Bay, OR, once again had the highest species total; followed by Sequim-Dungeness, WA, at 142; Port Orford, OR, at 141; and Grays Harbor, WA, at 138. High counts east of the Cascades included Tri-Cities, WA, at 106; Lyle, WA, at 102; and Klamath Falls, OR, at 95.

Unusual species were generally well documented. In fact, many compilers sent in details for species that did not require documentation. A sapsucker in Seattle, WA, identified secondhand from photos not available to the compiler or this reviewer, was downgraded from Red-naped to Red-naped/Yellow-bellied, since no descriptive details were provided and both of these can occur in the winter in western Washington. Reports of female/immature Rufous Hummingbirds from the Oregon coast were downgraded to *Selasphorus* sp. As is the custom, all reports of alleged Northwestern Crows were changed to crow sp. A flock of Swainson's Thrushes, submitted without details, was deleted.

CALIFORNIA

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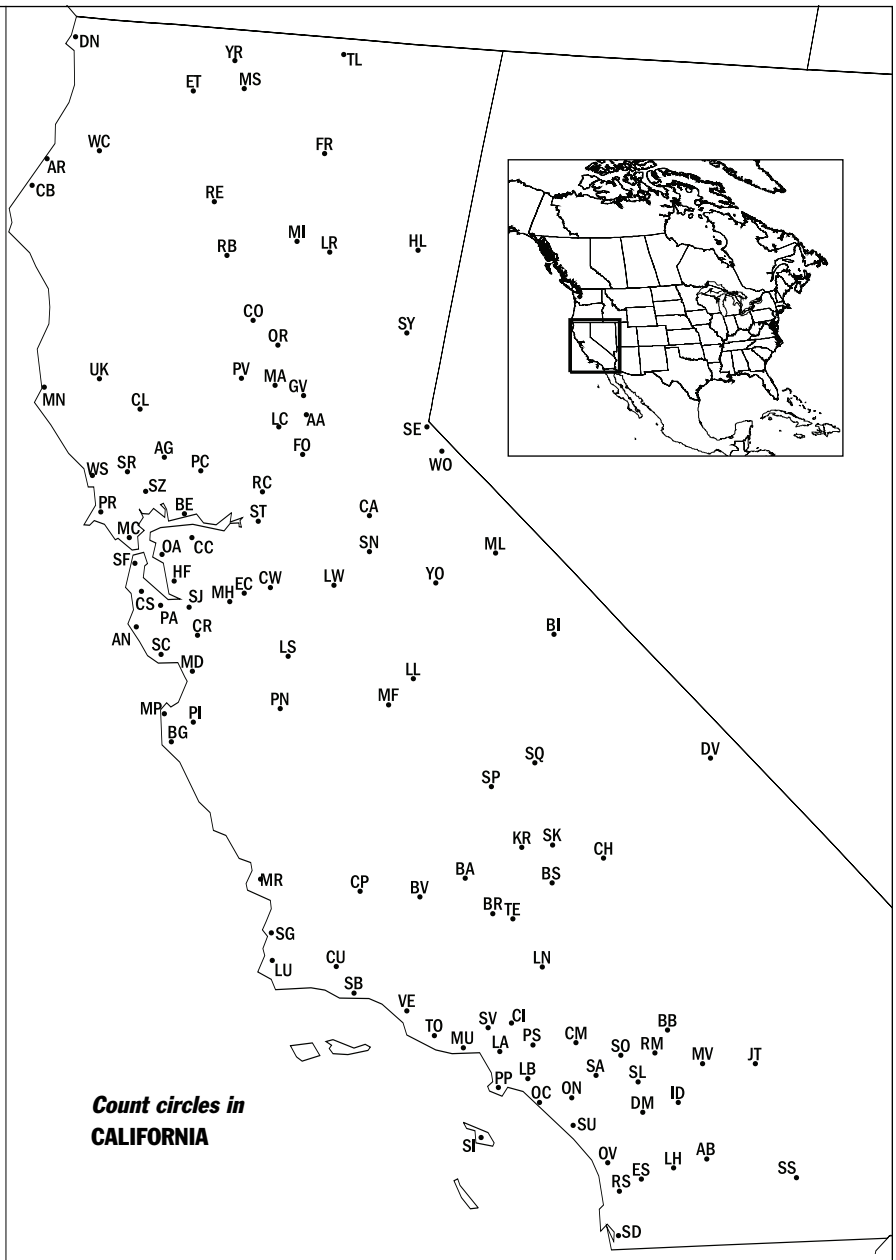

Count circles in **CALIFORNIA**

During this Christmas Bird Count season 114 counts were completed in California, one less than last year. Three counts tied with a top species total of 200: Santa Barbara, San Diego, and Orange County (coastal). Point Reyes managed an amazing 195 participants. Many compilers complained that inclement weather severely hampered efforts by diminishing the number of participants, limiting access, and therefore affecting the number of birds seen. More than half of the counts reported rain or snow on their count day. What follows are the highlights for California for the 106th season.

