



2022 Christmas Bird Count Report

Species tallied (count day + count week)	128 species
Count Day	117 species
Count Week	11 additional species
Individual Birds:	49,732 [47,438 in-field, 2294 at feeders]
Observers:	319 [230 in field + 89 feeder watchers]

Overview

2022 marked the first more 'normal' CBC for Seattle, after 2020 was feeder-watch only, and 2021 was held with limited participation.

The 2022 Seattle CBC was held on December 18, 2022. The weather was in the 30s & 40s, cloudy with some snow in the air in the afternoon. The winds prevented our boat crew from getting out on the water and as a result they conducted their survey portion via ferry. Results were strong, but overall a bit lower than usual. With 319 participants including 89 at home and 230 in the field, we had the highest participation in our history, breaking 300 for the first time ever.

Highlights

While we added no new species to the CBC history this year, highlight birds for the count included Black Oystercatcher [2], Ancient Murrelet [count week], Swamp Sparrow [1], Townsend's Solitaire [3] and Western Tanager [count week].

Notable misses

Eleven species were only picked up as count week birds: Redhead, Mourning Dove, Wilson's Snipe, Ancient Murrelet, Bonaparte's Gull, Herring Gull, Great Egret, Great Horned Owl, American Pipit, Savannah Sparrow and Western Tanager. In addition, notable misses included: Tundra Swan, Long-tailed Duck, Eurasian Collared-Dove, Ring-necked Pheasant, Sanderling, Dunlin, Marbled Murrelet, Western Screech-Owl and Evening Grosbeak.

Record high counts

For the modern period (1972-present), high counts were recorded for eight species. We set or tied record highs for: Cackling Goose [703], Black Oystercatcher [2], Bald Eagle [163], Red-tailed Hawk

[55], Peregrine Falcon [17], Townsend's Solitaire [3], Swamp Sparrow [1], and White-throated Sparrow [8].

Trends

It's always tough to be selective with the results to report, but here's how a few groups fared. [numbers in brackets indicate the total number seen and the percentage as a ratio of the 10-year average on the count (excluding last year), species with a record-high count noted with an *]. For example, a note of "[100, 50%]" would indicate that 100 individuals were seen, and that this is just 50% of the norm for the past 10 years (the average # seen from 2010-2019 has been 200).

Ducks & geese

Goose numbers were mixed, with Snow Goose [53, 68%], Greater White-fronted Goose [1, 11%] and especially Brant [7, 7%] coming in low, but Cackling goose [703*, 535%] and Canada Goose [1188, 112%] coming in high. Dabbling ducks, in general, came in lower than their 10-year average, with a couple exceptions. For example: Northern Shoveler [115, 63%], Eurasian Wigeon [7, 66%], American Wigeon [2208, 90%], and Northern Pintail [8, 11%] were low, but with Gadwall [651, 115%] and Mallard [1556, 118%] were a bit higher than the 10-year average. The diving duck story was very mixed. Coming in higher than usual were: Canvasback [231, 155%], Ring-necked Duck [599, 115%], Surf Scoter [827, 112%], Black Scoter [23, 155%] and Hooded Merganser [118, 159%]. Significantly lower than usual counts came for Greater Scaup [22, 9%], Lesser Scaup [67, 22%], Harlequin Duck [19, 35%], White-winged Scoter [1, 13%] and Ruddy Duck [3, 28%].

Grebes, pigeons & hummingbirds

Grebe numbers were by and large lower than normal this year, with only Pied-billed Grebe [212, 104%] found in higher-than-average numbers. On the other extreme, largely driven by the inability of the boat crew to get out this year, Western Grebe [87, 15%] were well below the recent numbers. In fact, this is the first time since 1952 that we've recorded under 100 Western Grebes on the Seattle CBC. Anna's Hummingbird [370, 74%] were present in low, but still decent numbers.

Shorebirds and Alcids

Two Black Oystercatchers from the Kitsap crew across the Sound were found for only the 2nd time ever on our CBC. Killdeer [86, 206%] numbers were up, as were Black Turnstones [93, 178%]. On the other hand, Surfbirds [5, 7%] hid from us this year, and the only other shorebirds were Spotted Sandpiper [1, 26%] and count-week Wilson's Snipe [vs the 10-year norm of 16]. On the alcid front, again likely impacted by not being safe to put the boat crew on the water this year, our numbers were low across the board: Common Murre [6, 8%], Pigeon Guillemot [29, 54%] and Rhinoceros Auklet [33, 54%] totals were all well below average, and we totally missed Marbled Murrelet and had Ancient Murrelet only as a count-week bird.

