



# The Stilt

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Newsletter of the Bridgerland Audubon Society

# CBC 2001

Who spends all day Saturday driving and walking around in freezing weather, foregoing a leisurely breakfast in a warm home? Birders! Saturday the 15<sup>th</sup> of December was the Christmas Bird Count for the Cache Valley area, and it brought 58 dedicated individuals out to count. The day actually started with 6 parties of the most foolhardy (including yours truly) up before dawn and coffee to try to spot owls. Then around 8 am a total of 58 observers, split into 23 parties, spread out to prearranged territories in the count circle. By the end of the day, the parties of birders had covered 66 hours and 54 miles on foot and 74 hours and 736 miles by car, for a total of 136 birding hours and 790 birding miles spent that day! The weather was fine, ranging from 15 to about 35 degrees during the day with varying amounts of snow falling.

Now, what did we see? Nothing too exciting. In fact, this is the first year that Keith Archibald (our dependable organizer) did not have a rare bird report to file. Still, there are some very interesting

results and a good number of record highs.

Nearly all the ducks were seen at the Sewage Lagoons and at the 20-20 ponds. Usually they're much more spread out through the Valley. There were record highs of Northern Shovelers (1134) and Buffleheads (26).

Ferruginous Hawks were seen in 1959, 2 in 1960, 1 in 1962, and then none were counted until 1992. Since then, seeing 1-3 has not been infrequent, so while 4 is a record high, it's not a big jump in numbers. Rough-leggeds, however, did make quite a jump, with 120 sightings this year, many in

## Record Highs

Northern Shoveler	1134	Northern Flicker	114
Bufflehead	26	Steller's Jay	8
Ferruginous Hawk	4	Song Sparrow	211
Rough-legged Hawk	4	White-crowned Sparrow	203
House Finch	656		

Historically, Shoveler spottings have ranged from 2 (seen in 1985 and 1988) to 1,111 (1999); Buffleheads numbers typically fluctuate quite a bit, most years we see 0-6, and then some others we see many more. One great waterfowl bird was seen in the sewage lagoons in the morning: a Greater Scaup.

It was a record year for Ferruginous Hawks and Rough-legged Hawks. Three Ferruginous Hawks were seen in the Amalga area and another near Mendon. Three

the same areas as the Ferruginous Hawks. Looking at the numbers counted over the last twenty years, the population seems to cycle low to high every few years. We also saw high numbers of American Kestrels, 55 overall; not a record- that was set in 1999 with the sighting of 77. These are all mouse and vole eaters, so the scurrying critter numbers must be up (if we have a mouse count, I'm not volunteering!). However, the number of Northern Harriers was down, with only 22 reported. In the last ten

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years, the count on Harriers has been between 9 and 260. Since they're mouse eaters too, we wonder why this number isn't higher. It was a good year for Merlin sightings (4) and a bad year for Prairie Falcons (3). It was an average owl year, with 5 species out of the possible 7 found. There were no Long Eared Owls or Pygmy Owls spotted. We've seen Pygmy Owls 15 out of every 20 years. We got a high number of Northern Saw-whet Owls (4), three in Logan Canyon, where a lot of effort was put forth to find them.

So while the weather was cold enough to scare away coots and gulls, Yellow-rumped Warbler sightings were high (6), although not record high, and one Green-tailed Towhee was seen. The only other Green-Tailed Towhee seen on the CBC was spotted in 1996.

Three woodpeckers were seen: Hairy (1), Downy (23), and it was a record year for Northern Flickers (114); last year was also a record (106).

A record was also set for Steller's Jays with 8 seen

they eat the same things. Go figure.

Canyon Wrens were also high with four sightings, or rather hearings. A couple of our experienced birders play tapes of the Canyon Wren's call note to get response. While the Canyon Wren is a year-round resident, it doesn't usually sing (although Jim Cane heard it singing in Green Canyon the week after the count) and in many areas of the intermountain west is not counted at all. We're lucky to have such experienced birders in our area.

