

## 64th Annual Denver Christmas Bird Count

Day, Date, and Time: **Saturday, December 16, 2017, 6:30 a.m. to 16:30 p.m.**

Compiler: **Joey Kellner** Feeder Coordinator: **Bob Shade**

Weather: **AM mostly cloudy, PM partly cloudy** Temperature: **20 to 55° F** Wind: **variable, 0 to 15 mph**

Snow Cover: **0 to 3"** Still Water: **frozen to partly open** Moving Water: **partly open to open**

Observers: **181 (169 in 43 parties, 14 watchers at 14 feeders)**

Total Party Hours: **292 (167 on foot, 80 by car, 45 feeder watching)**

Total Party Miles: **588.4 (165 on foot, 423.4 by car)**

Hours Spent Watching Feeders: **42**

Count Day Totals: **108 species; 37,776 individuals**

### Participants by Area (Area Leader's names in **bold**):

1. Red Rocks Park (RRP): Tom Behnfield, John Breitsch, John Dougherty, Fionn Gruebmeier, Kristin Gruebmeier, Rebecca Jackson, **Dan Stringer**
2. Lower Bear Creek (LBC): Rick Creswell, Martha Eubanks, David Gillilan, David Hickey, Diane Hutton, **Michael Kiessig**, Matthew Michalak, Monique Pigeon, Melissa Tweardy, Wendy Wibbens, Andrew Wicklife
- 2A. Bear Creek Lake Park (BCP): Terri Allen, **Mark Amershek**, Janice Arey, Carol Cook, Alison Hixon, Cyndy Johnson, Bruce Neuman, Yvonne Parrot, Elaine Wagner
3. Bow Mar/Marston (BMM): Kent Bagley, Lori Bollendonk, Darcy Bullock, Margi Clute, **Bill Hopping**, Alec Hopping, Brad Peterson, Joe Roller, Jerry Valdes
- 4A. Lower South Platte-east (LSP): Jared Del Rosso, Nelson Ford, **Ed Holub**, Thomas Holub, Bill Ogg
- 4B. Lower South Platte-west (LSP): Deb Carstensen (+2), Dave Melblom (+31 helpers), **Dick Schottler**, Dean Shoup, Christopher Warneke (+2)
5. Highline Ditch (HLD): **Nancy Crews**, Susan Dunn, Karen Hurley, Pam Schmidt, Jannette Wesley
6. Plum Creek (PCK): Dan Brooke, Jesse Casias, Renee Casias, **Norm Erthal**, Cheryl Teuton
- 7A. Middle South Platte (MSP): Burke Angstman, Joey Angstman, **Charles Lawrence**, Randy Lentz, Patrick O'Driscoll
- 7B. Middle South Platte (MSP): Peter Gillette, Frank Coons, Alexandra Hall, Don Hall, **Hugh Kingery**, **Urling Kingery**, Rebecca Laroche, Christina Leslie, Deb Ostergard, Bridget Sanders, Mike Serruto, Daren Seex
8. Chatfield Reservoir (CHA): **Joey Kellner**, Alden LaRocque, Carol LaRocque, Diane Roberts
9. Upper South Platte (USP): Katherine Abe, Lynn Forrester, Betty Glass, **Jill Holden**, Mary Keithler, Meredith McBurney
10. Lower Deer Creek (LDC): Susan Blansett, Sunny Bradford, Peggy Gonder, Philip McNichols, Kathy Mihm-Dunning, **Riley Morris**, **Heather Morris**, Mary Fran O'Connor, Doug Shoffner, Bea Weaver
11. Upper Deer Creek (UDC): Not covered this year due to illness
12. Yegge Peak (YPK): **Ann Bonnell**, Audrey Boag, Elizabeth Evans, Celia Greenman, Linda Knudsen, Walt Knudsen, Eric Masting, Else VanErp
13. Doublehead Mountain (DHM): **Amy Davis**, Nancy Davis, Tim Davis
14. North Turkey Creek (NTC): Ginny Bergstom, **Ed Furlong**, Matt Ramlow
15. Indian Hills (IHL): Chuck Aid, Brad Andres, Gary Brower, Caroline Gilbert, Michael Gilbert, Leon Moore, **Dick Prickett**, Warren Roske, Bobby Strom, Jeanette Strom
16. Upper Bear Creek (UBC): Kate Halstead, Melissa Mezger, Kyle Pritchard, **Laura Steadman**
17. Ken Caryl Ranch (KCR): **Tom Bush**, Chip Clouse, Andrew Cherrack, David Cherrack, Sharon Cobb, Jane Haddock, Cynthia Kristensen, Sue Summers, mark Meiklejohn, Senja Meiklejohn, David Suddjian
18. Garrison Gate (GGT): **Bob Shade**, Steve Kingswood, Bill Schreitz, Ruth Schreitz
19. Morrison/Willow Brook (MWB): **Chris Gilbert**, Steve Meier
20. Willow Creek (WCK): **Doris Cruze**, Mary Mouton, Nancy Mullens, Polly Reetz, Barbara Shissler
21. Mt. Lindo/Willow Springs (MLW): **Bob Shade**, Steve Kingswood, Bill Schreitz, Ruth Schreitz

