

Last year 41 counts were summarized; however, 21 were in Utah and 20 were in Wyoming. I think the compilers who provide interesting facts and trends in the special aspects section of the entry form. These comments make this summary more interesting and informative.

In Wyoming, fall weather was mild but not as warm as last year. Weather continues to influence bird species and numbers. The 106th CBC in Wyoming recorded 119 species, down from 133 last season. Like last year, several summer residents that usually migrate south before the CBC period were observed. Examples included Brown Thrasher, Gray Catbird, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, and Virginia Rail. Along these lines, Gadwall numbers were up, with 129 counted on seven circles. More Merlins than average were in the area, with 23 recorded on 11 circles. During the last five-year period (101st to 105th CBCs), Wyoming recorded an average of 11.6 Merlins on an average of seven circles. Eurasian Collared-Doves are now well established in Wyoming; 370 were recorded on 11 circles, up from 229 seen on eight counts last year and 122 on six counts during the 104th count. This increase is significant because none were seen before the first seven were recorded on the 103rd CBC. American Crow numbers continue an upward trend. The extent of the trend is illustrated with total numbers followed by number of circles recording crows in parenthesis: 101st CBC, 796 (12); 102nd CBC, 1941 (14); 103rd CBC, 2007 (14); 104th CBC, 3219 (16); 105th CBC, 4884 (17); and 106th CBC, 9819 (18).

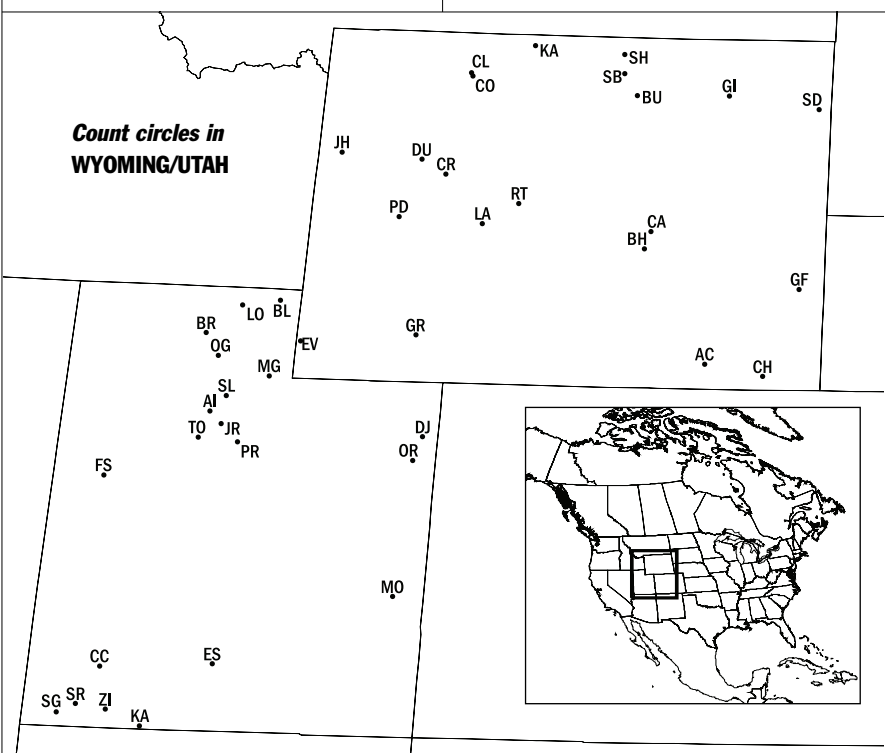
I believe a couple of species warrant more detailed information. First, the Ferruginous Hawk, which seems to be increasing during the CBC winter period. Wyoming recorded nine on five circles last year and eight on four circles this year. In my winter birding in Utah I noted many very light morph Rough-legged Hawks. At a distance, with a nearly all-white tail, these birds looked very much like Ferruginous Hawks. I challenge all birders to look very carefully

at light morph winter hawks to avoid confusion and misidentification. Another hard to identify species seems to be showing up in Wyoming: the Purple Finch. Reports of this finch should come with very good rare bird reports; Purple Finches are out of their range and easily confused with Cassin's or House finches. If Purple Finches are indeed crossing between their east-wide range and their west-coast range, we should document the extent of this range expansion.

