

**46th and 47th-annual SAN DIEGO Christmas Bird Counts – Compared**  
**Saturdays, 16 December 2000 and 15 December 2001**

As many of you can personally attest, coordinating and compiling a Christmas Bird Count (CBC) is a lot of work that takes organization and dedication. Claude Edwards was the coordinator of the 2000 San Diego CBC, his seventh consecutive year. In 2001, the CBC was organized and coordinated by Philip Unitt and Ann Klovstad. Although the outcome of 2000 San Diego bird count, at 194 species, was typical of recent past counts, the 2001 bird count turned out to be the most successful count in many years, with 201 species of birds identified, including three exotic species that are breeding in San Diego County but not necessarily recognized as well established. This may be the first time we have broken 200 since 1981, a truly great success.

Below is a side-by-side summary of the two bird counts comparing the variety of species and numbers of individuals of each bird species. The 2001 San Diego CBC was performed during the fifth and final winter season of the ambitious San Diego County Bird Atlas, sponsored by the San Diego Natural History Museum, under the meticulous attention of Mr. Unitt and Ms. Klovstad. This project is destined to be a valuable data resource of the bird life that occur and have been documented within San Diego County.

**THE SAN DIEGO CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT RESULTS**  
**2000 TO THE LEFT AND 2001 TO THE RIGHT.**

**OUTSTANDING AND UNUSUAL SPECIES ARE IN UPPERCASE LETTERS**

**>>NOTEWORTHY SPECIES IN FOUND IN 2001 ARE UNDERLINED<<**

**SEE ADDITIONAL COMMENTS BELOW**

The following list generally follows the 42nd Supplement to the A.O.U. Check-list, as published in The Auk 117: 847-858, 2000.

<b><u>2000 / 2001</u></b>	<b><u>SPECIES</u></b>
62 / 95	Pied-billed Grebe
= / 1	<u>RED-NECKED GREBE</u>
21 / 54	Horned Grebe
919 / 1104	Eared Grebe
2036 / 3241	Western Grebe
312 / 234	Clark's Grebe
22 / 13	Red-throated Loon
90 / 49	Pacific Loon
33 / 20	Common Loon
4 / =	Northern Fulmar
2 / 4	<u>SHORT-TAILED SHEARWATER</u>
= / 397	Black-vented Shearwater
806 / 1021	Brandt's Cormorant
993 / 658	Double-crested Cormorant
7 / 9	Pelagic Cormorant
= / 16	American White Pelican
530 / 747	Brown Pelican

<u>2000 / 2001</u>	<u>SPECIES</u>	<u>[2]</u>	<u>SAN DIEGO CBC</u>
4 / 2	Little Blue Heron		
104 / 98	Snowy Egret		
1 / =	TRICOLORED HERON		
1 / =	REDDISH EGRET		
106 / 93	Great Blue Heron		
74 / 115	Great Egret		
7 / 5	Green Heron		
28 / 31	Black-crowned Night Heron		
= / 1	<u>AMERICAN BITTERN</u>		
5 / 4	Turkey Vulture		
316 / 364	Ruddy Duck		
11 / 1	<u>SNOW GOOSE</u>		
834 / 6	Canada Goose		
729 / 1118	Brant		
1 / =	WOOD DUCK		
1 / =	EURASIAN WIGEON		
1620 / 695	American Wigeon		
70 / 62	Gadwall		
107 / 58	Green-winged Teal		
759 / 802	Mallard		
1077 / 230	Northern Pintail		
= / 4	<u>BLUE-WINGED TEAL</u>		
9 / 13	Cinnamon Teal		
1206 / 343	Northern Shoveler		
11 / 11	Canvasback		
24 / 2	Redhead		
83 / 15	Ring-necked Duck		
3 / 3	Greater Scaup		
1726 / 1962	Lesser Scaup		
3603 / 8574	Surf Scoter		
1 / =	White-winged Scoter		
= / 4	Common Goldeneye		
836 / 1357	Bufflehead		
3 / 2	<u>HOODED MERGANSER</u>		
40 / 114	Red-breasted Merganser		
17 / 30	Osprey		
14 / 10	White-tailed Kite		
34 / 30	Northern Harrier		
14 / 8	Sharp-shinned Hawk		
31 / 30	Cooper's Hawk		
32 / 33	Red-shouldered Hawk		
118 / 110	Red-tailed Hawk		
1 / 2	Ferruginous Hawk		
= / 2	Golden Eagle - adults		
26 / 86	American Kestrel		
5 / 6	Merlin		
8 / 4	Peregrine Falcon		
1 / =	Prairie Falcon		
50 / 64	California Quail		
9 / 18	Clapper Rail		
4 / 3	Virginia Rail		

