

2017 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17

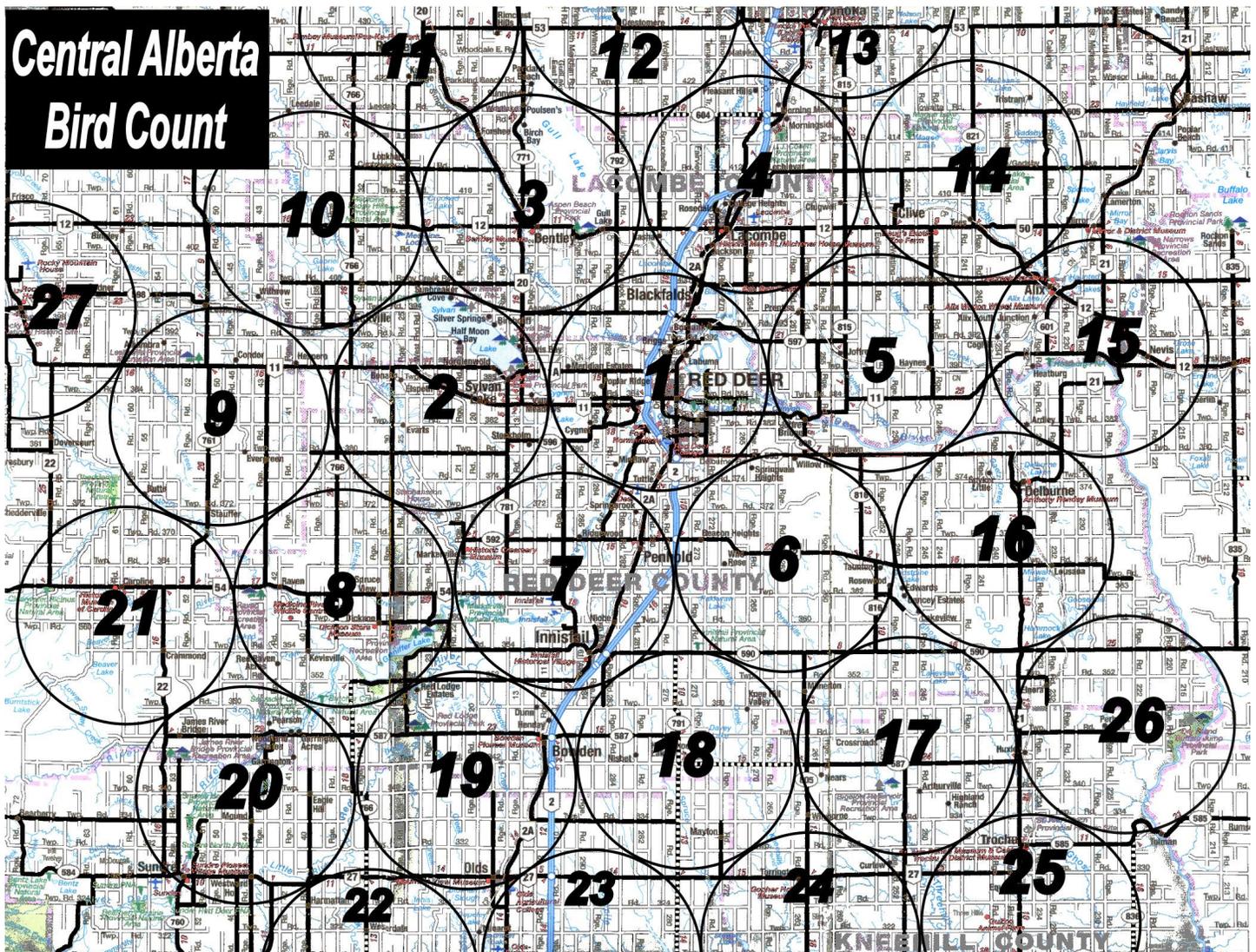
Join other Central Alberta birdwatchers by participating in the longest-running and most important bird census in the world!



