



Red-headed Woodpecker (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*), Silver Reef, Utah.
Photo/Kevin Wheeler

this year. One trend I've noticed is more California Gulls wintering in Utah than in the past. The days are gone when Utah birders could just call off "Ring-billed Gull" on winter outings without a close look. This increase started about 20 years ago (on the 85th CBC). This year's California Gull count of 4253 on nine count circles represented a high for individuals and a high for number of count circles in Utah. For California Gull, the average number of birds per party hour has increased from 0.031 (CBC Nos. 75–79) to 3.255 (CBC Nos. 100–104). Nationwide for the same count segments, birds per party hour numbers have increased from 0.735 to 0.912. Utah's most abundant winter gull remains the Ring-billed Gull; 10,492 individuals were counted on 10 circles this season.

Wintering bird populations seem to be highly variable in the state, with many "new" species recorded each year. Many of these are "accidentals," but some species seem to be wintering farther north after a string of mild winters. For example, this was the 25th anniversary for the Ogden count (UTOG), and six new species were added. Housing developments continue to impact some count circles and some bird species. For example, Ring-necked Pheasant numbers on the suburban routes have been drastically reduced. California Quail numbers are down with urbanization, but this species seems to be adapting to urban life better than the pheasant. A few other unusual sightings included Canyon Wren (Bear

Lake), Varied Thrush (Moab, for the second consecutive year), Red-naped Sapsucker (Logan), White-winged Dove (Ogden), Rusty Blackbird (Ogden), Eurasian Wigeon (Fish Springs NWR), Blue Jay (Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, Logan, and Zion National Park), Rufous-backed Robin (Zion NP), and Red-headed Woodpecker (Silver Reef). Examples of summer birds remaining into the count period include Turkey Vulture, Osprey, Sandhill Crane (1282 individuals on two counts), American Avocet, Franklin Gull, Warbling Vireo, and Chipping Sparrow.

I've recently searched the CBC database for information on Utah's wintering sparrows, and here report a few interesting findings. Utah's bird checklist (2004) lists 23 species of new world sparrows (the House Sparrow, a weaver finch, was excluded). Of these 23, only four species have not been recorded on at least one CBC over the past 30 years. On the 105th CBC, 15 sparrow species were recorded on the 21 CBC circles inventoried. Utah's most common wintering sparrows continue to be the American Tree Sparrow (140 individuals), Song Sparrow (547 individuals), and White-crowned Sparrow (5092 individuals). American Tree Sparrow numbers have varied over a 10-year

period from 140 to 282 in Utah, 536–1394 in Wyoming, and 621–1286 in Montana. American Tree Sparrows rarely winter south of Utah as shown by Arizona CBC numbers from zero to five over the same 10-year period.

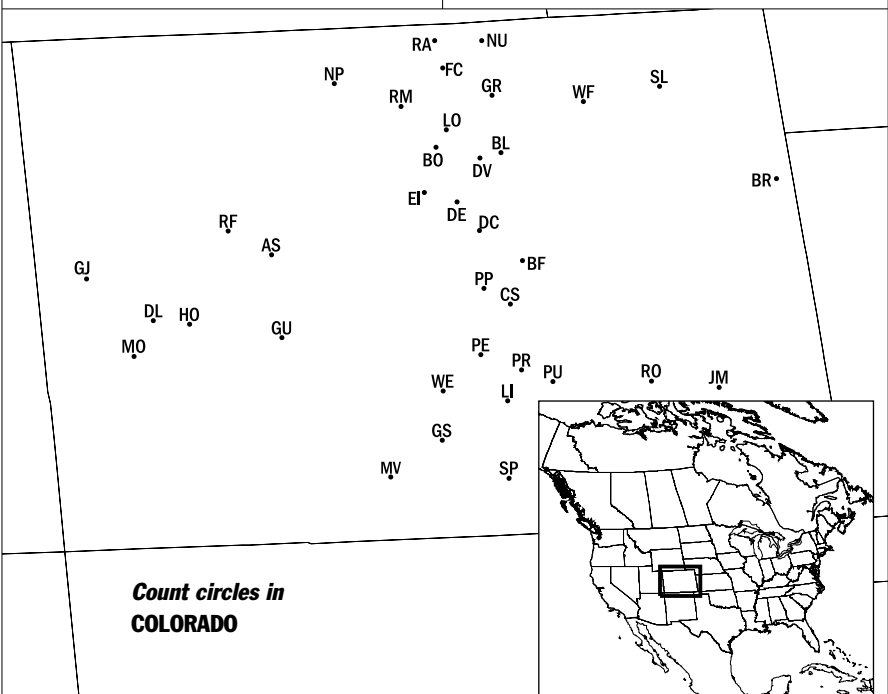
COLORADO

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Great diversity, a cornucopia of high counts, genuine rarities, and the first good Bohemian Waxwing invasion in nearly two decades—the 105th CBC had something for everyone.

