

remains good with 28 waterfowl, eight gallinaceous species, 22 raptors (including 7 owls), six gulls, and 15 sparrows. American Coot numbers appeared low when compared with the last two counts (18,990 on in the 106th CBC and 8257 in the 107th); however, the 108th tally of 4585 was in line with most other years. Pinyon Jays at 909 seemed high, but numbers have varied from 294 to 1060 over the last 20 years. Most of the Utah counts are in the valleys, and the abundance of Steller's Jays depends on the winter conditions and food sources at higher elevations. Steller's Jay numbers, at 254, have not been matched since 438 were recorded in the 101st CBC. After low Brown Creeper counts for 8 of the last 10 years, it was great to see 107 this year. Evening Grosbeaks and Red Crossbills are erratic winter visitors, and this season was good for both species, with 190 Red Crossbills and 26 Evening Grosbeaks. Great-tailed Grackles continue to increase and move north in Utah. They entered the St. George area in the 1980s and now occur as far north as the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge. This year 202 Great-tailed Grackles were counted in five circles.

Each CBC includes some interesting and unexpected observations. The 108th count recorded historical all-time highs for two species: Bald Eagles with 425 on 20 circles and Merlins with 43 on 17 circles. This year, 12 Lincoln's Sparrows were counted on three circles. Interestingly, half of these were counted on Bluff, our newest route (UTBF). With new circles in southern Utah, we may see more Lincoln's Sparrows on our list. A few years ago I wrote a winter sparrow status report for *Utah Birds* (Utah Ornithological Society). A 40-year analysis indicated from one to 42 individual Lincoln's Sparrows were seen on from one to five circles during most count years. A few other interesting observations include the following: Antelope Island (UTAI) recorded Utah's only Snowy Plover and Wilson's Phalarope, Bear River (UTBR) recorded the state's only Lesser Yellowlegs, Cedar

City (UTCC) the only Swainson's Hawk, Silver Reef (UTSR) a Lark Sparrow, and Fish Springs (UTFS) the only Black-throated Sparrow. Utah is on the northern edge of the breeding range for Black-throated Sparrow, and during most winters they migrate out of Utah; in fact they usually leave in August. Utah's best year was the 105th count when 11 Black-throated Sparrows were counted on two circles. Ouray N.W.R. (UTOR) picked up four species they had not previously reported: Cooper's Hawk, Merlin, Sage Sparrow, and Harris's Sparrow. Considering rare species, Morgan (UTMG) recorded a Rusty Blackbird, Zion N.P. (UTZI) a Red-breasted Sapsucker, St. George (UTSG) a Costa's Hummingbird, Jordan River (UTJR) a Dunlin and a Greater White-fronted Goose, Logan (UTLO) a Short-billed Dowitcher, and Ogden (UTOG) a Red-shouldered Hawk.

COLORADO

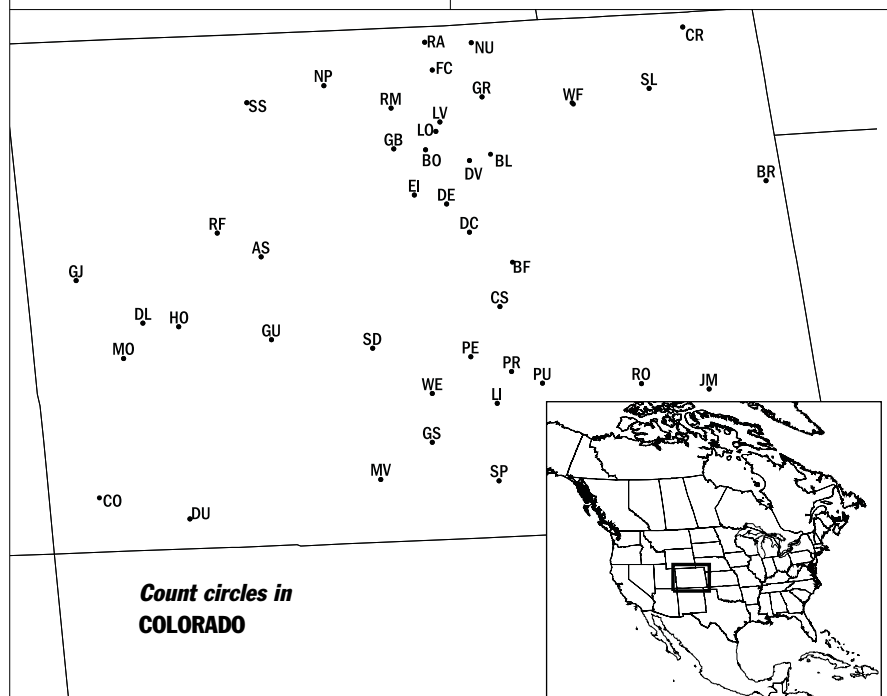
Brandon K. Percival
835 Harmony Drive
Pueblo West, CO 81007
bkpercival@yahoo.com