In Utah, there seemed to be more unexpected species recorded this year; however, a total of 185 species was similar to other years (188 species on the 105th CBC). The less common birds recorded included Western Tanager (UTZI), Green-tailed Towhee (UTDJ), Anna's Hummingbird (UTSG), Vermilion Flycatcher (UTSG and UTSR), Barn Swallow (UTFS), Western Kingbird (UTSG), Blue Grosbeak (UTKA), Sage Thrasher (UTSR), Lesser Yellowlegs (UTPR), Long-billed Dowitcher (UTOG), American White Pelican (UTBR), and Great Egret (UTFS). At 473, Eurasian Collared-Dove now outnumbers Bald Eagle, at 304. Many counts could argue for the highlight species of the season; however, I like gulls, so I am giving Provo

(UTPR) high marks for the Mew Gull. The "wow" factor goes to Cedar City (UTCC) for 11,860 American Coots on Quichapa Lake, which is usually dry or frozen during the count period.

The mild weather accounted for the high number of Sandhill Cranes (545) and Mountain Bluebirds (134) on the Dinosaur National Monument-Jensen circle (UTDJ). Mountain Bluebird numbers were up statewide, with 872 counted on seven circles. Sandhill Crane numbers are interesting if two time frames are considered: the past 10 years and the past 10 to 20 years. From the 87th to 96th CBCs, Utah averaged only 3.7 cranes per year (0.0251 per party hour). From the CBCs numbered 97 to 106, Utah averaged 240.4 cranes per year (approximately 0.7672 per party hour). An interesting range expansion is the California Quail moving south into Washington County (UTSG). The St. George count recorded 12 California Quail for their first CBC record. Statewide, 976 California Quail were recorded on seven circles. Watching the interaction between Gambel's Quail and California Quail as their range overlap increases will be interesting. Utah seems to be a "swing" state for Bohemian Waxwing. High counts were in the 97th



CBC, with 2677 birds counted on five circles, and in the 99th CBC, with 1063 on two counts. Low years were the 101st and 103rd CBCs, when not a single Bohemian Waxwing was found. This season, observers recorded 157 on five counts, with the most (137) at Morgan (UTMG).

COLORADO

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It was difficult to characterize the weather on the 39 counts in Colorado this Christmas Bird Count season. Temperatures varied by more than 80 degrees, with Pueblo reaching 67 degrees Fahrenheit and Evergreen dropping to -16 degrees F. More counts failed to reach 20 degrees F (6) than reached 60 degrees F (5). Perhaps the best news for counters was that the wind posed less of a challenge than in the past, though participants on the Boulder count who dealt with gusts up to 41 mph in the afternoon may disagree with this characterization.

A fine total of 199 species was recorded in Colorado this season, only one shy of last year. Pueblo Reservoir retained the title of Colorado's champion CBC, reporting 118 species. Only two other counts broke the century mark on count day: Penrose (109) and Boulder (106).

The variation in weather may give some indication of the diversity of Colorado's CBC circles. Another indication is that only *two* species were recorded in every count circle during the 106th CBC: Downy Woodpecker and what *should* be the state bird—Black-billed Magpie. Thirty-five species were recorded on only a single CBC. This includes the standouts this year, highlighted by Colorado's first well-documented Northern Waterthrush on a CBC, at

Fort Collins; this count also hosted a Pine Warbler. Pueblo Reservoir produced a number of rarities, including Surf Scoter, Spotted Sandpiper, Greater Yellowlegs, Dunlin, Black Phoebe, and Cape May Warbler. The Golden-crowned Sparrow returned to Delta. A Black Brant was found at Denver. And after last year's invasion, the only Bohemian Waxwing this season was recorded at Boulder.

Although rarities may cause the most excitement during CBC season, the real value of the data is expressed when we examine more commonly encountered species. We noted last year that after the widespread decline in the number of Black-capped Chickadees recorded in Colorado during the 104th CBC, counts rebounded, a trend that continued this year. The increase has been slowest on the eastern plains. Though numbers are slowly increasing in the northeast, not a single Black-capped Chickadee was recorded along the Arkansas River Valley east of Pueblo Reservoir.

