

Dewitt Bird Field Guide



by

Kathleen age: 11 & Skylar age: 11

Citizen Scientist Journey

Girl Scout Cadettes

Girl Scout Troop 60500

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Observation Locations

Backyard- Habitat contains trees, bushes, flowers, grass, water feature, bird feeders.



Butternut Creek- Habitat contains many trees, bushes, running creek, stationary canal, grass.



Birding Observations

Number of observations: 8

Environments: 4 backyard observations

4 Butternut Creek observations

Time: 2 months (May-June)

Observers: 6 people

Species observed: 33

Checklist used: Cornell University's Birding Checklist

Waterfowl

- Graylag Goose (Domestic type)
- Domestic goose sp. (Domestic type)
- Canada Goose
- goose sp.
- Mute Swan
- Trumpeter Swan
- Trumpeter/Tundra Swan
- Muscovy Duck (Domestic type)
- Wood Duck
- Mallard
- Mallard (Domestic type)
- dabbling duck sp.
- Hooded Merganser
- Common Merganser
- duck sp.

Grouse, Quail, and Allies

- Ring-necked Pheasant
- Ruffed Grouse
- Wild Turkey

Grebes

- Pied-billed Grebe

Pigeons and Doves

- Rock Pigeon (Feral Pigeon)
- Mourning Dove

Cuckoos

- Yellow-billed Cuckoo
- Black-billed Cuckoo
- Yellow-billed/Black-billed Cuckoo

Swifts

- Chimney Swift

Hummingbirds

- Ruby-throated Hummingbird

Rails, Gallinules, and Allies

- Virginia Rail

Sora

- Common Gallinule

Shorebirds

- Killdeer
- Least Sandpiper
- peep sp.
- American Woodcock
- Wilson's Snipe
- Spotted Sandpiper
- Greater Yellowlegs
- Greater/Lesser Yellowlegs
- shorebird sp.

Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers

- Ring-billed Gull
- Herring Gull
- Great Black-backed Gull
- ~~Larus~~ sp.
- gull sp.
- Caspian Tern
- Common Tern
- Common/Forster's Tern
- Sterna sp.
- tern sp.

Cormorants and ~~Anhingas~~

- Double-crested Cormorant

Herons, Ibis, and Allies

- American Bittern
- Great Blue Heron
- Green Heron

Vultures, Hawks, and Allies

- Turkey Vulture
- Osprey
- Northern Harrier
- Sharp-shinned Hawk
- Cooper's Hawk
- Sharp-shinned/Cooper's Hawk
- Accipiter sp.
- Bald Eagle
- Red-shouldered Hawk
- Broad-winged Hawk

Some Bird Types from Cornell University's Birding Checklist

Hérons, Ibis, and Allies

Green Heron: feeds mostly on fish but is an opportunistic hunter.



Vultures, Hawks, and Allies

Turkey Vulture: is a scavenger.



Red Tailed Hawk: A baby Red Tailed Hawk is called an eyas.



Tyrant Flycatcher

Pewees: eats flies, butterflies, bees, wasps, grasshoppers, and crickets.



King Bird: is sometimes called the "living gem".



Some Bird Types from Cornell University's Birding Checklist

Waterfowl

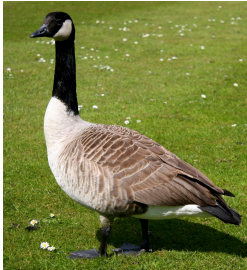
Mallard Duck: can fly almost vertical if needed.



Common Merganser: eats fish and sometimes mussels, shrimp, and salamanders.



Canada Goose: lives to be 10-24 years of age in the wild.



Kingfishers

Belted Kingfisher: eats fish.



Great Crested Kingfisher: is a large bird because it is 41-43 Cm. long.



Pigeons and Doves

Mourning Dove: eats 20% of its body weight each day.