Raptor data	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	2000	2001
Northern Harrier	23	104	16	30	10	1	13	57	2	76	93	32	9	40	32	47	163	34	102	260	51	34
Red-tailed Hawk	15	32	35	35	27	28	36	48	22	46	53	93	43	72	85	115	204	27	86	228	35	83
Ferruginous Hawk	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	3	1	0	0	1	4
Rough-legged Hawk	24	65	15	28	49	66	18	31	16	30	32	58	63	11	17	16	78	10	14	41	38	83
American Kestrel	24	35	38	55	28	15	35	38	45	39	40	36	30	45	40	48	56	41	54	77	71	120
Merlin	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	1	2	5	3	2	3	1	1	0	1	1	1	2	3	4
Peregrine Falcon	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0
Prairie Falcon	4	3	6	5	3	4	1	5	5	6	3	3	7	4	4	2	11	6	5	12	2	3

A new record was set for sightings of the Wild Turkey, with 21 seen in the Smithfield area. Turkeys are a reintroduced species, and the first sighting was in 1997 by John Barnes, and nobody believed him! But more were seen in the area and he was vindicated. Since then, the numbers continue to climb.

There were only 13 American Coots found this year and no gulls at all. Sightings of these species are very weather dependent. Coots have ranged from 4 to 1200 over the last twenty years. We usually have thousands of gulls at the dump until the first cold snap and then they're gone. We see 1 or 2 on most years, but then 2,120 Ring-billed Gulls in 1995.

(4 at feeders in Logan, 3 in Providence, 1 in North Logan). We had high numbers of Black-capped Chickadees (245) and Mountain Chickadees (40), low numbers of Red-breasted Nuthatches (1), average Brown Creepers (6). We had record highs of Song Sparrows (211); historically, numbers have ranged from 59 to 185 between 1990 and 2000. We also had a record high number of White-crowned Sparrows, a big jump to 203 this year. It was an average year for Dark-eyed Juncos (559), Red-winged Blackbirds were low (214), but the numbers always depend on how many huge flocks we run into. We found low numbers of Pine Siskins (137) and high numbers of American Goldfinches (477), although

Overall, the total number of birds counted this year was 18,415 individuals in 88 species. Once we report the findings of this year's count, you can see all the results of this and earlier years on the National Audubon Website at <http://www.audubon.org/bird/cbc/>

- Georgan Gilliam

	2001	2000	1999	1998	1997	1996	1995
<b>Total birds seen</b>	18,415	15,997	22,897	15,844	14,810	23,610	22,983
<b>Total no. species seen</b>	88	93	93	92	97	91	89



# green calendar

## January

### 5 Winter Birding in Cache Valley

Meet Saturday, 5 January, at 8:30 a.m. in the parking lot behind the Logan Fire Station (50 East 150 North) for a morning spent following-up on unusual sightings during the Christmas Bird Count and then hitting often overlooked areas in the valley for raptors and other winter birds. Ferruginous Hawks seem to be in relative abundance this year, and Harris Sparrows have been sighted. Every year we find something unusual at this time of year. Bring warm clothing and binoculars (\*); carpooling will be available. We'll come back to Logan around noon; but if there are individuals who haven't had enough by then, we can go back out for more. If you plan to stay beyond noon, bring a lunch. For more information call Bryan Dixon, 752-6830, or Dick Hurren (435) 734-2653.

### 10 Bridgerland Audubon Society General Meeting

Penny Trinca and Cindy Hall will be guest speakers at January's BAS general meeting. They will be discussing future possibilities for Cache Valley Agriculture. Cindy Hall has been involved in fostering economic development and agricultural sustainability in the valley through Bear River Association of Governments. She will discuss recent developments and public opinion in the ongoing effort to maintain working landscapes in Cache Valley. Penny will discuss the future of the Cache Valley Gardeners' Market and the development of a commercial shared-use kitchen for processing locally grown foods. The meeting will be held at the Logan City Meeting Room, 255 North Main at 7 p.m.