Colorado's 108th Christmas Bird Count was easier than the 107th, which was difficult because of its two blizzards. This season was still very cold, however;

only three counts had temperatures averaging above 32 degrees Fahrenheit. The Monte Vista, Gunnison, and Westcliffe counts all averaged below-zero temperatures on count day. The average high temperature for the 42 Colorado counts was only 30 degrees. The warmest count happened on the last day of the period at Lake Isabel, with a balmy high of 54 degrees, though the observers had to deal with up to 60 miles per hour winds all day, making birding difficult.

A total of 688,598 birds were counted in Colorado on the 42 counts, of which 202 species were found, plus two more count week species. Pueblo Reservoir (125) again had the highest species tally in the state; other 100-plus species counts were Penrose (120), John Martin Reservoir (111), Denver (110), Boulder (107), Grand Junction (103), and Colorado Springs (102). John Martin Reservoir counted the most birds again this year with 72,633, and not far behind was Longmont with 67,739.

Some bird surprises were found on this year's counts. The best was without a doubt Colorado's first state record **Streak-backed Oriole** present from December 8, 2007, to January 2, 2008, at the Loveland CBC compiler's yard, which is within the Loveland circle.



Count circles in COLORADO



Summer Tanager (*Piranga rubra*), Penrose, Colorado. Photo/Bill Maynard.

Others that all could vie for second best were **Sanderling** (Pueblo Reservoir), **Black-throated Blue Warbler** (Grand Junction), **Summer Tanager** (Penrose), and **Western Tanager** (Roaring Fork River Valley). All of these species are accidental in winter in Colorado.

As usual a few state rarities were found: Trumpeter Swan (Fort Collins); Tundra Swan (Denver, Weldona-Fort Morgan, and count week at Durango); swan species, not Mute (Salida); Mew Gull (Pueblo Reservoir and Boulder); Great Black-backed Gull (Pueblo Reservoir and John Martin Reservoir); Varied Thrush (Denver and count week at Delta), and an amazing 42 Purple Finches (found on 7 counts, with Bonny Reservoir counting 30).

Some of the other rarities this year found on only one count are as follows: Surf Scoter (Boulder); White-winged and Black scoters and Long-tailed Duck (John Martin Reservoir); Pacific Loon count week (Denver); Turkey Vulture (Colorado Springs); Glaucous Gull (John Martin Reservoir); Inca Dove (Rocky Ford); Williamson's Sapsucker (Penrose); Black Phoebe (Pueblo Reservoir); Carolina Wren (Penrose); Field Sparrow (Pueblo Reservoir); and Vesper Sparrow and McCown's Longspur (John Martin Reservoir).

Rarities found this year on more than one count include Blue-winged Teal (Colorado Springs and Delta); American White Pelican (John Martin Reservoir and Weldona-Fort Morgan); Peregrine Falcon (Boulder and Monte

Vista N.W.R.); Spotted Sandpiper (Denver and Grand Junction); Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (Hotchkiss and Grand Junction); Hermit Thrush (Grand Junction and Durango); Brown Thrasher (Ft. Collins and Loveland); Lark Bunting (John Martin Reservoir and Bonny Reservoir); Savannah Sparrow (Ft. Collins and Rocky Ford); Fox Sparrow (Denver and Rocky Ford); and Northern Cardinal (John Martin Reservoir and Crook).

Four species were found on all 42 counts: Black-billed Magpie and House Sparrow were not unexpected in this category, while Mountain Chickadee and White-breasted Nuthatch were quite a surprise. Both species invaded the plains and were found for the first time on several counts.

Two northern species invaded the state, at least in modest numbers. Bohemian Waxwings were found on 12 counts with a total of 7495 birds, and Common Redpolls were found on three counts with a total of eight birds tallied.

Several other species were found more frequently than usual with 10 Lesser Black-backed Gulls, 120 White-winged Doves, five Gray Catbirds, 13 Northern Mockingbirds, 265 American Pipits, four Green-tailed Towhees, 10 Yellow-headed Blackbirds, 21 Rusty Blackbirds, 50 Common Grackles, 1174 Great-tailed Grackles, and 30 Lesser Goldfinches.

