

## Creston Christmas Bird Count, December 27, 2024

The binoculars and spotting scopes were out in full force during the 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Creston Christmas Bird Count day on December 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024. It was a beautiful day with a bit of sunshine, no wind, and no precipitation. Thirty birders walked and drove around the designated circle count area, and more people watched from their windows to see what came to their birdfeeders. A warm thanks to everyone who contributed to finding 75 species!

There have been a few owl species found in our valley over the years during the Christmas Bird Counts including the Western Screech Owl, Great Horned Owl, Snowy Owl, Northern Pygmy Owl, Long-eared Owl Short-eared Owls, Northern Saw-whet Owl, and the Barn Owl. But this year's most exciting find was the Great Gray Owl!! It is the first time this species has ever been recorded on a count day. It is a very rare winter visitor to our valley and the interior of BC.

Due to the sensitivity of this species with hopes of reporting breeding success, the location of these owls should not be shared.

With the open waters of Duck Lake and Kootenay Lake, the Kuskanook Circle Count held on January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025 added 15 more species that can be found in our valley - Common Loon, Pacific Loon, Tundra Swan, American Coot, Pied-billed Grebe, Horned Grebe, Red-necked Grebe, Western Grebe, Gadwall, Green-winged Teal, Ring-billed Gull, Herring Gull, Short-eared Owl, Snow Bunting, and Clark's Nutcracker.

Since there are 90 species of winter birds out there to find, it is a great excuse to get outdoors into our beautiful wilderness!

See you all at the Bird Festival in May, and of course when December 27<sup>th</sup> rolls around again!

Written by: Ulrike Sliworsky, Creston Christmas Bird Count Compiler and Coordinator



Photo credits: Bald Eagle (Marc-Andre Beaucher), Great Gray Owl (Lyle Grisedale), Pygmy Owl (Betty Martin), Chestnut-side Chickadee (Tammy Bradford), Pileated Woodpecker (Betty Martin), American Tree Sparrow (Tammy Bradford).

Creston Total	Species
1540	Canada Goose
90	Trumpeter Swan
585	Mallard
8	Northern Pintail
1	Ring-necked Duck
11	American Wigeon
10	Bufflehead
60	Common Golden-eye
1	Barrow's Golden-eye
1	Greater Scaup
6	Hooded Merganser
6	Common Merganser
59	California Quail
21	Ring-necked Pheasant
9	Ruffed Grouse
190	Wild Turkey
3	Great Blue Heron
29	Mourning Dove
888	Eurasian Collared Dove
117	Rock Pigeon
20	Bald Eagle - Adult
1	Bald Eagle - Immature
3	Northern Harrier
2	Sharp-shinned Hawk
3	Cooper's Hawk
39	Red-tailed Hawk
6	Rough-legged Hawk
13	American Kestrel
1	Merlin
8	Great Horned Owl
13	Northern Pygmy Owl
21	Downy Woodpecker
9	Hairy Woodpecker
184	Northern Flicker
18	Pileated Woodpecker
11	Northern Shrike
8	Belted Kingfisher
1147	European Starling
3	American Dipper
50	Steller's Jay



44	Blue Jay
138	Black-billed Magpie
673	American Crow
156	Common Raven
565	Black-capped Chickadee
68	Chestnut-backed Chickadee
5	Mountain Chickadee
7	Brown Creeper
78	Red-breasted Nuthatch
7	Pacific/Winter Wren
1	Marsh Wren
30	Golden-crowned Kinglet
1	Ruby-crowned Kinglet
26	American Robin
13	Townsend's Solitaire
76	Bohemian Waxwing
1	Yellow-headed Blackbird
30	Red-winged Blackbird
14	Spotted Towhee
49	Dark-eyed Junco - Oregon
36	Dark-eyed Junco - Slate
74	Dark-eyed Junco - Unknown
1	American Tree Sparrow
92	Song Sparrow
1	White-throated Sparrow
1	White-crowned Sparrow
1	White-winged Crossbill
163	House Finch
2	Cassin's Finch
2	Common Redpoll
4	Evening Grosbeak
62	Pine Grosbeak
816	Pine Siskin
110	American Goldfinch
83	House Sparrow
2	Western Meadowlark
2	Great Gray Owl
<b>74</b>	<b>Total Species</b>