Two arctic species that are regularly found on Colorado CBCs—Northern Shrike and Rough-legged Hawk—bear some examination. Because Northern Shrikes are found at low densities, it may surprise some people that only 17 species were recorded on more counts

than Northern Shrike. That's correct, 34 Colorado CBCs recorded Northern Shrike, precisely the same number that recorded American Kestrel! This year's strong showing is reflected both in number of individuals (113) and the percentage of CBCs recording Northern Shrike (87 percent). Looking at the past 26 years, we see that Northern Shrikes generally appear to follow a pattern of numbers, peaking every four to six years. Figure 1 illustrates this by looking at total number of shrikes, while Figure 2 adjusts for effort by looking at number of shrikes seen per 50 hours of effort.

Rough-legged Hawk, by contrast, made its poorest showing ever on Colorado's CBCs. Only 54 percent of counts recorded the species, with a total of only 116 individuals. The pattern for Rough-legged Hawks is less obvious, but still reflects a general trend of irruptions every three to five years. Figure 1 illustrates this by looking at total number of hawks, while Figure 2 adjusts for effort by looking at number of hawks seen per 50 hours of effort. Interestingly, since the winter of 1996–1997, irruptions of Rough-legged Hawks have been inversely correlated with those of Northern Shrikes. What will happen next year? Will more Northern Shrikes be seen on Colorado CBCs than Rough-legged

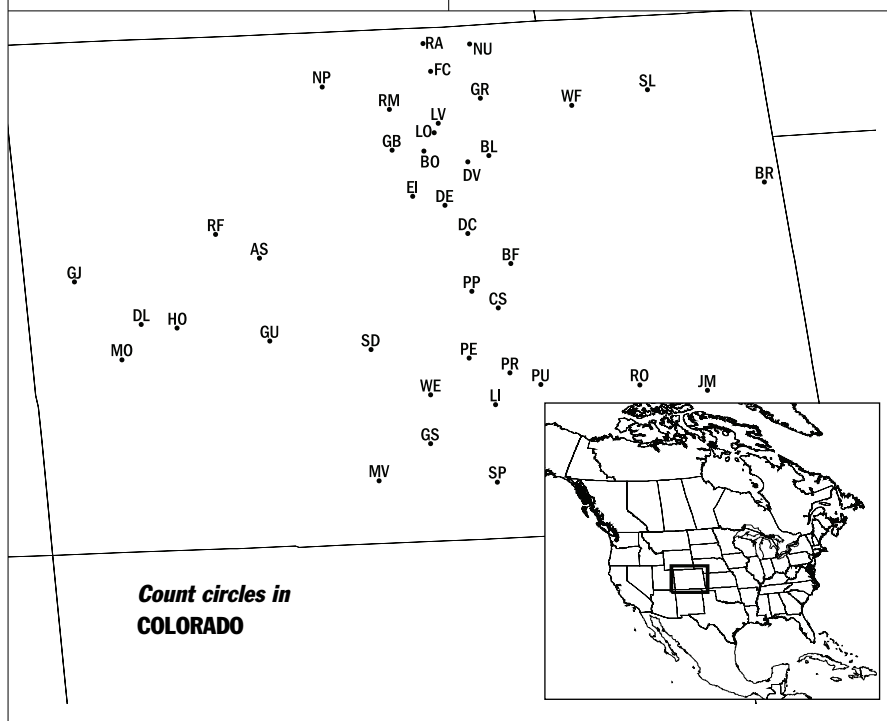


Figure 1. Total Number of Rough-legged Hawks and Northern Shrike recorded on Colorado CBCs.