This year's Eurasian Collared-Dove count was 5988, up from 3417 last year. A total of 299 owls were counted last year; this year's total was 407 (8 Barn, 46 Western Screech, 34 Eastern Screech, 245 Great Horned, 4 Northern Pygmy, 57 Long-eared, 5 Short-eared, 7 Northern Saw-whet, and one owl species).

I want to thank all the compilers and observers who made this a very successful 108th Christmas Bird Count.

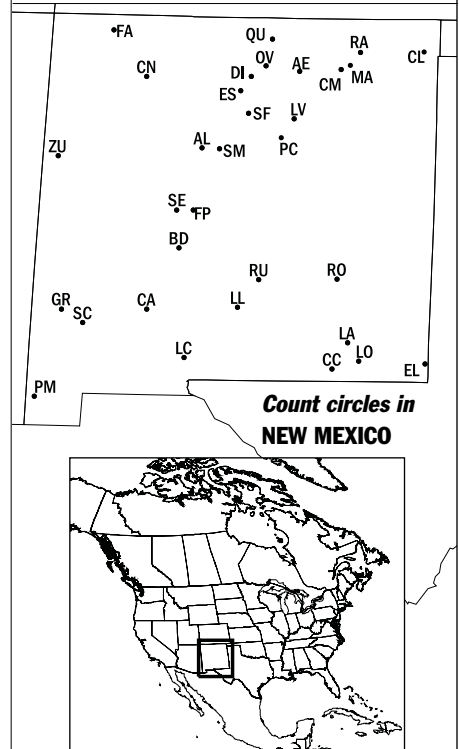
On a sad note, Rich Levad, a former Grand Junction CBC compiler, passed away in late February 2008. He worked on many bird projects throughout the state and will be greatly missed by all who knew him. This column is dedicated in his memory.

NEW MEXICO

John W. Shipman
507 Fitch Avenue NW
Socorro, NM 87801
john@nmt.edu

Our intrepid counters worked 32 circles this year, a net gain of two. We welcome back three circles cancelled last year due to a blizzard: Clayton, Maxwell, and Pecos. We mourn the loss of the Santa Rosa circle due to lack of participation. The statewide species count for the year was up slightly, 235 against last year's 229, short of the all-time high of 244 two years ago.

Caballo's Palm Warbler was the sole addition to the all-time state CBC checklist, now at 327. This year's report includes three interspecific hybrids. Lakes Avalon-Brantley had seven Gambel's x Scaled Quail, where both species visit feeders and mingle freely. John Trochet described two Red-breasted x Red-naped Sapsuckers in the Cimarron circle, especially notable because the pure Red-breasted form is not on the New Mexico Ornithological Society (NMOS) checklist; details are under review. Albuquerque's first-generation hybrid Black-capped x Mountain Chickadee was reported by Bill Howe, who has been studying this contact zone since the mid-1980s.



Eight counts had more than 100 species: Caballo had 122, Las Cruces 118, Gila River 113, Albuquerque 110, Roswell 109, Peloncillos 107, Lakes Avalon-Brantley 105, and Carlsbad Caverns 101. The statewide total of individuals was around 330,000, sharply down from last year's 415,000. The circle with the most individuals was Roswell with 75,000; Las Cruces, Albuquerque, and Farmington were all in the mid-20,000 range.

A single apparent Northern Rough-winged Swallow in Las Cruces was the only swallow reported this year.

A few records suggested increases in range or numbers. Common Goldeneye records seemed to be up a bit. Both Maxwell and Orilla Verde reported Barrow's Goldeneyes, east of their usual San Juan County range. Great Egret numbers were up in the southern part of the state, as were Sora records. Several circles reported high counts for Eurasian Collared-Dove and White-winged Dove. Caballo's immature Red-headed Woodpecker was westerly of that species' expected range. Spotted Towhee numbers were up in widely separated circles, though Ruidoso missed this species for the first time in 13 years.

Jay records showed no clear pattern. Maxwell had no records of Western Scrub-Jay for the first time in eight years, and numbers were down in the Gila River circle, but the Sandias reported high counts. Santa Fe missed Pinyon Jay for only the second time in 50 years, while Caballo had one stray for its second all-time record, and Ruidoso reported a high count.

This CBC was the second in a row with no Neotropic Cormorant records in the state, after records for 15 straight years. Loving missed Ruby-crowned Kinglet for the first time in 41 years, and missed Marsh Wren for only the second time.

Only two patterns emerged among irruptive species. American Robin numbers were up at Maxwell, but down in the highland circles of Pecos, Raton, and Ruidoso. Red-breasted Nuthatches made a good showing in the lowlands, including 18 circles statewide.

