

The 76th consecutive Elizabethton Spring Bird Count was held on Saturday, 4 May 2019. Fifty-seven observers in 11 parties participated. The weather was mostly favorable, except for a late afternoon band of thunderstorms that passed through rather quickly.

The area covered on this count included Carter County and parts of adjacent Johnson, Sullivan, Unicoi, and Washington counties.

154 species were tallied, slightly above the recent 30-year average of 149 species. The all-time high was 166 species found in 2016.

Highlights:

Gadwall (1) and Bufflehead (3) - late lingerers.

Com. Merganser (4 females at 2 sites on the Watauga River) - part of regional breeding population.

Am. Bittern - 1

both night-herons (5 Blk-cr. & 4 Yell-cr.)

Bald Eagle - 5

Sora - 3 at 3 sites

Forster's Tern - 3

Black-billed Cuckoo - 6 at 5 sites

N. Saw-whet Owl - 2

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker - 4 - part of regional breeding population

Willow Flycatcher - 1

Loggerhead Shrike - 2 - a pair at a new site

Hermit Thrush - 1 - singing on territory at Roan Mtn

warblers - 29 species, including Golden-wg (3), Swainson's (8), Cerulean (1 - very scarce in NE Tenn in recent years), Canada (40 - large breeding population in mtns.).

Dickcissel - 1

Purple Finch - 2 - late lingerers

Pine Siskin - 9 at 2 sites - local breeding population at one of these sites.

Thanks to the observers for continuing this legacy of spring counts in northeast Tenn.

Rick Knight, compiler

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