Two Fulvous Whistling-Ducks, one on the Pasadena-San Gabriel count and another on the Santa Barbara count, were the first recorded on a Christmas count in the past 10 years. Eighty-six Eurasian Wigeon were reported from 38 count circles. A widely seen Baikal Teal was present on the La Purisima count and is under review with the California Bird Record Committee (CBRC). Eurasian Green-winged Teal were substantiated from the Honey Lake and Moss Landing counts; Centerville Beach to King Salmon also reported this species but provided no details. Single Tufted Ducks were reported from Contra Costa, Crystal Springs, and Oakland. Seven count circles reported a total of 31 Harlequin Ducks, with 22 in Del Norte. Arcata, Centerville Beach to King Salmon, and Monterey Peninsula each reported two, while singles were found in Crystal Springs and Oakland. Three Long-tailed Ducks were photographed on the Morro Bay count, and a single individual was also photographed on the San Diego count. Centerville Beach to King Salmon, Del Norte, and Moss Landing also reported single Long-tailed Ducks, and Caswell-Westley reported one during the count week period. Finally, details were convincing for five different hybrid ducks: a Eurasian x American Green-winged Teal photographed on the Palo Alto count, a Barrow's Goldeneye x Hooded Merganser

photographed on the Oakland count, two Bufflehead x Hooded Merganser on the Oakland count, and a Blue-winged x Cinnamon Teal that remained for the winter in San Diego. One Pacific Loon at Santa Clarita was the only inland report of this species.

The Orange County (coastal) and San Diego counts each recorded two Reddish Egrets. Two Yellow-crowned Night-Herons were found on the San Diego count. A Wood Stork endured for its 18th year on the Escondido count. Four radio-collared California Condors were reported on the Pinnacles National Monument count; two others were reported on the Big Sur count. A Broad-winged Hawk was well documented and photographed in the Orange County (northeastern) circle. Two Swainson's Hawks were accompanied with good documentation, one on the Long Beach count, another on the Monterey Peninsula count; two others were reported from Rio Consumnes. Single Zone-tailed Hawks were seen in Escondido and Santa Barbara.

Pacific Golden-Plovers were reported from Caswell-Westley (5), Long Beach (2), Coastal Orange County (1), and San Diego (3). Mendocino Coast, Milburn-Fresno, and Sonoma Valley also had reports of single Pacific Golden-Plovers during the count week period. Mountain Plovers were reported on four counts: 99 at Carrizo Plains, 68 at Salton Sea (south), 35 at Lancaster, and eight at La Purisima. A Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, present for some time, remained to be counted on the San Jose count. A Ruff, also present for some time, was photographed on the Salton Sea (south) count. Seven Wilson's Phalaropes were also reported on the Salton Sea (south) count, where they are a rare winter visitor. Red Phalaropes were recorded in larger than usual numbers from 23 count circles across the state. Centerville Beach to King Salmon reported more than 2000 birds, and Monterey Peninsula reported more than 700 individuals. Other counts reporting this species in the hundreds include Año Nuevo (214), Marin County (southern) (354), Moss Landing (129), Mendocino Coast (230), and San Francisco (537). Single-digit finds of this species, too numerous to mention, were also scattered across the state, including two individuals inland on the Angwin CBC.

A Franklin's Gull was well described for the Santa Barbara count. Ten Glaucous Gulls were reported statewide, with three well-described birds on the Arcata count. Good details were also provided for single birds on counts from Año Nuevo, Marin County (southern), Moss Landing, and Redding. Crystal Springs, Del Norte County, Mendocino Coast, and Santa Catalina Island also reported single Glaucous Gulls but provided no details on these sightings. Twenty-eight Black-legged Kittiwakes were reported on the Arcata count, and singles were found at Centerville Beach to King Salmon, Crystal Springs, Moss Landing, Santa Barbara, and Ventura. Additionally, Palos Verde Peninsula recorded one during count week.

Eurasian Collared-Doves were new on many counts again this year, with 30 count circles reporting 700 individuals. Spotted Dove continues to be reported in small numbers from Bakersfield, San Bernardino Valley, Ventura, Long Beach, Santa Catalina Island, and, during the count week, at Santa Barbara. White-winged Doves continue a strong showing on the Anza-Borrego count, with 550 reported, and single birds ventured far enough to be found on the San Diego and Salton Sea (south) counts. Twenty-four Inca Doves were reported from Death Valley and 19 from the Salton Sea (south) count. These two counts also reported the only Ruddy Ground-Doves, with Salton Sea (south) finding 12 and Death Valley reporting one.

A photographed and well-described Lesser Nighthawk was submitted on the Santa Barbara count. A second individual was reported from a nearby count, but, sadly, no details accompany the latter claim. Single Common Poorwills were reported from Bear Valley Springs, Orange County (northeastern), Rancho Santa Fe, Santa Cruz County, and Springville. Single Broad-billed Hummingbirds—a photographed adult male from Anza Borrego, a long-staying bird from Orange County (northeastern), and a female plumaged bird from San Juan Capistrano—are currently under the review of the CBRC. Again, a single Gila Woodpecker was found on the Salton Sea (south) count. Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were found at Arcata, Bishop, Morro Bay, Palo Alto, Redlands Mill Creek, and San Fernando Valley. Point Reyes also recorded this species during the count week period.

Hammond's Flycatchers showed well this year, with documented individuals on the Lincoln, Long Beach, Orange County (coastal), and San Diego CBCs. The 26 Gray Flycatchers seen on 13 counts were well more than are usually encountered during a CBC season. Nine "Western" or Pacific-slope Flycatchers on five counts round out the *Empidonax* flycatchers this season. Seven Eastern Phoebes on as many counts was slightly more than usual. The 18 Vermilion Flycatchers found on 11 counts was an all-time record, with single individuals making it as far north as the coastal Moss Landing and Point Reyes Peninsula CBCs. Six Dusky-capped Flycatchers—singles at Claremont, Long Beach, Orange County (coastal), Pasadena, Santa Barbara, and Salton Sea (south), had sufficient documentation to forward on to the CBRC. An excellently described Ash-throated Flycatcher was reported on the Long Beach count. Tropical Kingbirds on the Long Beach, Santa Barbara, and San Diego CBCs, as well as a count week bird on the Los Angeles count, was a nice tally for this species. Additionally, Thick-billed Kingbirds on the Palos Verdes Peninsula and Rancho Santa Fe counts (under review with the CBRC) round out an impressive tyrant flycatcher list.

