

contrary, the Pink-footed Geese were most probably escaped birds. The Washington Records Committee will have the final say on the disposition of this record.

A Costa's Hummingbird spent the winter at a feeder in Coos Bay, OR. A well-described Rufous Hummingbird overwintered in Edmonds, WA, and *Selasphorus* hummingbirds were reported from Tillamook Bay, OR, and Sequim-Dungeness, WA. A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was photographed on the Florence, OR, count, and a Red-naped Sapsucker was photographed at Vashon, WA.

Neotropical holdovers were reported in smaller numbers compared with the past few years. Winter swallow numbers were greatest on the south coast of Oregon, where both Barn and Tree swallows were seen. A well-described Wilson's Warbler was seen at Grants Pass, OR, and a likely MacGillivray's Warbler was reported from Forest Grove, OR. A single female Rusty Blackbird was reported for count week at Walla Walla, WA, but failed to show itself on count day.

There was a notable northern finch bubble, with Common Redpolls reported from many counts east of the Cascades and Everett, WA, and Columbia Estuary, OR, west of the Cascades. Pine Grosbeaks were reported from Bridgeport and Leavenworth, WA. Resident finches and siskins do not appear to have been seen in higher-than-average numbers, however.

High count for the year was once again Coos Bay, OR, with 157 species, in spite of stormy conditions. Sequim, WA, followed with 142, Tillamook Bay, OR, at 140 and Grays Harbor, WA, at 131. East of the Cascades, Lyle, WA, recorded 103 species, and Klamath Falls, OR, tallied 101.

Most rarities were well documented, and many had accompanying photographs. Two House Wren reports were deleted, because they did not adequately eliminate similar (and more probable) species, and a Rufous Hummingbird was downgraded to *Selasphorus* sp. All other reports were included with appropriate editorial comments. Compilers still seem a bit confused about what to call Wilson's Snipe. About half reported

Common Snipe and half reported Wilson's Snipe. There were just too many to fix, so those searching for snipe numbers may want to use both names.

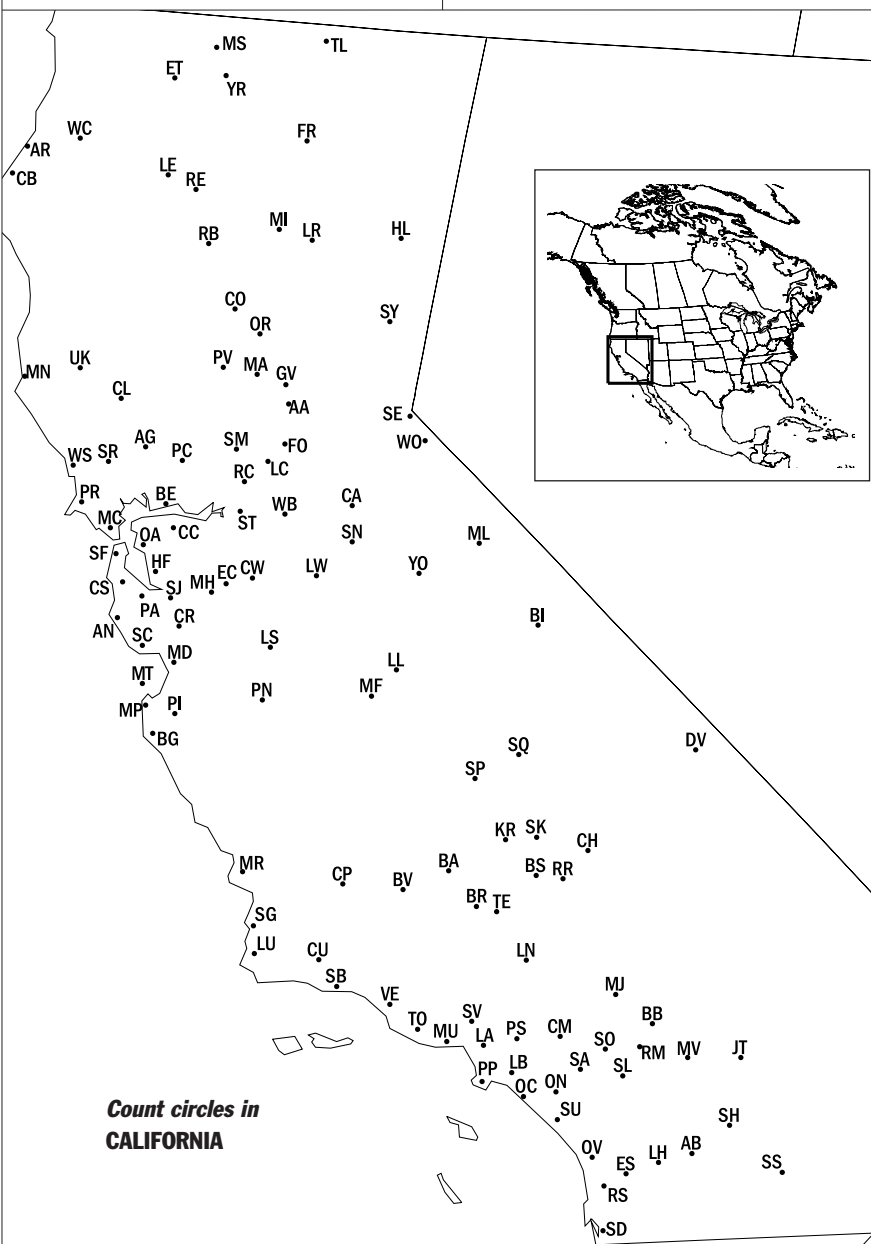
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This past Christmas Bird Count season, birders participated on 116 California CBCs, three less than last year.