Generally warm weather and a lack of precipitation characterized most of the 39 counts run in Colorado during the season. On most counts, temperatures reached the 40s and 50s. But in Colorado such characterizations are quite difficult to make; this year temperatures varied by nearly 90 degrees! Rocky Ford was the only count that was above freezing all day, with an amazing high temperature of 79 degrees F. Bonny Reservoir dropped to minus 10 and only made it to 15 degrees for a high.

A superb total of 200 species were recorded in Colorado on this season's CBC, not including three species that



Count circles in COLORADO

were only found during count week. Pueblo Reservoir not only retained the title of Colorado's champion CBC, but set a new high count for the state with an amazing **129** species. Four other counts broke the century mark on count day: Penrose (116), Grand Junction (114), Boulder (109), and John Martin (109). It was great to see the appearance of two new mountain counts: Salida (80) and Granby (66). Hopefully they will continue for many years.

In addition to generally high species diversity on counts, many species were noted in high numbers. A staggering 29 species tied or established new high counts for the state during the 105th CBC, presented in Table 1. White-winged Doves deserve special mention. The Pueblo Reservoir CBC recorded an astonishing 66; 16 were at Rocky Ford, six were at

Pueblo, and singles were at Penrose and Longmont, while Boulder recorded a count week bird. Only a decade ago there were few records for the state and most of those the one-day-wonder variety, and there was only one previous CBC record. Bushtits also continue their steady march along the Front Range, with several high counts, including a state record 298 from Colorado Springs.

As may be anticipated by the high species total, Pueblo Reservoir was a great place to be for rarities. The count recorded the first Black-throated Green Warbler found on any CBC, one of only three Gyrfalcons reported on any Colorado CBC, and only the ninth Pine Warbler and Red-throated Loon recorded on a CBC! But far and away the most unexpected find was a Sedge Wren at Grand Junction. Throw in only the second Anna's Hummingbird on a Colorado CBC on the same count, and there may be enough to encourage some of the Front Range birders to join some of the West Slope counts next year. American Woodcock at Denver Urban (second), Green Heron at John Martin (fourth), and Golden-crowned Sparrow at Delta (15th) led the list of other rarities.

Perhaps the most exciting event of the winter was the invasion of Bohemian Waxwings. They were found on 14 counts, spread throughout the state. The total of 2532 at Loveland and triple-digit counts from Fort Collins, Boulder, Colorado Springs, and Longmont were the best since the winter of 1987–1988.

After the widespread decline in the number of Black-capped Chickadees recorded in Colorado during the 104th CBC, counts throughout most of the state rebounded to near normal numbers. A noticeable exception was on the northeastern plains, where counts continued to fall. The 12 at Bonny Reservoir (0.1067/party hour) was the lowest ever (mean 101; 2.48/party hour). Not a single Black-capped Chickadee was found on Weldona-Fort Morgan or Sterling.

These counts wouldn't be possible without the many fine participants and



Pygmy Nuthatch (*Sitta pygmaea*), Salida, Colorado. Photo/Tony Leukering

Table 1. Colorado High Counts, 105th CBC

Species Name	Circle	Number
Greater White-fronted Goose	Penrose	13
Cackling Goose	Rocky Ford	502
Northern Shoveler	Barr Lake	2546
Greater Scaup	Rocky Ford	28
Hooded Merganser	Denver	197
Red-throated Loon	Pueblo Reservoir	1
Horned Grebe	Pueblo Reservoir	31
Clark's Grebe	Pueblo Reservoir	5
Green Heron	John Martin	1
Gyrfalcon	Pueblo Reservoir	1
Killdeer	Denver	69
American Woodcock	Denver Urban	1
Great Black-backed Gull	John Martin	2
White-winged Dove	Pueblo Reservoir	66
Eastern Screech-Owl	Bonny Reservoir	29
Long-eared Owl	Denver Urban	42
Anna's Hummingbird	Grand Junction	1
Williamson's Sapsucker	Penrose	3
Downy Woodpecker	Denver	125
Bushtit	Colorado Springs	298
Sedge Wren	Grand Junction	1
Marsh Wren	Delta	19
Eastern Bluebird	Bonny Reservoir	247
Black-throated Green Warbler	Pueblo Reservoir	1
Song Sparrow	Delta	514
Golden-crowned Sparrow	Delta	1
Common Grackle	Barr Lake	68
Great-tailed Grackle	Barr Lake	351
Brown-headed Cowbird	John Martin	93