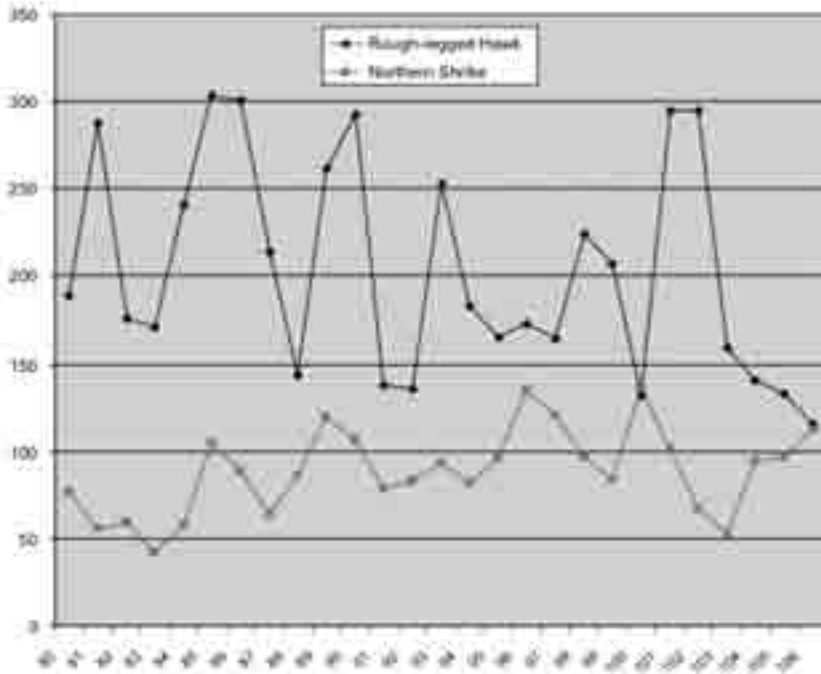
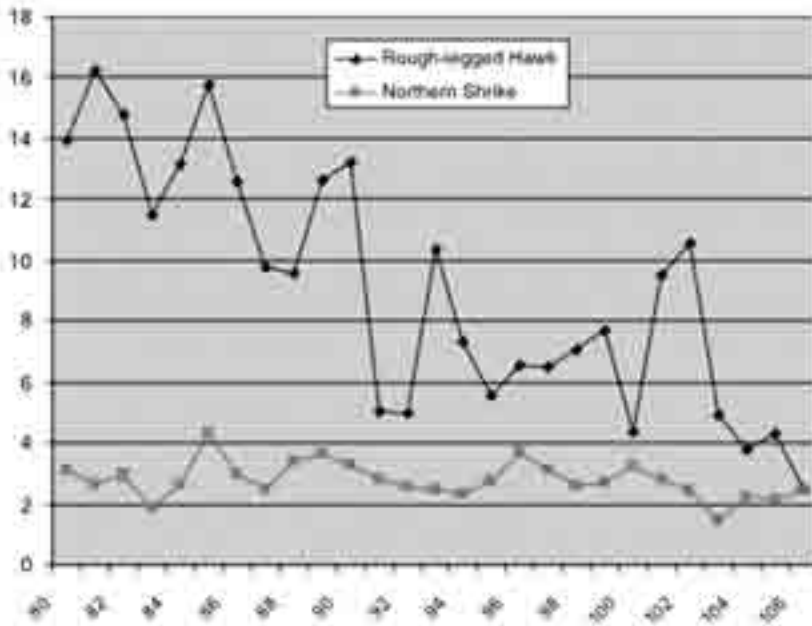


Figure 2. Number of Rough-legged Hawks and Northern Shrike seen per 50 hours of effort on Colorado CBCs.



Hawks? Now that's a great reason to participate on the 107th CBC. As always, these counts wouldn't be possible without the many fine participants and compilers who work so hard to make these counts a success. Thanks to all of you!

NEW MEXICO

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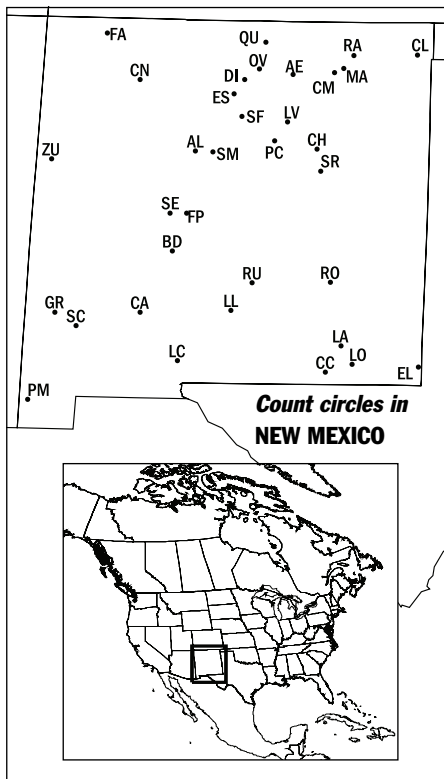
Copious thanks go to those who took to the field this year and covered all 34 of the circles from last year. Thanks to the improved coverage and a mild winter, statewide species count was 244, smashing the record of 235 for the 103rd Christmas Bird Count. This total does not include two exotics, Mandarin Duck and Ringed Turtle-Dove.

Twelve circles found 100 or more species. Caballo led with 121, followed by Lakes Avalon-Brantley with 115, Las Cruces with 114, Albuquerque with 111, and Loving and Gila River, both with 108.