Additionally, another seven CBCs had either incomplete or no data entry by the editorial deadline. For the fourth consecutive year, Santa Barbara recorded the most number of species, with 208. Point Reyes recorded 201 species, while Orange County (coastal) had 198. For the most part, California Christmas Bird counters enjoyed rather mild weather throughout the entire CBC period, with only a few counts reporting any significant precipitation. Many northern California compilers commented on how nice it was to encounter good to great weather conditions in contrast with the harsh conditions that plagued counters the



previous year. Following are the highlights for California during the 104th CBC season.

Single Common Loons were found inland on the LaGrange-Waterford, Palo Alto, and San Jose CBCs. A well-documented Red-necked Grebe was far south on San Diego's CBC. Additionally the Thousand Oaks and San Francisco CBCs recorded one each. Fifty-eight Pink-footed Shearwaters on 10 coastal counts were the most recorded in the past 20 years. A single Flesh-footed Shearwater was on the Monterey Bay CBC.

Single Tricolored Herons were seen on the Long Beach and Oceanside-Vista-Carlsbad CBCs, and are under review by the California Bird Records Committee (CBRC). A Reddish Egret was on the Salton Sea (south) CBC. For the 16th consecutive year, a Wood Stork was counted on Escondido's CBC. Two California Condors were on the Big Sur CBC. This is only the second time since 1986 that North America's largest bird has been on a CBC (and the second year in a row for Big Sur).

Almost across the board, waterfowl numbers matched the average, but many species were counted in fewer numbers than last year. An exception to that is the 141 vagrant Eurasian Wigeons recorded on 42 counts, the most recorded in the past 10 years. Only nine count compilers tagged this species as unusual, indicating just how regular this species has become during California winters. Well-documented Tufted Ducks were seen on the Crystal Springs, Oakland, Point Reyes, and Peace Valley CBCs. Seven Harlequin Ducks were recorded on six different CBCs. A White-winged Scoter was inland on the Eagle Lake CBC.

Single Swainson's Hawks were well documented from the Benicia and Stockton CBCs. Zone-tailed Hawks were found on the Santa Barbara CBC, as well as the San Juan Capistrano CBC. A returning Harlan's Hawk was on the San Jose CBC.

A Wandering Tattler was inland on the Salton Sea (south) CBC. Rock Sandpipers were found on the Arcata, Crystal Springs, and Western Sonoma

County CBCs. Single Ruffs were on the San Jose and Salton Sea (south) CBCs. A Yellow-footed Gull wandered out to the coast on the San Juan Capistrano CBC, and a Western Gull was found inland on Eagle Lake's CBC. Six Glaucous Gulls were seen on five CBCs, in addition to two more during count week. The 158 Eurasian Collared-Doves on the Salton Sea (south) CBC (up from just four the previous year) illustrate how this species is exploding throughout the southeastern part of California. Spotted Doves, on the other hand, have nearly dropped off the face of the state. Only 28 were found on six counts. Eleven years ago California counters recorded more than 1000 on 20 different CBCs. Eighty-three Inca Doves on four CBCs is the highest number ever recorded during a CBC season in California. Additionally, a whopping 13 Ruddy Ground-Doves were found on the Salton Sea (south) CBC.