A Northern Shrike found during count week on the Fall River Mills CBC was the only one reported this season. A Bell's Vireo was recorded on the Long

Dusky-capped Flycatcher *(Myiarchus tuberculifer)*, Santa Barbara, California. Photo/Jim Greaves

Tropical Kingbird *(Tyrannus melancholicus)*, Long Beach-El Dorado, California. Photo/Karen Gilbert

Beach count. Fourteen Plumbeous Vireos on 12 counts plus three more recorded during count week is substantially more than are expected during a typical CBC season. Eight Cassin's Vireos on seven different counts and a Warbling Vireo on the San Diego CBC complete this season's vireo list.

A well-documented Blue Jay on the Benicia count, if accepted by the CBRC, will be only the 12th ever recorded in the state. A Sage Thrasher was found on the Morro Bay count, where they are rare, and the Long Beach CBC recorded a Brown Thrasher. A Sprague's Pipit was photographed on the Salton Sea (south) count and is under review by the CBRC. A Bohemian Waxwing on the Mono Lake CBC during count week was the only one reported this year.

California counters found 19 species of wood warblers this season, still a little below average, but on par with the number of species seen in the past few years. Highlights in this group include a Tennessee Warbler on the Centerville Beach to King Salmon CBC. There were 31 Nashville Warblers on 13 counts plus one seen during count week. Individual Northern Parulas were recorded on the Morro Bay and Palos Verdes Peninsula CBCs, with an additional individual seen in San Francisco during count week. Thirty-one Yellow Warblers on 16 counts plus one seen during the count week period is about normal. Chestnut-sided Warblers were found on both Orange County CBCs as well as the Pasadena-San Gabriel count. Seventy-four Black-throated Gray Warblers plus one during count week were noted on 19 counts. Black-throated Green Warblers were seen on the Orange County (coastal), Redlands (Mill Creek), and the San Bernardino CBCs. Thirteen Hermit Warblers were recorded on 11 CBCs. A Grace's Warbler on the Rancho Santa Fe CBC is under review. There were 19 Palm Warblers seen on 12 CBCs (plus two more during count week). Sixteen Black-and-white Warblers were tallied on 12 different counts, and nine American Redstarts were recorded on six different counts. Northern Waterthrushes were found on the Arcata, Centerville Beach to King Salmon, and Santa Barbara counts, with another during count week on the Palo Alto CBC. Twenty counts reported Wilson's Warblers, with a total of 61 individuals found this season. Painted Redstarts, absent for a decade in California during the CBC period, made a phenomenal showing this season. Two birds were recorded on the San Diego CBC, and single birds were present in Santa Clarita, Claremont, Pasadena-San Gabriel Valley, and Rancho Santa Fe.

The eight Summer Tanagers on six CBCs (plus one count week) are slightly fewer than are normally encountered during a season. There were 45 Western Tanagers on 17 counts. Five Green-tailed Towhees were seen on as many CBCs. The Mono Lake CBC had two American Tree Sparrows. Additionally, Clay-colored Sparrows were on the Centerville Beach to King Salmon count and, during count week, on the Ventura CBC. A Brewer's and a Black-chinned sparrow each wandered toward the coast, ending up on the Escondido CBC. The only Lark Bunting this season was found on the Carrizo Plain CBC. Three Grasshopper Sparrows on the Calero-Morgan Hill CBC were well documented, as was a photographed individual on the San Bernardino count. Red Fox Sparrows of the *iliaca/zaboria* complex were found on the Arcata and Oakland CBCs. Fifty Swamp Sparrows were found on 19 counts. There were 204 White-throated Sparrows on 44 CBCs, plus a count period bird. The only Harris's Sparrows found were individuals on the Lake Almanor and Orange County (coastal) counts. A Dark-eyed (pink-sided) Junco was a nice find on the Lake Henshaw CBC. Ten McCown's Longspurs were found at Salton Sea (south), as was a Smith's Longspur, the latter a much-photographed individual that is currently undergoing review with the CBRC. Four Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were found on as many counts, plus another two were reported during the count week period. Additionally, two Black-headed Grosbeaks were found on two counts, with a third individual recorded during count week.

Lazuli and Painted buntings were present this season, the former on the Pasadena-San Gabriel Valley count, the latter a count week bird present in Santa Barbara. Common Grackles were found and photographed on the Morro Bay and San Diego CBCs and are currently being reviewed by the CBRC. Four Orchard Orioles were recorded this season, with one individual on the Orange County (coastal) CBC and three on the San Francisco count. Two Hooded Orioles were noted on the Los Angeles CBC, along with individual birds on the Orange County (northeastern) and Santa Barbara counts. Forty-six Bullock's Orioles on 14 CBCs (plus one during count week) was more than are usually reported. Baltimore Orioles were

Western Screech-Owl *(Megascops kennicottii),* Sonoma Valley, California. Photo/Shelly Arrowsmith

found on the Orange County (coastal), Palos Verdes Peninsula, Santa Barbara, and Los Angeles counts. Additionally, two Scott's Orioles were seen on the Orange County (northeastern) count, along with one on the Santa Barbara CBC. Finally, 10 Common Redpolls from the Eagle Lake count are under review with the CBRC.

