

In addition to other seasonal bird counts (spring, fall, & Christmas), the Herndon Chapter of TOS (in Elizabethton) conducts two summer bird counts to provide a set of baseline data on the diversity & numbers of breeding birds in two local counties. This supplements other summertime data collection projects, such as the long-running Breeding Bird Survey (one route in Carter Co.), the Nightjar Survey (3 local routes), etc. The Carter Co. Summer Count was initiated shortly after the conclusion of the Tennessee Breeding Bird Atlas project. Summaries follow.

The 24th Carter County Summer Count was held on 10 June 2017 under favorable weather conditions with twenty observers in six parties. A record high of 123 species were tallied, besting the previous high of 121 species set in 2013. The average over the previous 23 years was 112 species (range 105 - 121).

Highlights:

Ruffed Grouse - 7, including chicks
Yellow-cr. Night-Heron - 1
Bald Eagle - 2
Red-shld. Hawk - 3
Eur. Collared-Dove - 1
Red-headed Woodpecker - 2 (nesting), first time on this count
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker - 2
Alder Flycatcher - 2
Willow Flycatcher - 1
Least Flycatcher - 5
Warbling Vireo - 1
Com. Raven - 7
Red-br. Nuthatch - 12
Brown Creeper - 2
Winter Wren - 4
Golden-cr. Kinglet - 12
Veery - 32
Hermit Thrush - 4
21 species of warblers
Golden-wg. Warbler - 13
Swainson's Warbler - 2
Magnolia Warbler - 3
Blackburnian Warbler - 7
Yellow-rumped Warbler - 1
Vesper Sparrow - 1
Rose-br. Grosbeak - 12
Blue Grosbeak - 2
Red Crossbill - 1
Pine Siskin - 5

The 4th Unicoi County Summer Count was held on 17 June 2017 with twenty-one observers in five parties. Morning weather was favorable, but scattered rain in the afternoon hindered some efforts. A total of 104 species were tallied, down slightly from the three year average of 111 species.

highlights:

Bald Eagle - 1
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker - 6, including a nest with young
Merlin - 1
Com. Raven - 7
Red-br. Nuthatch - 1
Brown Creeper - 3
Golden-cr. Kinglet - 7
Veery - 25
Hermit Thrush - 4
20 species of warblers
Swainson's Warbler - 6
Magnolia Warbler - 3
Blackburnian Warbler - 2
Prairie Warbler - 3
Rose-br. Grosbeak - 4
Blue Grosbeak - 2

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Many thanks to all participants.

Rick Knight, compiler
Johnson City, TN