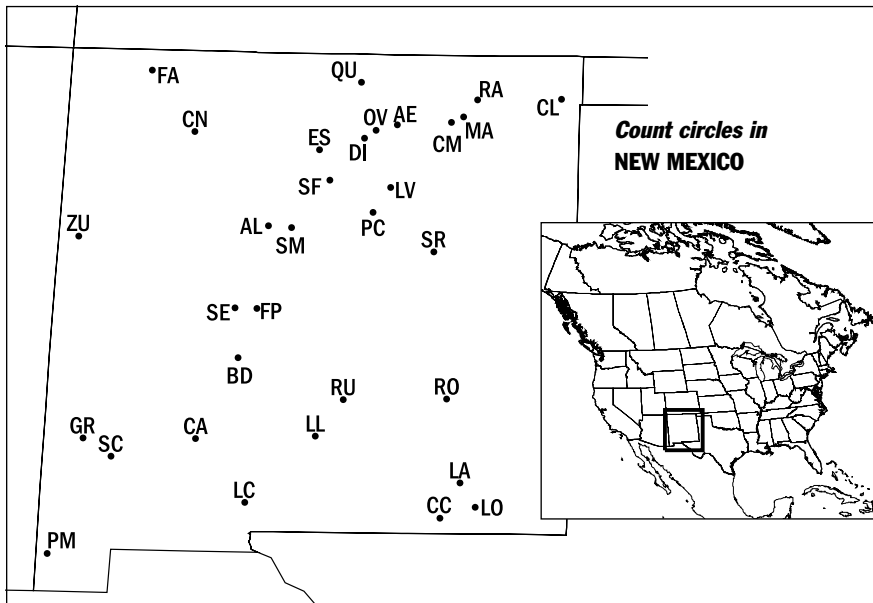
compilers who work so hard to make them a success. Thanks to all of you!

NEW MEXICO

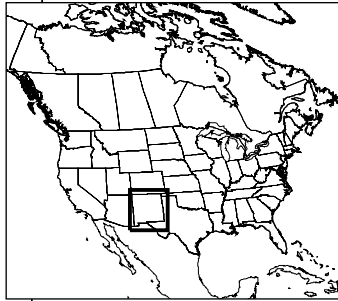
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We are delighted to announce that our counters have started up two new circles and revived a third, in the northern part of the state, this year. Chaco National Historical Site in the northwest (only 20 miles away from a historical circle run three years in the early 1970s), north central Orilla Verde, and Cimarron in the northeast are all in areas where coverage has been sparse. With continued coverage of all of last year's 31 circles, we stand now at a record 34. Species diversity was 227, better than last year's 220 but short of the all-time record of 235. This total does not include our usual exotic species, Ringed Turtle-Dove.

The most speciose circles were Loving with 114, Albuquerque with 110, Bosque del Apache with 105, Las Cruces with 103, and Gila River with 101. The total number of individuals counted statewide was about 325,000, down from last year's 375,000. Highest counts of individuals were about 65,000 at Bosque del Apache, 40,000 in Las Cruces, and 30,000 in Roswell.



**Count circles in
NEW MEXICO**



Carolina Wren made its second appearance in the state CBC records: the first was two years ago in Roswell, but the location of this year's record was quite surprising, the Sandia Mountains.

NEVADA/ARIZONA

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For the 105th Christmas Bird Count season, Nevada observers held 13 counts, the same number as the previous two years. Going into the count period, the several years of drought continued, but there were at last signs that the winter may have above-normal precipitation. Walker Lake was so low that a boat could not be launched for the count. Although the waterfowl numbers were down, there was a vast amount of shorebird habitat, and two count-first shorebird **species**—

