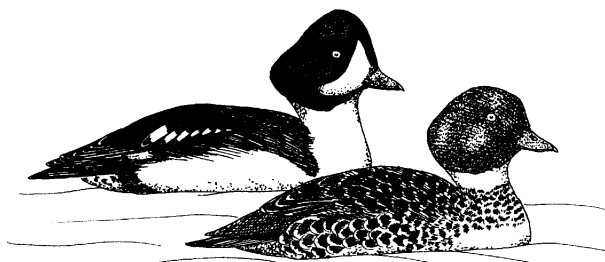


CAPE COD BIRD CLUB

CAPE COD LAKE & POND WATERFOWL SURVEY

1997 SUMMARY



The 15th annual Cape Cod Lake and Pond Waterfowl Survey was conducted on the weekend of December 6-7, 1997. For the third year in a row, the weather preceding the count was colder than normal: November's temperatures were about 3°(F) below average. However, December began relatively mild, and generally ice-free conditions prevailed during the survey weekend

Forty-nine observers censused 380 ponds - 23 ponds more than ever before! Every year participants somehow manage to find more and more ponds tucked away in the nooks and crannies of Cape Cod. Twenty-eight species of waterfowl were found, totaling 11,004 individuals, both very close to the 14-year average.

SPECIES RESULTS:

This year's results were remarkably unremarkable: For the first time in the surveys history, no species were found in record high or low numbers. This is somewhat to be expected: as the database grows, exceptional totals (whether high or low) should become increasingly less frequent. Among the modest highlights were the following:

Pied-billed Grebe: Following last year's precipitous drop, the petite *Podilymbus podiceps* proved positively plentiful this year, achieving its third highest total ever.

Canada Goose: After last year's remarkable and inexplicable record low, the number of honkers rebounded somewhat this year, though the total of 618 was still the 3rd lowest ever, 19% below average.

Green-winged Teal: This species also recovered from a record low last year, reaching its 3rd highest total on the survey.

Mallard: Last year's record low was, alas, just a temporary anomaly, as this year's total of 1,640 was somewhat above average.

Scaup (both species combined): For the fifth consecutive year, scaup were found in rather depressed numbers, this year's total of 1,195 constituting the 3rd lowest in the survey's history.

Hooded Merganser: One of the treats for local birders over the past decade has been the steady increase of this popular diver on the Cape. The 866 found on the survey this year is just one shy of the record high set two years ago.

Red-breasted Merganser: The 500 found this year represents the second highest total in the survey's history for this primarily saltwater duck.

Ruddy Duck: Though less than half of last year's record high, this year's 87 still represents the second highest total of Ruddies over the past 14 years.

American Coot: The number of coot was down over 100 birds from last year, but nonetheless represents the 3rd highest total in the survey's history.

For the second time in 14 years, Buffleheads (1,979 birds) outnumbered all other species, followed by scaup (both species combined; 1,915 birds), Mallard (1,640), and American Black Duck (1,613). These five species combined comprised about 63% of the overall total.

Among the more unusual species found this year were single Red-throated Loons in Barnstable and Brewster, Horned Grebes in Barnstable and Eastham, three Northern Shovelers in Barnstable, a Eurasian Wigeon in Barnstable, and a Common Eider in Orleans.

TOWN RESULTS:

As always, Falmouth out-distanced all other towns by a wide margin, with 3,679 birds or 33% of the Capewide total. The perennial battle for runner-up between Barnstable and Yarmouth was won this year by Yarmouth with 1,355 birds (12%), while Barnstable followed with 1,197 (11%). Far and away the best variety was found in Barnstable with an unprecedented 24 species, followed by Yarmouth with 18 species and Falmouth with 17 species. Wellfleet, with just 32 birds of 7 species, remained mired at the bottom of the pack.

POND RESULTS:

Salt Pond in Falmouth traditionally harbors a large flock of scaup and consequently takes top honors every year for the largest number of birds: This year 1705 individuals of 9 species included 1600 scaup. Second again this year was Swan Pond in Dennis with 365 birds (a sharp drop from last year)

of 9 species. The best variety, 12 species was found on Hinckley's Pond in Harwich, followed by Mill Pond in Yarmouth with 11 species.

PARTICIPATION:

Participation reached a record level this year; thanks to each and everyone of the 49 people who took part. Peter Trimble again took the time to organize the four Upper Cape towns, to the great relief of this compiler, and we were joined once again by a couple off-Cape birders: special thanks to Dennis Oliver and Polly Stevens.