### 12 Those Smelly Sewage Lagoons again

It may seem strange to keep going back to this place each month during the winter, but it is not available to the general public, and, if there are any unusual winter waterfowl in the valley, it is where they are apt to be hanging out. Meet Saturday, 12 January, at 8:30 a.m. in the parking lot behind the Logan Fire Station (50 East 150 North) or at the Lagoons at the West end of 600 North at 8:45 a.m. for a guided tour. Carpooling will be available for those who meet behind the Fire Station. If you haven't been to the Lagoons before, you will be amazed by the number and diversity of waterfowl. Dress warmly, bring binoculars(\*); and bring a scope if you have one. Kids are welcome. If you don't have a scope you can use those of the leaders. We will be back in Logan by about noon. For more information call Keith Archibald, 752-8258, or Dick Hurren (435) 734-2653.

### 12 Stokes Nature Center Second Saturday Programs: Reading the Winter Skies

Come along on a journey through the stars. Join local astronomer Peter Grieve to explore the universe we live in. Learn about the stars and planets that are visible in our winter skies, and take home your own star chart to help you identify constellations all year long. 5:30 p.m. Program fee is \$5 for adults and \$3 for children, half-price for Nature Center members. Star Gazing - 6:30 p.m. Immediately following the program we will step outside the Nature Center to identify all the constellations and planets we can see. Telescopes will be available. Bring binoculars and dress warmly! Bring a flashlight to help you navigate the trail after the program. Included in program fee. Second Saturday Programs are designed for all ages. For more information, call 435-755-3239 or visit <http://www.logannature.org/>

**Be sure to call about non-Audubon events—we can't be responsible for these descriptions!**

**More community events are available at: <http://www.bridgerlandaudubon.org/greencalendar/index.html>**



## 12 Stokes Nature Center Tales and Trails program: Coyote Places the Stars

We will read this legend about the origin of the stars, and then make a star constellation projector and your very own star pin to take home. The Tales and Trails program is designed for children 4 - 8 years old. For more information, call 435-755-3239 or visit <http://www.logannature.org/>

## 19 Winter Animal Tracks

Meet Saturday, 19 January, at 9:00 a.m. in the parking lot behind the Logan Fire Station (50 East 150 North) for a fascinating trip with tracking expert Kayo Robertson to investigate animal tracks in Cache Valley.

Animals on the ground leave evidence of who they are and what they do, easily seen preserved in Winter's snow and mud. Even birds leave evidence in their footprints and marks left by wing feathers on take-off. This is a great trip for children and adults alike to speculate on winter wildlife happenings (all theories entertained!). Dress warmly; return about 1:00 p.m. For more information call Kayo Robertson, 563-8272, or Dick Hurren (435) 734-2653.

## 26 Stokes Nature Center Tales and Trails program: In the Time of Drums

Learn about the importance of drums in the time of slavery as we read this story told by an African-America child. We will then make our own drums and investigate the ways that animals use sounds to communicate with each other. The Tales and Trails program is designed for children 4 - 8 years old. For more information, call 435-755-3239 or visit <http://www.logannature.org/>

## 26 Winter Birding in Box Elder County

Meet Saturday, 26 January, at 8:00 a.m. in the parking lot behind the Logan Fire Station (50 East 150 North) or at Dick Hurren's place in Brigham City at 8:45 a.m. (call Dick for directions) for a guided tour of some of the winter birding hot spots in Box Elder County. Carpooling will be available. Dick will, of course, try to have some owls spotted in advance (among other things). Itinerary will vary according to weather, open water, etc. Dress warmly and bring a lunch, because this trip will last into early afternoon. We don't want to make promises in advance, but there are almost always some species in Box Elder County in winter that are not in Cache Valley. Dress warmly, bring binoculars(\*), and bring a scope if you have one. For more information call Dick Hurren, (435) 734-2653, or Bryan Dixon, 752-6830.

\* If you don't have access to binoculars, call Dick Hurren and he'll try to make a pair available to you.

Note from Dick: I have asked for and received from a number of your comments on field trips you would like to see Bridgerland Audubon undertake. As well as pointing out to me traditional Bridgerland Audubon trips that you have enjoyed and that you would like to see us continue, your comments have also described wonderful new trips that you would like to see us undertake. Your comments have also pointed out that you would like to see us undertake a few more field trips that parents with children would feel comfortable participating in. Comments also suggest your desire that we undertake a few more extended trips. As the year progresses, we will try to incorporate as many of your suggestions as possible into our plans. Please feel free to make additional suggestions at any time.



