



**Anna's Hummingbird (*Calypte anna*),
Denver, Colorado.
Photo/Christopher L. Wood**

An impressive total of 197 species were recorded in Colorado on this year's counts, plus an additional four species that were found only during count week. Pueblo Reservoir regained the title of Colorado's Champion CBC, with 115 species. The only other count to break the century mark on count day was Boulder (103).

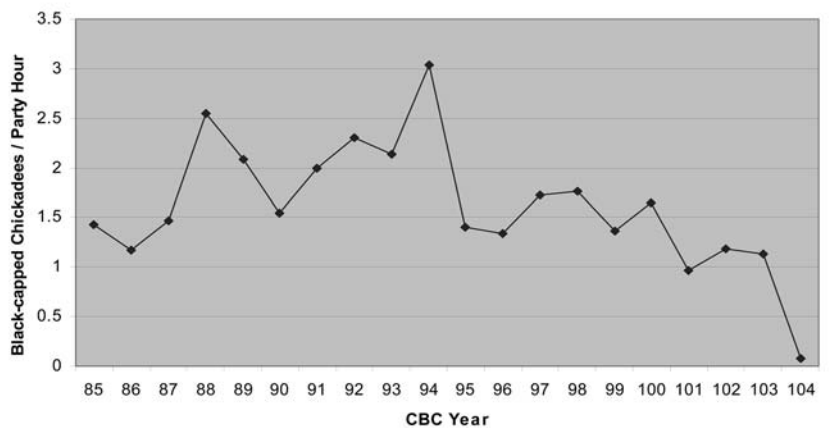
The major story this season was the widespread massive decline in the number of Black-capped Chickadees recorded in Colorado, particularly on the plains. Many counts saw declines of greater than 50 percent (see Figures 1 and 2). Declines were most apparent east of the Front Range, but were fairly widespread. The only counts that did not record a decline in Black-capped Chickadees recorded per party-hour were Boulder and Denver. However, both of these counts have high numbers of feeder watchers, and the metric of birds per party-hour does not work particularly well here. Indeed, both counts saw declines in total number of chickadees. It is impossible to tell from these data what the cause is, but there is a strong correlation between the declines in Black-capped Chickadees and the severe West Nile virus season in Colorado. While it seems unlikely that this correlation is purely coincidental, different data are required to determine if this relationship is coincidental, spurious, or causal.

Figure 1. Black-capped Chickadees on Colorado CBCs (103rd and 104th)*

CBC Circle Name (number reported on 103rd CBC/ number reported on 104th CBC)	Percent Change 103rd to 104th	Number / Party-Hour	
		103rd 2002-2003	104th 2003-2004
Boulder (507/221)	11.15%	1.82	2.0229
Denver (471/328)	38.29%	2.171	3.0023
Douglas County (366/187)	-51.95%	3.562	1.7117
Colorado Springs (328/169)	-45.67%	2.847	1.5469
Fort Collins (275/74)	-70.99%	2.335	0.6773
Longmont (222/72)	-72.91%	2.433	0.659
Denver Urban (160/56)	-65.71%	1.495	0.5126
Loveland (112/80)	-66.00%	2.154	0.7323
Aspen (107/60)	-88.84%	4.92	0.5492
Gunnison (103/188)	-29.01%	2.424	1.7208
Penrose (95/6)	-96.71%	1.667	0.0549
Pueblo Reservoir (89/17)	-88.28%	1.328	0.1556
Evergreen-Idaho Springs (80/57)	-37.74%	0.838	0.5217
Barr Lake (59/8)	-93.55%	1.135	0.0732
Bonny Reservoir (53/24)	-88.27%	1.873	0.2197
Weldona-Fort Morgan (52/9)	-92.39%	1.083	0.0824
Lake Isabel (51/22)	-75.91%	0.836	0.2014

*Minimum count of 50 on 103rd CBC

Figure 2. Black-capped Chickadee on Barr Lake CBC



Three remarkable rarities were present this season. A female Anna's Hummingbird at Denver was the first to be recorded on any Colorado CBC. Very rare anywhere in the United States in winter, a Scarlet Tanager on the Fort Collins CBC presented Colorado with its second winter record. A Yellow-throated Warbler at Canyon City on the Penrose CBC furnished Colorado's second CBC record (and third winter record). Other goodies included six Long-tailed Ducks on four different counts, a

White-winged Scoter at Penrose, a well-documented Osprey at Pueblo Reservoir, a Greater Yellowlegs at Boulder, a Red-headed Woodpecker at Fort Collins, eight Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers on six different counts, two Williamson's Sapsuckers, two Eastern Phoebes (Aspen and Loveland), three Vesper Sparrows on two counts, three LeConte's Sparrows at John Martin, an amazing 14 Lincoln's Sparrows on six counts, and an unprecedented 86 Swamp Sparrows on 14 counts.