## 2017 Denver Christmas Bird Count Highlights

Joey Kellner, Compiler

The 2017 Denver Christmas Bird Count (CBC) took place on December 16<sup>th</sup>. This is the 64<sup>th</sup> consecutive year that the Denver Field Ornithologists has conducted a Christmas Count within the same 15-mile diameter count circle established in 1954 and centered just north of the old Ken Caryl Ranch entrance.

The weather on count day started mostly cloudy and relatively calm. Morning temperatures started at 20F, but thankfully no wind to light [winds. It was a nice day to be out with the team reporting a respectable 37,776 individual birds of **108 species** recorded by 169 field observers and 14 feeder watchers. Unfortunately, one Count Area was not able to be covered due to sudden illness. No new species were added to the cumulative Denver CBC. The grand total of species seen since 1954 thus remains at 201.

“Rare” birds (seen on less than 10% of the previous counts) and found this year included:

- Spotted Sandpiper - only the 2nd time recorded on the Denver CBC and found in Area 8 (Chatfield Reservoir),
- Gray Catbird - only the 6th time recorded on the Denver CBC and found in Area 10 (Lower Deer Creek (Chatfield Farms “Chatfield Arboretum”).

“Uncommon” birds (seen 10–24% of the previous counts) and found this year included:

- Pacific Loon - 7<sup>th</sup> time recorded on the Count
- Northern Saw-whet Owl - 8th time recorded on the count
- Golden-crowned Sparrow - amazingly the 13<sup>th</sup> time recorded on the count, found and photographed by a feeder watcher on Count Day near the town of Morrison.
- Eurasian Collared-Dove (multiple areas—recent explosive addition to the annual count),
- Ross’s Goose – 13<sup>th</sup> time recorded
- Cackling Goose (multiple areas—split and tracked starting in 2004),
- Lesser Goldfinch – 13<sup>th</sup> time recorded
- Barrow’s Goldeneye – 14<sup>th</sup> time recorded
- Rock Wren - 15<sup>th</sup> time recorded
- Pine Grosbeak – 16<sup>th</sup> time recorded on the Count

Record-high individual numbers were established for several species this year: Cackling Goose (6,367), Common Loon (7), Great Horned Owl (43), Common Raven (188), Bushtit (194), and White-breasted Nuthatch (214).

The ten most numerous species observed on the 2017 count were: (1) Canada Goose (9,850), (2) Cackling Goose (6,367), (3) Mallard (1,258), (4) House Finch (1,070), (5) American Crow (1,046), (6) European Starling (965), (7) Red-winged Blackbird (958), (8) Northern Shoveler (750), (9) Black-billed Magpie (731), (10) Black-capped Chickadee (714). Together, these ten species accounted for 62.7% of the birds counted.

Christmas Bird Counts must be performed on a single calendar day. Any species seen outside that date can be added as “Count Week” if the sighting falls within three days prior or after the count date. One additional “Count Week” species was noted in the three days prior to count day in 2017: Several Rusty Blackbirds were found along the shore of Chatfield Reservoir near the Plum Creek delta. **Making an overall count of 109 species for the circle this year!**

As compiler of the 64<sup>th</sup> Denver Christmas Bird Count, I thank all of the field observers and feeder watchers for participating. Special thanks go to the Area Leaders whose efforts and knowledge make this count a success and to Cheryl Teuton and Dan Brooke who did an amazing job once again of coordinating this year’s potluck. Thank you, Bob Shade, for contacting, coordinating, and compiling all the Feeder Watcher data. Thanks also to Colorado Parks and Wildlife for the use of the Chatfield State Park Multi-Purpose Room for our compilation meeting. Lastly, thanks to all who brought drinks and food to share! Sharing food and friendship after a day in the field was a great way to relax before the holidays. I hope to see you all at the compilation next year!