Please call Judy Boyd (403-358-1098) to register

Join us for a pot-luck supper at 6:00 PM at Kerry Wood Nature Centre

Central Alberta Bird Count



CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT INSTRUCTIONS

- ◆ Counts must be made during a single calendar day within the official CBC period.
- ◆ CBC 2017 will take place from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. You can also *owl* (count before 9:00 a.m. or after 5:00 p.m.). There is no minimum time limit, and you can watch your feeders or count birds on foot, by car or using any other mode of transportation.
- ◆ A Count area must fill (preferably) or fit entirely within a 24-km diameter official count circle.
- ◆ It is important to record low and high temperatures, as well as snow and sky conditions.
- ◆ All counters must record hours and kilometres walked/driven/skied, etc.
- ◆ You can also record any interesting or unusual bird seen any time during the Count Week (three days before and three days after the official Count Day). Please make sure, though, that you mark down when and where you saw the bird and what the bird was doing at the time. Add these birds to your tally sheet but make sure it is evident that it is a Count Week (CW) bird.
- ◆ seen any time during the Count Week (three days before and three days after the official Count Day). Please make sure, though, that you mark down when and where you saw the bird and what the bird was doing at the time. Add these birds to your tally sheet but make sure it is evident that it is a Count Week (CW) bird.

Tally sheets must be received by Dec. 29. You can drop sheets off (Attn: Judy) at KWNC, mail to RDRN Box 785, Red Deer, AB T4N 5H2, or email to rdrn.nature@gmail.com. Put "CBC" in the subject line.

BIRD FOCUS

December 9—Gaetz Lakes Sanctuary.
Meet at KWNC. 1:30 PM

HISTORY OF THE CBC

Prior to the turn of the 20th century, hunters engaged in a holiday tradition known as the Christmas "Side Hunt." They would choose sides and go afield with their guns—whoever brought in the biggest pile of feathered (and furred) quarry won.

Conservation was in its beginning stages in that era, and many observers and scientists were becoming concerned about declining bird populations. Beginning on Christmas Day 1900, ornithologist Frank M. Chapman, an early officer in the then-nascent Audubon Society, proposed a new holiday tradition—a "Christmas Bird Census" that would count birds during the holidays rather than hunt them.

So began the Christmas Bird Count. Thanks to the inspiration of Chapman and the enthusiasm of 27 dedicated birders, 25 Christmas Bird Counts were held that day. The locations ranged from Toronto, Ontario to Pacific Grove, California with most counts in or near the population centers of northeastern North America. Those original 27 counters tallied around 90 species on all counts combined.

Today, between December 14 through January 5 each year, tens of thousands of volunteers throughout the Americas brave snow, wind, or rain and take part in the effort. Audubon and other organizations use data collected in this long-running wildlife census to assess the health of bird populations, and to help guide conservation action.

FLOWER FOCUS

December 20 • 10:00 AM • KWNC

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS AND THE WEIRD AND WONDERFUL

DON WALES



Photo by Don Wales

CBC POTLUCK: Please bring a hot or cold dish, your own drink, and your own cups, plates and utensils.



CBC INSTRUCTIONS: HOW TO COUNT LARGE NUMBERS OF BIRDS

If hordes of birds are coming and going from your yard, counting them all can be a challenge. Don't give up! Instead, count a subgroup of 10 or 25 birds and see how large that group looks. Then make several visual "sweeps," counting how many such groups are in view. Multiply the number of sweeps by the size of your subgroup (e.g., 5 sweeps x 10 birds/sweep = 50 birds) To get the best estimate, repeat this procedure at various times throughout the day, and average your results.

To ensure that no duplication occurs, please register to count with Judy at 403-358-1098.

THE BIRDS OF CHRISTMAS



The Red Deer River Naturalists, the first natural history organization to be established in Alberta, was incorporated as a society in 1906. The objectives of the society are to foster an increased knowledge, understanding and appreciation of natural history, and to support conservation measures dealing with our environment, wildlife and natural resources.

Annual membership is \$15.00 for individuals and \$20.00 for families.

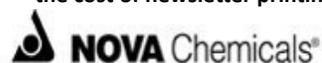
Regular meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. on the fourth Thursday of most months at the Kerry Wood Nature Centre, 6300-45 Ave., Red Deer, AB. Non-members are welcome.

Members are encouraged to contribute to this newsletter. The deadline is the last Friday of the month.

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<http://wearenaturalwise.blogspot.com>

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Photos, unless noted otherwise, by Myrna Pearman