

# WINTER WATERFOWL COUNT, JANUARY 2019— CORRECTED

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**[Editor's Note]**—Due to slight variations in the template files used in compiling the January 2019 Waterfowl Count, some of the species totals for Region 10 were incorrect as published in the original version of this report (*The Kingbird* 69: 119-123). These errors affected the summary as well, so the entire corrected report is republished here.]

About 387 volunteers went into the field 12-27 January 2019 and conducted the New York State Ornithological Association's January Waterfowl Count (JWC). The volunteers logged 1025.5 party-hours and counted 394,243 waterfowl. Swift (2007) described the methodology of the count.

## WEATHER CONDITIONS

The only significant snow in the state leading up to and during the waterfowl count period was in the western part of the state. Buffalo recorded a 13-inch snow cover on January 20, the count's target date, and 15-inch snow cover on January 26. The snow in Buffalo was accompanied by sub-zero weather on January 20, as well. The target date's weather did lead to some changed plans for participants, but the count's overall coverage of the state was good.

## RESULTS

In this summary, I will compare the 2019 numbers with the average annual numbers from the decade 2001-2010. The total number of waterfowl counted this year, 394,243, was 10,537 (3%) more than the average for the 2001-2010 decade. The difference was primarily due to an overall larger count of geese, primarily Canada Geese, which was 43,433 (25%) more than the decade average. This larger count of geese more than offset the lower count of ducks and miscellaneous other waterfowl than the decade average. The 2019 count of swans was 247 (10%) more than the decade average, a higher count of Tundra Swans overcoming a lower count of Mute Swans.

Lingering Wood Ducks and Northern Shovelers accounted for the only counts of dabbling ducks that were higher than the 2001-2010 average. Among diving ducks, the counts of Redheads, Ring-necked Ducks, Greater Scaup (unless all the unidentified scaup from 2001-2010 were this species and none of the

unidentified scaup in this count were), Common Eider, Black Scoter, Long-tailed Duck, and Hooded Merganser were all higher than the decade average. All the non-Anseriformes waterfowl species counts were lower in the 2019 count than the average for the 2001-2010 decade.

## **LONG-TERM TRENDS**

We have been watching for many years the long-term trend of increasing numbers of Tundra Swans wintering in New York State, the number peaking at 4,065 in 2016. That number dropped to 1,443 in 2017 and to 655 in 2018. The number rebounded somewhat in the 2019 count to 1,317. We have also been watching Canvasbacks. While their numbers vary widely from year to year, their two highest counts, 24,584 and 25,718, both occurred in the 2001-2010 decade. Their two lowest counts, 3,771 and 4,514, occurred in the current decade.

By comparing the averages for the periods 1973-2000, 2001-2010, and 2013-2019, possible long-term trends in New York State's winter waterfowl populations can be identified. Possible long-term increases can thus be seen for Snow Goose, Brant, Trumpeter Swan, Tundra Swan, Wood Duck, Gadwall, Eurasian Wigeon, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, Common Eider, Harlequin Duck, Long-tailed Duck, Bufflehead, Hooded Merganser, and Red-breasted Merganser. Long-term decreases may be happening to American Wigeon, American Black Duck, Northern Pintail, Green-winged Teal, scaup, White-winged Scoter, and Common Merganser.

## **FUTURE COUNTS**

You can help with the 2020 count by contacting your Regional compiler. Compiler contact information and historical data are available online at:

<http://nybirds.org/ProjWaterfowl.htm>

For planning purposes, the January Waterfowl Count is conducted in a period that begins the Saturday before Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (the third Monday in January). The next two count periods will be:

2020 – January 18-26 (target date Sunday, January 19)

2021 – January 16-24 (target date Sunday, January 17)

Table 1. Regional totals for the 2019 January Waterfowl Count.

Note: these data have been corrected and replace those published in *The Kingbird* 69: 120-121.

