

53RD ANNUAL WESTERN SONOMA COUNTY CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT
Sunday, December 29, 2019

Greetings CBC Area Leader,

Thank you for volunteering to be an area leader for Madrone Audubon's 53rd Annual Western Sonoma County Christmas Bird Count! We are very happy you to have your help and expertise! Following, are some housekeeping issues and details to keep in mind for the WSC CBC. This information is important, so please take time to review it.

Please go over all procedures with your team members including the post count dinner arrangements.

The following forms can be found on Madrone's CBC web page (www.madroneaudubon.org)

- **Field Talley Form**
- **Final Talley Form** – All final tally results for each team must be recorded on this form. Please do not use old forms, forms from other CBC's etc. The last page of this form also includes the reporting section for **Observation hours and Effort** in the field. Please do not to forget to complete this because the comparability of our observations to other Christmas bird counts depends upon documenting our level of effort in terms of numbers of observers, amount of time in the field, and amount of area covered.
- **Be sure to submit your FINAL TALLEY FORM to Stacy Li at the post count dinner.**
- If you observe an unusual or rare bird (a bird out of range or out of season), this form must be completed and submitted to Stacy Li with your other materials at the post count dinner, December 29th. If you are not attending the dinner, please find someone who can deliver your forms to Stacy at the dinner.
- **Deadline for the Count Week birds is January 5th**

A **topo map** of your count area may be found on the Madrone Audubon website (www.madroneaudubon.org) in the CBC section.

Counters have a history of counting in the same area year after year. Confirm participation of your team from last year and inform Stacy if you need more counters so that he can send them your way.

Please contact private property owners and secure their permission to count on their property. If you are able to secure permission, please save the contact information for future counts. If it is helpful, please reassure property owners that Madrone Audubon has insurance to cover participants during our activities.

We are again using revised methods for counting Turkey Vultures. Please assume that every able-bodied TV has roused itself and left its roost by mid-morning. Please only count TV's until 11:00 am. Any seen after that will probably already have been counted (and if you haven't seen one by 11, go ahead and count the first one that flies by, for the sake of your territory list). If the weather is absolutely horrible, disregard the above!

Our count circle is in need of owl counters. If you or any members of your team plan to count owls before dawn, please contact me.

As usual, **unusual** birds (those out of range or season) should be described in **written detail**. National Audubon has asked for the addition of photographic documentation when possible. If you or a member of your party has a camera that can be safely brought into the field and used on the count, the CBC editors would appreciate it. Do not risk your valuable instruments if the weather is inclement or the terrain is rough. Madrone Audubon is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged items, so please use your good judgment if you choose to bring photographic equipment.

Eagles and rare-ish hawks should be described by plumage, adult or immature status, time and sighting and direction of flight. The time and direction are important because often the eagles pass from one area to another and this information helps to keep on bird from turning into two! Please record all **flickers** as “northern” unless you checked **all** the field marks. Likewise, call all “butter-butts” **Yellow-rumped Warblers**, unless they can honestly be assigned to the Audubon or Myrtle races. Please use **Accipiter Sp.**, unless you have positive IDs on Sharp-shinned and Coopers hawks. It is possible that our **blackbird flocks** contain more Brown-headed Cowbirds and Tricolored Blackbirds than we realize – check all flocks carefully.

The **post-count dinner is at the Sebastopol Community Center, 390 Morris St., Sebastopol**. You may arrive after 4:30 pm. **Tally and team reports begin at 6:30 pm**. This year we’re serving a delish vegetarian lasagna with soup, salad and, crusty French bread from Oliver’s Market (Thanks to Nancy Hair for coordinating with Oliver’s). Mineral water, ginger ale and hot tea will be provided. It is our tradition to BYOB. Everyone is requested to donate a dessert and donate \$5 for the dinner. Remember to bring your “campware” and help send less waste to the landfill.

All CBC forms, maps and letters are also available on our Madrone Audubon website as well as an FAQ about the CBC and other interesting information. Check it out at <https://www.madroneaudubon.org> Don’t forget to visit the site again in late January to view the post-count results of the 53st Annual Western Sonoma County Christmas Bird Count.

Please let me know if you have any questions. I sincerely appreciate all of your hard work and continued support of this very important Citizen Science tradition! I look forward to seeing you on Sunday, December 29th. Until then, have a beautiful holiday season!

Peter Leveque, CBC Chair and Co-compiler
Stacy Li Deputy CBC Deputy Chair and Co-compiler
Madrone Audubon Society

PS – Please remember to keep your eyes out for the following: Green Heron, American Bittern, Cinnamon Teal, Green-winged Teal, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, Hooded Merganser, Fulmar, Mountain Quail, Sooty Grouse, Cattle Egret, Yellowlegs, Common Gallinule, Long-billed Curlew, Horned Lark, Swallows, California Thrasher, American Dipper, Rock Wren, Brown-headed Cowbird, Crossbills, Lark Sparrow, Ruff, Lincoln’s Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow and Cedar Waxwing.