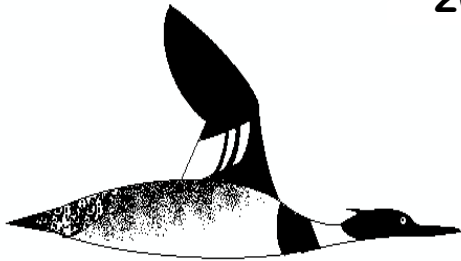


Cape Cod Lake & Pond Waterfowl Survey

2009 SUMMARY



The 27th annual Cape Cod Lake and Pond Waterfowl Survey was conducted by members of the Cape Cod Bird Club on the weekend of December 5-6, 2009. Forty-five observers surveyed 331 ponds (one less than last year), recording 29 species and 8,862 individual ducks. The latter total is 15% below the long-term average, but not surprising given the mild weather preceding the survey. No species were recorded in record high, or record low, numbers, and only a few were found in numbers that deviated much from the norms.

The weather leading up to the survey was very mild. November temperatures averaged almost four degrees (F) above normal in Boston, and that trend continued into the first week of December. The weather on the survey weekend was good on Saturday, but rainy on Sunday, and all ponds were open and ice-free.

SELECTED SPECIES RESULTS

Pied-billed Grebes, although up from last year, were still 38% below the long-term average.

Atlantic Brant are found exclusively in saltwater habitats, so it is not surprising that the species rarely has been recorded on this primarily fresh water survey. Indeed, the species was not recorded at all during the first 19 years of this survey. However, 16 were recorded this year, from two sites—the fourth time in the last seven years this small goose has been tallied. As

would be expected, all records have come from tidal ponds, but reasons for its increasing appearance on this survey—and what, if any, significance can be attached to these recent appearances—remains to be seen.

Mute Swans increased for the fourth straight year, the total of 259 birds being just two shy of the record high in 1991 and 44% above average. Swan totals increased steadily over the first 16 years of this survey, then declined rather sharply for a few years, but more recently have increased again to near record levels.

American Wigeon declined for the third straight year, but were still 67% above average..

American Black Ducks dropped sharply from last year, and were 27% below normal. However, this species winters primarily in saltwater habitats so the totals on this survey may not accurately represent numbers overall.

Green-winged Teal, rarely numerous on this survey, numbered a paltry 11 birds this year, 79% below average.

Canvasbacks continued at an anemic level, with just four birds tallied this year. Over the first 15 years of this survey, this handsome duck averaged 522 birds/year; since then the average has dropped to just 18 birds/year!

Ring-necked Duck numbers often have been highest in cold weather years, but did not fit that trend this year. The total of 417 birds, though less than half of the record count two years ago, was still 47% above the 26-year average.

Common Goldeneye is another cold weather species, and the 92 birds counted this year was the third lowest total in the survey's history.

Common Mergansers also typically appear in numbers only after significant ice-up and, consistent with that trend, were 57% below average this year.

American Coot numbers have varied over the past 26 years to an extent unsurpassed by any other species. Totals have ranged from a meager three birds in both 1992 and 2004 to a record high of 484 birds in 1998. Just 19 birds this year was 85% below average—though “average” with this erratic species defies enumeration!

Bufflehead was again the most common species, with 1900 individuals (21% of the total), closely followed by scaup (1752 birds, both species combined, or 20% of the total), and Mallard (1401 birds; 16% of the total). These four species comprised about 57% of the overall total. The most widespread species once again was Mallard, which was found at 143 ponds (43% of the sites, but down from 188 ponds last year), followed by Bufflehead at 139 sites (42%), and Hooded Merganser at 90 sites (27%).

RESULTS BY TOWN

As always, Falmouth out-distanced all other towns, this year with 3224 birds or 36% of the Capewide total. Barnstable was a distant second with 1054 birds (12%), followed by Yarmouth with 882 birds (10%). Barnstable and Falmouth tied for top honors for best variety with 16 species each, followed by Yarmouth with 15 species and Harwich with 14.