Some Bird Types from Cornell University's Birding Checklist

Jays, Magpies, Crows, and Ravens

Blue Jay: lives to be 16-17 and a half years old.



American Crow: can be 16-21 in. in size as an adult.



Tits, Chickadees, and Titmouse

Black-Capped Chickadee: can remember where it hid food for a month!



Tufted Titmouse: lives to be 2-13 years of age!



Some Bird Types from Cornell University's Birding Checklist

Woodpeckers

Downy Woodpecker: lives to be 1 to 2 years of age.



Red-bellied Woodpecker: lives to be 4 to 12 years of age.



Hairy Woodpecker: likes to eat the larvae of wood-boring beetles, caterpillars, and ants.



Pileated Woodpecker: is 16-19 in. length and is as big as a crow.



Some Bird Types from Cornell University's Birding Checklist

Martins and Swallows

Barn Swallow: has pointed wings and a wingspan of 12.6 to 13.6 inches.



Nuthatches

White-breasted Nuthatch: gets its name from the way it opens seeds.



Starlings and Mynas

European Starling: was introduced to North America in the 1890's.



Thrushes

American Robin: is very popular in North America.



Some Bird Types from Cornell University's Birding Checklist

Old World Sparrows

House Sparrow: is so common in our lives that you will probably see them around all of the time.



New World Sparrows

Eastern Towhee: is 8 inches long with a wingspan of 10 inches.



Dark-eyed Junco: is an omnivore (it eats meat and plants).



Chipping Sparrow: is found across North America where trees are interspersed with grassy openings.



Finches, Euphonias, and Allies

American Goldfinch: is about 4-5 inches long.



House Finch: is known as the *Carpodacus Mexicanus*.



Some Bird Types from Cornell University's Birding Checklist

Blackbirds

Red-Winged Blackbird: the male Red-Winged Blackbird can hide the brilliant red shoulders or show them off in a dazzling display.



Baltimore Oriole: is Maryland's official state bird.

Common Grackle: is a bird that looks like it has been slightly stretched.



Cardinals, Grosbeaks, and Allies

Northern Cardinal: male Cardinals are red with a black face.



Rose-breasted Grosbeak: eats insects and various types of nuts and fruits.



Wood-Warbler

Yellow Warbler: has black eyes, a thin, pointed bill, and a slender body with a long tail.



Shorebirds

Least Sandpiper: is the smallest seabird in the world.



Additional Bird Types

There was also one type of bird observed in the backyard that was not on Cornell University's Birding Checklist!!

Townsend's Solitaire: is usually found in Western mountain forests, so it is very unusual to see it here.



