

Bird Count by Eric Davis, December 2021

Bear Butte Creek Historic Preserve

Highway 79 to Sturgis Soccer Fields

Sunday, December 19, 2021

Weather: Partly cloudy, low-wind, mid-40's.

Miles walked: 6.2

Time birded: 3.5 hours



One birder ([Eric Davis](#)) walked Bear Butte Creek [from Highway 79 to Sturgis Soccer Fields](#) as part of the **2021 Sturgis Christmas Bird Count**.

Notes: Have never walked this stretch but was surprised to find so few passerines generally. 200 mallards on the creek near the sewage lagoons, and 400 more on the lagoons. Spent a long time scanning the masses but did not see anything other than mallards and Canada geese. Saw one snow-white jackrabbit standing out starkly. Lots of dead deer in varying states of decay. I am guessing most are highway fatalities, although one had an arrow sticking out of its head.

Highlight: two Wilson's Snipe.

Conspicuously absent: red-breasted nuthatch, junco.

Lowlights: dead racoon who died a long and tortuous death in a leg trap.

The following species and quantities were observed:

Canada Goose (~120 flying over and 14 on lagoons)	134
Mallard	~600
Green-winged Teal (for sure)	1
Sharp-shinned Hawk (juv, might be a Cooper's but I don't think so; video taken: https://imgur.com/a/DfbRSkR)	1
Sharp-tailed Grouse	20
Wild Turkey (2 flocks. may have been a dozen more, as part of flock was not visible to me)	26
Wilson's Snipe (pair together)	2
Belted Kingfisher (maybe 2, but not certain)	1
Downy Woodpecker (but might have been a Hairy)	1
Northern Flicker	1
Blue Jay	8
American Crow	3
Black-capped Chickadee	1
White-breasted Nuthatch	1
House Finch	6
American Goldfinch	26
duck species (small, maybe a gadwall or wood duck, bigger than a teal, could not glass)	1
eagle species (juv, could not ID. Spooked 400 mallards off the lagoons. Pretty cool.)	1

Eric Davis

