

Hello Feeder Watcher!

Thanks for volunteering to be a feeder watcher for the **Portland Christmas Bird Count** (CBC). Your efforts will help us get a more accurate census of the birds in our count circle on December 30, 2023.

The purpose of this sheet is to give you a few tips and hints on watching your feeders: methods of watching, counting strategies, and data return.

Two essential points of clarification:

1. **Your feeder must be within the Portland CBC circle.** See the count circle displayed on Google Maps by [clicking here](#). If in doubt whether you're in the circle, send me an email. Every year we get out-of-circle reports, and I really hate having to tell people I can't use them.
2. Please **ONLY** count birds **on December 30!**

The purpose of the Christmas Bird Count is to record birds within a pre-defined 15 mile diameter count circle in a 24 hour period.

Methods of Watching

There are two general approaches here:

- a) solid time: many people will watch their feeders for a 30-to-60 minute period during the day and record what comes in at that time. The advantage of this is full attention to the feeder and the surrounding yard and airspace (yes, count that crow or gull that flies down the street). But often, in life, a solid block is impossible, so you could try . . .
- b) a few brief checks during the day: sure you'll miss some birds, but you would the other way as well. This way, you can focus on the feeder at spurts during the day-- perhaps four to six five-to-ten minute intervals. In your report please send **only one number for each species** (see "counting strategies" below), and the total minutes spent counting.

Either way, by keeping track of what you see in your yard, you'll find birds we miss while out in the field. This may not seem significant, but it really helps to give us a more accurate census of the birds within our count circle. And of course, there's always the chance that you'll see a species that no one else does on count day!

Counting Strategies

You want to record both species and number of individuals seen during the count day, and **you want to avoid counting the same individual twice!** So, you can't just sit there at your intervals and add up all the birds that come in. Some strategy is needed.

We want you to report the maximum number of individuals of a species found at the feeders at one particular time. It may be helpful to differentiate individuals and sexes as much as possible to get the most accurate count.

In other words, when looking at a feeder full of House Finches, don't just count 25 House Finches; rather, count 16 Red (i.e., adult males) and 9 Brown (not adult males). That way, if you count again later and have 12 Red and 20 Brown, you'll be able to report 36 House Finches because the greatest count of males you had was 16 and the greatest count of females you had was 20: $16 + 20 = 36$.

This doesn't work for all birds: Scrub Jays pretty much all look alike, but if one Scrub Jay was flying away to the right while another was coming in from the left, you know you had 2.

This census method, differentiating individuals as well as numbers and species, will give you the most accurate method of counting without catching the birds. The table provided for counting separates the species that have different male and female plumages. This is just to make it easier for you—I **don't need separate counts by sex.**

Data Return

Please return your results to me as soon as possible after December 30. Even if you record ZERO birds (it happens), it's still data. Please email your data to: clarson@audubonportland.org

I don't need anything fancy; you can scan over your data sheet or just type your results in the body of your email, preferably in the order they appear on the data sheet. **Be sure to include your address and time spent watching.** I have to submit all the data by mid-January, so procrastinating may result in your efforts not being included in the national census.

Thanks again for helping out!

Candace Larson

2023 Portland Christmas Bird Count: Feeder Watcher Data Sheet

Below are listed some of the common feeder birds that are often found in Portland. This is by no means a comprehensive list nor does it include things like gulls, ducks, and other birds that might fly by your yard. Feel free to supplement this by using the additional spaces or other sheets. Also, if you see a gull, but don't know what kind it was, you could just write "1 gull"--this data is still useful and will be added into the results. Thanks!

Your Name _____ Total time spent counting _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____ Phone/email _____

Rock Pigeon		European Starling	
Band-tailed Pigeon		Yellow-rumped Warbler	
Mourning Dove		Townsend's Warbler	
Anna's Hummingbird		Spotted Towhee	
Downy Woodpecker--male		Fox Sparrow	
Downy Woodpecker--female		Song Sparrow	
Northern Flicker		White-crowned Sparrow	
Steller's Jay		Golden-crowned Sparrow	
California Scrub Jay		Dark-eyed Junco	
American Crow		House Finch--male	
Black-capped Chickadee		House Finch--female	
Chestnut-backed Chickadee		Pine Siskin	
Bushtit		Lesser Goldfinch	
Red-breasted Nuthatch		American Goldfinch	
Brown Creeper		House Sparrow--male	
Bewick's Wren		House Sparrow--female	
Golden-crowned Kinglet		Other:	
Ruby-crowned Kinglet		Other:	
American Robin		Other:	
Varied Thrush		Other:	
Cedar Waxwing		Other:	

Please return this form as soon as possible following the count. You can email me at clarson@audubonportland.org, or mail to 5151 NW Cornell Road 97210. Thanks for joining the Portland Christmas Bird Count!