Thanks once again to the compilers and individuals who respond to requests for documentation. Also, thanks go to compilers who do the unpleasant job of removing birds that are not sufficiently documented, thus saving editors from time-consuming follow-ups. Removing a bird is not something that is taken lightly, but at times we feel it necessary. Birds that we removed from the database this year include a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker from the Long Beach count, because the details provided did not address relevant identification marks. Birds that were removed due to a complete lack of documentation include an Eastern Phoebe from San Jacinto Lake, a Thick-billed Kingbird from Ventura, and both a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and Clay-colored Sparrow from the Santa Maria-Guadalupe count. Finally, we understand that the editorial codes we use are often received as a pat on the back or a kick in the pants, but an alternative view we would like considered is that these codes are meant for researchers and are a way to clue them in as to what they might expect to find if they were to inquire further about a bird that is not expected because it is out of range or out of season. We hope the season was an enjoyable one for all involved and that the weather is a little more inviting next year!

HAWAII/PACIFIC ISLANDS

Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands and Guam

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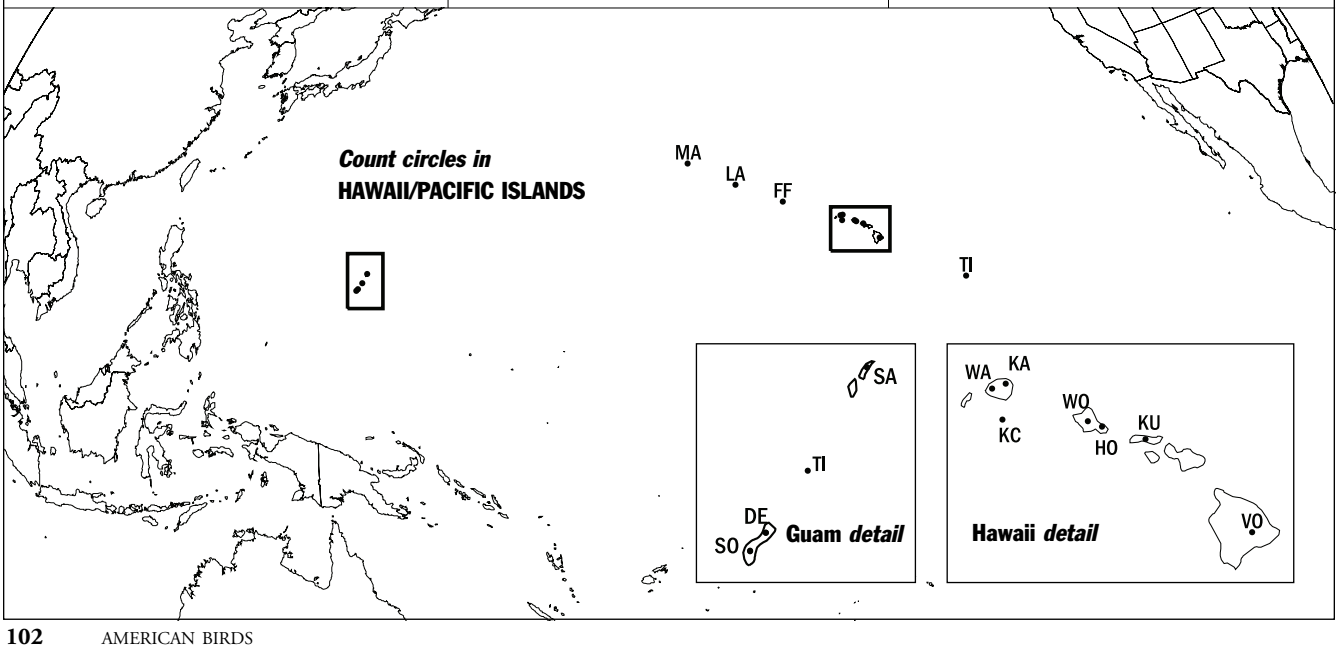
The 106th Christmas Bird Counts for the Hawaii and Northwest Islands region as well as for the Pacific Islands region (Mariana Islands) were held under generally fine weather conditions. For the Hawaii/Northwest region, there were just 10 count circles this year: Midway, Laysan, French Frigate Shoals, Kaulakahi Channel (new), Kapa'a and Waimea on Kauai, Honolulu and Waipio on Oahu, Kualapu'u on Molokai, and Volcano on Hawaii Island. Notably absent were the two Maui circles. Participation and coverage in main Hawaiian Islands was very low this year. All five Mariana Island circles were visited in the 106th count.

As in past years the Northwest Island CBCs took advantage of the annual albatross count conducted simultaneously by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Albatross numbers appear to be up, with relatively high counts of nearly half a million active nests on Midway, at a ratio of 20 Laysan Albatross to one Black-footed Albatross. A lone Short-tailed Albatross was seen. It is heartening to report that, according to the American Bird Conservancy, the longline fishery bycatch of these three magnificent seabirds has greatly decreased, both in Hawaii and on the Alaska feeding grounds (*Bird Calls,* March 2006). Back on the main islands, a very high count of 138 Laysan Albatross was recorded in the Kapa'a circle, Kauai. Oddly, no vagrant seabirds were reported this year.

High counts among the resident waterbirds were 267 Hawaiian Coots at Waipio, Oahu, and 77 Hawaiian



Moorhens and 213 Hawaiian Stilts at Kapa'a, Kauai. Certain migratory waterfowl species seem to "make it big" in particular years, and this year was no exception. A rare vagrant, the Greater White-fronted Goose, was seen at Kauai's Hanalei National Wildlife Refuge, and another on Oahu Island's Waipio count. The other unusually frequent goose species was the Brant, with one each at French Frigate Shoals and the Honolulu and Waipio circles, Oahu. By contrast, no Canada Geese were reported, and only one Cackling Goose showed up, on Laysan Island. High counts of 84 Northern Pintail were seen at Kualapu'u, Molokai; 31 American Wigeon at Waipio, Oahu (especially relative to small numbers of other migratory species seen); 22 Lesser Scaup at Kualapuu; and four Canvasback for Kapa'a, Kauai.