<u>2000 / 2001</u>	<u>SPECIES</u>	<u>[3]</u>	<u>SAN DIEGO CBC</u>
4 / 1	Sora		
3 / 9	Common Moorhen		
1164 / 1067	American Coot		
5 / 3	Common Snipe		
12448 / 1591	Marbled Godwit		
38 / 28	Whimbrel		
116 / 97	Long-billed Curlew		
38 / 25	Greater Yellowlegs		
= / 1	<u>LESSER YELLOWLEGS</u>		
18 / 20	Spotted Sandpiper		
6 / 5	Wandering Tattler		
1691 / 1263	Willet		
33 / 92	Ruddy Turnstone		
78 / 33	Black Turnstone		
349 / 877	Short-billed Dowitcher		
109 / 75	Long-billed Dowitcher		
20 / 19	Surfbird		
176 / 70	Red Knot		
606 / 150	Sanderling		
1121 / 5390	Western Sandpiper		
576 / 247	Least Sandpiper		
109 / 147	Dunlin		
766 / 1626	Black-bellied Plover		
1 / =	<u>PACIFIC GOLDEN-PLOVER</u>		
117 / 94	Semipalmated Plover		
451 / 305	Killdeer		
106 / 196	Snowy Plover		
1 / =	<u>BLACK OYSTERCATCHER</u>		
144 / 278	Black-necked Stilt		
157 / 92	American Avocet		
= / 2	Pomarine Jaeger		
2 / =	Parasitic Jaeger		
1 / 58	Bonaparte's Gull		
477 / 779	Heermann's Gull		
30 / 38	Mew Gull		
896 / 938	Ring-billed Gull		
726 / 1036	California Gull		
1 / 1	Thayer's Gull		
29 / 58	Herring Gull		
3 / 2	Glaucous-winged Gull		
1709 / 1486	Western Gull		
1 / =	<u>GLAUCOUS GULL</u>		
7 / 11	Caspian Tern		
7 / 88	Royal Tern		
2 / =	<u>ELEGANT TERN</u>		
46 / 348	Forster's Tern		
79 / 85	Black Skimmer		
= / 1	<u>MARbled MURRELET</u>		
2223 / 2484	Domestic Pigeon		
= / 1	<u>BAND-TAILED PIGEON</u>		
1170 / 871	Mourning Dove		