RESULTS BY POND

An average of 27 birds/pond was recorded, down somewhat from the long-term mean. Of the 331 ponds surveyed, 92 (27%) had no birds at all. Sider's Pond in Falmouth again hosted by far the largest number of birds (1126), thanks, as usual, to a large flock of scaup (1100 birds). Coonamesset Pond in Falmouth was a distant second with 280 birds, followed by Little Pond in Falmouth (239 birds) and Pilgrim Lake in Truro (219 birds).

Mill Pond in West Barnstable took top honors for variety with 10 species, followed by Great Pond in Eastham with nine species. Four ponds hosted eight species each: Tom Mathews Pond in Yarmouth, Wequaquet Lake in Barnstable, Green Pond in Falmouth, and Red Brook in Bourne.

PARTICIPATION

At least 45 people took part in this year's survey. Many thanks to each and every one!

Participants:

Ron Ayotte, Joanne Baldauf, Peter Bono, Sally Branch, Jan Bridge, Pam & Peter Brown, Randy Buckner, Frank Caruso, Kathleen Casey, Molly Cornell, Al Curtis, Mark Faherty, Peter Flood, Karen Goggins, Ed Hoopes, Mary Keleher, Art King, Derek MacDonald, Kathy & Rives McGinley, Priscilla Moor, Ken Morton, Ed Nadolny, Katherine & Phil Neal, Blair Nikula, Tom Noonan, Ginie Page, Alida Pellegrini-Toole & John Toole, Kelly Sattman, Beth Schwarzman, Carol & Don Scott, Wil Sprauve, Dick Stacey, Betsy Stepney, Jim Talin, Aurele Thomas, Lou Turner, Ellie Winslow, Charlie & Jane Woodruff, and Wabe Yurek.

Compiler: Blair Nikula, 2 Gilbert Lane, Harwich Port, MA 02646. 508-432-6348.

2009 Cape Cod Lake and Pond Waterfowl Survey

Species	Municipalities															TOTAL	% OF TOTAL	# OF PONDS
	BOURNE	FALMOUTH	SANDWICH	MASHPEE	BARNSTABLE	YARMOUTH	DENNIS	BREWSTER	HARWICH	CHATHAM	ORLEANS	EASTHAM	WELLFLEET	TRURO	PROVINCETOWN			
Red-throated Loon	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Common Loon	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0.1	5
Pied-billed Grebe	0	5	1	2	14	7	2	2	2	2	3	8	0	0	0	46	0.5	25
Canada Goose	9	315	29	16	117	20	3	0	12	0	54	43	0	0	0	618	7	34
Brant	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	11	0	0	0	0	16	0.2	2
Mute Swan	6	109	12	11	16	51	2	1	13	21	15	2	0	0	0	259	2.9	54
Wood Duck	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0.1	1
Gadwall	0	0	0	0	34	88	0	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	132	1.5	10
Eurasian Wigeon	0	1	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	3
American Wigeon	0	38	0	0	78	14	0	0	0	39	16	0	0	0	0	185	2.1	11
Black Duck	22	121	0	30	61	138	129	22	24	19	170	34	0	0	43	938	10.6	74
Mallard	37	296	109	103	178	178	88	23	56	47	125	104	32	25	0	1401	15.8	144
Northern Shoveler	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Northern Pintail	1	0	0	0	1	8	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	13	0.1	7
Green-winged Teal	2	0	0	0	3	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	0.1	3
Canvasback	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	2
Ring-necked Duck	4	78	13	31	135	24	25	27	22	0	2	51	0	5	0	417	4.7	53
Greater Scaup	0	21	0	0	6	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	29	0.3	4
Lesser Scaup	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0.1	2
scaup species	0	1509	0	1	75	0	6	6	112	10	0	3	0	30	0	1752	19.8	14
Common Eider	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Surf Scoter	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1
White-winged Scoter	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	2
Bufflehead	28	452	148	163	207	253	232	11	102	46	106	77	33	37	5	1900	21.4	140
Common Goldeneye	0	8	5	24	0	0	0	23	23	0	0	1	0	8	0	92	1	11
Hooded Merganser	11	192	49	119	111	91	27	7	13	4	42	73	4	2	0	745	8.4	92
Common Merganser	0	0	69	7	16	0	0	0	20	2	0	3	0	0	0	117	1.3	9
Red-breasted Merganser	0	58	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	4	70	0.8	10
Ruddy Duck	0	18	0	0	0	0	0	52	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	71	0.8	3
American Coot	1	1	0	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	19	0.2	4
TOTAL NUMBER	121	3224	438	528	1054	882	523	181	415	192	547	401	69	233	54	8862		239
% of Total	1	36	5	6	12	10	6	2	5	2	6	5	1	3	1			
Number of Species	10	16	10	13	16	15	10	13	14	11	11	13	3	8	5	29		
Number of Ponds Censused	10	55	19	19	43	28	17	22	21	28	27	12	10	7	13	331		
Birds per Pond	12	59	23	28	25	32	31	8	20	7	20	33	7	33	4	27		
Number of Observers	2	12	3	1	3	3	2	2	1	5	4	3	2	3	1	45		