Last year's high count of Cattle Egret on Midway dropped to only one bird this year, thanks to a removal operation of this predatory species, which is destructive to nesting seabirds. Unusual migratory shorebird species and high counts of regular ones included a Bar-tailed Godwit and a Red Knot on Laysan, a Bristle-thighed Curlew in the Honolulu circle, and a Lesser Yellowlegs in the Kualapu'u, Molokai, circle. A Peregrine Falcon was seen at Kapa'a.

Only Kauai Island reported native songbirds of interest, including three Puaiohi, a critically endangered solitaire, and the Akikiki, an imperiled Hawaiian honeycreeper; fair numbers of other native forest birds were reported from this circle as well. Among the exotic species were a high count of 50 Rose-ringed Parakeets and a Mariana Swiftlet, both on the Honolulu count. Three species that are obviously spreading and increasing on Oahu were reported as high counts for Waipio: 26 Mourning Doves (first reported last year), 159 Red-whiskered Bulbuls, and 66 Saffron Finches.

The reports of vagrants on the Mariana Island CBCs are always impressive, but this year topped them all. Most spectacular was a flock of eight Tundra Swans reported from Tinian, the first record of this species on any Mariana Island count, and utterly unexpected, particularly in such numbers. Ten swans were initially reported, but within a few days of arriving on Tinian only 8 adults were seen. It appears that all the swans eventually died on Tinian, with carcasses sighted at Lake Hagoi. Other unusual waterfowl were six Gadwall, a Mallard, a Common Pochard, and a Lesser Scaup on Saipan, as well as a Garganey on Southern Guam. A Black Kite turned up on Tinian. Noteworthy shorebird sightings included five Marsh Sandpipers, seven Black-winged Stilts, and a Little Ringed Plover on Saipan, and a Great Knot and five Red-necked Stints on Southern Guam. Two Black-headed Gulls on Saipan and a Black-naped Tern on Rota were vagrants, one from north Asia, the other from the tropical Pacific. A count of 39 Black Francolins was very high for Southern Guam. Seven vagrant wintering Barn Swallows were spotted on Saipan and two on Tinian. The introduced Orange-cheeked Waxbill may be increasing on Saipan; at 54 birds, this year's count was the highest yet.

MEXICO/BELIZE

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The Mexico and Belize region continues to grow every year. This year three new CBC circles from Mexico were added (Guadalajara, Navopatia, and Ensenada de La Paz). Overall, 22 circles were active this winter—20 from Mexico and two from Belize. All told, 333 observers participated, recording 154,320 individuals of 727 species.

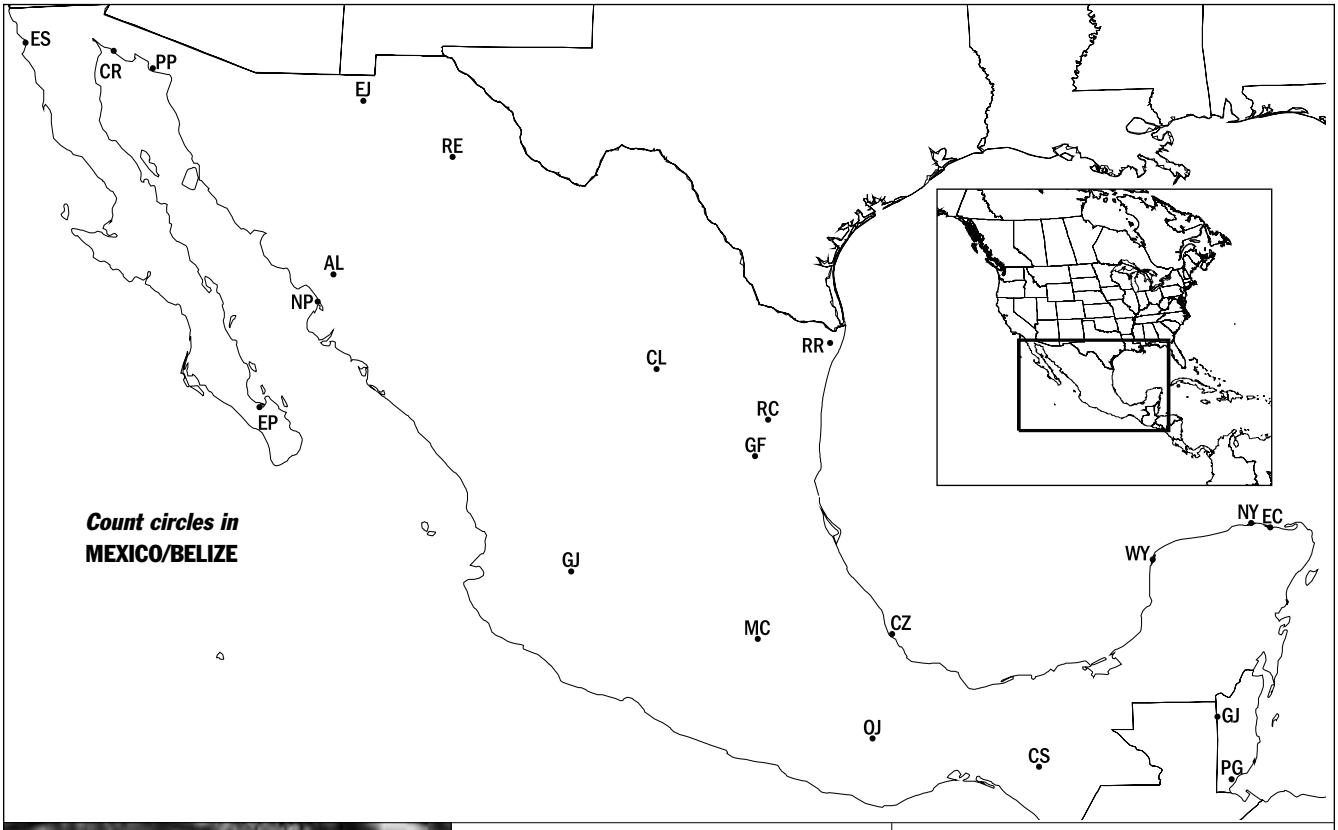
Broad-winged Hawk *(Buteo platypterus)*, Ensenada, Baja California, Mexico. Photo/Peter Gaede

