



CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT INSTRUCTIONS



- The CBC takes place each year between December 14th and January 5th.
- The official day-time count is between 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM. You can also Owl (count before or after these times). 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.

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.

THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

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 Audubon Society, proposed a new holiday tradition—a "Christmas Bird Census" that would count birds during the holidays rather than kill them.

So began the Christmas Bird Count. Thanks to the inspiration of Chapman and 27 dedicated birders, 25 Christmas Bird Counts were held that day. The locations ranged from Toronto, Ontario to Pacific Grove, California. Those original 27 counters tallied around 90 species.

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 actions.

We would like to thank Judy Boyd for being our dedicated and amazing CBC Count Compiler for the past 24 years! This will be her last count, as she hands the reins over to Shelley-Anne Goulet.

