

Information for 2017 Hilton Head Christmas Bird Count

DATES

Presentation	Thursday, December 7 , 7:00 pm - Social, 7:30 pm - Presentation First Presbyterian Church, Fellowship Hall, 540 William Hilton Parkway “Christmas Birds Highlights” by Robert Rommel
Count Day	Friday, December 15
Results (Captains)	Monday, December 18 , 9:00 am-1:00pm Coastal Discovery Museum Each Captain spends about 15 minutes reviewing results with panel. Panel: Robert Rommel, Jack Colcolough, Pauline Jones

Guidelines

Count Day vs. Count Week	Count Day is Friday, December 15. Count Week includes three days before and after (Dec. 12,13,14 and Dec 16,17,18). For birds seen during count week and not on Count Day, enter “cw” on checklist (not a number). As the results are compiled, we eliminate “cw” if the species is seen on Count Day.
Checklist	Available on Hilton Head Island Audubon Society website under events/CBC. www.hiltonheadaudubon.org “ U ” means check carefully on the ID since this is an unusual sighting in our area at this time of year or the bird is difficult to identify. “ R ” means it is a rare find and a Rare Bird Form is required. Any species added to the list also require a Rare Bird Form. Captains review each team’s list and consolidate on one form. Any “ U ” or “ R ” or unusually high numbers should be discussed with the observer and team leader.
non-ID	Use this option if observer is certain that a particular bird belongs to a specific species but is uncertain about which form of that species is observed. Add non-ID species as needed.
Banded	Note on the Checklist if any birds seen are banded. Try to note color and location of bands.
Duplicate sightings	Captains reconcile the numbers among their own teams to be sure we are not double counting high fliers (Eagle, White Pelican, Osprey, Wood Stork). For example, if 2 of your teams see a flock of 20 White Pelicans, determine if it is the same flock and report once in the area report. For Bald Eagles only, please note time and location on count day.
Other formats	You can use modified worksheets in the field, if desired. However, data should be submitted to Captains on the official Checklist to provide the full “effort” information. Use the 2017 Checklist to turn in your combined area results. Captains should keep their teams’ individual lists in case questions arise. If you would like an Excel version of the checklist and/or Alphabetical, let me know and I will e-mail it to you. Only the PDF version of the “official” checklist is on the website.
Rare Bird Form	Needed if “ R ” on the Checklist or if not listed (write-in). Use the back of the form to sketch and/or describe the bird, habitat, behavior, etc. A photo, even if from count week, is very helpful. Form is on the HHIAS website.
Playing Bird Calls	The use of playback is discouraged. The exception might be for owling.

Participant List	Please include data for each participant (name, phone #, e-mail, address). Include Field Observers, Feeder Watchers, and Owlers. Form is available on HHIAS website or submit a spreadsheet.
Weather	Each team reports conditions, then Captains summarize.
Effort	Each team reports, then the Captain adds together on area Checklist. Effort information is critical to determining whether an increase in bird observations reflects a real increase in population numbers or reflects the fact that more participants are spending more hours in that location. See details for reporting below.
Field Observers	Record the number of people, then the number of parties in Field. This section excludes Feeder Watcher and Owling hours and distance. Each field team should break down the party miles and hours by mode of transportation. Round to nearest quarter mile and quarter hour. Do not include time or mileage to travel to a birding location.
	If a route is re-traced, only include the one-way distance. For example: If a field party walks out a path to a distance of 1.5 miles and returns the same way, the distance is reported as 1.5 miles, not 3. However, the entire time spent should be reported, not just that of the one-way distance.
Owling	Also called “Nocturnal Birding.” Record the results of birds seen (or heard) on the Checklist. Nocturnal birding Effort is reported separately from field observers. Report the number of total parties and party hours in the field during non-daylight hours under Owling in the Effort section.
Feeder Watchers	Counters watching birds at their feeders on Count Day. Watch for a minimum of 30 minutes at a time. Count the largest number seen at one time. (Example: Count 5 Chickadees that you see at one time, not as they individually come to the feeder.) Two people watching the same feeders for an hour counts as one hour. Record results of birds seen on the Checklist. Captains report the number of Feeder Watchers and their hours separately in the Effort section, but the bird counts mix in with the field observers on the consolidated checklist.
Participants' Guide	A 1/2-page Guide by National Audubon is available on the HHIAS website. (Optional)
Preparation	Check out areas in advance of count day to find the most productive areas.
New Participants	I will e-mail Captains the contact information for new people interested in the CBC in their area as I receive it.
Donations	Donations are optional - final reports are no longer printed and mailed. Donations to the National Audubon Society support this research.
Contact info	Susan Murphy E-mail: HHICBC@gmail.com