Yellow-throated Warbler (*Dendroica dominica*), Penrose, Colorado.
Photo/Christopher L. Wood

I am pleased to say that the majority of compilers and observers do a stellar job submitting documentation for rare birds. This season's three rarest individuals (Anna's Hummingbird, Scarlet Tanager and Yellow-throated Warbler) were each accompanied by excellent documentation and stunning photographs. On the other hand, a few sightings had to be deleted because absolutely no details were supplied. A count week Swainson's Hawk was not even highlighted as being unusual. There are no documented winter records of this species in the state, and Rough-legged Hawks are misidentified as this species every winter. Reports of species that are unprecedented in winter, or for which there are very few winter records, will not be included if they are not accompanied by adequate documentation. Luckily, the great majority of observers and compilers take this seriously and supply excellent details. They have my admiration and thanks.

NEW MEXICO

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Counters in New Mexico censused a record 31 circles, including all 29 of those counted last year. Two new circles give us looks into the state's fascinating, poorly studied eastern habitats on the fringes of the Great Plains. The new Clabber Hill Ranch circle in the northeast quadrant is a recently dis-

covered birding hotspot. The new Eunice circle in the very southeastern corner especially gladdened your editor's heart, close as it is to the Hobbs stomping grounds of his youth, and close also, both in distance and in habitat, to a Jal circle run for three years in the early 1960s; comparison of those circles should prove interesting.

In general, the season was relatively quiet. The statewide species total was 220, well down from the 235 last year. This total does not include one species we still regard as exotic, Ringed Turtle-Dove.

Circles with high counts of species were led by Caballo, with 123; Albuquerque with 110; Bosque del Apache with 109; and Las Cruces and Lakes Avalon-McMillan, both with 102.

The statewide total of individuals was about 375,000, up from last year's 315,000. Notable high counts of individuals were Las Cruces with 61,993, Bosque with 61,745, and Roswell with 50,941.

The all-time state CBC checklist stayed unchanged this year at 322, the first year no new species have been added after an incredible run of 22 new species in the five preceding years.

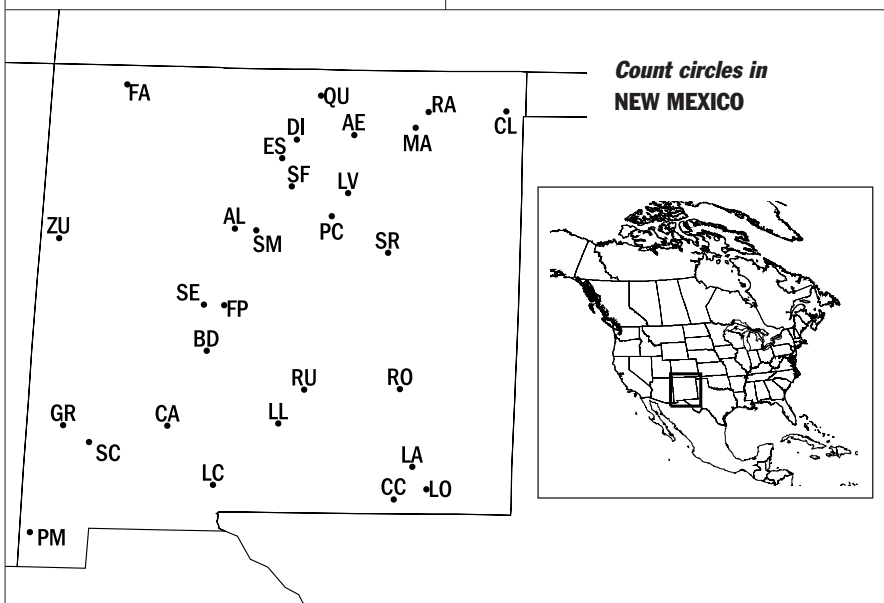
Northerly were two Northern Mockingbirds in the Farmington circle, new to that count, and a Winter Wren in Albuquerque. Lingering shorebirds included four American Avocets, new to the Caballo circle, and a Lesser Yellowlegs from Lakes Avalon-McMillan. Wood Ducks were noted in Dixon and Zuni.