Species/Region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
Goose, Gr. White-fr.	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	2	7
Snow	0	49	12,058	0	0	0	0	1	9	602	12,719
Ross's	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Canada	5,286	15,741	42,879	5,118	4,873	1,191	0	23,840	31,011	55,920	185,859
Cackling	0	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	8	8	21
Brant	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	550	17,420	17,970
Swan, Mute	9	176	25	0	18	103	0	17	317	803	1,468
Trumpeter	0	16	20	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	42
Tundra	196	0	1,060	0	33	28	0	0	0	0	1,317
not to species	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wood Duck	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	28	38	70
Gadwall	12	1	62	3	16	0	0	0	72	1,160	1,326
Wigeon, Eurasian	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
American	5	0	41	1	0	0	0	0	51	228	326
Am. Black Duck	64	168	661	277	63	78	42	96	611	5,893	7,953
Mallard	2,042	2,424	4,946	1,393	1,600	522	1,404	1,611	5,478	8,430	29,850
Mallard X Black	2	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	72	79
Blue-winged Teal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Northern Shoveler	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	7	530	538
Northern Pintail	0	3	0	2	0	1	0	1	4	108	119
Green-winged Teal	1	4	1	1	0	2	0	0	4	149	162
Canvasback	4,255	14	964	3	3	0	0	3	90	174	5,506
Redhead	1,143	2,649	15,738	345	156	7	0	1	9	45	20,093
Ring-necked Duck	9	84	301	5	19	0	0	1	417	993	1,829
Tufted Duck	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Scaup, Greater	16,817	397	403	31	132	0	0	0	1,128	19,001	37,909

Species/Region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
Lesser	3	17	104	3	20	2	0	0	35	1,185	1,369
not to species	130	10	243	0	50	0	100	0	1	1,226	1,760
Eider, King	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Common	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5,607	5,607
Harlequin Duck	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2
Scoter, Surf	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	658	659
White-winged	99	34	20	1	42	0	0	0	1	1,446	1,643
Black	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	3,690	3,691
not to species	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4,369	4,369
Long-tailed Duck	1,182	2,565	46	13	475	539	0	0	207	3,291	8,318
Bufflehead	925	24	201	4	33	16	22	0	830	4,911	6,966
Goldeneye, Co.	2,234	1,098	1,982	139	670	1,504	359	467	538	989	9,980
Barrow's	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Merganser, Hooded	57	9	98	133	47	1	5	59	253	1,334	1,996
Common	1,058	410	3,323	364	1,560	762	241	431	1,547	131	9,827
Red-breasted	702	3,523	486	2	163	65	0	0	89	1,846	6,876
Ruddy Duck	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	18	2,115	2,133
Loon, Red-throated	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	94	104
Common	0	3	2	0	0	0	2	0	43	258	308
Grebe, Pied-billed	3	1	6	0	3	0	0	0	5	17	35
Horned	0	3	3	1	0	0	2	0	16	217	242
Red-necked	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	5
Eared	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cormorant, D.-cr.	16	17	1	0	26	0	0	0	2	102	164
Great	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	47	49	96
American Coot	0	29	240	46	2	0	0	0	23	153	493
Other/Unidentified	1,297	3	901	0	0	41	0	0	21	170	2,433
<b>TOTALS</b>	37,550	29,481	86,822	7,890	10,012	4,862	2,177	26,528	43,482	145,439	394,243

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thanks to everyone who participated in the 2019 January Waterfowl Count. The many dedicated field observers volunteered many hours in the field. Regional and local compilers and coordinators deserve special thanks for making sure that the state had good coverage and for compiling the data in a timely manner. The Regional compilers, this year, were:

Region	Compiler	Region	Compiler
1	Jim Landau	6	Jeff Bolsinger
2	Robert Spahn	7	Gary Lee
3	Thomas Bell	8	Bryan Swift
4	Gail Kirch	9	Bill Ostrander
5	Bill Purcell	10	Clifford Hagen

## LITERATURE CITED

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