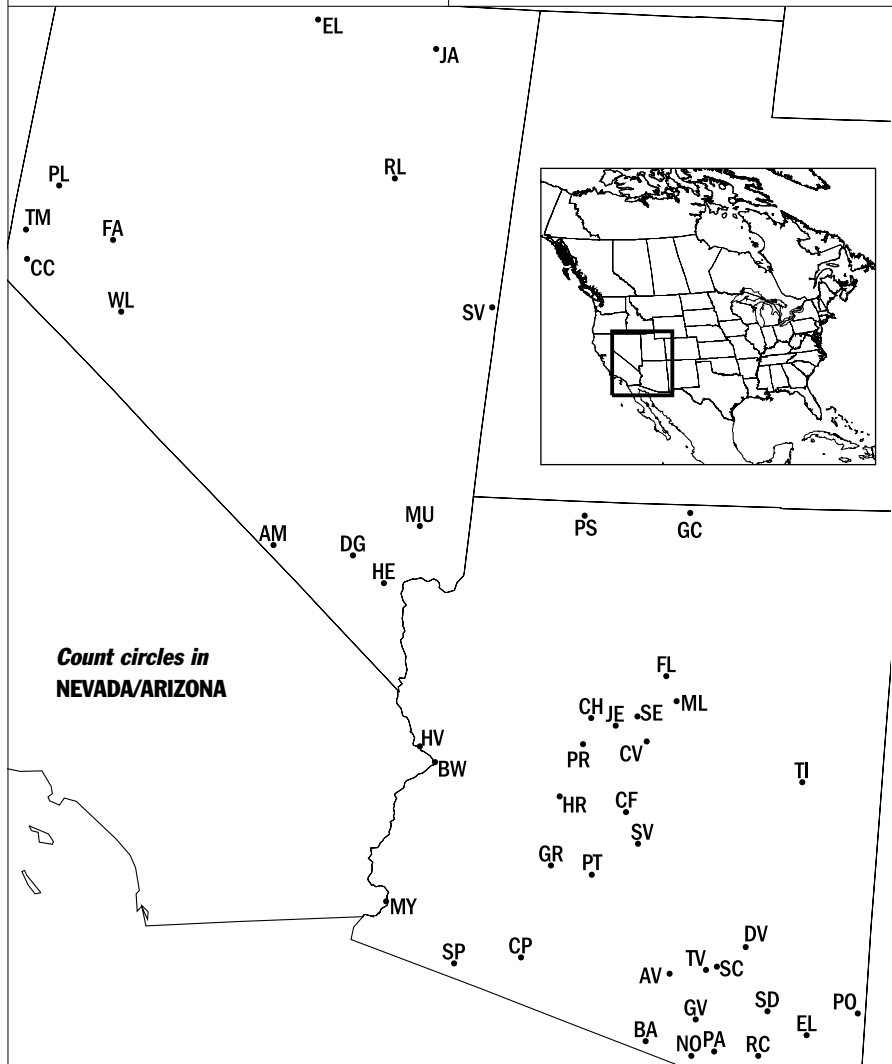
The cumulative checklist of statewide CBC species increased by one species this year to 323, with observations of the recently split Cackling Goose in five circles. Our second historical CBC record of a "Western"-type flycatcher was reported as a Cordilleran in the Carlsbad Caverns circle, and numerous pictures are posted on my web site at <www.nmt.edu/~shipman/z/cbc/nmcbc.html>. Unfortunately, the bird was silent, so we couldn't rule out Pacific-slope, which was added to the cumulative checklist in the Las Cruces circle for the 96th CBC using solid voice identification.

Among lingering birds, Roswell had a late Black-bellied Plover. The only late warblers of note were Townsend's Warblers in Albuquerque and the Peloncillos, as well as Orange-crowned Warbler and Common Yellowthroat in a handful of circles. A Tree Swallow persisted in Las Cruces.

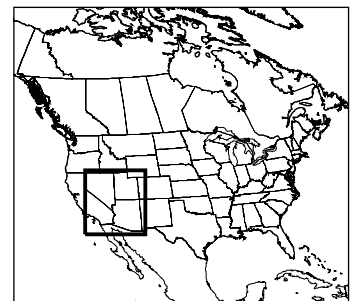
Turning to species that are expanding, Eurasian Collared-Dove continued its steamroller advance, making its first CBC appearances in the Farmington, Las Cruces, Pecos, Ruidoso, and Sandia Mountains circles. White-winged Dove was also new in Farmington. Grassland sparrows seem to be bouncing back a bit after some thin years.

No major invasions of montane species stood out this year, except that Cedar Waxwings were fairly widespread in the lowlands.

Finally, a few rarities. A Trumpeter Swan was well described in the Clabber Hill circle. Clayton had a White-winged Scoter. A Long-tailed Duck was seen in Santa Rosa. Clabber Hill had a thoroughly detailed Red-necked Grebe.