Total number of individuals statewide was about 430,000, well over last year's 325,000. Circles contributing most to these totals included Bosque del Apache and Roswell, with about 80,000 each, and Farmington and Las Cruces, with more than 30,000 each.

The all-time cumulative state checklist stands at 324 this year, with one addition: a lingering Costa's Hummingbird from Las Cruces. A Green Kingfisher was reported and well described on the Loving count by an observer who had previous experience with this species. However, since the bird was not photographed and could never be relocated, this potential first state record must be considered hypothetical.

Looking at lingering migrants, both American Avocet and Black-necked Stilt stayed in Roswell. Caballo had an Ash-throated Flycatcher and a male Bullock's Oriole. Five circles found Orange-crowned Warbler; Las Cruces had a Yellow Warbler; and Albuquerque noted a popular staked-out Pine Warbler on the University of New Mexico campus.



**Count circles in
NEW MEXICO**

Turning to the winners, Wood Ducks were common in the northern part of the state this year. Only seven years after its first state CBC record, Eurasian Collared-Dove continues its advance, with records in 26 circles and first records for Española and Sevilleta. White-winged Dove also did well, with high numbers in several circles and a first record for Española. Sage Thrasher numbers were up generally; Bosque del Apache observers noted their attendance on a good sumac berry crop. Grassland sparrows seem to have recovered from their low point two years ago.

Among altitudinal and latitudinal migrants, Cedar Waxwings, Cassin's Finches, and Evening Grosbeaks were hard to find anywhere. American Robin numbers were down in the north half of the state and up in the south.

Finally, there were a few interesting rarities. We had four loon species in the state: Avalon-Brantley hosted Yellow-billed, Red-throated, and Common, with the fairly new Clabber Hill circle providing Pacific Loon. The Peloncillos count found three White-tailed Kites. It was a good year for gulls, including California Gull in Santa Rosa, a first-year immature Glaucous in the Caballo

circle, and a Black-legged Kittiwake on Lake Brantley. Sevilleta counters found a Gray Catbird. See <http://www.nmt.edu/~shipman/z/cbc/nmcbbc.html> for compiler resources and photographic documentation.

Nick Vaughn, the Sandia Mountains compiler, included this sad note:

Ryan Beaulieu was an annual (and coveted) participant in this count. He was lost to an auto accident in 2005. This time around I missed his participation, I missed his birds, and I really missed his presence at the post-count party. At the end of a long count Ryan was often the only moving object in the room. His mission was to dart from table to table at Dion's Pizza and make a determination as to who got the best bird. More years than not, it was he! Ryan was a great young birder. Fortunately, his young friend Raymond VanBuskirk survived the same accident (they were trying to avoid hitting a deer) and is still here, doing great fieldwork and inspiring the veteran birders with his contagious enthusiasm.

NEVADA/ARIZONA

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For the 106th Christmas Bird Count season a lucky 13 counts were held in Nevada. As usual, all of the Nevada compilers did a great job of entering the data in a timely fashion and turned in very clean counts. Truckee Meadows led the pack with 112 species. They had a very smooth count but cold weather, and frozen water cost them a few species on count day. Notable species from the Truckee count included Mew Gull, Anna's Hummingbird, Black Phoebe, and Chipping Sparrow. The two new species for the count were Cackling Goose and Great-tailed Grackle.

Henderson recorded 107 species, including four Dunlin, eight Tree Swallows, and both American and Least bitterns. Fallon's 92 species included two Lapland Longspurs. Muddy River found

89 species, including a hardy Barn Swallow and a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher. Carson City had quite an interesting count, with probably the worst weather—heavy rain and snow all day. More than a foot of new snow made it extra hard to cover the areas, but even with the difficult conditions counters managed seven new species for the count; even more surprising, they had their all-time high for number of individuals, with 12,536 birds.

