

Backyard Bird High Count



by Sue Friscia

During the past several years, readers have been sending me some great information about the unusual birds and high counts of birds seen in their backyards. In response, here is IOS' first backyard bird high count. The rules are simple. All birds must have been seen from your house with binoculars or a scope. This also pertains to fly overs. For example, I was riding my bicycle in the cemetery across the street from my house when a flock of Sandhill Cranes flew over. I quickly rode home in time to see the birds from my yard. So I counted them - a record 270 cranes.

But when I was riding my bicycle past the cemetery later and saw

Turkey Vultures fly over, I couldn't make it home in time to count the birds. So Jim Smith gets to keep his record of six. That is, unless anyone out there has a new record.

These records - based on the number of birds seen at one time - are begging to be broken. In fact, after Todd Fink sent me his record of 21 Double-crested Cormorants, 100 of them flew over my house when I was talking to the roofer. So, check out the records and let us know if you've broken them. We'll periodically publish updated lists.

Please send all updates and new data to Sue Friscia, 3417 W. 123rd St., Alsip, IL 60658.

Participating high count back and front yard bird watchers include Cindy Alberico (CA), Crest Hill; Judy DeNeal (JD), Harrisburg; Sheryl De Vore (SD), Mundelein; Todd Fink (TF), Ozark; Sue Friscia (SF), Alsip; Lisa Granbur (LG), Warrenville; Dave and Phyllis Gruver (DPG), Lansing; Kay Hanson (KH), Clarendon Hills; Cary Hillemonds (CH), Calumet City; Calvin and Cassie Maginell (CM), Jonesboro; Ann Minckler (AM), Makanda; James O. Smith (JS), Homer; Muriel Smith (MS), West Chicago; Ellen Strauss (ES), Olympia Fields; and Craig and Barb Thayer (CBT), Orland Park.

Species Total Observer

Double-crested Cormorant.....	100	SF
American Bittern	1	MS
Great Blue Heron	4	JS
Cattle Egret	2	JS
Green-backed Heron	4	JS
Black-crowned Night-heron	1	JS/H
Swan sp.	8	MS

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Feeder station drawing by Denis Kania