

## CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS SCHEDULE:

- Dec. 17 - Buffalo Lake NWR - meet at refuge headquarters at 8:00 a.m.  
 Dec. 18 - Amarillo - meet at the entrance gate of Palo Duro Canyon State Park at 8:00 a.m.  
 Dec. 20 - Lake Meredith (east) - meet at National Park headquarters in Fritch at 7:00 a.m.  
 Dec. 22 - Arnett, Okla. - meet at the restaurant east of the Circle C Lodge at 7:00 a.m.  
 Dec. 31 - Lake Meredith (west) - meet at National Park headquarters in Fritch at 7:00 a.m.  
 Jan. 1 - Quitaque - meet at the headquarters building at Lake Theo at 8:00 a.m.

NOTE\*\*\*\* The count day for the Lake Meredith (east) count has been moved to Dec. 20 and the date for the Lake Meredith (west) count to Dec. 31.

For those of you unfamiliar with Christmas Bird Counts, they are counts made every year in designated areas 15 miles in diameter. Not only are the different species that are observed recorded, but also the numbers of each species. All counts are from sun-up to sun-down, but it is not necessary for every participant to be out that long. Even if you can only bird part of the day, your help is needed. There is a \$1.50 fee for each count in which you participate. This goes to the National Audubon Society to help defray costs of printing the counts in AMERICAN BIRDS. The issue containing last year's Count results has recently been published. We thought it might be of interest to share with you some of the facts gleaned from these counts:

Of 1200 counts made involving over 30,000 participants, 67 were in Texas. For Canada and the U.S., 608 forms were recorded (588 species plus 20 formerly recognized as species). Of these, 360 forms (353 species plus 7 formerly recognized as species) were seen in Texas. It must be pointed out that the Editor responsible for the Texas counts has seriously questioned the validity of 10 species because of the lack, or the inadequacy, of supporting documentation for unusual species. The species are the American Golden Plover, Baird's Sandpiper, Glaucous Gull, Least Tern, Common Nighthawk, Western Kingbird, Wied's Crested Flycatcher, Bank Swallow, Parula Warbler, and Magnolia Warbler.

Of the 67 counts made in Texas, two species were recorded on every count - the American Kestrel and the Loggerhead Shrike. The following is a list of the species most widespread across the state:

- American Kestrel (67)
- Loggerhead Shrike (67)
- Red-tailed Hawk (66)
- Mourning Dove (66)
- Mockingbird (65)
- Killdeer (64)
- American Robin (64)
- Song Sparrow (64)
- Common Flicker (63)
- Ruby-crowned Kinglet (63)
- House Sparrow (63)
- Cardinal (63)

- March Hawk (62)
- White-crowned Sparrow (62)
- Belted Kingfisher (61)
- Great Blue Heron (60)
- Red-winged Blackbird (60)
- American Coot (59)
- American Wigeon (57)
- Yellow-rumped Warbler (57)
- American Goldfinch (57)
- Rufous-sided Towhee (57)
- Dark-eyed Junco (57)
- Pied-billed Grebe (56)
- Mallard (56)
- Starling (56)
- Pintail (55)
- Common Snipe (55)
- White-throated Sparrow (55)
- Green-winged Teal (54)
- Gadwall (53)
- Brown-headed Cowbird (53)
- Savannah Sparrow (53)
- Field Sparrow (53)
- Ring-billed Gull (52)
- Water Pipit (52)
- Lincoln's Sparrow (52)
- Lesser Scaup (51)
- Bobwhite (50)
- Brewer's Blackbird (50)

The following species were unique to a count:

- Gannet (Freeport)
- Whistling Swan (Bolivar Peninsula)
- White-winged Scoter (Bolivar Peninsula)
- Surf Scoter (Bolivar Peninsula)
- Black Scoter (Bolivar Peninsula)
- Greater Prairie Chicken (Aransas NWR)
- Gambel's Quail (El Paso)
- Harlequin Quail (Davis Mountains)
- Whooping Crane (Aransas NWR)
- Mountain Plover (New Braunfels)
- Whimbrel (Laguna Atascosa)
- Purple Sandpiper (Freeport)
- Wilson's Phalarope (San Antonio)
- Pomarine Jaeger (Freeport)
- Red-crowned Parrot (Brownsville)
- Saw-whet Owl (Travis Co.)
- Chuck-wills-Widow (Bolivar Peninsula)
- Lewis' Woodpecker (Midland)
- Eastern Kingbird (Orange)
- Yellow-bellied Flycatcher (Corpus Christi)
- Least Flycatcher (Corpus Christi)
- Barn Swallow (Houston)
- Purple Martin (Orange)
- Brown Jay (Falcon Dam)
- Mexican Jay (Chisos Mountains)
- Mexican Crow (Brownsville)
- Northern Shrike (Amarillo)
- Gray Vireo (Big Bend NP)
- Philadelphia Vireo (Aransas NWR)
- Tennessee Warbler (Atwater Prairie Chicken NWR)
- Townsend's Warbler (Chisos Mountains)
- Prairie Warbler (Seam Rim SP)
- Kentucky Warbler (Houston)
- Yellow-breasted Chat (Corpus Christi)
- Scott's Oriole (Robert Lee)
- Rose-breasted Grosbeak (Houston)
- Indigo Bunting (Freeport)
- Baird's Sparrow (Stanton)