Eighteen Vaux's Swifts were recorded during this past CBC season, with three on the Bakersfield CBC, eight on the Calero-Morgan Hill CBC, five on the Marin County (southern) CBC, and two on the San Fernando Valley CBC. An adult male Broad-tailed Hummingbird photographed on the Claremont CBC had been present for some time. A Gila Woodpecker wandered to the Anza Borrego Desert CBC. Well-documented Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were found on the Crystal Springs, Marin County (coastal), Morro Bay, Oakland, and Ventura CBCs. A Pileated Woodpecker was found wandering on the Palo Alto count.

Empidonax flycatchers made a good showing. A Willow Flycatcher was excellently described from the Morro Bay CBC. Two Hammond's Flycatchers were on the Orange County (northeast) CBC. Additionally, single Hammond's Flycatchers were found on Santa Barbara, San Diego, and San Francisco CBCs. A Dusky Flycatcher was recorded on the Orange County (northeast) CBC, while the San Fernando Valley CBC had a Gray Flycatcher. Three Pacific-slope Flycatchers on three

counts, five "Western" Flycatchers on as many counts, and two flycatchers left as *Empidonax* sp. round out this genus.

Two Eastern Phoebes were on the Salton Sea (south) CBC. Another was on the San Fernando count. Wayward Vermilion Flycatchers were seen count week in the Los Baños CBC circle and on the Orange County (coastal), Palos Verdes Peninsula, San Jacinto Lake, and Stockton CBCs. A Dusky-capped Flycatcher was on the Orange County (coastal) CBC and is under review by the CBRC. The Long Beach CBC had an Ash-throated Flycatcher, while San Diego's CBC had two. Single Tropical Kingbirds were on the Mendocino Coast and Santa Barbara CBCs, and on the San Francisco CBC during count week. A photographed Western Kingbird was on the Orange County (coastal) CBC, and another one was well described on the San Diego CBC. A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was recorded on the Long Beach CBC.

Of the 12 Northern Shrikes on seven counts, one made it as far south as the Folsom CBC. Single Bell's Vireos were seen and well photographed on the Salton Sea (south) CBC and during count week in the Palos Verdes Peninsula CBC circle. A Yellow-throated Vireo was on the San Diego CBC. Additionally, there were 10 Plumbeous Vireos on eight CBCs, and 33 Cassin's Vireos plus one count week on 34 CBCs. Single Steller's Jays wandered onto the Mojave River Valley, Morongo Valley, and Ventura CBCs, while five were on the Escondido CBC.

Swallows continued to be encountered in higher numbers than in previous years. Thirty-one Northern Rough-winged Swallows were on eight counts. The Salton Sea (south) CBC had 21 Bank Swallows. Two Cliff Swallows were on the Orange County (coastal) CBC. Additionally, the 774 Barn Swallows on 41 CBCs, including 198 on the Salton Sea (south) CBC, is more than has ever been previously recorded during the CBC season in California (274 on 35 CBCs during the 102nd season is the previous high count).

A Western Bluebird on the China Lake CBC and four on the Death Valley CBC were at unusual locations. A Gray Catbird was recorded count week within the Palos Verdes Peninsula CBC circle. Three Sprague's Pipits were on the Salton Sea (south) CBC.

The 21 species of warblers reported during the last CBC period was four more than were reported the previous year but still well below the average. Twenty-one Nashville Warblers (plus three count week) were recorded on 16 CBCs. Yellow Warblers were slightly more numerous this past CBC season, with 39 found on 20 counts, including one count week. A Chestnut-sided Warbler was on the San Diego CBC as well as one count week at Palos Verdes Peninsula. Sixty-three Black-throated Gray Warblers were found on 25 CBCs. A Black-throated Green Warbler returned for a second winter to the Monterey Peninsula, while another was seen on the Orange County (coastal) CBC.

Fifteen CBCs recorded a total of 36 Hermit Warblers. Both a Blackburnian and a Pine warbler were present for some time in San Diego, including count day. Single Prairie Warblers were on the Palos Verdes Peninsula and San Juan Capistrano CBCs. Eleven CBCs recorded a total of 26 Palm Warblers, including one count week bird. Nineteen Black-and-white Warblers were seen on 12 CBCs, including one count week. Thirteen American Redstarts were on seven different CBCs. The San Diego CBC had a Prothonotary Warbler, and the Palo Alto CBC had a Northern Waterthrush. Orange County (coastal) turned up a MacGillivray's Warbler. Finally, 43 Wilson's Warblers were found on 18 different CBCs, including one count week.

