

Larry - Pig Island is included in data
for Area 2 - Barbara Steelman covered it,
and may send you a list. Rick West
To: Port St. Joe CBC Participants

2808 Rabbit Hill Road
Tallahassee, FL 32312

January 15, 1992

We also go into the landing behind the
camp ground each year.

Thank you for participating in the 1991 Port St. Joe Christmas Bird
Count. We particularly welcome the Apalachicola contingent. We had a
successful count again this year. 12~~5~~ species were reported, plus ~~5~~4 more
during the count week. This is above average, but well below the record
134 reported in 1989.

Most important is the number of party hours expended. Our 12-year
average is 52, and we had 65 party-hours of effort this year, third
highest. Our party-hours have gradually increased about 50% over the 12
years. In order to most accurately derive trend data from our CBC
efforts we should maintain a constant effort, but at a level suitable to
sample all the habitats. I recommend about 70 party-hours, or about 7
parties in the field for a 10-hour day, which is close to what we have
done for the past 5 years.

This year our results, viewed over the 12-year period, have been
astonishing normal. I will try to pick out some highlights.

Species which seem to be significantly increasing during the 12-year
period include Snowy Egret, Reddish Egret, Bald Eagle, Black-bellied
Plover, Semipalmated Plover, Willet, S-b Dowitcher, Laughing Gull,
Ground-Dove (in contrast to BBS results), owls (possibly related to
weather, effort, and tape recorders), Red-bellied Woodpecker, American
Crow (related to Fish Crow decrease?), Chickadee, Marsh Wren,
Gnatcatcher, Catbird, Yellowthroat, and Chipping Sparrow.

Species which seem to be significantly decreasing during the 12-year
period include Am Black Duck, Redhead, scaup, Herring Gull (declining in
Delaware, too), Royal Tern, and Fish Crow (big decrease, but may just be
a change in local roosting habits).

Species which were unusually high in 1991 include Horned Grebe (92),
Gannet (58), Tricolored Heron (22), Canada Goose (100), Red-breasted
Merganser (638), American Kestrel (25), Ruddy Turnstone (85), Dunlin
(1091), Forster's Tern (233), Pine Warbler (82), and Field Sparrow (37).

Species missed or with low numbers in 1991 include Am Oystercatcher (2),
Lesser Yellowlegs (1), Snipe (0), Caspian Tern (cw), Pileated Woodpecker
(0), and eruptive winter passerines (no R-b Nuthatch, Br Creeper, Winter
Wren, G-c Kinglet, Waxwing, House Finch, or Siskin).

Overall, the trend is upward, even discounting the increased effort in
more recent years. Adverse factors for birds in the 1970s relative to
the 1980s include hard pesticides (such as DDT), two severe late winter
freezes in 1977 and 1978, and probably more air and water pollution in the bay
from the paper mill then. Adverse factors in the 1980s include the severe
drought in the plains and loss of pothole habitat.

NEXT YEAR'S PORT ST. JOE CBC IS WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 30, 1992. I hope to
see you then.

WIK
etc

RECEIVED

JAN 15 1992

Rick West

ST. JOE NATIONAL
WILDLIFE REFUGE

BIRD COUNT, December 30, 1991

~~124~~
125