# CBC 1995-2001

Common Name	2001	2000	1999	1998	1997	1996	1995
Pied-billed Grebe	5	3	7	9	5	3	1
Eared Grebe	1	0	4	0	0	0	44
Double-crested Cormorant	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Great Blue Heron	12	10	22	9	13	10	37
Black-crowned Night-Heron	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
White-faced Ibis	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Tundra Swan	0	1	0	2	0	0	11
Snow Goose	0	0	0	3	0	0	0
Canada Goose	107	671	695	349	297	425	520
Wood Duck	4	10	11	8	20	40	62
Green-winged Teal	27	16	15	33	25	12	0
Mallard	697	902	976	883	1057	1012	720
Northern Pintail	5	10	16	12	15	16	0
Blue-winged Teal	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Cinnamon Teal	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Northern Shoveler	1134	708	1111	123	394	370	600
Gadwall	713	299	2911	266	806	670	548
American Widgeon	46	101	128	90	244	132	68
Canvasback	0	0	15	0	0	0	3
Redhead	3	37	11	21	40	8	57
Ring-necked Duck	517	568	217	159	438	314	206
Greater Scaup	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Lesser Scaup	13	228	180	13	55	6	61
Common Goldeneye	98	161	55	367	106	158	65
Barrow's Goldeneye	57	96	108	118	55	68	60
Bufflehead	26	4	19	21	22	6	15
Hooded Merganser	0	3	3	2	1	0	7
Common Merganser	1	2	0	43	0	37	60
Ruddy Duck	12	6	5	24	5	1	20
Osprey	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Bald Eagle	7	9	9	18	9	11	4
Northern Harrier	34	51	260	102	34	163	47
Sharp-shinned Hawk	5	9	12	8	6	7	2
Cooper's Hawk	5	1	3	3	2	3	2
Northern Goshawk	0	1	1	0	1	1	1
Red-tailed Hawk	83	35	228	86	27	204	115
Ferruginous Hawk	4	1	0	0	1	3	0
Rough-legged Hawk	120	38	41	14	10	78	16
Golden Eagle	8	3	21	5	13	11	2
American Kestrel	55	71	77	54	41	56	48
Merlin	4	3	2	1	1	1	0
Peregrine Falcon	0	1	0	1	1	0	0
Prairie Falcon	3	2	12	5	6	11	2
Gray Partridge	11	0	17	5	7	0	0
Chukar	18	16	1	0	10	2	2
Ring-necked Pheasant	161	144	271	238	199	212	86
Ruffed Grouse	0	0	0	3	0	2	4
Sharp-tailed Grouse	0	0	2	5	19	0	0
Wild Turkey	21	18	0	0	1	0	0
Virginia Rail	4	4	10	16	10	10	5
American Coot	13	4	22	65	188	101	1231
Sandhill Crane	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Killdeer	9	20	10	13	13	49	1
Common Snipe	21	12	30	66	25	78	6
Wilson's Phalarope	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Ring-billed Gull	0	25	0	1	0	1	2120
California Gull	0	2	0	0	0	0	220
Rock Dove	739	398	588	213	373	528	483
Mourning Dove	1	1	10	3	11	16	1
Barn Owl	3	3	16	7	0	6	0
Western Screech-Owl	2	4	1	6	2	4	10
Great Horned Owl	6	8	10	16	4	10	16
Northern Pygmy-Owl	0	3	1	2	1	0	2

