

# Matanuska Valley Christmas Bird Count (CBC)

## Feeder Counter Instructions

**REPORTING YOUR DATA** – see [matsubirders.org](https://matsubirders.org) for links and forms

**Preferred:** Use the Online Spreadsheet to submit your species and participant data. Directions are on the first tab of the spreadsheet.

**OR**

email your results and participant info to [matsubirders@gmail.com](mailto:matsubirders@gmail.com)

**OR**

Call to report your count if the spreadsheet doesn't work for you.

Robin	907-841-7398
Tom Cappiello - 907-350-7028	

## **FORMS**

All forms mentioned are available at [matsubirders.org/christmas-bird-count](https://matsubirders.org/christmas-bird-count)

### **COUNT TALLY SHEET:**

You may use whatever method you wish to record the numbers of birds as you count them. However, the **Count Tally Sheet** must be filled out and **turned in—or submit tally data on the spreadsheet** 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.

**NOTE: If you complete the online spreadsheet you do NOT need to turn in the Tally Sheet.**

### **CBC PARTICIPANT FORM:**

**NOTE: If you complete the online spreadsheet you do NOT need to turn in the participant form. Do use the form to keep track of the following data and submit via the spreadsheet.**

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 — try to accumulate at least an hour of counting
- Weather Conditions
- CBC Rare Bird Form(if you counted a bird with an asterisk)

## COUNT WEEK SPECIES:

During Count Week, report species seen within the Count Circle, but that were not seen on Count Day (species only, numbers not needed).

Count week includes 3 days before Count Day, and 3 days after Count Day. **EMAIL TO: matsubirders@gmail.com**

## TEAM DESIGNATOR:

All Field Teams and all home Feeder Counters are assigned an alphabetical Team Designator that should be placed in the upper right hand corner of your Participant Form. Field Teams that also Feeder Count their own feeders will be assigned an additional Team Designator.

The Team Designator should be used when you submit your totals. Team Designators will be passed to you by email, telephone, or mail prior to Count Day.

**NOTE: Use the TEAM DESIGNATOR to find your page on the spreadsheet. Follow the directions on the first tab of the spreadsheet.**

## CBC FEEDER COUNT PROCEDURE

- Keep track of the time you spend counting.
- You do not need to count all day.
- Time could be multiple short blocks of time or one block of time... just keep track!
- Count and record the highest number of each bird species that you observe at or near your feeders **at one time**
- At the end of the day, use the CBC Tally Sheet to record the highest number you observed **of each species seen at one time**. This 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

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#### **DEFORMED BEAK OBSERVATIONS:**

**These are no longer required for the CBC.** If you see a bird (or birds) with a deformed beak, you can still report your observation to United States Geological Service at the link [https://alaska.usgs.gov/science/biology/landbirds/beak\\_deformity/observerreport.php](https://alaska.usgs.gov/science/biology/landbirds/beak_deformity/observerreport.php) . Be sure to click "submit" at the bottom of the page when you are finished. This information will help them determine where and how many birds are affected. For any additional questions or comments, please email [GS-AK\\_Beak\\_Deformity@usgs.gov](mailto:GS-AK_Beak_Deformity@usgs.gov) .

#### **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 substantial documentation, the Christmas Bird Count Regional Editor will disallow rare birds that we report, so it is important to fill it out completely.

There are several options for completing the Rare Bird Form listed on the [matsubirders.org](http://matsubirders.org) website.

**IF AT ALL POSSIBLE, TRY TO PHOTOGRAPH RARE BIRDS.**

**TIP: Use your smartphone to video the bird while you describe what you are seeing that identifies the bird, or get a photo.**

**P.S. If you have questions about the Count during our CBC Count Day, you can call one of the compilers above.**