The circles with the highest diversity of bird species were Punta Gorda, Belize (238 species), Ensenada, Baja California (213), Gallon Jug, Belize (211), Gomez Farias, Tamaulipas (194), and Oaxaca de Juarez (179). As it has for the last few years, Ensenada, Baja California, stands out with 29,752 birds, the highest number recorded; followed by Ensenada de La Paz with 20,222; Ejido San Pedro, Chihuahua, with 15,563; and Rancho Palomino, Chihuahua, with 12,878.

The species seen in highest numbers within the Mexico-Belize region were Western Sandpiper (12,743 individuals recorded in Ensenada de La Paz), Brown-headed Cowbird (4707 individuals recorded in Guadalajara), Western Gull (3554 individuals recorded in Ensenada, Baja California), sparrow sp. (3012 individuals recorded in Ejido San Pedro), and Brewer's Sparrow (2788 individuals recorded in Ejido San Pedro).

A high number of unusual species were noted; however, many were not documented. Several interesting species were recorded as "unusual" with very good descriptions: Eurasian Collared-Dove (Rancho Rincon de Anacahuitas, Tamaulipas), Wilson's Snipe, Royal Tern, Rock Pigeon, and Common Pauraque (all recorded in Rio Corona, Tamaulipas), Long-tailed Duck, Tropical Kingbird, American Redstart, MacGillivray's Warbler, and Hooded Oriole (all recorded in Ensenada, Baja California).

Great photos were taken for unusual and interesting species in Puerto Penasco Sonora (Mew Gull, Brant, and Thayer's Gull), and Ensenada, Baja California (exotic African Darter, Broad-winged Hawk, Costa's Hummingbird, Gray Flycatcher, Pacific-slope Flycatcher, Bell's Vireo, Varied Thrush, Nashville Warbler, Black-throated Gray Warbler, Pine Warbler, Clay-colored Sparrow, and White-throated Sparrow). Thank you very



Nashville Warbler *(Vermivora ruficapilla)*, Ensenada, Baja California, Mexico. Photo/Robert A. Hamilton

much to photographers and compilers for sending this extraordinary material!

Fortunately, more and more birders are getting involved in the CBC for this region, and the interest for opening new circles continues to grow. However, a big challenge remains: the capacity for giving continuity to existing circles. Unfortunately, some circles have been abandoned because compilers live far away or even out of the country, which makes it difficult to follow up on the counts. We hope more local birders get involved in these circles so we can find some way to ensure their continuity.

Thanks to all 106th CBC participants—please keep your enthusiasm and excitement for future Christmas Bird Counts. We wish all of you a wonderful and interesting counting season next year.

CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICA

Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Panama, Peru, and Trinidad

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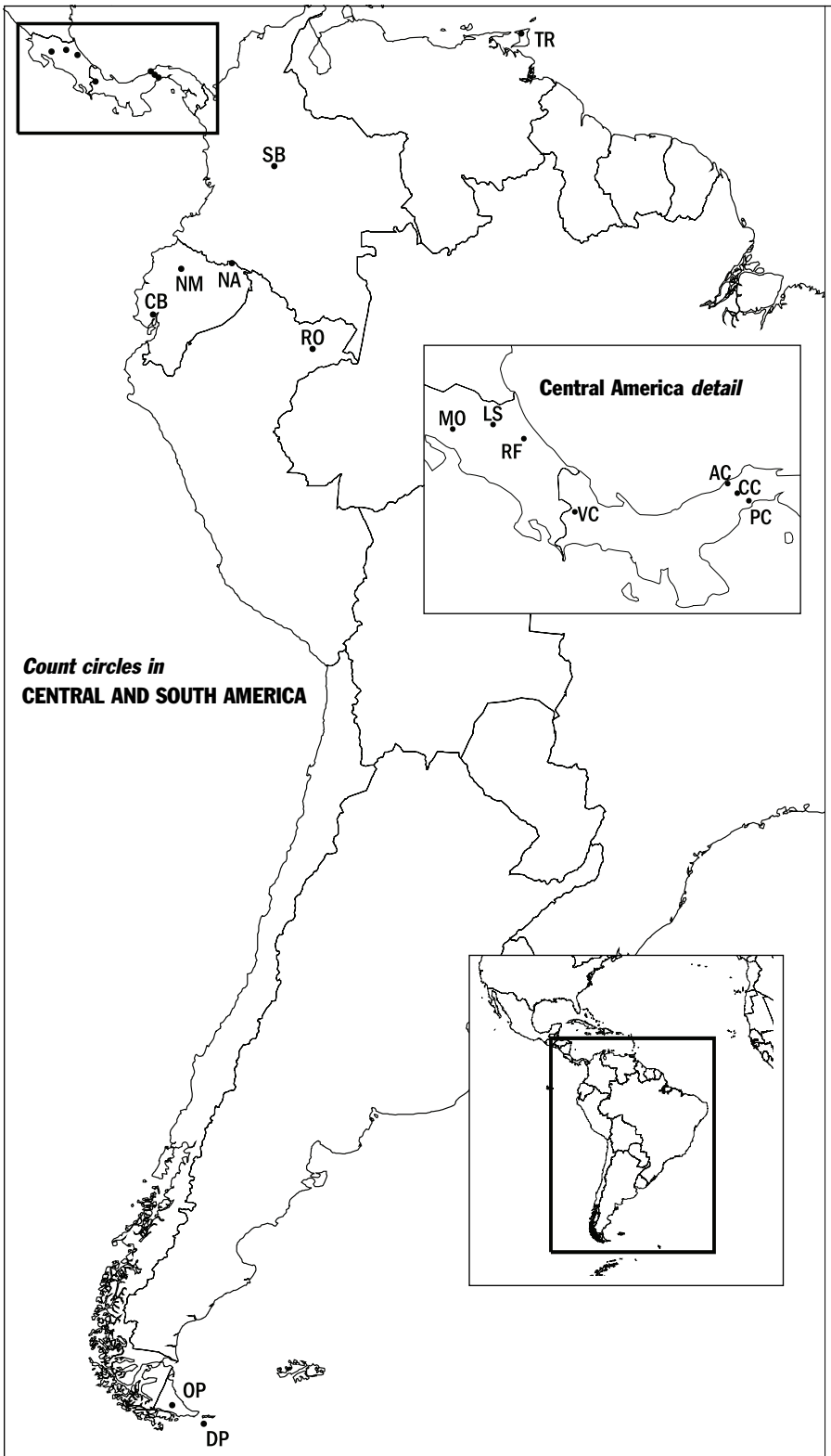
Rain Forest Aerial Tram, Costa Rica, registered a new all-time high species count for North America, with 403. Still reigning as the highest count of all time, glitches in last year's list total forgiven, is Napo, Ecuador, with more than 472 species (the total may be as high as 480, pending acceptance of the taxonomy in Ecuador's field guide). Mindo-Tandayapa, Ecuador, was the only other 400-species barrier breaker, with 413. Throughout the region, a total of 15 counts were conducted and completed online. I can only convey sympathy once again to compilers for the chaotic taxonomic sequence in the data entry forms. It is a known problem, and, unfortunately, a final fix must wait until the American Ornithology Union finalizes a South American bird checklist.