Lastly, a few rarities are worthy of note. Farmington's apparent Red-necked Grebe record is under NMOS review. The Peloncillos circle reported two White-tailed Kites. Caballo had a Mew Gull. The Gila River circle reported its second all-time Ruddy Ground-Dove. Short-eared Owl reports included four in the Peloncillos and a single in the Five Points circle; although this owl species seems to be showing up more, we still need details for each record. The Gila River circle had four Lawrence's Goldfinches.

See <http://www.nmt.edu/~shipman/z/cbc/nmcbc.html> for compiler re-sources and photographic documentation.

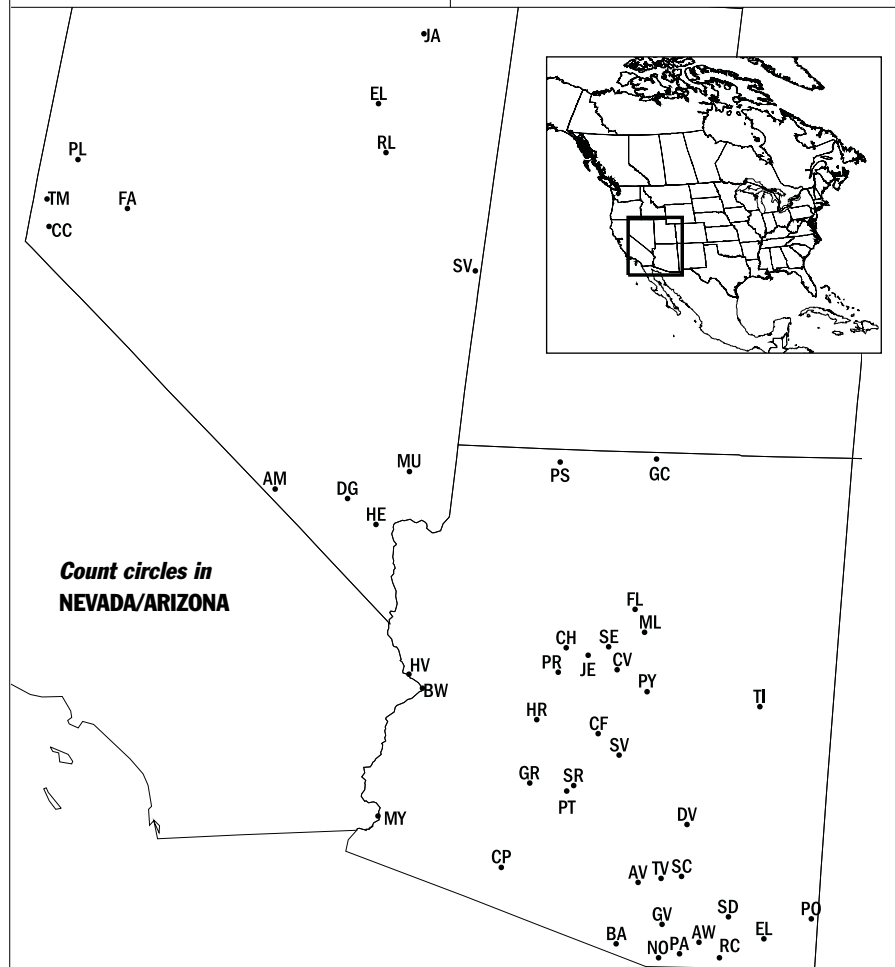
NEVADA/ARIZONA

Steve Ganley
2750 North Rugby Circle
Mesa, AZ 85215
sganley@cox.net

For the 108th Christmas Bird Count season, 12 counts were held in Nevada. Walker Lake was missed this year, but I hope that there will be some renewed

interest and the count will be back next year. Although there had been a cold spell and most of the water was frozen, Truckee Meadows had the most species in the state with 108 total species. Henderson was a distant second at 94, Fallon counted 86, Desert Game and Muddy River both tallied 81, and Cason City was just behind at 80. Next was Pyramid Lake with 79, Elko tallied 67, Ash Meadows had dry conditions and counted 63, Snake Valley had 52, Ruby Lake counted 36, and Jarbige had 12.

Several interesting birds were found on counts this year. A Cackling Goose was found at Truckee Meadows along with an American Bittern. A bittern was also recorded on the Fallon count. Red-shouldered Hawks made a good showing this year with seven birds seen on six different counts. Two interesting gulls were tallied, with a Thayer's Gull at Truckee Meadows and a Glaucous-winged Gull at Pyramid Lake. Eurasian Collared-Doves continue to spread throughout the state; only two counts





**Gray Catbird (*Dumetella carolinensis*),
Dudleyville, Arizona. Photo/Doug Jenness**

did not record them, Ruby Lake and Jarbige. A Western Screech-Owl was counted at Pyramid Lake, and Northern Shrikes put in an appearance at Elko and Fallon. Two species of swallows were lingering in the south, with four Violet-greens and two Northern Rough-wingeds counted at Henderson. Bohemian Waxwings came south with six at Pyramid Lake and seven at Jarbige. The rosy-finches were a little sparse this year with just one Gray-crowned and a count week Black Rosy-Finch at Elko. Snake Valley had the only American Tree Sparrows, and Desert Game had an Evening Grosbeak.

