

51st Western Sonoma County Christmas Bird Count
Saturday, December 30, 2017

Greetings CBC Counter:

We are so happy you to have your participation in the Western Sonoma County CBC! By now, your team leader has provided you with details about the meeting place and time for your team on count day. If you find that you are not able to attend, please contact your leader and Peter Leveque ASAP. If it is the morning of the count, contact your leader directly. Below are a few additional details about the count.

Please introduce yourself to private property owners and secure their permission to count on their property. You may also find it helpful to familiarize yourself with the general outline of the count circle so that any birds you see within the circle, but not in your area can still be recorded for the count.

We use 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!

As usual, **unusual** birds (those out of range or season) should be described in **written** detail. Your leader has a form for this purpose and will submit the completed form at the post count dinner. 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 eagles often pass from one area to another and this information helps to keep one 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 Cooper's Hawks. It is possible that our **blackbird flocks** contain more Brown Headed Cowbirds and Tricolored Blackbirds than we realize – check all flocks carefully.

A delicious post-count vegetarian dinner will be provided for a donation of \$5 per guest. **Please let us know ahead of time if you plan to attend the dinner.** If you can, please bring an appetizer or dessert to share. Appetizers are really appreciated because everyone will come from the field hungry. The dinner is held at the **Sebastopol Community Center, 390 Morris St., Sebastopol**. Doors open at 4:30 pm, **dinner will begin at 5:15** and tally and team reports begin at 6:30 pm -this is an interesting and often amusing recount of the events of the day. Coffee, tea and hot cocoa will be provided – anything else is BYOB. We will have some disposable dinnerware on hand, but if you bring your own reusable pieces, we will send less waste to the landfill.

A copy of the WSC CBC territory map, topo maps and field forms are available on Madrone Audubon's website: <http://madroneaudubon.org>. Remember to visit the site again in late January to view the post-count results of the 51st Annual Western Sonoma County Christmas Bird Count.

Thank you again for participating in this important Citizen Science tradition! We look forward to seeing you on Saturday, December 30, 2017. Until then, have a beautiful holiday season!

For the Birds,

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