

## **Birding in and Around the Towns of Somerset and Yates 2017**

**Here is an updated list of bird counts conducted in our area. You can participate as a citizen scientist by reporting what you see on the lake, at your feeder, or during one of the other organized bird counts each year. This is a simple yet wonderful way to enjoy the variety of birds that pass our way and help to determine both numbers and species that are part of the natural beauty we enjoy and hope to preserve.**

**The Great Backyard Bird Count:** The Great Backyard Bird Count is a popular event where people collect information on bird populations all over the world. It's free and easy to participate. The next GBBC is Friday, February 17, through Monday, February 20, 2017. In addition to the count there is a photo contest with many of those sent in displayed on their website. The eBird mobile app is available and allows you to enter eBird observations from anywhere in the world. This year you can upload both photos and sound recordings. Sightings of owls, eagles, other rarities can be added to e-Bird at any time. <http://ebird.org/content/ebird/> This link shows data compiled from the 2015- 2016 count. <http://audubon.maps.arcgis.com/apps/PublicInformation/index.html?appid=e67e3b8ea8e0434d81128d76b8aa0d3d>

The Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society started the Great Backyard Bird Count in 1998. Back then, most of the counts were done in the United States and Canada. In 2013, the event went global and many counts were done in countries such as India, Europe, Mexico, and Australia. In 2016, Great Backyard Bird Count participants in more than 130 countries counted 5,689 species of birds on more than 162,000 checklists! <http://www.audubon.org/content/about-great-backyard-bird-count>

**Project Feeder Watch:** The Cornell Lab also sponsors Project FeederWatch, a winter-long survey of birds that visit feeders in backyards, nature centers, community areas, and other locales in North America. FeederWatchers periodically count the birds they see at their feeders from November through early April and send their counts to Project FeederWatch. FeederWatch data help scientists track broadscale movements of winter bird populations and long-term trends in bird distribution and abundance. Anyone interested in birds can participate. FeederWatch is conducted by people of all skill levels and backgrounds, including children, families, individuals, classrooms, retired persons, youth groups, nature centers, and bird clubs. Participants watch their feeders as much or as little as they want over two consecutive days as often as every week (less often is fine). They count birds that appear in their count site because of something that they provided (plantings, food, or water). New participants are sent

a [Research Kit](#) with complete instructions for participating, as well as a bird identification poster and more. You provide the feeder(s) and seed. <http://feederwatch.org/>

**Buffalo Ornithological Society:** The Buffalo Ornithological Society was established in 1929 to promote the study of the birds of the Niagara Frontier Region. The BOS coverage area includes western New York and parts of nearby Ontario, Canada. This region is rich in bird life with over 380 species and 25 recognizable subspecies of birds recorded. Explore the site to learn more about where to report and find birds, both regional specialties and rare visitors. <http://www.buffaloornithologicalsociety.org/>

**Lakeshore Waterfowl:** Each January, members visit lakes, rivers and shorelines to count waterfowl (ducks, geese, swans, loons, grebes, etc.). New York State Ornithological Association (NYSOA) has conducted this survey annually since 1955. In most years, more than a quarter of a million birds are tallied. In addition to being an enjoyable outing, DEC has acknowledged this to be a useful survey for long-term monitoring of waterfowl populations wintering in New York. The count will always begin the Saturday just before Martin Luther King Day, which is the third week in January, this year the target is January 14-22 (target date - Sunday, January 15). <http://www.nybirds.org/ProjWaterfowl.htm>

**The Christmas Bird Count:** Organized by the Audubon Society, this count takes place in specifically designated areas. The closest to us is the area around Wilson with a tally this year of 81 species. The Wilson-Lake Plains bird count has a Facebook page. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/365797119965/>

**The Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge** The refuge headquarters and visitor center is located at 1101 Casey Road, one mile north and west of the Alabama traffic light, which is at the intersection of Highway 63 and Highway 77 in Alabama. The phone number is (585) 948-5445. <https://www.fws.gov/refuge/Iroquois/> The refuge has a number of programs throughout the year for youth and adults as well as self-guided activities. The Wildlife Observation handout included below gives instruction on using their lookout points. <https://www.fws.gov/uploadedFiles/Wildlife%20Observation%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf>