Raptors & owls

Raptors appeared in mixed numbers. On the upside, we recorded record high counts for Bald Eagle [163, 172%], Red-tailed Hawk [55, 147%] and Peregrine Falcon [17, 191%]. On the other hand, accipiter numbers [Sharp-shinned Hawk [4, 53%]. Cooper's Hawk [19, 79%]] were lower than usual as was Merlin [8, 71%]. The 10 owls were found on count day was lower than usual: Barn Owl [1, 30%], Barred Owl [8, 87%], and Northern Saw-whet Owl [1, 38%]. We added a count-week Great horned Owl but continued to locate zero Western Screech-owls as has been the case since 2018.

Passerines

Corvids

Numbers were present in pretty average numbers, all told: Steller's Jay [194, 101%], California Scrub-Jay [21, 176%], American Crow [5598, 87%], and Common Raven [10, 119%].

Numbers for the 'little ones,' from **Chickadees to Wrens**: Chestnut-backed Chickadee [409, 105%] and Red-breasted Nuthatch [209, 134%] showed up well, but Black-capped Chickadee [1541, 90%],

Bushtit [729, 74%] and Brown Creeper [63, 63%] were a bit lower than normal. Lower still, Ruby-crowned Kinglet [157, 43%] had their lowest total in 30 years. Likewise, we didn't find wrens in normal numbers: Bewick's Wren [201, 71%, lowest in 17 years], Pacific Wren [109, 53%, lowest in 13 years], and Marsh Wren [5, 51%, lowest in 10 years].

Thrush numbers were strong overall. In addition to our 3 Townsend's Solitaires, we also saw higher than usual Hermit Thrush [15, 15%], American Robin [2854, 103%] and Varied Thrush [212, 170%] numbers.

Finches

It was not surprising to have low finch numbers given the winter's poor finch showing overall in the state. Although historically low, perhaps most surprising was that we did record Red Crossbill [2, 2%] and Pine Siskin [48, 4%] at all. House Finch [645, 84%], Purple Finch [15, 65%] and American Goldfinch [460, 88%] numbers were a bit low, but not by too much.

Sparrows & Warblers

The Kitsap crew of the CBC again came through, giving us our first Swamp Sparrow since 2005. We also set a record high count for White-throated Sparrow [8, 229%]. Beyond those two, only 1 other sparrow species, Dark-eyed Junco [2175, 128%] came in above the recent averages. On the Warbler front, we had three species: Orange-crowned Warbler [3, 50%], Yellow-rumped Warbler [354, 152%] and Townsend's Warbler [11, 53%].

Thanks to all the participants who contributed to this year's count.

At-Home Count

Count Day: 43 species

Individual Birds: 2294 birds

Observers: 89

Locations: 64

This year, our feeder watchers contributed about 5% of the total birds on the count and filling in many of the gaps in our coverage by watching backyards throughout the count circle. Overall, 89 observers found almost 2300 birds over the course of the day. Overall numbers of feeder watchers were a little lower than recent years, perhaps a sign of the number of observers eager to get out of the house and into the field.

Top ten species found at feeders by number were: Dark-eyed Junco (384), American Crow (278), American Robin (193), European Starling (169), House Finch (168), Bushtit (159), Black-capped Chickadee (143), Anna's Hummingbird (94), American Goldfinch (78) and Song Sparrow (67). Nine of those were on the top-ten list in 2021 as well.

Thanks to everyone who participated and made this another great count.

