

CHILLIWACK CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT (126th CBC) – 20 December 2025

This was the 126th year for the Audubon Christmas Bird Count (CBC). Nature Chilliwack held the 47th CBC this year on 20 December 2025. The Chilliwack (BCCH) count covers a ~24.07km diameter circle reaching from Cultus Lake in the south to Deroche and Harrison Bay in the north. The western part of the circle enters the east end of Vedder Mountain and all of the Bert Brink Wildlife Management area (McGillivray Game Reserve) while the easternmost sections of the circle reaches almost to the centre of Rosedale, most of Slesse Trailer Park and the peak of Elk Mountain.

Last year we had 17 groups in cars on count routes with 42 observers. This year, we had 14 groups in cars on count routes consisting of a total of 32 observers.

Temperatures on December 20 were at 4 to 6°C with light to moderate winds and some light rain in the afternoon. The number of individual bird counters and groups were down from last year's count. Counters did an excellent job as usual of finding and identifying birds!

This year's count day attracted a total of **32** counters on **14** routes plus **4** feeder watchers. They observed **95** different bird species and 1 count week species and 2 count day species more than year. The total of individual birds came to **43558 down 7,368** birds. In the cold year of 2008, we had 89 species on the count day with 20,313 individual birds. The number of individual birds on this year's count was down 16,972 individual from the extreme high of 65,978 individuals on the 2011 count. For comparison, our numbers on the 2009 and 2013 count days was 99 species both years with individual birds totalling 31,606 in 2009 and 41,091 in 2013, which is more typical of the normal numbers.

This year 5 species broke high record numbers for individuals. The record breaking high counts were 21 Eurasian Wigeon, 215 Northern Pintails, 2 Great Egret, 2 Barred Owl, 10 Bewick's Wren. We recorded 50 Anna's Hummingbirds this year and 24 last year, 52 below the 2018 high of 102 Anna's. European Collared Doves were down again this year with 141 seen, 221 lower than the 2019 high count of 362 doves. We found three owl species again on count day 1 Barn Owl, 1 Northern Pygmy-Owl plus a 2 Barred Owl. Low numbers, Pine Siskin had great numbers in 2023, with 1574 seen last year only 35 counted but just one this year. The next 3 species are not seen every year and only 21 of each was seen this year Common Loon, American Pipit, and Lincoln Sparrow.

We had 4 rare species on the count day 2 Great Egret, a Long-tailed Duck, 1 Mountain Chickadee and a Barn Swallow.

Audubon also collects and prints birds observed in the Chilliwack CBC count week (cw). This year, cw ran from Dec. 11th to 17th, 2024 and 1 species was observed that was not seen on count day a Western Scrub-Jay. Count week helps to show birds that occur in the count area but eluded counters on the count day. So next year, be sure to report birds that you saw 3 days before or after the count date that were not located by anyone on the count day. You can report a cw bird anywhere in the 24.07 km diameter count circle.

The one new bird species for Chilliwack was a Barn Swallow. 'New' birds are defined as birds never before seen on the Chilliwack CBC day or week. Rare birds include birds that are unusual species. For simplicity and clarity that means 'new/rare' birds are birds

that have not been seen on our count for 6 years or more. Over the 47 years since the Chilliwack count started, we have only had 25 species in the total number of species commonly occur on our count every year, with 8 more additional species recorded on 42 counts.

Since the Chilliwack count started 47 years ago in the winter of 1978-79, our participants have found a total of 171 confirmed species in the Chilliwack CBC area. The confirmed number of course depends on the final tally accepted by Bird Studies Canada.

Click on your Regional Editors e-mail address: Yousif Attia to contact him CBC@birdscanada.org. All regional summaries are contained in the Audubon publication *American Birds*, <https://www.audubon.org/conservation/science/christmas-bird-count> which can be accessed through the Audubon CBC home page. Also on the web is access to all CBC circles <https://www.birdscanada.org/bird-science/christmas-bird-count>.

For more information contact Denis at 604 858-5141 or email to bcwilddenis@uniserve.com. Please pass this summary of the count on to any others that may be interested.

Thanks for all your help and enjoy the Birds!

Denis Knopp
Nature Chilliwack

<https://naturechilliwack.ca/membership/>