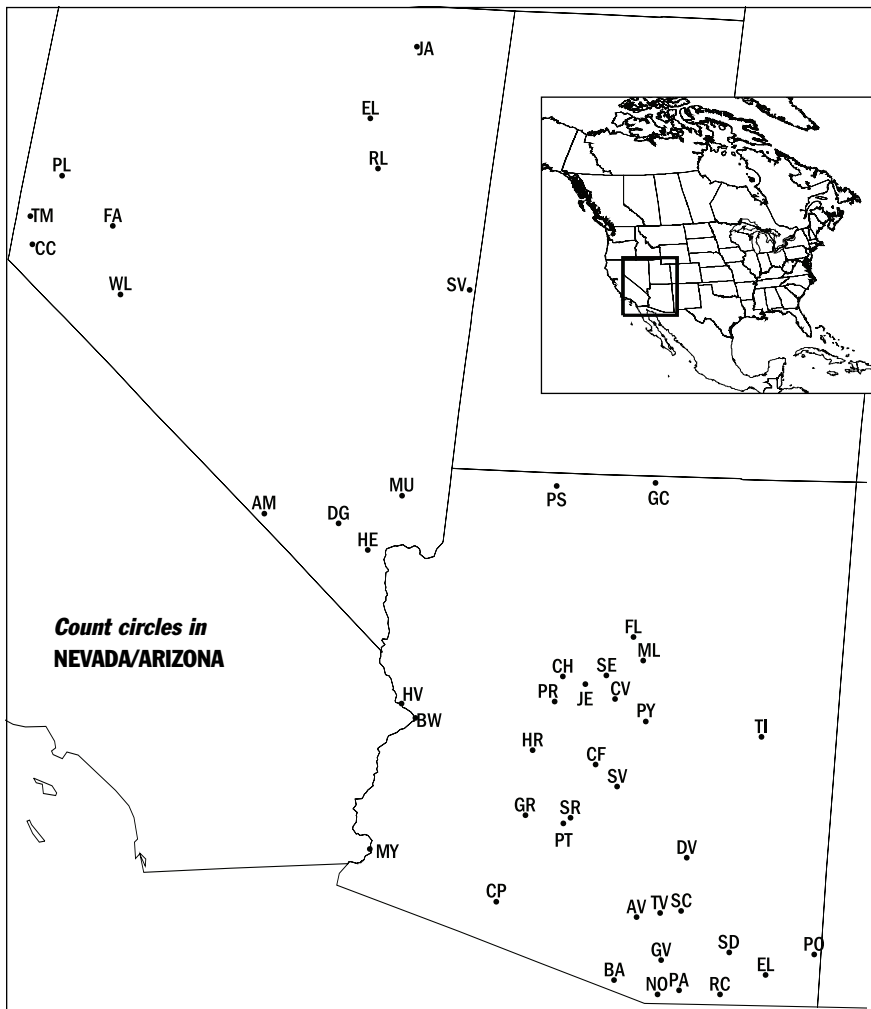
Walker Lake's 79 species included four Snowy Plovers; Pyramid Lake had 75 species, including a Sanderling, Harris's Sparrow, and a male Barrow's Goldeneye. The dedicated birders were hampered by a flood on the Truckee River that dumped mud and debris into the lake; the swift moving water kept some birds off the lake. Both Ash Meadows and Desert Game had 67 species, with Elko right behind at 62. Snake Valley had 52, Ruby Lake had 47, and among Jarbidge's 20 species, three were new to the count.

All of the Nevada counts had interesting birds, and although I don't have space to go through all of them, you can peruse them on the Audubon website.

In Arizona, 33 counts were held this Christmas Bird Count season. I would like to welcome the Payson count, which was added this year. It is great to have more coverage from the Rim Country. By most accounts, this year was a good one for variety of species and for good numbers of birds. As usual the weather plays a major role in the count success. After several years of below-average rainfall, there was above-average rain. This set the stage for a good seed crop for this year's counts, which was reflected in the high numbers



Snowy Plovers (*Charadrius alexandrinus*), Walker Lake, Nevada. Photo/Greg Scyphers



Count circles in NEVADA/ARIZONA

of sparrows counted. We also had an extremely warm winter, with many lingering species and, for the most part, great weather on count day. Unfortunately, with records set for lack of precipitation, we were back in a drought. Some areas of Arizona went more than 140 days without precipitation, shattering the all-time record of 101 days by more than a month!

Once again, Ramsey Canyon led the state in total species, with 156. They have so many habitats within the count circle that there is always a wide variety of species possible. The Gila River, Nogales, Green Valley, Phoenix Salt-Verde, Phoenix-Tres Rios, and Portal counts all had 140 or more species. Twenty-one of the 33 counts had 100 or more species. Most of the compilers commented on the good numbers of sparrows and towhees, and the warm weather helped with lingering species.