Expansions of note include higher Wild Turkey numbers in the Angel Fire-Eagle Nest, Farmington, La Luz, and Peloncillo circles. Eurasian Collared-Doves continued their advance, with first records for Carlsbad Caverns and Zuni. Las Cruces reported an incredible 42,521 White-winged Doves, more than two-thirds its count of total individuals.

Grassland sparrow numbers were low generally. There were no strong patterns among altitudinal or latitudinal invaders except that American Robin and Pine Siskin numbers seemed thin in the lowlands.

This wasn't a year for a long list of stunning rarities. Chris Rustay found a Ross's Goose of the rare blue morph in the Clayton circle. Clabber Hill Ranch reported four Greater Scaup. Anna's Hummingbirds showed up for the first time in the Carlsbad Caverns circle and repeated last year's appearance in Albuquerque. Two Red-bellied Woodpeckers were reported in Santa Rosa. In the Zuni circle, John Trochet described a Short-eared Owl and the circle's first record of Rufous-crowned Sparrow. Counters in the Bosque and Clayton circles found single Rusty Blackbirds.

Finally, we bid a fond farewell to Ken and Mary Lou Schneider, who are leaving Cedar Crest for Florida. Several winters ago they set up a feeder at Sandia Crest, overlooking Albuquerque in the Sandia Mountain circle. With



donations of seed from many others, this site produced the recent bump in numbers of all three species of rosy-finch. We hope the site will be kept up.

See www.nmt.edu/~shipman/z/cbc/nmcbc.html for compiler resources and photographic documentation.

NEVADA/ARIZONA

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For the 104th CBC season, 13 counts were held in Nevada, the same number as last year. The trend of long-term drought continues in the southwest, and many counts recorded lower numbers of individuals. Overall, most counts had fair weather, with six counts having high temperatures between 50 and 60 degrees F. Elko ran into some bad luck with 8–12 inches of snow the night before the count and an additional 8–12 inches during the count. Even with high winds and four-foot drifts added to that, they still managed to have a dozen participants and turn up several good birds, including three Common Redpolls and a Brown-headed Cowbird.

Truckee Meadows regained the top spot in the state this year with a record high of 113 species. The next closest was Henderson with 96 and Fallon with 95. Having a diverse terrain with different types of habitats helps, but I am convinced that a big part of Truckee Meadows' success year after year is in the number of participants they turn out. I wonder what 34 participants on some of the other counts would have turned up. Truckee recorded several good birds, including a Mew Gull, Lark Sparrow, and, with the fall influx of Acorn Woodpeckers, it was nice to get one recorded on a CBC.

Henderson also had some interesting sightings, with a Gilded Flicker, the only swallow recorded (a Violet-green), and a Clapper Rail. Fallon was a real hotspot for grassland birds this winter, and among its 95 species were four American Tree Sparrows, several

Lapland Longspurs, Chestnut-collared Longspurs, and a Snow Bunting!

Walker Lake had some high winds but counters were still able to get out on the lake and find a Yellow-billed Loon, American White Pelican, and three Golden-crowned Kinglets. All were new to the count. Carson City had a Sora, Desert Game had a White-throated Sparrow, Muddy River had a Pacific Loon, and Pyramid Lake a Surf Scoter. Other notables were a Rock Wren at Ruby Lake, Golden-crowned Sparrow at Snake Valley, Wood Duck at Ash Meadows, and a Rough-legged Hawk at Jarbidge.

Thanks go to all the compilers for putting up with the new web page data entry system; next year will be better.

For the 104th CBC season, 34 counts were held in Arizona. This is two more than last year, partly because of a new count, called the Superior count. The Superior count circle includes the town of Superior but also the Boyce-Thompson Arboretum. I am sure many

visiting birders have been to this location and added a life bird or two.

The overall weather was good, with warmer temperatures for many counts. Twenty-six of the counts had a high temperature of at least 50 degrees F. The multi-year drought has taken its toll on the local nesting species, with the total number of birds down. This year Ramsey Canyon regained the top spot in the state, with 150 species, followed by an excellent Gila River count at 142; Green Valley-Madera Canyon was also at 142. Tres Rios was right behind at 141, and both Tucson Valley and Nogales were at 139. Fourteen counts in all reported more than 100 total species, and nine more were right behind, in the 90s.

Many interesting birds were found this year, with several species counted that are not regularly found in Arizona. Tucson Valley had a Least Grebe, and the Gila River count had a White Ibis, rare anytime in Arizona and not expected in winter. Gila River also had a Glaucous-winged Gull. It had been many years