<u>2000 / 2001</u>	<u>SPECIES</u>	<u>[4]</u>	<u>SAN DIEGO CBC</u>
= / 3	COMMON GROUND-DOVE		
= / 1	[Red-crowned Parrot]		
2 / 3	Greater Roadrunner		
5 / 7	Barn Owl		
3 / 6	Great Horned Owl		
4 / 8	Burrowing Owl		
1 / 1	Short-eared Owl		
346 / 93	White-throated Swift		
872 / 1040	Anna's Hummingbird		
27 / 24	Costa's Hummingbird		
17 / 19	Belted Kingfisher		
1 / =	Red-naped Sapsucker		
1 / =	Red-breasted Sapsucker		
29 / 48	Nuttall's Woodpecker		
8 / 10	Downy Woodpecker		
55 / 46	Common Flicker		
96 / 95	Say's Phoebe		
267 / 306	Black Phoebe		
1 / =	<u>PACIFIC-SLOPE FLYCATCHER</u>		
= / 1	<u>DUSKY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER</u>		
1 / 1	<u>ASH-THROATED FLYCATCHER</u>		
= / 1	<u>TROPICAL KINGBIRD</u>		
86 / 82	Cassin's Kingbird		
13 / 3	Loggerhead Shrike		
1 / =	WARBLING VIREO		
= / 1	<u>BELL'S VIREO</u>		
17 / 11	Hutton's Vireo		
= / 1	<u>CASSIN'S VIREO</u>		
1 / =	PLUMBEOUS VIREO		
= / 1	<u>PHILADELPHIA VIREO</u>		
1 / =	STELLER'S JAY		
287 / 235	Western Scrub-Jay		
= / 12	[Black-throated Magpie-Jay]		
1856 / 4313	American Crow		
132 / 140	Common Raven		
1 / 4	Phainopepla		
324 / 200	Cedar Waxwing		
34 / 27	Western Bluebird		
36 / 110	Hermit Thrush		
53 / 60	American Robin		
1802 / 1427	European Starling		
238 / 266	Northern Mockingbird		
66 / 81	California Thrasher		
= / 2	<u>WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH</u>		
1 / 7	Cactus Wren		
1 / =	Rock Wren		
25 / 22	Marsh Wren		
54 / 65	Bewick's Wren		
16 / 35	House Wren		
45 / 40	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher		
56 / 50	California Gnatcatcher		

<u>2000 / 2001</u>	<u>SPECIES</u>	<u>[5]</u>	<u>SAN DIEGO CBC</u>
1259 / 1371	Bushtit		
30 / 202	Tree Swallow		
127 / 87	Ruby-crowned Kinglet		
120 / 116	Wrentit		
242 / 63	Horned Lark		
693 / 1091	House Sparrow		
931 / 326	American Pipit		
1 / =	Pine Siskin		
52 / 20	American Goldfinch		
153 / 230	Lesser Goldfinch		
2116 / 2857	House Finch		
2 / 7	Fox Sparrow		
468 / 520	Song Sparrow		
7 / 19	Lincoln's Sparrow		
2369 / 1994	White-crowned Sparrow		
10 / 34	Golden-crowned Sparrow		
112 / 56	Dark-eyed Junco		
1 / =	<u>GRASSHOPPER SPARROW</u>		
684 / 516	Savannah Sparrow		
18 / 2	Chipping Sparrow		
= / 1	Vesper Sparrow		
= / 2	Lark Sparrow		
2 / 1	Rufous-crowned Sparrow		
= / 2	<u>GREEN-TAILED TOWHEE</u>		
34 / 91	Spotted Towhee		
477 / 534	California Towhee		
111 / 160	Orange-crowned Warbler		
1 / 2	<u>BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER</u>		
= / 2	<u>NASHVILLE WARBLER</u>		
1 / 4	Yellow Warbler		
2250 / 2452	Yellow-rumped Warbler		
= / 1	<u>BLACK-THROATED GRAY WARBLER</u>		
27 / 52	Townsend's Warbler		
= / 2	<u>PALM WARBLER</u>		
= / 3	<u>BLACK &amp; WHITE WARBLER</u>		
1 / 3	<u>AMERICAN REDSTART</u>		
181 / 234	Common Yellowthroat		
= / 1	<u>HOODED WARBLER</u>		
2 / 4	<u>WILSON'S WARBLER</u>		
1 / =	<u>YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT</u>		
1 / 4	<u>SUMMER TANAGER</u>		
8 / 5	<u>WESTERN TANAGER</u>		
= / 3	<u>ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK</u>		
= / 2	[Northern Cardinal]		
= / 2	<u>HOODED ORIOLE</u>		
= / 1	<u>BALTIMORE ORIOLE</u>		
1 / =	<u>BULLOCK'S ORIOLE</u>		
= / 1	<u>YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD</u>		
137 / 318	Red-winged Blackbird		
2 / 1	Tricolored Blackbird		
379 / 158	Western Meadowlark		