Cape Cod Lake and Pond Waterfowl Survey: 1984 - 2009 Totals

SPECIES:	YEAR:																												1984-2008 average	Change: 2009 vs. average																																																																			
	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009																																																																							
Red-throated Loon	0	2	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	4	0	1	1	3	4	0	0	1	0	0	2	2	1	0	2	1	1																																																																						
Common Loon	3	8	5	4	5	13	7	20	6	10	5	11	7	7	10	0	6	11	8	0	3	4	6	4	9	6																																																																							
Pied-billed Grebe	92	57	63	160	56	42	43	60	63	80	95	179	64	132	204	108	41	57	32	11	26	59	61	42	25	46																																																																							
Horned Grebe	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0																																																																							
Red-necked Grebe	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0																																																																							
White-fronted Goose	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0																																																																							
Snow Goose	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0																																																																							
Canada Goose	1246	1504	1165	973	1291	1676	961	659	476	757	792	1005	276	618	1066	474	837	496	742	615	689	344	671	915	781	618																																																																							
Brant	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	31	0	3	0	0	5	16																																																																							
Mute Swan	64	75	118	177	149	176	137	261	226	247	233	193	147	214	249	255	156	183	178	124	164	120	195	210	232	259																																																																							
Tundra Swan	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0																																																																							
Wood Duck	0	1	2	2	7	20	0	3	1	0	2	3	0	5	18	11	6	6	6	5	1	3	4	50	4	5																																																																							
Gadwall	14	11	18	72	38	95	153	81	56	150	183	261	155	141	167	101	128	123	94	26	55	94	50	98	181	132																																																																							
Eurasian Wigeon	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	5	1	1	4	3	3	1	4	2	6	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	3	4																																																																							
American Wigeon	35	23	38	51	95	159	86	92	63	61	121	176	125	69	164	253	184	102	71	86	84	105	85	243	202	185																																																																							
Am. Black Duck	1497	1044	1006	1325	1160	1461	2004	1047	668	685	2184	1067	1049	1613	2500	1929	1128	1416	911	653	1384	831	1171	1003	1692	938																																																																							
Mallard	1745	1731	1617	1789	1596	1901	1911	1626	1180	1256	1462	1619	1037	1640	1748	2228	2147	2115	1982	1580	1549	1085	847	2085	1953	1401																																																																							
Blue-winged Teal	1	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	0	0	0																																																																							
Northern Shoveler	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	5	2	3	0	0	2	0	0	4	0	3	0	0	2	1																																																																							
Northern Pintail	49	91	67	61	35	25	42	32	27	5	26	35	5	29	19	16	14	19	25	5	21	21	6	8	12	13																																																																							
Green-winged Teal	31	38	32	43	47	15	30	11	14	37	56	55	5	50	75	298	95	186	47	32	18	7	7	28	39	11																																																																							
Canvasback	812	1169	983	981	933	486	727	141	213	238	115	175	506	221	127	57	61	8	39	1	2	0	24	3	1	4																																																																							
Redhead	0	2	37	26	14	17	6	6	2	4	0	1	3	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	0	0	0																																																																							
Ring-necked Duck	201	168	155	175	73	310	109	272	52	295	107	358	247	187	374	362	203	281	565	410	216	195	349	916	518	417																																																																							
Tufted Duck	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0																																																																							