The following Panhandle counts recorded the highest number of individuals of a species for the entire state:

Canada Goose - 30,050 (Buffalo Lake NWR)  
Mallard - 175,350 (Buffalo Lake NWR)  
Pintail - 200,100 (Buffalo Lake NWR)  
Common Merganser - 212 (Lake Meredith-east)  
Golden Eagle - 7 (Lake Meredith-west)  
Bald Eagle - 17 (Lake Meredith-west)  
Prairie Falcon - 2 (Lake Meredith-west)  
Virginia Rail - 4 (Lake Meredith-east)  
Ring-necked Pheasant - 1 (Buffalo Lake NWR tied with Bolivar Peninsula)  
Roadrunner - 10 (Quitaque tied with Presidio)  
Horned Lark - 1242 (Buffalo Lake NWR)  
Common Crow - 1085 (Quitaque)  
Tree Sparrow - 369 (Lake Meredith-west)  
McCown's Longspur - 288 (Amarillo, and high for the nation)  
Chestnut-collared Longspur - 1285 (Buffalo Lake NWR)

The following counts recorded 125 species or more:

Freeport - 196 (high for the nation)  
Corpus Christi - 195 (second high for nation)  
Houston - 173  
Corpus Christi (Flour Bluff) - 165  
Welder Wildlife Refuge - 159  
Bolivar Peninsula - 156  
Laguna Atascosa NWR - 155  
Brownsville - 153  
Old River - 150  
Orango - 141  
Aransas NWR - 140  
San Angelo - 139  
Attwater Prairie Chicked NWR - 136  
Padre Island Nat'l Seashore - 135  
Travis Co. - 134

The following counts recorded less than 70 species:

Buffalo Lake NWR - 53  
Muleshoe NWR - 54  
Palo Pinto - 60  
Hueco Tanks - 62  
Alice - 65  
Lake Meredith (east) - 66  
Quitaque - 68  
Ruidosa - 68

#### BIRD NOTES:

Red-throated Loon - a bird in winter plumage was observed on Lake Theo, Briscoe Co. on 11/24 by Ken Seyffert. The sighting of this species in inland Texas is rare.

Western Grebe - one at Lake Tanglewood, Randall Co., by Peggy Acord on 11/20. This is the first reported sighting of this species in our area in several years.

Inca Dove - a new bird for our two county list. Virginia Wood reported one in her yard in Westlawn during the third week of November, and it was later confirmed by Peggy Acord.

Cactus Wren - first reported sighting of species in Briscoe Co. (Caprocks Canyon SP) on 12/4 by Ken Seyffert.

Northern Shrike - Nancy and Ed Elliott observed one on the morning of 12/10 as it attacked and killed a House Sparrow in their

near Canyon, Randall Co. The bird immediately began feeding on the sparrow after wedging it firmly between two branches of a bush growing close by. The shrike was very reluctant to leave the scene of its kill when approached and only flew after the Elliott's dog rushed at it and took the sparrow away.

Solitary Vireo - one late bird in Caprocks Canyon SP, Briscoe Co. on 11/13 by Ken Seyffert.

Orange-crowned Warbler - late sightings by Ken Seyffert in Caprocks Canyon SP, Briscoe Co., 11/13 and 11/24.

Magnolia Warbler - one near Canyon, Randall Co. 10/24 by Ed and Nancy Elliott - a late sighting.

Black-throated Green Warbler - one near Canyon, Randall Co. 10/24 by Ed and Nancy Elliott - a late sighting.

American Redstart - a late sighting in Caprocks Canyon SP, Briscoe Co. on 11/13 by Ken Seyffert.

Common Redpoll - one in Wolfe Creek Park, Lake Fryer, Ochiltree Co., on 11/27 by Ken Seyffert. The only previous reported sighting of this species in Texas were those we had at Buffalo Lake NWR during the winter of 1965/66.

Lapland Longspur - a flock of several thousand were observed on 11/27 a few miles south of Perryton, Ochiltree Co., by Ken Seyffert.