

The 2025 Val-des-Monts Christmas Bird Count took place right at the end of the count season, on Sunday January 5th. Our team explored the circle throughout the day - braving some quite biting temperatures in the wind. Numbers of individual species were lower this year. Whether this is due to weather conditions, food availability or other factors is hard to know. Of the winter irruption species, Evening Grosbeaks, both species of crossbill, and Pine Siskins were all seen. No redpolls or Pine Grosbeaks were found this year.

Whilst we still had some open running water, most of the still sections were iced up and there were noticeably fewer ducks than in recent years - which means the addition of a flyover Great Blue Heron was all the more surprising!

Other new species were:

- a Red-Bellied woodpecker which has been visiting the feeders of one of our volunteers since October.
- a Great-Horned owl found on a pre-dawn owling excursion.
- a Merlin, again at a volunteer's feeders, arriving on the 6th and making it onto the count week list.

Many thanks to everyone who came out to count this year, and also to our feeder watchers who added some new species to our tally too.

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