SAN DIEGO CBC 2000 & 2001 [6]

SAN DIEGO CBC

15 / 31	Great-tailed Grackle
523 / 384	Brewer's Blackbird
25 / 21	Brown-headed Cowbird

**221 OVERALL NATIVE SPECIES RECORDED, SAN DIEGO CBC, 2000-2001**

COMMENTARY ABOUT THE 2001 SAN DIEGO CBC, Mostly By Phil Unitt  
Regarding the 2001 CBC, the results were summarized within days, rather than weeks, following the bird count itself. This is mostly due to timely submission of the data generated by the CBC teams. Infra-specific identifications such as "Large-billed" Sparrow and "Myrtle" Warbler, will appear in the final results on the National Audubon website, www.audubon.org. A few minor modifications are possible since not all of the supporting write-ups for the rare birds have been received. Last year, some of the teams failed to provide required supportive documentation.

This year, high numbers of the Surf Scoter and Bufflehead were presumably due to our being able to cover the San Diego Bay with a boat this year, thanks to Bruce Reznik and San Diego Baykeeper. High numbers of some shorebirds like the Black-bellied Plover, Willet, and Western Sandpiper are in part due to improved coverage of the Salt Works, where our team could use a vehicle.

Some high numbers are clearly the results of continuing population increases, in the cases of the Osprey, Cooper's Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Nuttall's Woodpecker, Black Phoebe, Hutton's Vireo, Scrub Jay, and American Crow, setting a new count record. One species that was not previously appreciated but is increasing rapidly is Cassin's Kingbird, up 41% this year from its high in 1999 over the preceding 15 years. The rather high numbers of the Cactus Wren are due in large part to focused coverage of key sites retaining the species within the count circle. There are no easy explanations for high numbers of a few species like the Spotted Towhee and Orange-crowned Warbler.

On the other hand, two species recorded this year have decreased alarmingly on San Diego Christmas bird counts in recent years, the Loggerhead Shrike and Tricolored Blackbird, both of which could easily become extirpated within the count circle entirely.

**Commentary about certain outstanding bird species found in 2001:**

**Red-necked Grebe** - Seen and well-described offshore from a boat. This is only the 4th well-supported record from San Diego County, the first in 17 years.

**Blue-winged Teal** - Pointed out at the J St./Chula Vista Marina shoreline during the midday compilation.

**Osprey** - Thirty is a new record number, the previous high was 17.

**Clapper Rail** - Included one that was found in freshwater at the Dairy Mart pond, all others were in the Tijuana River Estuary.

**Snowy Plover** - This is a high count for this declining species.

Marbled Murrelet - One was just outside the surf line off the Silver Strand. The 3rd from San Diego and the 1st in 22 years.

Band-tailed Pigeon - Rare along the coast, one was found at the south end of Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery on Point Loma.

Common Ground-Dove - Observed in the eastern Tijuana River Valley, rare and localized in the San Diego CBC area.

Burrowing Owl - Reported by three teams, including the known colony at North Island Naval Air Station.

Dusky-capped Flycatcher - Well-seen and described at the Greenwood Cemetery, only the fourth known in San Diego County.

Ash-throated Flycatcher - A returning bird from last year? This was found at the Dairy Mart pond.

Tropical Kingbird - Re-found at the Rohr Park duck pond after being previously discovered in early-December.

Bell's Vireo - A very rare bird in winter, perhaps the first in San Diego County since 1990. This was observed in Coronado.

