

# **2009 Christmas Bird Count**

## **Field Counter Instructions**

### **GENERAL**

**Count Day:** Sunday, December 20, 2009

**Count Week:** 17-19 & 21-23 December 2009

**Count Week Species:** Report species seen within the Count Circle during Count Week, that were not seen on Count Day (species only, numbers not needed).

**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. The Team Designator will be used at the wrapup meeting when you report your totals. Team Designators will be passed to you by email, telephone, or mail.

**Count Forms:** You can use any kind of paper to keep your running tally of species and species numbers seen during the Count, **but please use the Participant Form and Tally Form for your final tally and report that you turn in.**

**Documenting Rare Sightings:** The species listed on the Tally Form are most of the species seen on previous Mat Valley CBC's. Many of those species are tagged with an asterisk(\*). Be sure and use a **CBC Rare Bird Documentation Form to substantiate your sighting of any species listed with an asterisk, or for any species not listed!** Without a Rare Bird Documentation Form as backup, the CBC Regional Editor will not take our reports of rare sightings seriously. The best rule is, that if it's a species that we rarely see or if it's not a Valley winter regular, you should include details. **Pay close attention to the last sentence of Item #10** on the Rare Bird form, which asks you to tell how you know that the bird was the species that you reported, and not another species. Example: if you report a Golden Eagle, how did you determine that it wasn't a juvenile Bald Eagle, Red-tailed Hawk, etc.? You should try to answer the questions on the form right after you see a rare species, and not try to fill out the form later from memory. Audubon requires a CBC Rare Bird Documentation Form if a "HARLAN'S" Red-tailed Hawk is reported. Remember, the Regional Editor will want to see observation comments supporting our rare bird ID's.

He's not interested in our birding qualifications. We will be asking for your rare bird forms at the wrapup meeting, so please have them ready to turn in with your bird count report.

**IF AT ALL POSSIBLE, PHOTOGRAPH RARE SPECIES!**

**MILEAGE/HOURS:** Be sure and keep track of your team's mileage and hours. If your group splits up and goes in two different directions, that requires separate accounting of hours and mileage for the time you are separated. When traveling your route, if you have to double back over ground already covered, subtract that distance from your total mileage. **When calculating the distance that you walk, do not report a maximum distance greater than could be covered at 1.5 mph**, e.g., if you walk for one hour, the maximum distance you could have covered is 1.5 miles, for two hours, 3 miles, etc. Audubon will disallow a higher figure. **If you plan to look for owls prior to daybreak, keep your owling time and distance separate from your other times and distances.**

**TEAM LEADERS:**

(1) Mat-Su Birders will pay field counter participation fees for all field counters, so there is no longer a participation fee required. **However, please provide mailing addresses for all team members, so that a copy of the 110th edition of *American Birds* (covering the 2009 CBC) can be mailed to each of them when it is printed in the fall of 2010.** If anyone does not want a copy of *American Birds*, or if one copy per family is enough, please let us know.

(2) **Do not count ravens after 12 noon!**

(3) **Poaching!** Don't add any birds to your Count Area's totals that you see outside of your assigned Count Area. However, do count any rare birds or high numbers of a species that you see in adjacent Count Areas so that, if the Team assigned to that area didn't see that species or has a lower count for that species, you can report the additional sightings for that area at the wrapup meeting.

(4) If you have taken one of the Area Maps, please turn them in at the wrapup meeting so we don't have to pay to have them printed again next year!

## **FIELD COUNTERS WHO ALSO COUNT AT THEIR HOME FEEDERS**

**Only count birds at your home feeder on December 20th!** The highest number of birds of a species **SEEN AT ONE TIME** is your high count for that species for the day. **Do not add all of the totals for that species that you have seen over the day.** Remember to keep track of how much time you count birds at your feeder and try to count for at least one hour. **KEEP YOUR FEEDER COUNT TOTALS AND THE AMOUNT OF TIME YOU WATCHED YOUR FEEDERS SEPARATE FROM YOUR FIELD COUNT TOTALS!**

**ODD BIRDS:** Please note any Black-capped Chickadees (or other species) with deformed beaks or other physical deformities, along with the approximate location where they were seen. They can be part of your species total, but keep a separate tally of those with problems.

### **CBC WRAPUP MEETING AND POTLUCK**

Maggie and Dan Crowson have again generously offered their home off of Fairview Loop for our post-Count wrapup meeting and potluck dinner. Maggie will provide spaghetti with a choice of meat or meatless sauce, and coffee, tea, and cider. We ask that everyone bring a side dish, or garlic bread, snacks, salads, desserts, etc., and beverages (if you would like something other than coffee, tea, or cider). Snacks from 5:00 to 6:00 PM and dinner from 6:00 to 7:00 PM on Sunday, December 20, 2009.

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

### **DIRECTIONS to Dan & Maggie's Home**

**From Palmer**, exit the Parks Hwy at the Hyer Road/Fairview Loop exit.

Turn left under the overpass, right on Frontage Road, and left onto

Fairview Loop. At the bottom of a long downhill stretch (4.8 miles after turning onto Fairview Loop), turn left onto Patty Drive.

**From the Knik-Goose Bay Road end of Fairview Loop**, turn right on Patty Drive (about 3 miles after you pass Snowshoe Elementary School or about one mile after the junction of Edlund Road and Fairview Loop). **Follow Patty Drive** until the last driveway that turns to the right (a CBC sign will be posted there). Turn right into the driveway and proceed to the house. Enter the house through the garage on the right where you can leave your boots, coats, etc.

**IF YOU GET LOST, CALL 373-7674 FOR RESCUE!!**

**HOPE TO SEE YOU ALL AT THE POTLUCK!!**

**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 373-7674 before 7:00 PM on December 20th, and mail your Participant Form/Tally Sheet and your Area Map as soon as possible to:**

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

**QUESTIONS?? Call Bob Winckler at 376-8594  
(or cell # 354-8594 on the 20th)**