Quite a few species of note were observed this year. An incursion of

Fulvous Whistling-Ducks into Arizona was reported this winter, and the Havasu National Wildlife Refuge count was lucky enough to find one, along with the only Tundra Swans in the state. Blue morph geese are rare in Arizona, so the blue form Snow Goose was a good find on the Elfrida count. There has been some increased interest in "Mexican" Mallards, and six counts recorded them, with those at Salt-Verde being out of their normal southeast Arizona range. Nineteen Brown Pelicans was a high number for this time of year on the Bill Williams Count. Neotropical Cormorant numbers have exploded in the Phoenix area, and more than 300 were recorded on just two counts along the Salt and Gila rivers. We've had a pair of Red-shouldered Hawks on the Hassayampa count for several years, but this time they counted four, which may indicate successful nesting. Dusky-capped Flycatchers seemed to be all over the west this winter, and

even though they nest within the Ramsey Canyon circle, this season provided that area's first CBC record. Ash-throated Flycatchers fell into the lingering category, with 118 birds found spread over 18 counts. I am always trying to figure out if Plumbeous or Cassin's vireos are more common in winter in Arizona. This year, as in most, they were even at 15 each. The Carolina Wren that has been present for some time was recorded at Portal, as was a Gray Catbird.

A fair number of eastern warblers were found this winter, and a Magnolia on the Nogales count was quite unusual. A Black-throated Blue was reported at Prescott, and a Chestnut-sided was noted at Martinez Lake-Yuma and Phoenix-Tres Rios. Of the Western warblers, both Hermit and MacGillivray's on the Tucson Valley count were very good finds.

Other good birds included a Western Tanager at Superior and a Streak-backed Oriole on the Patagonia count. There were many sparrows and towhees this season, including 1067 Green-tailed Towhees scattered on 24 counts, and Flagstaff-Mt. Elden and Hassayampa River both had Harris's Sparrows.

I think the data entry went much more smoothly this year for most compilers, and the job was well done. I would like to thank everyone for their time, especially those that help out on more than one count.

WASHINGTON/OREGON

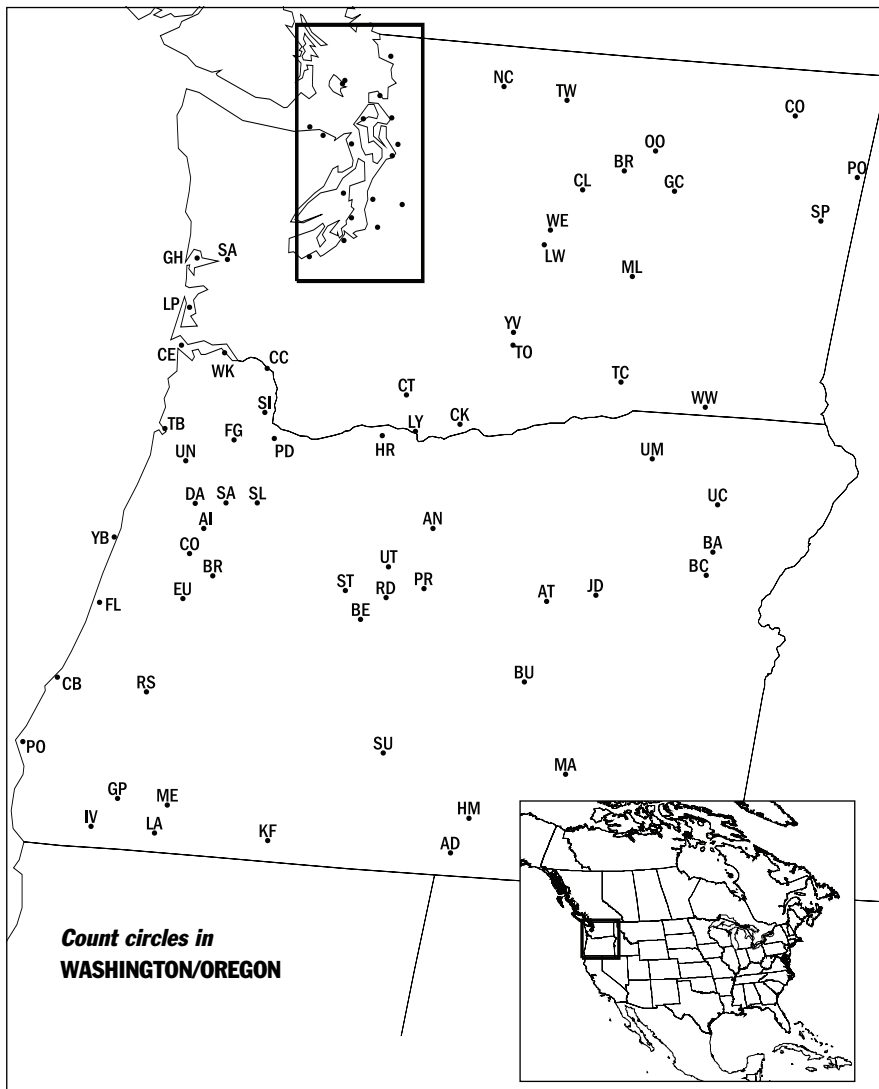
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The 106th Christmas Bird Count season was notable for its irruptions, invasions, and wrecks. Some of these may have been related to La Niña conditions along the West Coast, though meteorologists could not agree on the scope and timing of the event. Oregon climatologists placed the blame for poor weather this winter squarely on La Niña, claiming that indicators for the beginning of the phenomenon were evident last summer. Climatologists for the