Philadelphia Vireo - Discovered in Coronado, this is the 1st winter record in San Diego County, and the 4th for California.

White-breasted Nuthatch - Unusual along the coast, they were found at the Greenwood Cemetery.

Green-tailed Towhee - Reported by two teams, one at Gunpowder Point and another in the southwestern Tijuana River Valley.

Hooded Warbler - Female, along the east edge of the North Island golf course. May be only 3rd winter record for San Diego County.

Wilson's Warbler - By three different teams, the San Diego Zoo, NE corner of North Island golf course, and the Dairy Mart pond.

Nashville Warbler - At the N end of Country Club Lane, Coronado.

Black-throated Green Warbler - One each in Coronado and in National City, this returning for its 6th winter here.

Palm Warbler - At NW Tijuana River Valley and Greenwood Cemetery.

Black & White Warbler - Two reported on count-day, at Coronado and Dairy Mart pond. One also found in Golden Hill on 12/16.

American Redstart - All three in vicinity of Dairy Mart pond.

Summer Tanager - One each reported by four teams, in Balboa Park, in Coronado, at Greenwood Cemetery, and in Nestor.

Western Tanager - Three were at the San Diego Zoo, and two at the San Diego Country Club in Chula Vista.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak - All females, well-seen at San Diego Zoo.

Hooded Oriole - A female was found in the San Diego Zoo, and a male was observed in San Diego Country Club.

Baltimore Oriole - Discovered along the Maple St. canyon.

Yellow-headed Blackbird - Northwestern Tijuana River Valley.

Check the San Diego Rare Bird Alert tape, 619-688-2473, for updated information on observations, or to report rare and unusual birds, or questions about local birding.

ADDITIONAL BIRDS SPECIES OCCURRING IN THE REGION THIS SEASON

In addition to the impressive variety of birds that were found on the 2001 San Diego CBC, several other interesting and noteworthy bird species have been observed in and around San Diego in recent weeks. Check the results and comments for the Lake Henshaw CBC.

REDDISH EGRET - Up to 5, San Diego River Flood Control Channel.

YELLOW-CR NIGHT-HERON - One, associating with black-cr. night-herons at the Scripps Institution Of Oceanography, La Jolla.

ROSS' GOOSE - One, near the Hilton Hotel at Mission Bay Park.  
Wood Duck - Santee Lakes Regional Park.

EURASIAN WIGEON - Males, NE Mission Bay Park and San Diego River Flood Channel.

HARLEQUIN DUCK - Male, De Anza Cove boat dock in northeast Mission Bay Park, and also the San Diego River Flood Channel.

Acorn Woodpecker - Around oaks at El Monte County Park, Rancho Penasquitos County Park.

LEAST FLYCATCHER - One, found before the San Diego CBC, in riparian vegetation on the east side of Dairy Mart Road.

GRAY FLYCATCHER - One, after San Diego CBC at Greenwood Cemetery.

VERMILION FLYCATCHER - Male, east end of Lindo Lake, Lakeside.

WESTERN KINGBIRD - One, after San Diego CBC, Greenwood Cemetery.

Oak Titmouse - Around oaks at El Monte County Park, Rancho Penasquitos County Park.

GRACE'S WARBLER -Female, west Ft. Rosecrans Cemetery, Pt. Loma.

NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH - One that was before the San Diego CBC, in dense riparian vegetation at the Dairy Mart pond.

Tricolored Blackbird - Somewhat regular, with other blackbirds and around cattails, at Santee Lakes and Lindo Lake Park.

BULLOCK'S ORIOLE - male, found prior to the San Diego CBC, in tall, flowering eucalyptus trees, at Smuggler's Gulch, along Monument Road, Tijuana River Valley.

Also, pelagic species such as *Shearwaters*, *Phalaropes*, *Jaegers*, and *Alcids*, can be seen on winter commercial Whale-watching Trips. Call H & M Landing and Seaforth Sportsfishing for info.