Greater Scaup	30	151	368	2756	250	322	907	473	293	170	1245	438	3	1633	268	1053	743	125	1749	15	811	170	155	85	203	29																																																																							
Lesser Scaup	10	6	94	28	15	2	4	12	25	161	46	24	8	24	90	49	32	40	10	0	15	59	35	37	82	6																																																																							
scaup (species?)	1787	2645	3237	1578	3395	3021	1963	1732	2370	1782	590	1682	2030	258	1859	319	313	1086	303	2533	283	865	1041	1586	1349	1752																																																																							
scaup (total)	1827	2802	3699	4362	3660	3345	2874	2217	2688	2113	1881	2144	2041	1915	2217	1421	1088	1251	2062	2548	1109	1094	1231	1708	1634	1787																																																																							
Common Eider	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	7	0	1																																																																							
Surf Scoter	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	10	0	0	1																																																																							
White-winged Scoter	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	70	112	0	2																																																																							
Black Scoter	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0																																																																							
Long-tailed Duck	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0																																																																							
Bufflehead	939	819	1149	1632	1724	1362	1645	2173	1736	1772	2078	2784	1926	1979	2361	2279	1970	1825	1498	1264	1407	1129	1425	1704	1962	1900																																																																							
Common Goldeneye	145	178	234	241	170	241	267	338	186	322	292	325	258	197	157	221	121	94	314	73	150	95	84	161	148	92																																																																							
Barrow's Goldeneye	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0																																																																							
Hooded Merganser	100	324	112	383	381	310	720	567	469	444	718	867	518	866	933	1037	993	549	1160	546	795	776	676	1200	979	745																																																																							
Common Merganser	85	291	84	102	171	470	143	515	243	88	424	285	244	244	229	246	185	95	912	535	204	258	277	237	159	117																																																																							
Red-breasted Merganser	24	82	62	41	112	191	105	506	86	190	99	287	466	500	262	340	394	126	195	461	141	62	91	144	224	70																																																																							
Ruddy Duck	10	18	14	28	7	2	2	13	3	7	59	47	180	87	258	444	293	67	130	26	55	199	282	177	66	71																																																																							
Common Moorhen	1	1	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0																																																																							
American Coot	175	76	38	64	20	45	15	29	3	8	171	296	380	275	484	340	44	7	10	7	3	270	147	154	135	19																																																																							
TOTAL NUMBER	9097	10521	10702	12695	11747	12364	11996	10878	8486	8777	11111	12186	9652	11004	13637	12423	10102	9020	10981	9044	8078	6782	7774	11212	10968	8862																																																																							
Number of Ponds	213	239	239	263	284	285	327	317	305	341	343	354	357	380	376	375	379	383	354	298	356	367	357	313	332	331																																																																							
Birds/Pond	43	44	45	48	41	43	37	34	28	26	32	34	27	29	36	33	27	24	31	30	23	18	22	36	33	27																																																																							
Number of Species	23	29	25	26	26	25	28	27	28	27	26	29	29	28	29	23	24	25	22	23	23	31	28	27	25	29																																																																							
Number of Observers	25	31	26	32	35	35	39	38	37	38	43	47	39	49	47	60	52	50	54	54	38	54	39	35	45	37	45																																																																						
1984-2008 average	1	7	74	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0																																																																							
Change: 2009 vs. average	--	--	-38%	--	--	--	-27%	--	--	44%	--	--	--	-22%	30%	--	67%	-28%	-15%	--	179	44%	--	6	-22%	102	30%	2	--	111	67%	1297	-28%	1657	-15%	1	--	1	--	1	--	28	-53%	52	-79%	321	-98%	5	--	284	47%	577	-95%	36	-83%	1584	11%	2197	-19%	1	--	1	--	8	--	0	--	0	--	1702	12%	201	-54%	0	--	657	13%	269	-57%	208	-66%	99	-28%	0	--	128	-85%	10441	-15%	326	2%	33	-18%	26	11%	41	10%