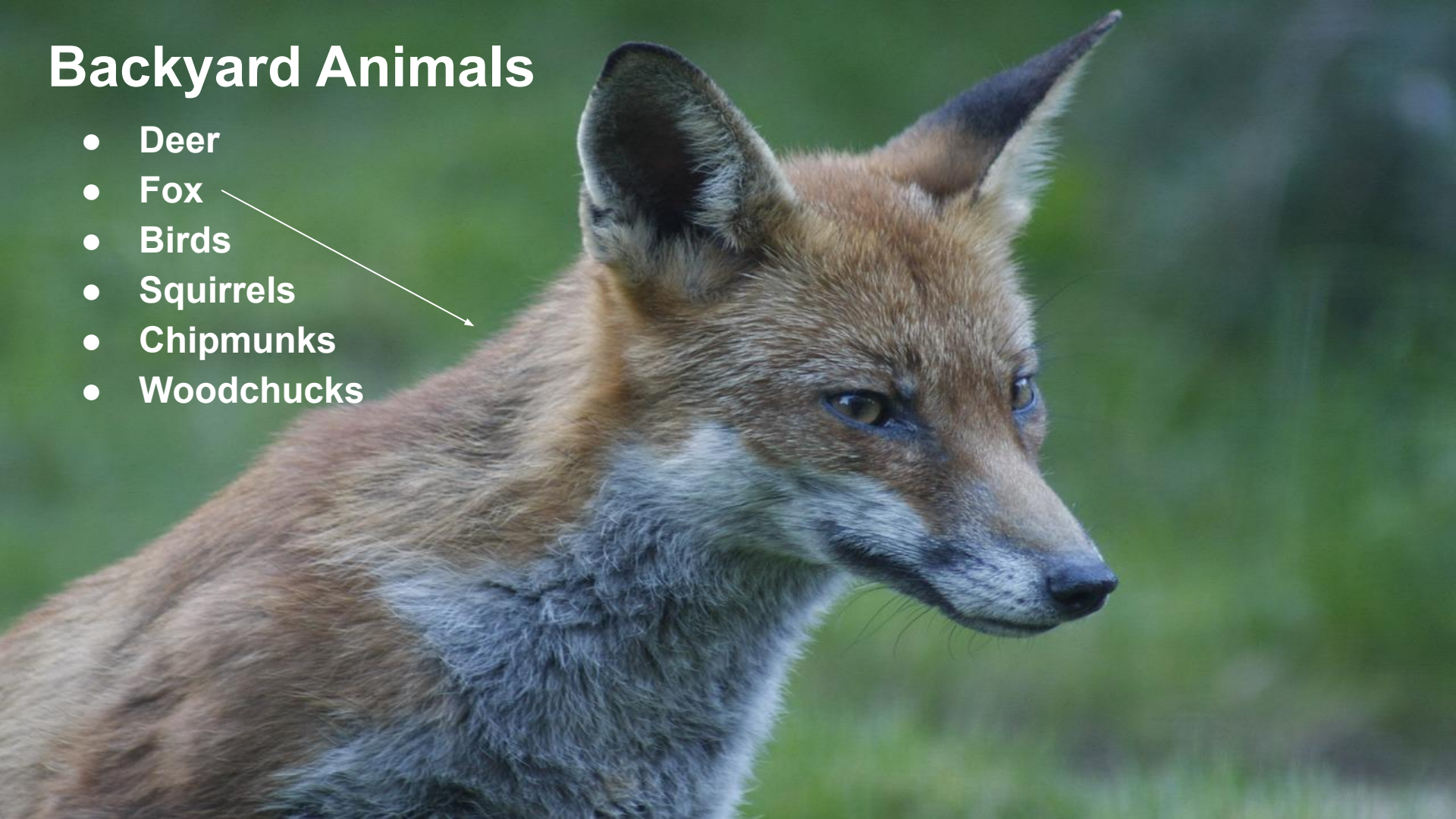


The Backyard Environment



Backyard Animals

- Deer
- Fox
- Birds
- Squirrels
- Chipmunks
- Woodchucks



Backyard temperature and features

The backyard is hottest in the afternoon. The backyard is also sometimes pretty humid. We have bird feeders / chipmunk feeder.

A blue jay is perched on a green metal bird feeder. The feeder has a clear plastic hopper filled with mixed birdseed, including yellow corn and brown seeds. The bird is facing left, looking towards the feeder. The background is a soft-focus green, suggesting foliage.

Blue Jay
on Bird
Feeder

Backyard Plants

- Deciduous Evergreens
 - Barberry Bushes
 - Luna Hibiscus
 - Evergreens
 - Peonies
 - Lilies
 - Lilac
 - Mint
 - Hosta
 - Bacopa
 - Tiger lilies
 - Blueberries
 - Raspberries
 - Lemon Balm
 - Strawberries



Hydrangea

Garden Plants

- Peas
- Tomatoes
- Onion
- Rosemary
- Radishes
- Cabbage
- Rhubarb



Tomato

Average Number of Types of Birds in the Backyard

We calculated the average by adding up the total number of birds we saw during all of our visits and then divided by how many times we observed in the backyard (4). Below they are in order from most to least frequent. This information can help to predict what a birdwatcher is most likely to see.

