



Christmas Bird Count - Field Counter Cheat Sheet

The following tips are for participants venturing into the field and covering designated locations either traveling by foot, vehicle or other means of transportation. Be sure to confirm with your circle Compiler or section/area/zone leader which locations to cover and any other questions you may have before your count date.

1. Record every bird species (including exotic or introduced species) and how many were seen or heard in your coverage area, only between midnight and 11:59 pm on the Count Date selected by your Compiler.
2. Try to cover your assigned route/area as thoroughly as possible during daylight hours.
3. Effort data are equally important to recording bird species and numbers. Record each mode of transportation used while watching and listening for birds (by foot, by car, bicycle, boat, dog sled, etc).
4. For each mode of transportation:
 - a. Record the number of hours your party (or group) collectively spent watching or listening for birds (e.g., 1 hour and 45 minutes = 1.75 hrs).
 - b. Record the number of one-way kilometers traveled while watching or listening for birds. For example, if your party spends 30 minutes walking down a 1 km long trail, and then backtracks that 1 km in 20 minutes, your effort on foot will be recorded as: Time = 50 minutes; Distance = 1 km. This method is the same for other modes of transportation and is also how data are collected for eBird.
 - c. Record only time and distance spent birding, and do not include any travel outside the area that is required to reach a counting location, nor travel within the area when you are not birding (e.g. getting lunch, repositioning a vehicle).
5. Try your best to avoid double-counting birds if you backtrack, or revisit a location at a later time.
6. Nocturnal birding or “owling” is optional. Time and distance spent owling is tracked separately from any birding in the field during count day.
7. If a rare, unusual, or unexpected bird is encountered, please ask your Compiler for a Rare Bird Documentation Form, fill it out, and return it to your Compiler by January 15. If you're able, try to obtain photos or audio recording of the rare bird and include that with your submission.
8. If your Compiler endorses the use of eBird for collecting data on a given count, please review the following article with additional guidance and considerations. <https://ebird.org/canada/news/ebirding-on-christmas-bird-counts>

Please give these numbers to your section/area/zone leader or Compiler at the end of count day. Thank you for participating in the annual Christmas Bird Count and supporting the conservation of birds in Canada! Visit www.birdscanada.org/cbc for more information.