Sabana de Bogota, Colombia, recorded nine Whispering Ibis *(Phimosus infuscatus)* for the fourth time on its CBC, but this was the first flock. This species could not be added to the database by the compiler (or editor as of this writing), but will be added to the archived database. Carib Grackle was seen for the first time on this count and is a species with only three recent records from the area (an invading species?). A snipe listed as Common Snipe *(Gallinago gallinago)* and identified by voice, necessary in South America, was probably a Wilson's Snipe *(G. delicata)* of North America, a recent split. The Old World species, retaining the name Common Snipe, would be new to South America. Lastly, for a second time a large flock of Gray-breasted Martins occurred on the count, and compiler Gary Stiles noted that the erratic movements of these martins is poorly understood.

Dry and drought-like conditions reportedly plagued counts from Ecuador to Peru. The dawn chorus was notably



muted relative to previous years at Rio Orosa, Peru, according to compiler Devon Graham. A similar lament was heard from Eric Von Horstman, compiler for Cerro Blanco-Chongon-Puerto Hondo Estuary, Ecuador, where there also was a paucity of flycatchers (no Pacific Royal Flycatchers!).

At Mindo-Tandayapa, Ecuador, Lani Miller expressed some competitive spirit between this count and the count she compiles at Napo, an area of higher species richness. For the record, Lani wanted to note errors that have crept into the count over the years and wants to take full credit for these (Okay, but it's a team effort, Lani.). She says that to the best of her knowledge, the following species have never occurred in the Mindo circle: Brown-rumped Tapaculo, Golden-headed Manakin, Great Crested Flycatcher, Black-breasted Puffbird, Blue-and-gold Tanager, Black-faced Dacnis, and Red-rumped Cacique. Also, Lani reported several data entry errors over the years, and these have now been corrected. *Saludos a todos!*

Editor's Note: Audubon fully understands the difficulties that compilers in Latin America may face with online data entry. Internet access is often unavailable, and even where available it may be slow and very expensive. Thus we remind compilers again that if any difficulties are encountered with online data entry, please remember that data may be sent via email or air mail to Audubon for data entry by CBC staff. —GSL

