

TABLE 1 — Annual Comparisons

Criteria	1999	1998	1997	Highest Total
Number of Species	262	259	268	269 (1996)
Number of Birds	588,646	517,330	569,014	593,680 (1996)
Number of Participating Counties	100	100	102	102 (2 yrs)
Number of Observers	1,479	1,495	1,611	1,611 (1997)
Number of Party Miles Walked	2,287	2,257	2,620	2,628 (1995)
Number of Party Miles Driven	23,305	23,774	23,070	23,774 (1998)
Total Number of Party Miles	25,592	26,035	25,690	26,035 (1998)
Number of Party Hours Walked	3,218	2,969	3,457	3,457 (1997)
Number of Party Hours Driven	1,932	2,140	2,050	2,140 (1998)
Total Number of Party Hours	5,150	5,109	5,565	5,565 (1997)
Species in 90% or more Counties	54	49	49	55 (1996)
Counties with 100 or more Species	74	69	80	80 (1997)
Counties with 20 or more Observers	19	18	24	24 (1998)
Highest Species total in single county	202	180	194	205 (1999)
Average # species/participating county	122	112	—	122 (1999)
Average # species for all 102 counties	120	110	—	120 (1999)

Species-wise, our 262 this year is just “average” — basically, in the middle between the best and poorest years. On the positive side, the 588,646 birds reported were only 5,000 short of the record set three years ago. 1986 & 1997 are still the only years in the count’s 28-year history where you, the observers, achieved the annual goal of counting birds in all 102 counties; we were two counties short of achieving the goal this year. The total number of participating observers and number of miles walked were still low this year; however, the number of miles driven and total party miles were rather close to the records. The number of party hours (walked, driven and total) were also fairly close

to the records. Perhaps the recent change in record-keeping for party hours and party miles for birding while bicycling, boating, sitting, fishing, feeder-watching, etc., has played a role in how the figures are now calculated and reported. The 54 species reported from 90 or more counties was only one short of the record and the 74 counties reporting 100 or more species was only six short of the record. At least two counties surpassed the 100 participant mark (Cook and Du Page) while another 17 counties fielded 20 or more participants (TABLE 2); it’s great to have such excellent support and we hope it continues. It may come to pass that birders in counties

with plenty of participants may feel restricted in their birding territories; should that ever occur, such observers would be welcomed as participants in more distant counties, especially in counties which often field 4 or fewer participants (check Figure 1). Finally, the two new calculations (initiated last year), average number of species per participating county and average number of species for all 102 counties, were: 122 and 120, respectively (exactly 10 species higher than last year).

TABLE 3 provides the usual comparison of birding effort in each quarter of the state (identified as AREAS 1, 2, 3 & 4 in FIGURE 1). The 1999 information shows that there was an average of 51.5 party hours per county this year (which is virtually the same as last year).

TABLE 4 identifies the 54 species reported from 90 or more counties (in other words, the species most commonly reported); only 13 species were reported from all 100 participating counties. It is possible that listed species such as the Red-tailed Hawk, the four listed species of woodpecker, Eastern Kingbird, Purple Martin, White-breasted Nuthatch, House Wren, Eastern Bluebird, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Common Yellowthroat, Field Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Eastern Meadowlark, Brown-headed Cowbird, Baltimore Oriole, House Finch,

TABLE 2

Counties with 20 or more Participants

Cook	127	Winnebago	29
Du Page	111	Edgar	28
McDonough	59	Boone	26
McHenry	55	Pike	24
Lake	49	Jo Daviess	23
Schuyler	47	Knox	23
Will	44	Kendall	22
Kane	43	Iroquois	21
Champaign	38	Stephenson	21
Livingston	30		

TABLE 3

Area Coverage

AREA	Possible # of Counties	# Counties Participating	# Party Hours	Average # Party Hours Per County
1	23	23 (100%)	736	32.00
2	28	27 (96%)	888	32.89
3	27	26 (96%)	1258	48.38
4	24	24 (100%)	2268	94.50
TOTAL	102	100 (98%)	5150	51.50