Common Name	2001	2000	1999	1998	1997	1996	1995
Long-eared Owl	0	4	0	8	1	2	0
Short-eared Owl	2	7	9	27	0	17	0
Northern Saw-whet Owl	4	0	0	2	1	2	2
Belted Kingfisher	10	4	10	9	7	12	11
Downy Woodpecker	23	19	17	19	28	13	19
Hairy Woodpecker	1	0	2	1	2	1	5
Northern Flicker	114	106	82	96	83	71	75
Horned Lark	494	220	120	94	24	545	248
Steller's Jay	8	3	2	0	0	0	2
Blue Jay	0	0	0	3	0	0	0
Western Scrub-Jay	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Clark's Nutcracker	2	0	3	0	5	0	0
American Magpie	363	370	445	486	423	384	427
American Crow	136	23	910	125	47	562	386
Common Raven	7	5	11	4	9	20	5
Black-capped Chickadee	245	344	196	239	220	282	242
Mountain Chickadee	40	28	11	11	19	33	25
Bushtit	0	0	0	0	0	5	0
Red-breasted Nuthatch	1	2	2	8	2	8	35
White-breasted Nuthatch	1	0	3	0	0	2	0
Brown Creeper	6	19	3	8	2	8	2
Canyon Wren	4	2	3	0	2	5	9
Winter Wren	1	3	0	6	0	0	0
Marsh Wren	7	6	2	0	1	0	10
American Dipper	6	16	11	11	10	11	14
Golden-crowned Kinglet	11	17	13	16	44	2	43
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	8	11	9	24	7	10	5
Eastern Bluebird	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Townsend's Solitaire	66	94	64	19	43	28	45
Hermit Thrush	0	1	0	2	2	1	0
American Robin	731	1076	286	599	396	219	196
Varied Thrush	0	0	1	0	1	0	0
American Pipit	5	17	4	13	8	25	4
Bohemian Waxwing	4	0	2	873	1	1720	52
Cedar Waxwing	153	180	88	163	133	774	307
Northern Shrike	0	1	6	9	2	8	1
Loggerhead Shrike	0	0	1	0	1	0	1
European Starling	5076	3561	7056	3675	4597	5722	9182
Yellow-rumped Warbler	6	0	7	8	1	0	0
Green-tailed Towhee	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
Spotted Towhee	24	25	11	17	32	19	20
American Tree Sparrow	14	27	12	35	66	71	50
Lark Sparrow	0	0	0	5	0	0	0
Song Sparrow	211	123	67	164	185	105	33
White-throated Sparrow	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
White-crowned Sparrow	203	126	96	70	99	60	19
Harris' Sparrow	0	1	0	0	0	2	1
Dark-eyed Junco	559	975	483	984	725	730	298
Red-winged Blackbird	214	901	1424	1587	371	1360	675
Western Meadowlark	55	150	31	59	90	111	18
Yellow-headed Blackbird	0	3	5	0	0	0	0
Brewer's Blackbird	227	271	325	292	159	175	170
Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch	0	602	0	50	25	2350	250
Pine Grosbeak	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cassin's Finch	31	31	0	9	0	325	22
House Finch	656	312	163	335	375	475	255
Red Crossbill	0	52	0	0	0	0	0
White-winged Crossbill	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
Pine Siskin	137	137	421	219	62	115	41
American Goldfinch	477	292	229	241	201	412	258
Evening Grosbeak	0	2	0	29	0	234	0
House Sparrow	3255	1107	2082	1679	1682	1715	1925





# The Stilt

Newsletter of the Bridgerland Audubon Society

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Logan, Utah

## Bird watching. *noun (archaic).*

A form of harmless staring, conducted in woody areas, by genial eccentrics often named Matilda or Chauncey.

## Birding. *noun (neologism).*

Dynamic, addictive and highly contagious behavior combining hunting skills, aesthetic delight, intellectual analysis and the dreamy withdrawal from normal life, especially during spring migration.

Membership in the Bridgerland Audubon Society includes a subscription to *The Stilt*, as well as *Audubon* magazine. The editor of *The Stilt* invites submissions of any kind, due on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month. Send to stiltnews@hotmail.com.

### National Audubon Society Chapter Membership Application

Yes, I'd like to contribute to Audubon and receive the Bridgerland Audubon newsletter *The Stilt* and the *National AUDUBON* magazine, as a:

- New member of the National Audubon Society and Bridgerland Audubon.
- Renewing member of the National Audubon Society and Bridgerland Audubon.
- Subscription only to the *Stilt*: \$20/year. Do not send *Audubon* magazine.

My check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed (\$20 membership dues)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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Please make all checks payable to National Audubon Society and send with this card to:  
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W-52 Local Chapter Code: 7XCHA

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