WEST INDIES/BERMUDA

Bahamas, Bermuda, Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands

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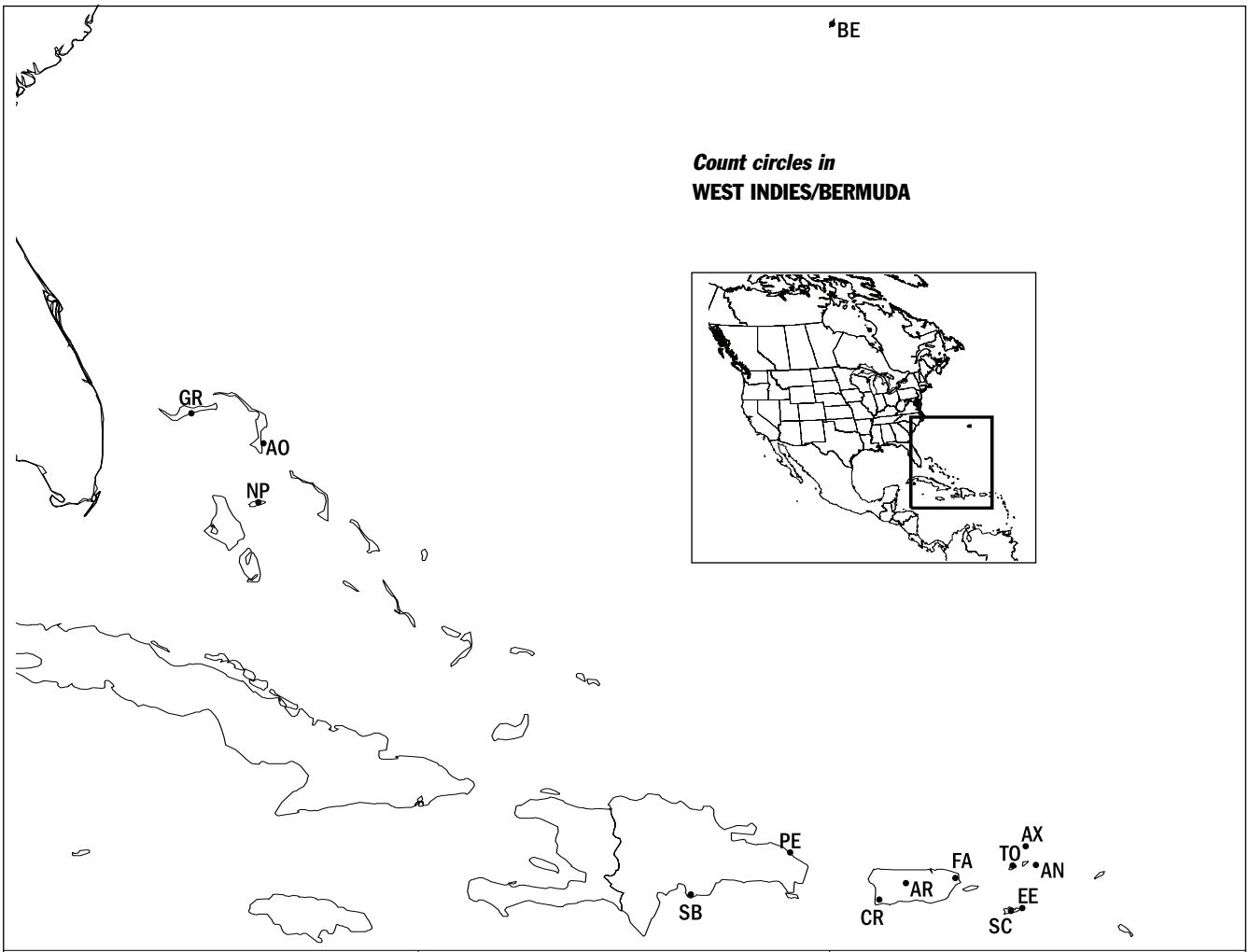
The 106th Christmas Bird Count saw the inclusion of a new area in the Dominican Republic—Puerto Escondido, a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve—and a revisit to Anegada, British Virgin Islands, after a 17-year hiatus. In all there were 12 Antillean counts and Bermuda. This year may have been the best in recent times, with five Antillean counts tallying more than 100 species. Cabo Rojo, Puerto Rico, took top honors at 121, followed by Arecibo, Puerto Rico, with 113. Puerto Rico's Fajardo and Cabo Rojo circles each had 51 participants, which may be a record effort there, followed by Arecibo and Grand Bahama with 25 participants each. Puerto Rico had a superlative effort this year, and the numbers of birds counted (15,752) and the species richness are reflected in that effort. Great job!

A long tradition of CBCs in the U.S. Virgin Islands at St. Thomas and St. John



and three more in Puerto Rico seems to be withering. Two counts in the Bahamas have also fallen away. Had all the previous CBCs from the region been conducted this year there would be a total of 22. The latitudinal position of these counts provides a valuable transect on distribution and temporal consistency. Where will the next cadre of committed bird enthusiasts come from? Nearly all of these locations have shown strong leadership in environmental education and resource stewardship in the past. Christmas Bird Counts are a time to celebrate and reflect on the state of avian resources, even when the future might look dim for habitat and species protection. It is the annual day of fieldwork that gives future generations of birders, researchers, and the birds themselves some hope of sustainability when the numbers are tallied at the end of the day. These efforts provide some notion of how our shared environment and the quality of life may be improved, or at least help plan for some improvement. I am personally saddened when we lose a count for no other reason than lack of interest.

As to the future, be certain to look over the Puerto Escondido count for a tantalizing list of birds, including Bicknell's, La Selle's, and Red-legged thrushes. Also tallied were Gray-fronted Quail-Dove, Least Pauraque, and White-winged Warbler. Check it out for yourself. The most outstanding record in this count, and perhaps the region, is **Golden Swallow.** This species is a two-island endemic from Jamaica and Hispaniola, and it has not been reported from Jamaica for a very long time. Having three reported from this protected area is a real coup. What a count! Congratulations to the organizers and participants of this CBC. I trust this area will not lack sustained interest for next year and beyond.

Bermuda had several birds among the 103 species that remained from Hurricane Wilma fallout, including a Magnificent Frigatebird, Laughing Gulls, and Royal and Sandwich terns, as well as a vagrant Great Cormorant from the north. Where else could you have a frigatebird and a Great Cormorant? At Arecibo, the total number of individuals exceeded 6900, a record for that circle. The three Bahamas counts also had a great effort, with more than 12,400 individuals counted and two circles with more than 100 species. In the American and British Virgin Islands we find a documented expansion or recovery of Least Grebe on St. Croix and, more recently, Tortola. The Anegada, British Virgin Islands, circle noted Puerto Rican Flycatcher, which may be pioneering the eastern terminus of the species' range. These counts have also recorded the explosive colonization of the eastern Puerto Rico Bank and northern Lesser Antilles by White-winged Dove. Other rapid colonization by perhaps less desirable species such as Eurasian Collared-Dove and House Sparrow has also been documented by CBC results in these locations.