**Count circles in
NEVADA/ARIZONA**





Ruby-throated Hummingbird (*Archilochus colubris*), Tucson Valley, Arizona.
Photo/David J. Stejskal

five Snowy Plovers and a Spotted Sandpiper—were recorded. There was enough water for a single American White Pelican, the only one found on a Nevada CBC this year.

Truckee Meadows had the most species again this year, with 110. Muddy River and Henderson were in the 90s; Desert Game and Carson City in the 70s; Fallon, Walker Lake, Pyramid Lake, and Ash Meadows were in the 60s; Snake Valley and Elko in the 50s; Ruby Lake had 45 species; and Jarbidge had several interesting finds among its 23 species.

Among the interesting birds found this year were a Franklin's Gull, Eurasian Wigeon, and Greater White-fronted Geese on the Truckee Meadows count. The only Vermilion Flycatcher and surprisingly the only Eurasian Collared-Doves (5) were on the Muddy River count. The only non-Yellow-rumped Warblers found were three Orange-crowned on Muddy River and four more on the Henderson count. These two counts had all of the swallows found this year, although it was a little one-sided. Muddy River had one Violet-green Swallow and Henderson had 29 Violet-green, two Barn, and two Northern Rough-winged swallows.

The Fallon count had the only Lesser Yellowlegs (3) and Long-billed Curlews (6) counted this year, Elko had a first-year Herring Gull, and Ruby Lake had

the only Northern Shrike. Jarbidge had several "new for the count" species, including Red-breasted Nuthatch, American Kestrel, and Song Sparrow.

I would like to thank all of the compilers and participants for such a smooth CBC season.

In Arizona, 32 counts were held for the 105th Christmas Bird Count season. The weather was good, with little rain, as we continued our multiyear drought. However, there were indications that we would have higher than normal precipitation this winter, but the bulk of Arizona's record rains did not fall until January and February, which was a little late to impact the CBCs.

The circle with the most species this year once again was Ramsey Canyon, with 147. It seems it is hard to beat the variety of habitats within that count circle. The Phoenix Tres Rios count was second, with 141, followed by the Gila River count at 137 and both the Green Valley-Madera Canyon count and Tucson Valley count at 136. Nogales, Portal, and the Phoenix Salt-Verde counts were all also in the 130s. Again this year, 14 counts had more than 100 species and 10 additional counts had between 89 and 99 species.

Some very special birds were recorded on this year's counts. Arizona's first record of Ruby-throated Hummingbird was at a feeder in the Tucson Valley count circle, and although the identification was not verified until the bird was banded at a later date, it was present for the count period and remained all winter. The Tucson Valley count also turned up Arizona's second record for Le Conte's Sparrow. The first record was along the Colorado River in 1981 and seen by only a few people; this year's bird stayed for several weeks and was enjoyed by many. Another good find was a probable Cackling Goose, but it was decided that it should be left as a small form of Canada Goose pending more information on this recently split species. Two Eurasian Wigeons were recorded, one in the southwest corner at Yuma and the other in the north on the Glenn Canyon

count. There two Long-tailed Ducks, one on the Bill Williams count and one on the Nogales count. There were quite a few swallows found this year: 143 Tree, 16 Violet-green, 403 Northern Rough-winged, and six Barn. A Gray Catbird was of note on the Bill Williams count, and less common warblers included three Townsend's, five Black-and-whites, and two American Redstarts. Besides the Le Conte's Sparrow, there were two Harris's Sparrows and four Golden-crowned Sparrows. Fall's irruptive species didn't really stay around for many of the CBCs. However, Cassin's Finches and Lawrence's Goldfinches were in much greater numbers than in the previous year, with some of the Lawrence's likely sticking around to nest in spring.

I think the compilers will agree that things went much smoother this year with the new web page setup for entering data. I would like to urge you all to use the Special Aspect section in the data entry area. I look forward to hearing from you next season.

