of Gulf-to-Bay is included.

This year over 60 counters in 20 teams scoured the area for birds from dawn to dusk and ended up finding 163 species. Reports generally noted smaller numbers of individuals present and few rarities, but the total number of species was the second highest total for us all time. Ten years ago, the Green-tailed Towhee year, we had 168. But until this year, second place was only 161, shared by several years.

We managed this large total which will probably rank us in the top 50 in the US without finding many rare birds. Wood Thrush found at Dunedin Hammock was a new species for the count. Other unusual species included Bachmann's Sparrow (3 times before) and Northern Waterthrush (4 times before). All other species that we recorded had been reported on at least 5 of the last 21 counts.

Our most abundant species was Fish Crow with almost 5,000 tallied. Did you guess that one? Other abundant species included White Ibis, Laughing Gull, Lesser Scaup, American Robin, and Double-crested Cormorant.

I can report on my biggest personal disappointment. For the second year in a row, I failed to find Canada Goose in my block where they've been reported every month of the year except June. I had five on the football practice fields on the 23rd, 2 on the 24th and then 11 on the 28th, but none on count day. So, it's wait 'til next year for Canada Goose yet again.