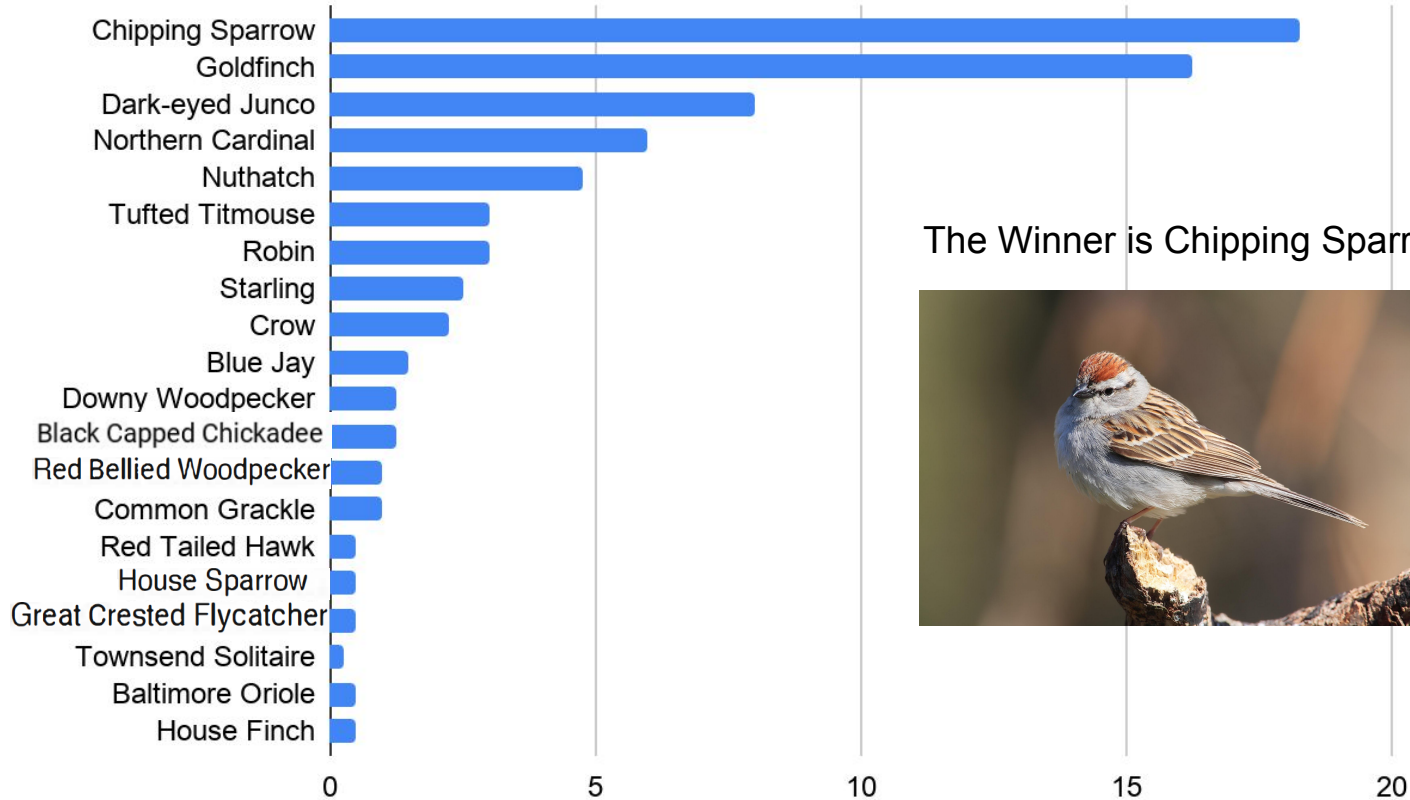
Most common

- 18.25 Chipping Sparrows
- 16.25 American Goldfinches
- 8 Dark Eyed Juncos
- 6 Northern Cardinals
- 4.75 Nuthatches
- 3 Tufted Titmouses
- 3 American Robins
- 2.5 European Starlings
- 2.25 Crows
- 1.5 Blue Jays

