

2016

Matanuska Valley Christmas Bird Count (CBC) Feeder Counter Instructions

Count Day: Sunday, December 18, 2016

Count Week: 15-17 & 19-21 December 2016

Count Day Bad Weather Backup Day: For 2016, there is no bad weather backup day since all remaining weekend days during the Count Period (Dec. 14 to Jan. 5) are holidays.

CBC FEEDER COUNT PROCEDURE: On Count Day, count the highest number of each bird species that you observe at or near your feeders **at one time!** At the end of the day, the highest number you observed **at one time** will be the total for that species. **EXAMPLE:** As you watch your feeders, six Black-capped Chickadees can be seen. Those birds fly away and a short time later, four Black-capped Chickadees fly in. **Don't add the two counts together!** **Six BC Chickadees is still your highest count for BC Chickadees.** Count all species the same way. If you have feeders at more than one location around your house (some in front and some in back, etc.), unless you have several observers all observing at the same time and in communication with each other, don't add the high counts from the different locations together, or you may be counting some birds twice. When you have large numbers of birds of a species at one time, the best way to count them is by using the "overlay" method. Estimate how much space 5 or 10 birds take up, then overlay that amount of space as many times as it takes to cover all of the birds, by counting 5 - 10 - 15 - etc.

CBC PARTICIPANT FORM: Feeder Counters need to fill in the following blanks on the Participant Form:

- Team Designator
- Name of Feeder Counter
- Name and email address of Feeder Counter
- Feeder Counter Hours
- Weather Conditions
- CBC Rare Bird Form

Be sure to keep track of the number of hours that you watched your feeders and try to count for at least an hour, since you'll probably miss several species if you count for less than that. Provide whatever weather information you can, including low and high temperatures. Your Participation Form and Tally Sheet must be called in or turned in after the Count.

COUNT TALLY SHEET: You may use whatever form you wish to record the numbers of birds as you count them. However, the **Count Tally Sheet** must be filled out and turned in after the Count is completed. The Tally Sheet lists almost all of the species of birds seen on past Matanuska Valley CBC's and, although many of the listed birds are not likely to be seen at your feeders, you never know what might show up.

CBC RARE BIRD DOCUMENTATION FORM: Some of the species listed on the Tally Form are marked with an asterisk (*). If you see any of the species marked with an asterisk, or see a species that is not listed on the form, you must fill out and turn in a Rare Bird Report for each rare species. The form is quite detailed, but without good substantiating documentation, the Christmas Bird Count Regional Editor will disallow rare birds that we report, so it is important to fill it out completely.

If at all possible, try to photograph rare birds.

CBC WRAPUP MEETING AND POTLUCK

This year we're meeting at Jean and Harry Holt's home for our CBC wrapup/potluck meeting. The Holt's home is just off of the Palmer-Wasilla Highway (directions will be sent separately by email). Jean and Harry will provide barbecue brisket with rolls and a pot of beans, and coffee, tea, and hot chocolate. We ask that everyone bring either vegetable side dishes, hors d'oeuvres, salads, or desserts, etc., and beverages (if you would like something other than coffee, tea, or hot chocolate).

Snacks from 4:30 to 5:00 PM and dinner from 5:00 to 6:00 PM
on Sunday, December 18, 2016.

We want to see all of you at the wrapup meeting and potluck!!

TURNING IN YOUR COUNT DATA

After the potluck dinner, we'll go through the species' list and ask everyone to provide their Count data. If you aren't able to make it to the wrapup/potluck meeting, please call your Count totals in to the potluck meeting at telephone number **745-5577** **between 4:00 & 6:00 PM** on December 18th. We strongly encourage you to call in your Count data so we have your information when we tally up the CBC Count at our December 20th CBC Wrapup/Potluck. We'll be collecting your Count Sheets at the wrapup meeting!

If you call in your Count total between 4 & 6 PM, you will not need to mail in your Participant Form and Tally Sheet.

If you don't call in your Count data on the evening of December 18th, you will need to mail your Participant Form/Tally Sheet as soon as possible to:

MAT-SU BIRDERS
P.O. Box 877378
Wasilla AK 99687