

Number show Great Backyard Bird Count on track to set new records.

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Record Number of Countries Join the Great Backyard Bird Count

Bird watchers on pace to shatter records

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New York, N.Y., Ithaca, N.Y., and Port Rowan, ON— By mid-afternoon on Tuesday, February 18, participants from a record **127 countries** had submitted bird checklists for the annual Great Backyard Bird Count, eclipsing last year's 110 countries. The four-day count ended Monday, but data are continuing to roll in from around the globe, on pace to surpass last year's record-breaking count.

The information gathered by tens of thousands of volunteers helps track the health of bird populations at a scale that would not otherwise be possible. The GBBC is a joint project of the [Cornell Lab of Ornithology](#) and the [National Audubon Society](#) with partner [Bird Studies Canada](#).

Top 10 most frequently reported species (number of checklists reporting this species):

Species	Number of Checklists
Northern Cardinal	50,603
Dark-eyed Junco	48,195
Mourning Dove	41,587
Blue Jay	37,069
Downy Woodpecker	34,555
American Goldfinch	31,397
American Crow	30,452
Tufted Titmouse	30,230
House Finch	30,193
House Sparrow	28,980



Northern Cardinal, Ella Clem

Top 10 most numerous species (sum of how many individuals were observed across all checklists):



Snow Geese, Larry Jordan

Species	Number of Individuals
Snow Goose	1,195,722
Canada Goose	985,763
European Starling	516,723
Mallard	470,340
Red-winged Blackbird	446,496
Ring-billed Gull	409,660
American Coot	391,423
Dark-eye Junco	382,003
American Crow	307,629
American Goldfinch	303,025

Checklists have come from Australia, China, Argentina, Kazakhstan, Iceland, India, Kenya, and even Antarctica! In Canada, participants in British Columbia have racked up the highest provincial total (189) in that country. Participation in the Maritime Provinces is also up with reports from New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland and Labrador already outstripping last year's totals even before all the data has been entered.

India is the clear superstar outside of North America with nearly 3,000 checklists and the greatest number of species reported at 765!

Country	Number of Species	Number of Checklists
United States	637	102,839
Canada	231	11,395
India	765	2,913
Australia	488	808
Mexico	632	377
Costa Rica	545	150
United Kingdom	154	146
Portugal	178	135
Puerto Rico	107	132
Honduras	316	99

In North America, California sits atop the leader board with the most checklists and the greatest number of species so far, but New York is nipping at its heels for the checklist record. Ontario, Canada, has jumped into the top 10 for checklists, outdistancing even big birdy states such as Texas, Florida, and North Carolina.

State/Province	Number of Species	Number of Checklists
California	354	7,607
New York	164	7,161
Pennsylvania	136	6,413
Ontario	144	5,870
Texas	346	5,093
Florida	305	5,011
Ohio	137	4,747
Virginia	176	4,537
North Carolina	192	4,500
Michigan	127	3,687

These checklist and species numbers will continue to rise as GBBC participants enter their data for the four days of the count through the end of the month. Although much more data has yet to be recorded, here are some of the trends noted so far.

- **Fewer Finches**

After last year's "superflight," this year's GBBC reports for 10 irruptive species (mostly finches) are down considerably. This includes reports for the White-winged and Red crossbills, Common and Hoary redpolls, Pine and Evening grosbeaks, Pine Siskin, Purple Finch, Red-breasted Nuthatches, and Bohemian Waxwings. These are natural

fluctuations in numbers because of variation in seed crops.

- **Snowy Owl Invasion Continues**

A massive irruption of Snowy Owls into the northeastern, mid-Atlantic, and Great Lakes States of the U.S., as well as southeastern Canada, is easily seen in GBBC numbers. Preliminary results show more than 2,500 Snowy Owls being reported in 25 states and 7 provinces of the U.S. and Canada!

- **The Polar Vortex Effect**

The impact of frigid cold in many part of North America has resulted in unusual movements of waterfowl and grebes. With the Great Lakes almost completely frozen, some species, such as the White-winged Scoter and the Long-tailed Duck have fled the frozen lakes and stopped at inland locations where they are not usually found at this time of year.

Explore what's being reported with the new "[Explore a Location](#)" tool. See what species are being reported and how many checklists are being turned in at the county, state/province, and country levels. Participants may also [submit photos for the GBBC photo contest](#) or just explore some of the fantastic images that are coming in! An overall summary of the report will be released in a few weeks.

The GBBC is made possible in part by sponsor [Wild Birds Unlimited](#).

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Contacts:

- Agatha Szczepaniak, Audubon, (212) 979-3197, aszczepaniak@audubon.org
- Pat Leonard, Cornell Lab of Ornithology, (607) 254-2137, pel27@cornell.edu; contact for photos
- Dick Cannings, Bird Studies Canada, (250) 493-3393 (West Coast time), dcannings@birdscanada.org

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About Bird Studies Canada

Bird Studies Canada advances the understanding, appreciation, and conservation of wild birds and their habitats. We are Canada's national body for bird research, conservation, Citizen Science, and education, and we are a non-governmental charitable organization.

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