

**Gustavus/Glacier Bay Winter Bird Sightings**  
**December 2012 - February 2013**  
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Birds listed as rare in winter on the 2010 Birds of Southeast Alaska checklist (Steve Heintz) are included here even if they are not considered rare in winter for Gustavus/Glacier Bay.

**Tundra Swan**

One juvenile on 22 December on the Salmon River in town. -JFS  
Unlike Trumpeter Swans, which regularly winter here, Tundra Swans are very rare in winter.

**Gadwall**

As usual, small numbers were present on rivers through the winter. The high count was twelve on December 16 at the mouth of the Bartlett River in Bartlett Cove. -NKD

**Canvasback**

One from 12-15 December at Bartlett Cove. -NKD, TDV

**Lesser Scaup**

One from 11-15 December on rivers west of town. -NKD

**Red-throated Loon**

Red-throated Loon is a regular, uncommon winter resident. Nine on both 12 December and 9 January at Bartlett Cove, where they are often seen in winter, were good numbers. -NKD

**Western Grebe**

One to two were near the Gustavus dock and west of there from 15 December to 11 February with three on 2 January. -PBSV, NKD, GPS

Western Grebe is still considered very rare in Gustavus/Glacier Bay, but sightings have increased in recent winters.

**Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel**

One on 15 December near the mouth of Glacier Bay. -GPS

One on 15 February found at a home in west Gustavus. The family kept the bird comfortable in their home over night and released it on the beach the next morning where it flew off over the water. -DB, JeJ

**Great Blue Heron**

The larger than unusual concentration of herons observed this fall at the Bartlett Cove fuel dock continued through the winter with thirteen there on 9 January. -NKD

**Sharp-shinned Hawk**

Two on 7 January in the state Crane Flats west of town. -NKD

One on 19 January on the beach west of town. -NKD

**Merlin**

One on 14 December in town. -NKD

**Peregrine Falcon**

Two in mid February on Lemesurier Island were the only Peregrine Falcons reported. -HL

**Black Oystercatcher**

Thirteen on 15 December along the Beardslee Islands in lower Glacier Bay. -GPS

**Sanderling**

Sanderling is a fairly common winter bird along Gustavus beaches and is often seen with wintering Dunlin and Rock Sandpipers.

A minimum of 100 Sanderlings were west of town on 9 January and a minimum of 150 were east of town on March 1. -NKD

**Wilson's Snipe**

Two on 15 December near the Salmon River. -JFS, WH

Two on 14 January along the Bartlett River in Bartlett Cove. -NKD

One on 16 January west of town. -NKD

**Black-legged Kittiwake**

Hundreds on 15 December were off Lemesurier Island in Icy Strait. -HL

One on 15 December closer to Gustavus made the Christmas Bird Count. -GPS

Several on 11 and 16 February on the beach west of town. -NKD

More than 100 on 16 February flying over the water at Bartlett Cove with Mew Gulls in high winds. -NKD

While Black-legged Kittiwakes are considered rare in winter in Gustavus/Glacier Bay, they are seen regularly in winter, sometimes in large numbers, in Icy Strait near Lemesurier Island and in Cross Sound. (HL and others) It seems likely that these kittiwakes come into lower Glacier Bay in winter where strong tides and shallow waters create feeding opportunities and that the birds are either not reported or not observed.

**Glaucous Gull**

One immature gull on 16 February near the Salmon River. -NKD

**Eurasian Collared-Dove**

Two on about 5 December at a feeder in town. -SM

**Great Horned Owl**

One on 18 December at Bartlett Cove. -AB

**Snowy Owl**

One on 16 December in west Gustavus. -NB

One on 21 December on the beach west of town. -JimJ

**Northern Pygmy-Owl**

One seen regularly through December until 6 January in town. -NKD

One heard on a few dates during February in west Gustavus. -PB, HL

**Short-eared Owl**

One on 6 and 11 December and on 12 January in town. -NKD

One in late January in the state Crane Flats west of town. -PB

**Northern Saw-whet Owl**

One on 24 February in west Gustavus. -NB

One on 25 February in central Gustavus. -NKD

**Downy Woodpecker**

None were reported during the period, although one was east of town on 1 March. -NKD

**American Three-toed Woodpecker**

One on 12 December and 9 January at Bartlett Cove. -NKD

**Northern Shrike**

One to two were seen almost daily in town through 18 December. None were reported after that. Northern Shrike is a regular, uncommon winter resident along beaches and in open areas, so the apparent absence of shrikes through much of the winter was odd.

**Horned Lark**

Three on 6 December on the beach west of town. -NKD

**Red-breasted Nuthatch**

A few were scattered around town through the winter with at least two coming to my feeder in town through the period. -NKD

Six were counted on 15 December during the Christmas Bird Count.

**American Robin**

One on 15 December in east Gustavus. -CS, BS

**Lapland Longspur**

One on 6 December on the beach west of town. -NKD

Three on 15 December on the beach east of town. -EHJ, LMT

**American Tree Sparrow**

American Tree Sparrows can often be found during winter in the beach grasses near the town dock. Eighty there on 12 January was a new high count. -NKD

**Fox Sparrow**

At least two at feeders in town through 16 December. -SAL, LMR

One was found dead from a window strike on 17 December, and one continued to be seen until mid January. -SAL

**White-Crowned Sparrow**

One to two from 1 to 9 December in town. -NKD

**Red Crossbill**

Small numbers were around during the first half of December with thirty on 13 December east of town. -NKD, JFS

**White-winged Crossbill**

White-winged Crossbills were common and widespread during December and into mid January. Numbers then declined, but they continued to be seen and heard regularly through the end of the period. -NKD and others

674 were counted on 15 December during the Christmas Bird Count.

**Common Redpoll**

Small flocks were fairly common through the period. -NKD

**Pine Siskin**

Few were around this winter with only scattered observations of small numbers. -NKD

Fifty-one were counted on 15 December during the Christmas Bird Count.



A Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel being released on the Gustavus beach after spending the night in town with Dena Bruchu and Jeff Jarvis (their photo).