WASHINGTON/OREGON

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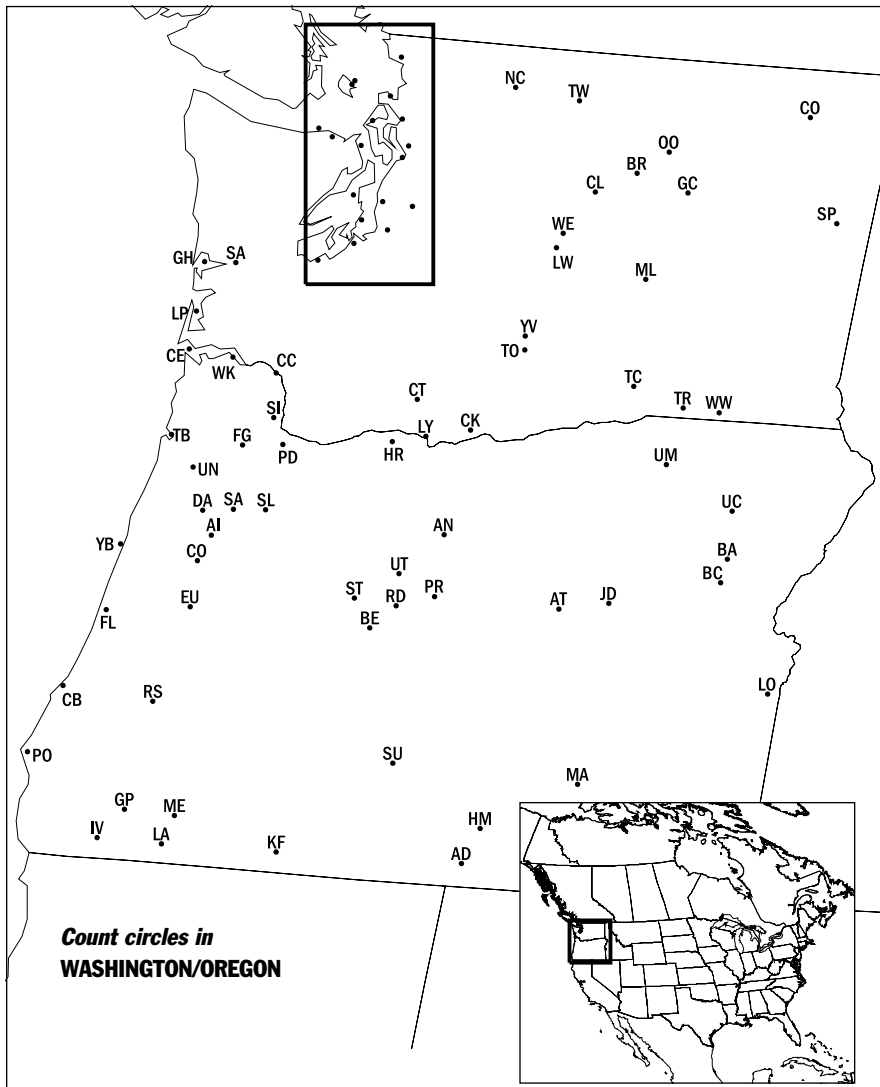
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The big news this year was the presence of a Redwing (that's European Redwing, *Turdus iliacus* for the uninitiated) in Olympia, Washington. It was first seen on 20 December 2004, and continued to be seen through the Christmas count season all the way into early March. A Falcated Duck spent the winter in a group of small ponds in Coburg, at the north-eastern edge of the Eugene, Oregon, circle. This bird is suspected to be the same bird that spent last winter at Fern Ridge, about 12 miles west of Coburg.

Several coastal counts took advantage of the better than average weather to get boats out on to the ocean. The Coos Bay, OR, count recorded seven Black-footed Albatrosses as a result. Tubenose numbers were also up, due in part to ocean counting. A Pink-footed Shearwater was seen from land at Tillamook, OR, and a

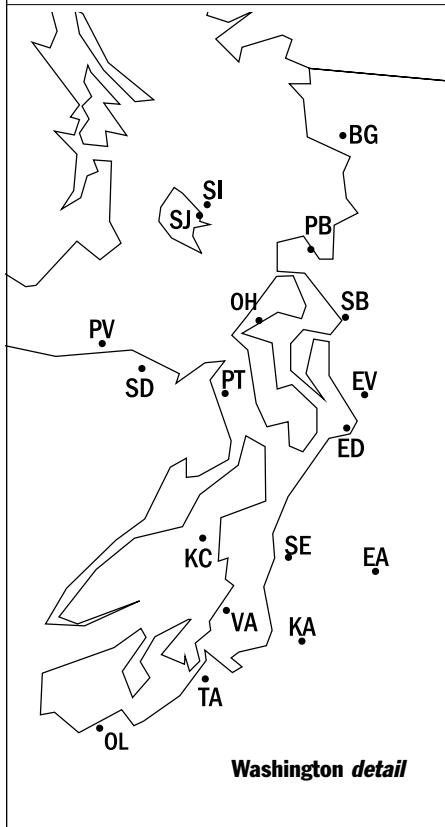


week for Columbia Estuary. A Black-and-white Warbler was photographed at Tri-Cities, WA. A Yellow Warbler, a Black-throated Gray Warbler, and multiple Wilson's Warblers were also reported. A Rose-breasted Grosbeak was coming to a feeder at Coos Bay, OR. A Common Grackle was photographed at Redmond, OR, and a Rusty Blackbird was photographed at Skagit Bay, WA.

