

Kodiak Birders a Hardy Breed

Friday, 26 December 2008

{audio}/images/stories/mp3/081226.xmas_bird_count.mp3{/audio}

Jay Barrett/KMXT

2008birdcount 396.13 Kb

Birds in

Kodiak are a hardy breed, but so are those who go looking for them. Last Saturday, during a pretty stormy day, 77 folks participated in the 36th consecutive Kodiak Christmas Bird Count, sponsored by the Audubon Society.

For years,

Kodiak has been the hot spot in the state for the bird count, averaging 78 species over the past 10 years. This year, despite the weather, 74 species and nearly 14,000 individual birds were counted. But according to Rich MacIntosh, the folks in Ketchikan put in an impressive effort this year and edged out Kodiak. Click on the PDF above for a list of all the birds spotted this year.

Birders

will get a second shot at counting next weekend. The Narrow Cape - Kalsin Bay Christmas Bird Count will be on January 3rd. MacIntosh says anyone is welcome to join in whether they're experienced or not, as each group will have a skilled birder leading them. He's looking for folks who are as hardy as the birds and will show up no matter the weather.

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-- (Birds 2 42 sec "For a number of years ... give us a run for our money.")

Six species

had all-time high counts this year, and one, the Wilson's Warbler was spotted for the first time ever. It was one of three warblers that showed up in the count:

-- (Birds 3 46 sec "One

thing that was ... Alaskan Christmas Bird Count.")

MacIntosh

said Women's Bay is a good spot for the casual birder to see one of the more spectacular birds that winter on the island:

-- (Birds 4 25 sec "The Emperor Geese at ... and he wasn't disappointed.")

Six-hundred-16

Emperors were counted on Saturday. The Kodiak birders benefit from being able to count from a pair of boats as well as from land. One boat was the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge's Ursa Major 2, skippered by Jeff Lewis and the other was the Celeste, with Andy Schroeder manning the tiller.

Another rare

and beautiful bird that can be found for a short time this time of year is the Bohemian Waxwing:

-- (Birds 5 34 sec "The Bohemian Waxwing are ... go back to the mainland.")