Seventeen Summer Tanagers were found on nine counts, while 54 Western Tanagers were found on 22 counts, including two during count week. Single Green-tailed Towhees were found on the San Bernardino Valley CBC as well as the Salton Sea (south) count. Ten American Tree Sparrows were found on five CBCs, including one on the South Lake Tahoe

CBC, while a Clay-colored Sparrow was on the Crystal Springs count. A Brewer's Sparrow on the Carrizo Plains CBC was unusual. Among the Vesper Sparrows seen, one each on the Big Sur, Butterbredt Springs, Mount Hamilton, and San Diego CBCs, as well as three on the Ventura CBC, were all at unusual locations. A Black-throated Sparrow was found in the Sierra Nevada foothills on the Sonoma CBC. Nine Grasshopper Sparrows were on three CBCs, including one on the Palo Alto count. A single Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow was on the Morro Bay CBC. Twenty-three CBCs turned up a total of 34 Swamp Sparrows. Additionally, 190 White-throated Sparrows were found on 45 CBCs, and Harris's Sparrows were seen on the Angwin and Santa Barbara counts.

Three McCown's Longspurs were found on the Lancaster CBC, and two more were on the Salton Sea (south) count. Single Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were seen count week within the Monterey Peninsula and Santa Cruz County CBC circles, while Orange County (coastal) had a Black-headed Grosbeak, Santa Barbara had three, and one was on the South Lake Tahoe CBC. An Indigo Bunting was photographed during count week in the Bishop CBC circle.

Great-tailed Grackles continue to move northward and along the coast. One or more were seen on the Contra Costa County, Calero-Morgan Hill, Los Baños, Moss Landing, and Stockton CBCs. An Orchard Oriole was on the Monterey Peninsula CBC. The Santa Barbara CBC recorded a Hooded Oriole, while three were on the San Francisco count. Three Baltimore Orioles were found on the Orange County (coastal) CBC, while individuals were seen on the Orange County (northeastern) and Santa Barbara CBCs. Twenty Bullock's Orioles, including two count week birds, were seen on 13 CBCs, and 16 Scott's Orioles plus one count week bird were seen on six CBCs, including the somewhat coastal Orange County (northeastern) count. Lastly, a well-described and sketched Common

Redpoll was seen on the Sierra Valley CBC and is currently under review with the CBRC.

The above-mentioned birds were all at least minimally documented for inclusion in this summary, and we received a lot of very good documentation to go along with the reports of unusual species. However, the number of undocumented or under-documented "unusual species" from this past CBC season was, in a word, appalling. There are simply too many to mention here, but the following handful of examples stand out.

A total of four Black-chinned Hummingbirds were reported from four different CBCs (two on counts, two from count week). Two had no details, indicating either a compiler mistake (checked the wrong box) or a complete lack of understanding of the status of this bird in winter in California. The other two had rather brief and incomplete descriptions, insufficient to substantiate what would be hugely significant winter records. One observer claimed to have a lot of experience with this species in other parts of the state in winter. This must be a mistake since most California birders are still waiting to see their first winter Black-chinned Hummingbird in the state.

Fifteen Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were reported from 13 different CBCs, yet only five compilers sent in documentation. It should be quite clear, in light of the numerous publications regarding the identification of *Sphyrapicus* sapsuckers, that identifying to species individuals from this genus is not a "slam dunk."

Seven Western Kingbirds were reported, but only two had sufficient documentation to actually differentiate them from other *Tyrannus* flycatchers. One compiler indicated that this species was being seen with more regularity in (Southern) California. That may or may not be true. How can one be sure? Such a casual statement does little to change the current understanding about this species.

Of the 41 CBCs reporting Barn Swallows, only 16 compilers considered

them unusual (some of these were recorded for the first time on their count) and only nine sent details. Does this represent a lack of understanding about the status of this bird or does our familiarity with this bird make it easy to overlook its rarity in winter? While their numbers appear to be increasing in winter, we should be aware that the 774 individuals counted this past season is almost equal to the numbers seen in all of the past California CBCs put together!