This was also an invasion year for Blue Jays, 18 in all for the region, six of them in Union County, OR. Birds were seen as far west as Port Townsend, WA, and Dallas, OR. We also saw an irruption of Mountain Chickadees west of the Cascades. Coastal Red Crossbill counts were much higher than average. Coastal crossbills are usually of the small, type-3 group, but this season there is good evidence that there was an irruption of larger crossbills (probably type-4 based on call), and these larger crossbills account for the spike in numbers. Bohemian Waxwings and Pine Grosbeaks were also reported in higher than average numbers.

Not surprisingly, the recent split of large and small form Canada Geese caused some confusion in the database. Different compilers listed Cackling Goose differently. Some entries are as Canada Goose (small form), some as Cackling Goose (*canadensis*), and some as Cackling Goose (*hutchinsii*). (Editor's note: All Cackling Geese in the 105th CBC have been moved to "*hutchinsii*.") The large form was, for some counts, listed as Canada Goose (large form) and also simply Canada Goose. Some undifferentiated white-cheeked geese in the complex were also, presumably, placed within Canada Goose. Some compilers chose to place these undifferentiated individuals into goose sp.

The weather through the count period was better than average, and as a result many counts tallied total species above their averages and several broke previous high count records. Coos Bay, OR, once again had the highest species total, with 160, followed by Tillamook Bay, OR, at 157; Grays Harbor, WA, at



Parasitic Jaeger, very uncommon in the winter, was reported without details from Florence, OR. Alcid diversity and total numbers were also notably higher than usual. A Slaty-backed Gull was found at Olympia, WA. Remarkable numbers of Glaucous Gulls were also reported. These, along with purer-than-average-looking Glaucous-winged Gulls, suggest that there may have been a winter irruption of northern gulls.

Following the trend of recent years, several neotropical species chose to remain for the winter at least into the count period. Two Costa's Hummingbirds were found at Portland, OR. Rufous and unidentified *Selasphorus* hummingbirds were reported on several counts. A Tropical Kingbird remained until the day before the Columbia Estuary, OR, count in residential Astoria. An adult male Bullock's Oriole was also seen on count

149; and Sequim-Dungeness, WA, at 147. High counts east of the Cascades included Klamath Falls, OR, at 109 and Tri-Cities, WA, at 104.

Unusual species were generally well documented. I once again sent some of the marginally documented reports out to regional experts for their opinions and appreciate their input. A Yellow Warbler was downgraded to warbler species because the description was more consistent with Orange-crowned Warbler. A report of 10 Hoary Redpolls was downgraded to redpoll species, in part because of the difficulties in separating Hoary from Common Redpoll, and which were not addressed in the description. I also threw out the Red Junglefowl included on a southern Oregon count. I let stand several unusual species that were included without documentation, including Lesser Yellowlegs and Sharp-tailed Grouse.