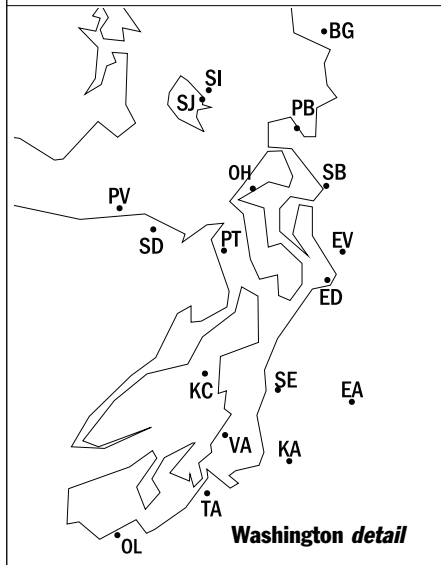


blown inland along the Columbia River and the Willamette Valley, with a high count of 21 at Forest Grove, OR. Snowy Owls were observed catching and eating storm-stressed phalaropes at several sites along the coast.

Perhaps the most remarkable bird seen this season was a well-documented and photographed **Curlew Sandpiper** found at Coos Bay, OR. This would be the 13th record for the state and the first winter record for the Pacific Northwest. Other rare or unusual species include an Ovenbird that remained throughout the winter at a feeder in the Wahkiakum, WA, circle and a well-described Grasshopper Sparrow at Coos Bay, OR. Eleven Eurasian Collared-Doves were reported from Moses Lake, WA. What makes this especially remarkable is that no other count in the region reported this species, making the question of origin doubly puzzling.

Black Phoebes continue their recent range expansion trend. Reports from Oregon's central Willamette Valley have become annual. A remarkable four phoebes were reported from the Tillamook Bay, OR, count. A very well-documented Swainson's Hawk was found on the Eugene count, and it remained throughout the winter. This is only the second well-documented winter record for this species in the region. Could this be an extension of the recent trend seen in California? Overwintering *Selasphorus* (presumably Rufous) hummingbirds are becoming routine away from the south coast of Oregon. An adult male Rufous Hummingbird spent the winter at a feeder in the Columbia Estuary, OR, circle. Numbers of overwintering swallows continue to increase throughout the region. Overwintering Bullock's Orioles were recorded on several counts. An inexplicable shift in Townsend's Warblers distribution away from the coast to the interior was also noted, with a remarkable 141 seen in Eugene, OR.

The weather through the count period was mixed, averaging drier and colder early, then wet and stormy toward the end of the period. With 160, Coos



This was an irruption year for Snowy Owls. Thirty-five were reported in Washington, eight in Oregon, and many more from areas outside count circles. Most records were confined to circles west of the Cascades, with a high count of 16 at Grays Harbor, Washington. Sequim-Dungeness, Washington, and Columbia Estuary, Oregon, both reported five. Owls began to appear as early as mid-November and remained to at least the end of February; many were still being seen in Washington through the end of March. The last irruption of this magnitude was in the winter of 1996–97.

Beginning after the first weekend of the count period, an intense storm series blew in a remarkable wreck of Red Phalaropes. Hundreds were reported along the coast by counts held during or after the storms, with a high count of 2811 at Port Orford, OR. Smaller numbers were

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) disagree, stating that the indicators only began to show themselves in January. Whatever the cause, the weather almost certainly played a part in this season's results for the region.