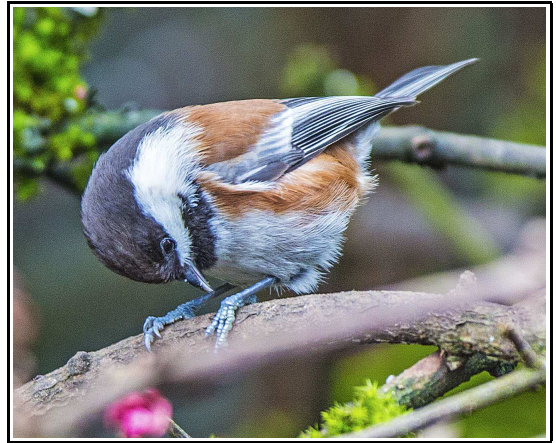


# 2013 Eugene Christmas Bird Count

*Dan Gleason, Count Compiler*

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December's record cold left many people concerned about how some bird populations would be affected. Many people expressed fear that the Anna's Hummingbirds would not survive. I'm sure that some did not survive, but a large majority did. This year's count produced a record high of 204 Anna's Hummingbirds. I had more concern for the ground-feeding birds. With the ground frozen and snow blanketing the area, many of these birds were denied an opportunity to forage at will. Many likely left the area to seek more open terrain, such as that along the south coast. The effect on ground-feeders is reflected by our count data—some species were completely lacking (Western Sandpiper and Least Sandpiper, for example) or in very low numbers (302 Killdeer and only 2 Long-billed Dowitchers). An exception to this trend was a high number of Dunlin (5,180).



Many raptor species were in high numbers this year. No records were broken, but numbers were much higher than usual for most raptors. Absent, however, were Rough-legged Hawk and Osprey.

Songbirds showed high numbers of some species, such as chickadees, jays, and nuthatches, for example, and low numbers of other species. Some of those in low numbers are birds that, like the shorebirds, typically feed on or near the ground. Low numbers were seen for Marsh Wren, Savannah Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird, Western Meadowlark, Brewer's Blackbird, Brown-headed Cowbird, and House Sparrow. Pine Siskins were also very low in numbers, but this species wanders greatly across the forests of the northern states and Canada, and low years are not unusual. Record high numbers were reported for Bushtit (1,510), Brown Creeper (89), Wrentit (26), and White-crowned Sparrow (510).

Waterfowl counts showed low numbers for many species, yet some were recorded at high levels or record-high levels. Record Highs were found for Cackling Goose (68,432), Bufflehead (165), and Hooded Merganser (100).

Eurasian Collared-Doves continue their expansion into western Oregon. This is a bird unknown in Oregon just a few years ago, but now its numbers continue to grow and this year a record 134 were reported. Expect to see these doves in more places as the years pass.

New to the Eugene CBC is Gray Jay. This species is unusual for the Willamette Valley, but it has occasionally been reported in the south end of the valley, in the forests near Spencer Butte. This is the first year that a sighting has been made on Count Day.

Another rarity for winter in our area is Western Tanager. Barbara Combs saw and photographed one in her yard before and after the count, and it was also sighted on Count Day. Two Lewis's Woodpeckers and a Mountain Chickadee are also good finds, because these birds are not seen on many Eugene CBCs. A Northern Mockingbird is also not normal for our count, but this bird has been present in the Alvadore area for quite some time and it was nice to see it reported on Count Day.

The total number of species reported on Count Day was 133, and 126,930 individual birds were reported. These numbers represent an average count for the Eugene CBC.

Many thanks to all participants for making this a good CBC.