Least common

- 1.25 Downy Woodpeckers
- 1.25 Black Capped Chickadees
- 1 Red Bellied Woodpecker
- 1 Common Grackle
- 0-1 (.5) Red Tailed Hawk
- 0-1 (.5) House Sparrow
- 0-1 (.5) Grosbeak
- 0-1 (.5) Great Crested Flycatcher
- 0-1 (.5) House Finch
- 0-1 (.5) Baltimore Oriole
- 0-1 (.25) Townsend's Solitaire

Average Number of Types of Birds in the Backyard



The Winner is Chipping Sparrow!



The Butternut Creek Environment



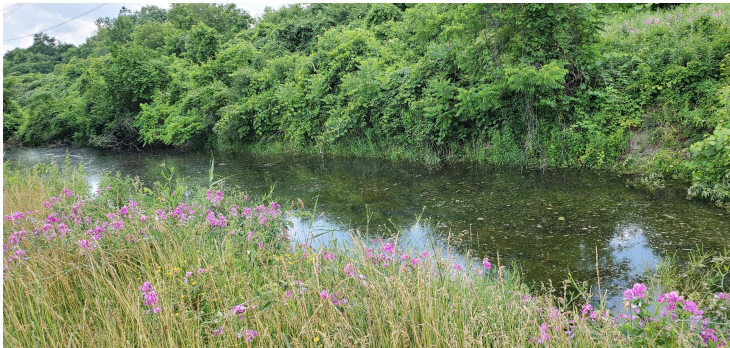
Butternut Creek: Right behind the Jamesville-Dewitt library!



Fast running creek with trees and tall grasses.



Slow running creek with grass and bushes.



Stationary canal with trees and wildflowers.

Average Number of Types of Birds at Butternut Creek

We calculated the average by adding up the total number of birds we saw during all of our visits and then divided by how many times we observed in Butternut Creek (4). Below they are in order from most to least frequent.

This information can help to predict what bird watchers are most likely to see.

