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Subject: Hooded Mergansers and Other Thoughts  
Posted by [davidf](#) on Sat, 20 Dec 1997 08:00:00 GMT  
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Hi Folks,

I haven't been feeling particularly thoughtful or festive this holiday season. But this morning I got up early for the annual Christmas Bird Count. It was one of those crisp, quiet, start-of-winter mornings that always reminds me why I live in Colorado.

It was a quiet bird day. The usual well-tailored, but otherwise boring Magpies. So many Starlings that I am convinced they are conspiring to take over the Earth.

The day was saved by a quiet walk along the creek and a brace of Hooded Mergansers, a rare bird in these parts, diving in a small pond. As I watched them, I could feel myself quiet and look inward. The rest of the day has felt different to me. Transformed, if you like, by unexpected birds.

And I got to thinking, as I came home and read my e-mail, how much I appreciate the people on this newsgroup. I subscribe to several newsgroups, but none is as important to me as this one. None is filled with so many people willing to be civil and helpful to one another. For someone like me, who spends many hours working alone, it feels like a community of friends.

So I wanted to tell you how much I appreciate it and how much I learn from all of you. (And sometimes not just about IDL.) I appreciate your courage to hit that SEND button and make a commitment. I appreciate your willingness to share your knowledge and expertise. I appreciate your sensitivity in answering questions. I especially appreciate those of you who are willing to make yourself vulnerable and \*ask\* the questions. Thanks for participating and for being the kind of community you are.

May this Holiday Season be quiet and peaceful to all of you. May you find the time to walk along a creek and discover a pair of unexpected birds. :-)

Best Regards,

David

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