

# Florence Christmas Bird Count Summary

By Count Compiler, Vjera Thompson

The 37th Florence Christmas Bird Count was held on Saturday, December 18, 2021. After a one-year hiatus due to COVID precautions, 40 birders were eager Field Counters, and another seven Home Counters reported on their feeder birds. The weather was varied, with gusty 20 mph wind and no rain on the outer coast, and calm wind with drizzle inland. With the current COVID precautions, we were not able to meet for a dinner afterwards, but instead met virtually via video.

We recorded 121 species, plus 4 for Count Week, which is a little below our average of 126. Twenty-nine of the species were found by one team only. Count Week birds were Osprey, Red-shouldered Hawk, Common Goldeneye, and Killdeer. Our four sea watching teams, complained of wobbly optics and noticed very little bird movement on the ocean. We did have sightings of Ancient Murrelet, Marbled Murrelet, Black-legged Kittiwake, Long-tailed Duck, Red Phalarope, Bonaparte's Gull, and several dark shearwaters.

We found two first-time species for the Count. One, a Common Yellowthroat, was found at the Waite Pasture restoration property, along with a record 27 Lincoln Sparrows and three Orange-crowned Warblers. The other new sighting was two groups of Wild Turkeys in the Glenada area. The one bittern was also unusual.

Very little owling was done, and the number of owls seen was low, with only one Barred Owl and one Northern Pygmy Owl.

Record high counts included Mallard (854), Snowy Plover (31), Black Phoebe (22), and the previously mentioned Lincoln's and Orange-crowned Warblers. We had high numbers of Pine Siskins, with nine areas reporting a total of 351, very close to our record of 359. Eurasian Collared Doves numbers shrank dramatically—we only got 38 compared to our last count of 121. Species not found included Killdeer (only our second time missed), Ruddy Duck, Purple Finch, and American Goldfinch.

Thanks to team leaders Hendrik Herlyn, Peter Ralph, Dennis Arendt, Alan Contreras, Marcia Maffei, Ellen Cantor, Linda Gilbert, John Sullivan, Pat Blue Heron, Adele Dawson, Rich Hoyer, and Tye Jeske. Thanks also to Ellen Cantor for doing the upfront coordination.