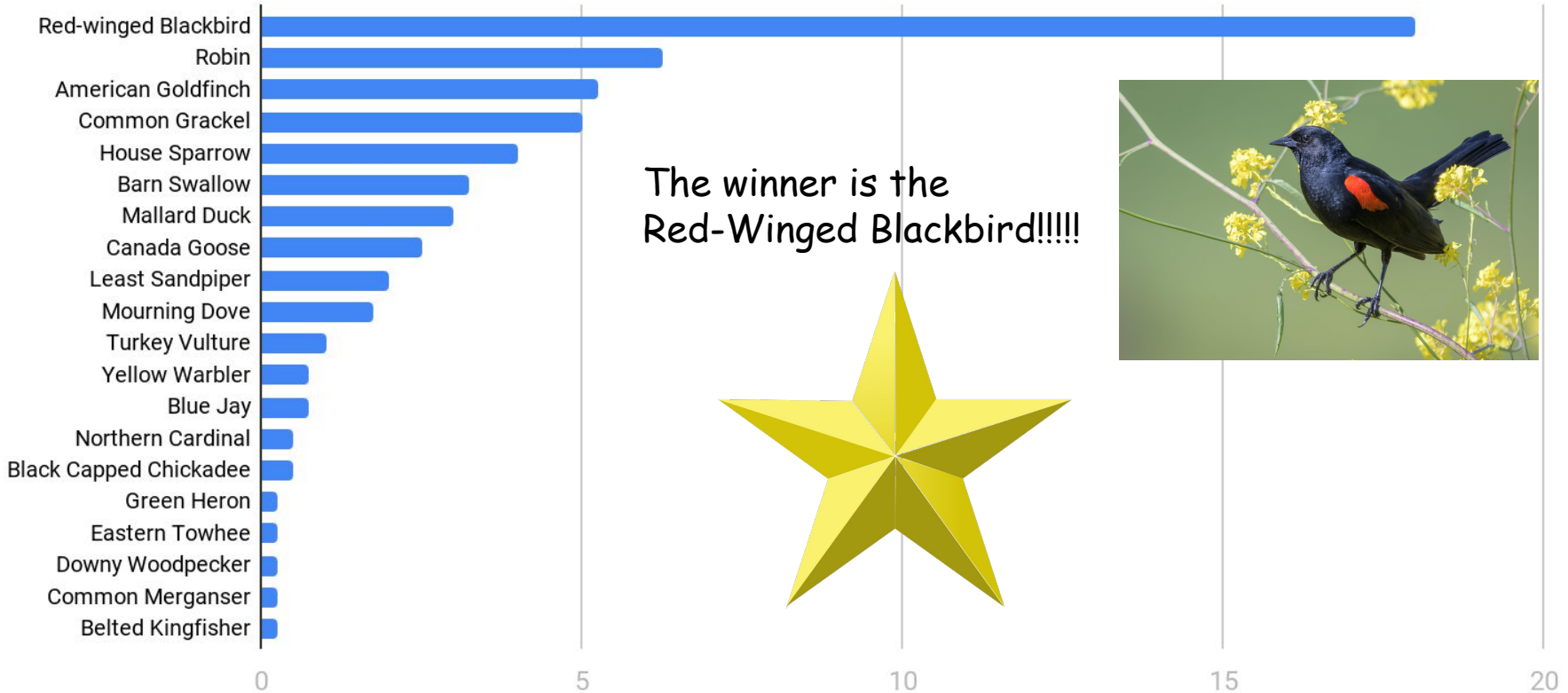
Most common

- 18 Red-Winged Blackbirds
- 6.25 Robins
- 5.25 American Goldfinches
- 5 Common Grackles
- 4 House Sparrows
- 3.25 Barn Swallows
- 3 Mallard Ducks
- 2.5 Canada Geese
- 2 Least Sandpipers
- 1.75 Mourning Doves
- 1 Turkey Vulture

Least common

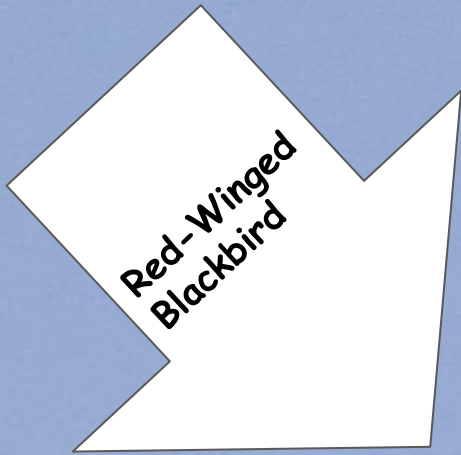
- 0-1 (0.75) Yellow Warbler
- 0-1 (0.75) Blue Jay
- 0-1 (0.5) Northern Cardinal
- 0-1 (0.5) Black-Capped Chickadee
- 0-1 (0.25) Green Heron
- 0-1 (0.25) Eastern Towhee
- 0-1 (0.25) Downy Woodpecker
- 0-1 (0.25) Common Merganser
- 0-1 (0.25) Belted Kingfisher

Average Number of Types of Birds at Butternut Creek



The winner is the
Red-Winged Blackbird!!!!





Conclusion

Anyone can watch birds in their own backyard and on public land. For our guide, we sampled a backyard environment and the Butternut Creek environment. We learned that there were more birds around than we expected. Finding more birds than we expected is probably true in most environments. Not all the birds are the same because there are different environments that attract different birds. Maybe your environment will attract other birds.

We hope you like our field guide!!!

Resources

GS Troop 10848 Bird Project



Cornell University Ornithology



Google