All of the counts were clean and well-done and all unusual birds documented—a great job by all the compilers and participants.

For the 108th Christmas Bird Count season, 34 counts were conducted in Arizona. By most accounts the weather was mild during the count period, allowing for lingering species and pleasant counts. Twenty-seven of the counts had high temperatures of 50 degrees Fahrenheit or higher, with many in the 60s or 70s. Several counts reported that leaves were still on many of the cottonwood and willow trees. A few counts were plagued by high winds, which kept the total number of birds down. Mormon Lake may have had the toughest conditions—they started out at a brutal -6 degrees but later warmed to a balmy 17 degrees.

Evidence of the mild temperatures in the region was provided by the six

Hepatic Tanagers, two Summer Tanagers, and five Western Tanagers tallied statewide. In addition there was a nice assortment of orioles—two Hooded, one Bullock's, two Scott's and one Streak-backed. Lingering warblers were in good numbers as well: three Northern Parulas, seven Yellow Warblers, 23 Townsend's, nine Wilson's, three Black-and-white, one Lucy's, one Hermit, and a count week Golden-winged.

Indications of irruptive species from the mountains were present as early as September, but only a few species were in above-normal numbers on the counts. There were 161 Golden-crowned Kinglets found on 14 counts, 115 Red-breasted Nuthatches on 18 counts, 143 Brown Creepers on 24 counts, and 436 Cassin's Finches on 17 counts. Hairy Woodpeckers are not usually part of our irruptive years, but three were found along the Colorado River and one at Superior. Lawrence's Goldfinch made a good showing this year with 788 noted on 14 counts.

Overall, the species totals were up, with Ramsey Canyon, the perennial leader, having the most followed by Patagonia, Green Valley-Madera, Nogales, and Tucson Valley all exceeding 150 species. Twenty-two of the 34 counts recorded more than 100 species. Many interesting birds were found on this year's counts and some puzzling low numbers as well. Only two Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks were found, both on the Nogales count; this species seems to be in a down cycle right now. One Cackling Goose was recorded at St. David, the only Eurasian Wigeon was up north in the cold at Flagstaff, and a Long-tailed Duck was at Bill Williams. Yuma, along with Bill Williams, had a Bonaparte's Gull. Yuma had the only American Bittern, plus a Tundra Swan and a very southern Barrow's Goldeneye. Red-shouldered Hawks were at Havasu and Prescott, along with the resident Hassayampa River birds. With 80 birds found on this year's counts, White-tailed Kites seem to be on an up cycle. The number of wintering

Cassin's and Plumbeous vireos is usually surprisingly even; this year 26 Cassin's and 24 Plumbeous were reported. An American Dipper found on the Patagonia count was about as far south as it can be without being in Mexico. The only Rufous-backed Robin found on a census day was recorded on the Colorado River at Havasu. Two Gray Catbirds were noted, one at Bill Williams and another at Dudleyville. Two Harris's Sparrows were found, one at Salt-Verde and one at Bill Williams. Common Grackle is rarely found in Arizona, and one discovered earlier in the month stayed around for the Santa Catalina count.

I would like to end with a wish list for next year. Considering all the state-of-the-art digital photographers out there and the fact that most of the CBC birds are wintering, it would be great to get photo documentation of the Western Sandpipers and the Black-chinned Hummingbirds that get reported every year. Also, there are some species that are so unusual or difficult to identify that even a written description, no matter how well done, is not enough to accept the species into the permanent record. If the bird has Swainson's in its name (Swainson's Hawk, Swainson's Thrush, or Swainson's Warbler), you are going to probably need a photo!

The compilers all spend a lot of time on their counts and do a great job of trying to get rare bird forms filled out, and I would like to thank them all.

WASHINGTON/OREGON

Mike Patterson

1338 Kensington Avenue

Astoria, OR 97103

mpatters@pacifier.com

Big winter storms and a lot of snow impacted Washington and Oregon counts for the second year in a row. A massive storm that combined the remnants of two Japanese typhoons and a northern Pacific winter cyclone hit the coast in early December with sustained winds of 75 miles per hour and gusts exceeding 120 miles per hour. The storm