Two CBCs reported Swainson's Thrush, one with no details while the other included documentation lacking sufficient detail to establish what would be an unprecedented record. None of the three Brown Thrashers reported from three different CBCs had any supportive details. Two Tennessee Warblers from as many counts had no details. The only Field Sparrow reported had no details, as was the case for the only Lark Bunting and Le Conte's Sparrow. Two "Red" Fox Sparrows were reported without documentation. Also, in light of the potential difficulties involved in identifying subspecies of juncos, it may be worth noting that of the three counts reporting Dark-eyed (Pink-sided) Junco, only one was accompanied by details.

Many of the undocumented accounts involved birds seen during count week. In fact many of the count week birds that would be presumed to be "unusual" were not marked as such, indicating a possible confusion for some compilers. Species seen during the count week are noted in the database and are therefore subject to the same scrutiny as all other birds seen on count day.

The Christmas Bird Count is Citizen Science, and science requires the establishment of fact. If the CBC data are to be relied upon for information on status and distribution (e.g. the aforementioned increase of Barn Swallows in winter), there must be a standard treatment of rare birds or unusual trends, and documentation is the key. We received so many very good to excellent documentations on many birds, some from well-known birders who were only

holding themselves to that standard. For that we are grateful, as it makes editing much easier. Thanks to all of the compilers who took the time to get the details, and thanks to the many birders who take the time to send written reports on birds that are unusual. A great message/lesson is sent to a wide range of participants that this is about science, and collecting data on a national level, not about personal lists and accomplishments. We editors have only the paper in front of us from which to make judgments.

While the numbers of undocumented rarities seem to have increased, the overall quality of submitted CBCs has increased as well. This may seem like a contradiction, but it's not. It appears that the standardization of CBC submissions via the Internet has left compilers with little else to do except collect documentation on all unusual species, validate the evidence, place the species in taxonomical order, put the documentation in an envelope (preferably with a summary letter), and send it in. Obviously that is an oversimplification, but it is what really makes editing much more pleasant. And it is exactly what the compilers of the Oakland, Palo Alto, Calero-Morgan Hill, Morro Bay, Salton Sea (south), San Juan Capistrano, Palos Verdes Peninsula, Moss Landing, San Francisco, Monterey Peninsula, and Santa Barbara CBCs—this is by no means a complete list—do year after year. Many thanks to all of the compilers who continue to organize, compute, and compile those bird numbers. We're looking forward to next year!

HAWAII/PACIFIC ISLANDS

Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands and Guam

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The 104th Christmas Bird Count for Hawaii and the Mariana Islands again was held with a rather low turnout of participants. Two Hawaiian counts were

missed, Iao on Maui owing to torrential rains, and North Kona. Access continues to be denied to Kulani Prison, where in past years the protected native forest has offered participants rare sightings of endangered Hawaiian honeycreepers. Palmyra and Johnston atolls, two remote and infrequently visited circles, were passed over again this year for lack of counters. On the plus side, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service personnel managed to field counters on all three of its remote circles in the leeward Hawaiian Islands: Midway, Laysan, and French Frigate Shoals, with interesting results. All five Mariana circles were counted. A total of 108 species was tallied for the Hawaiian Islands and 60 species for the Mariana Islands.

French Frigate Shoals this year reported record high counts for Black-footed Albatross (6382), Red-tailed Tropicbirds (28), Masked Boobies (279), Black Noddies (5272), and White Terns (259), among more usual numbers for other seabirds. Midway also reported record numbers of the latter two species, as well as Bonin Petrels (2949), a burrow-nester on the increase now that predatory rats have been exterminated from the atoll. The 1994 Great Frigatebirds on Laysan were another high count. Grey-backed Terns (3) were reported for the first time from the Waimea (Kauai) circle. Vagrant seabirds included a Glaucous-winged Gull on Laysan, four gull sp. from the Waimea circle, and two Caspian Terns on the Honolulu circle.

This was a very rainy winter, as one weather front after another flooded the Hawaiian Islands. Perhaps because of improved conditions in the lowlands and raging torrents in the mountains, high numbers of the Hawaiian Duck were reported from both count circles on Kauai, where the species maintains its stronghold. It should be mentioned here that a high count of three Mallards reported from Kapaa (Kauai) signals trouble for the native duck, as the two species hybridize readily. Other native water birds appeared in more usual numbers, although the 120 Hawaiian