Participants:

Ron Ayotte, Betty Bagshaw, Mary Beers, Elizabeth & John Berg, Carl Bergfors, Caroline Bird, Deedy Breed, Keith Brunell, Frank Caruso, Kathleen Casey, Mary Chestnut, Sally Clifton, Dick Comeau, Ruth Connaughton, Don Dyer, Green Brier Nature Center, Arnold Henson, Seward Highley, Ron Hindman, Art King, Phil Kyle, George Martin, Kathy & Rives McGinley, Blair Nikula, Tom Noonan, Dennis Oliver, Stu Parsons, Alida Pellegrini-Toole, Barbara Perry-clear, Bob Prescott, Diane Reynolds, Alison Robb, John & Pucky Roslansky, Carol & Don Scott, Betsy Stepney, Polly Stevens, Bill Swift, Jim Talin, Aurele Thomas, Charlie & Susan Thompson, Beverly Toole, Peter Trimble, Jean Turnbull, Bob Vander Pyl, and Dennis Wiehe

A town-by-town summary sheet is attached, as is a 14-year summary. Anyone wishing additional copies should send a S. A.S.E. to the compiler: **Blair Nikula, 2 Gilbert Lane, Harwich Port, MA 02646.**

1997 Cape Cod Lake and Pond Waterfowl Survey

Species:	Town:																TOTAL	% OF TOTAL
	BOUR	FALM	SAND	MASH	BARN	YARM	DENN	BREW	HARW	CHAT	ORLE	EAST	WELL	TRUR	PROV			
Red-throated Loon	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	
Common Loon	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	7	0	
Pied-billed Grebe	4	20	6	21	16	9	1	10	21	5	6	6	5	1	1	132	1	
Horned Grebe	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	
Mute Swan	13	39	8	9	11	57	60	0	0	6	6	5	0	0	0	214	2	
Canada Goose	0	197	83	28	143	31	35	1	0	9	84	2	0	5	0	618	6	
Wood Duck	0	1	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	
Green-winged Teal	0	0	7	0	31	0	0	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	4	50	0	
Black Duck	6	212	21	16	45	170	41	40	12	112	459	169	6	62	242	1613	15	
Mallard	28	305	122	118	389	299	34	62	15	28	184	30	0	5	21	1640	15	
Northern Pintail	0	0	0	0	0	29	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	29	0	
Northern Shoveler	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	
Gadwall	0	0	11	0	46	57	23	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	141	1	
Eurasian Wigeon	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	
American Wigeon	3	0	5	0	23	0	0	0	0	18	0	20	0	0	0	69	1	
Canvasback	0	13	0	0	15	95	30	34	32	2	0	0	0	0	0	221	2	
Redhead	0	1	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	
Ring-necked Duck	7	32	10	2	38	25	0	2	30	0	31	0	0	10	0	187	2	
Greater Scaup	0	1633	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1633	15	
Lesser Scaup	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	4	2	11	1	0	0	0	0	24	0	
scaup species	0	54	0	0	6	0	45	44	109	0	0	0	0	0	0	258	2	
Common Eider	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	
Common Goldeneye	0	25	0	71	20	12	1	2	60	0	0	1	4	1	0	197	2	
Bufflehead	15	642	45	264	183	329	141	78	140	46	31	17	7	3	38	1979	18	
Hooded Merganser	18	266	24	41	161	84	4	42	2	61	14	142	3	4	0	866	8	
Common Merganser	0	0	54	20	32	2	1	37	81	0	0	0	5	10	2	244	2	
Red-breasted Merganser	0	221	0	43	17	139	46	10	1	6	8	3	0	6	0	500	5	
Ruddy Duck	0	14	0	1	1	4	0	6	8	0	0	53	0	0	0	87	1	
American Coot	0	3	2	95	9	4	0	4	102	2	37	17	0	0	0	275	2	
TOTAL NUMBER	94	3679	398	730	1197	1355	462	380	620	314	862	466	32	107	308	11004		
% of Total	1	33	4	7	11	12	4	3	6	3	8	4	0	1	3			
Number of Species	8	17	13	14	24	18	13	16	15	13	12	13	7	10	6	28		
Number of Ponds Censused	11	58	19	17	62	26	17	27	26	28	29	11	20	16	13	380		
Birds per Pond	9	63	21	43	19	52	27	14	24	11	30	42	2	7	24	29		
Number of Observers	6	14	5	5	2	4	1	2	6	3	7	2	2	2	1	49		