CALIFORNIA

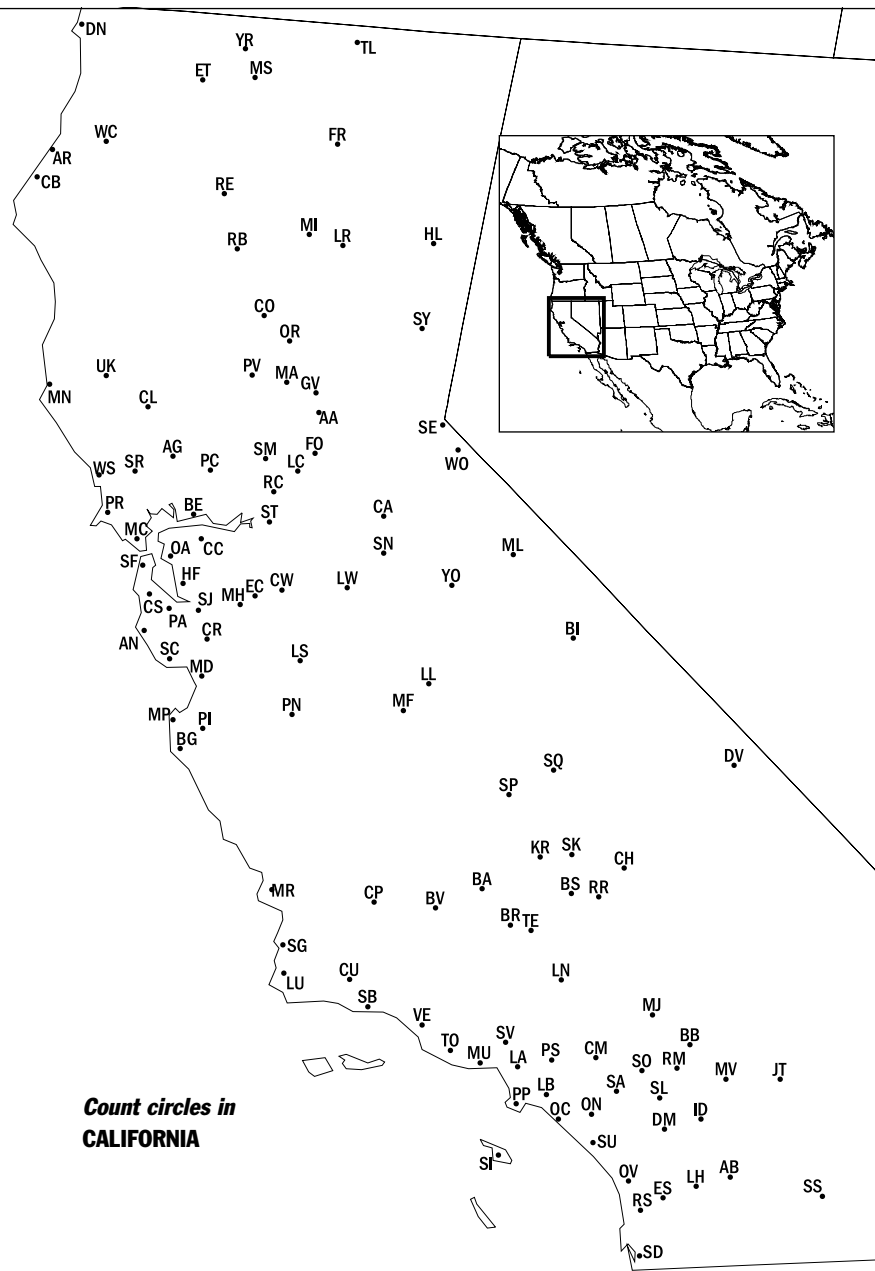
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During the 105th Christmas Bird Count season, birders participated in 116 California CBCs. Another six CBCs had incomplete data by the editorial deadline or did not participate this year. For the fifth consecutive year Santa Barbara recorded the most number of species, with 200. Morro Bay and Point Reyes Peninsula both recorded 198 species, while Coastal Orange County and Moss Landing each came in with 197. The San Francisco CBC had the highest number of participants this year, with 203. The majority of counts (75 percent) reported no rain and mild weather throughout the entire CBC period. The remaining counts experienced light rains in the morning, with a dozen counts going on to experience heavy rains by the afternoon. Many of the "high altitude" counts reported



struggles with heavy snow and road access problems due to earlier heavy storms. We welcome one new count circle this year, Diamond Valley; also a belated welcome is due to Santa Clarita, which joined us last year. The highlights of the 105th CBC season follow.

Waterfowl highlights include 111 Eurasian Wigeon reported from 37 count circles. Nine counts provided details on these wigeon. Additionally, there were two reports of American x Eurasian Wigeon hybrids. Three Tufted Ducks were well documented from Oakland and Palo Alto. Point Reyes Peninsula and Ukiah also reported this species during count week. Six Eurasian

Green-winged Teal, three from Palo Alto and one each from Crystal Springs, Peace Valley, and Santa Barbara, were supported by excellent details and photographs. An American x Eurasian Green-winged Teal was reported from the Palo Alto CBC as well. Two Long-tailed Ducks were reported from Del Norte, single birds were noted on the Centerville Beach to King Salmon, Crystal Springs, Morro Bay, and San Francisco CBCs. Additionally, Oakland reported one during count week. Twenty-two Harlequin Ducks, double the most in the past 12 years, were recorded on 10 CBCs. The only Bewick's Swan reported this season was from the Marysville CBC.