

Audubon Christmas Bird Count – Colleton River – December 16, 2019

The annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count was held on Monday, December 16, 2019 under the benefit and relatively warm weather. While it was cool at the start (50 degrees) it warmed up to the upper 60's by noon.

We met in the men's lounge at the Nick clubhouse at 8 am for orientation. The 32 birders (21 Colleton members and 11 guests) separated into 6 teams and at 8:30 we jumped in our golf carts to start the count. We also benefitted from member Tom Schmitz who performed a count of shorebirds off of his dock on Hampton Lane. We regrouped at around 11:45 in the Nick clubhouse and enjoyed some soup and sandwiches and we shared stories about the day's count. After lunch, three of us spent 2 hours covering zone 4.



In total, we submitted count totals that included 80 different species and 1,727 individual birds! Both the number of species and the individual birds were an increase from the prior year.

Some notes of interest:

1. Top three birds in quantities-
 - a. Tree Swallows – 304
 - b. Red Wing Blackbirds – 172
 - c. Ruddy Turnstones – 140
2. We saw all species of woodpeckers to Colleton - (Red-headed-2, Red-bellied – 16, Yellow bellied Sapsucker – 9, Downy – 8, Northern Flicker – 12)
3. We saw 4 mature Bald Eagles and one immature bald eagle. We believe that we have 3 active bald eagle nests within the community and another nest just offshore between Colleton and Pinkney Island.
4. No owls in the count this year, but who gives a hoot about owls.
5. Eastern Bluebirds – 36 (Our bluebird program is working)
6. Yellow-rumped warblers – 57

7. The Robins and Cedar Waxwings are back.

Thank you to all who participated.

Photo Credits: Eagle & Red-tailed Hawk – Chris Hartmann, Bluebird & Red Bellied Woodpecker – John Eckhardt (guest), House Wren & Flying Egrets – Stephen Dickson