Matt Bartels

Seattle CBC compiler

All Species Recorded During 2022 Seattle CBC

Snow Goose (53)	Wilson's Snipe (CW)	American Crow (5598)
Greater White-fronted Goose (1)	Spotted Sandpiper (1)	Common Raven (10)
Brant (7)	Common Murre (6)	Black-capped Chickadee (1541)
Cackling Goose (703)	Pigeon Guillemot (29)	Chestnut-backed Chickadee (409)
Canada Goose (1188)	Ancient Murrelet (CW)	Bushtit (729)
Trumpeter Swan (40)	Rhinoceros Auklet (33)	Ruby-crowned Kinglet (157)
Wood Duck (48)	Bonaparte's Gull (CW)	Golden-crowned Kinglet (551)
Northern Shoveler (115)	Heermann's Gull (1)	Cedar Waxwing (112)
Gadwall (651)	Short-billed Gull (424)	Red-breasted Nuthatch (209)
Eurasian Wigeon (7)	Ring-billed Gull (127)	Brown Creeper (63)
American Wigeon (2208)	Western Gull (2)	Bewick's Wren (201)
Mallard total (1556)	California Gull (52)	Pacific Wren (109)
[Mallard (wild) (1548)]	Herring Gull (CW)	Marsh Wren (5)
[Mallard x domestic hybrid (8)]	Iceland Gull (3)	European Starling (951)
Northern Pintail (8)	Glaucous-winged Gull (1551)	Townsend's Solitaire (3)
Green-winged Teal (110)	[Western x Glaucous-winged Gull (517)]	Hermit Thrush (15)
Canvasback (231)	[gull sp. (425)]	American Robin (2854)
Redhead (CW)	Red-throated Loon (8)	Varied Thrush (212)
Ring-necked Duck (599)	Pacific Loon (4)	House Sparrow (165)
Greater Scaup (22)	Common Loon (6)	American Pipit (CW)
Lesser Scaup (67)	Brandt's Cormorant (50)	House Finch (645)
[scaup sp. (86)]	Pelagic Cormorant (49)	Purple Finch (15)
Harlequin Duck (19)	Double-crested Cormorant (754)	[Haemorhous sp. (1)]
Surf Scoter (827)	[cormorant sp. (8)]	Red Crossbill (2)
White-winged Scoter (1)	Great Blue Heron (35)	Pine Siskin (48)
Black Scoter (23)	Great Egret (CW)	American Goldfinch (460)
Bufflehead (495)	Sharp-shinned Hawk (4)	[Spinus sp. (1)]
Common Goldeneye (399)	Cooper's Hawk (19)	Fox Sparrow (58)
Barrow's Goldeneye (186)	[accipiter sp. (3)]	Dark-eyed Junco (2175)

[goldeneye sp. (2)]	Bald Eagle (163)	[Dark-eyed Junco (Oregon) (1033)]
Hooded Merganser (118)	[Bald Eagle, adult (104)]	[Dark-eyed Junco (Slate colored) (5)]
Common Merganser (402)	[Bald Eagle, imm (31)]	[Dark-eyed Junco (unspecified) (1137)]
Red-breasted Merganser (272)	[Bald Eagle (unspecified) (28)]	White-crowned Sparrow (67)
Ruddy Duck (3)	Red-tailed hawk (55)	Golden-crowned Sparrow (212)
[duck sp. (10)]	Barn Owl (1)	White-throated Sparrow (8)
Pied-billed Grebe (212)	Great Horned Owl (CW)	Savannah Sparrow (CW)
Horned Grebe (276)	Barred owl (8)	Song Sparrow (742)
Red-necked Grebe (41)	Northern Saw-whet Owl (1)	Lincoln's Sparrow (6)
Eared Grebe (1)	Belted Kingfisher (32)	Swamp Sparrow (1)
Western Grebe (86)	Red-breasted Sapsucker (4)	Spotted Towhee (314)
[grebe sp. (1)]	Downy Woodpecker (59)	Western Meadowlark (1)
Rock Pigeon (1568)	Hairy Woodpecker (7)	Red-winged Blackbird (87)
Band-tailed Pigeon (23)	Northern Flicker (321)	Orange-crowned Warbler (3)
Mourning Dove (CW)	[N. Flicker (red) (140)]	Yellow-rumped Warbler (354)
Anna's Hummingbird (370)	[N. Flicker (unspecified) (181)]	[Y-rumped Warbler (Audubon's) (110)]
Virginia Rail (2)	Pileated Woodpecker (10)	[Y- rumped Warbler (Myrtle) (4)]
Ameriican Coot (12381)	Merlin (8)	[Y-rumped Warbler (unseparated) (240)]
Black Oystercatcher (2)	Peregrine Falcon (17)	Townsend's Warbler (11)
Killdeer (86)	Hutton's Vireo (7)	Western Tanager (CW)
Black Turnstone (93)	Steller's Jay (194)	[Passerine sp. (4)]