

2019 GBBC Summary

March 2019

As it has nearly every year, the 2019 Great Backyard Bird Count broke more records and attracted more participants than ever before. So, the first order of business is a heartfelt **thank you** to each of you for embracing the count and sharing your bird sightings! We hope you had fun and feel good about your contributions to the global maps and the data behind them.

We'll kick off this summary with worldwide numbers—big numbers—all setting new records:

Species: 6,699

Checklists: 204,921

Estimated Participants: 224,781



[Double-crested Cormorant](#) by Janet Hix, Texas, 2019
GBBC

Some numbers may still change slightly as the final checklists for the GBBC dates are added through eBird or as flagged reports are validated by our reviewers and added to the database. Data above reflects website totals through March 14, 2019.

Top 10 Most Frequently Reported Species

(number of GBBC checklists reporting this species)



[Northern Cardinal](#) by Mary Sullivan, Minnesota, 2019 GBBC.

Northern Cardinal tops this list, as it nearly always does. Only once in the past 10 years has another species dislodged the cardinal from the top perch, but in 2016 the cardinal played second fiddle to the Dark-eyed Junco. A newcomer to the most-frequently reported birds is the White-breasted Nuthatch which pushed European Starling off the list entirely this year.

Species	Number of Checklists
Northern Cardinal	56,785
Dark-eyed Junco	50,397
Mourning Dove	45,449
Downy Woodpecker	42,095
Blue Jay	40,386
American Crow	39,467
House Finch	37,726
House Sparrow	37,149
Black-capped Chickadee	35,757
White-breasted Nuthatch	33,284

Data totals as of March 6, 2019

Note: All Top 10 species are common in North America, reflecting continued high participation from this region.

Top 10 Most Numerous Species

(sum of how many individuals were observed across all GBBC checklists)



[Red-winged Blackbird](#) by Sandra Adair, Michigan, 2019 GBBC.

Red-winged Blackbird jumped to the top of this list, up from the fourth most numerous species during the last count. Common Grackle and Herring Gull both got bumped off the list and the Northern Shoveler is a new addition since last year.

Species	Number of Individuals
Red-winged Blackbird	4,290,218
Snow Goose	2,481,082
European Starling	2,031,493
Canada Goose	1,716,620
Common Murre	755,193
Ring-billed Gull	748,766
Mallard	720,105
American Robin	491,102
American Coot	448,816
Northern Shoveler	446,105

Data totals as of March 6, 2019

Note: These Top 10 species are common in North America, reflecting high participation from this region.



[Western Bluebird](#) by Gary Botello, Arizona, 2019 GBBC.

Top 10 States by Checklists Submitted

There are some minor movements on this list compared with last year: Florida and Pennsylvania swapped places and there was some shuffling around in the 6 to 10 range, but nobody new came on the list and no state fell off. Half of the list set new state checklist records. *New state checklist record.

State	Number of Checklists
California	10,059
Texas	9,121*
New York	8,453*
Florida	7,696*
Pennsylvania	7,640
Virginia	6,332*
Washington	4,905*
Ohio	4,901
North Carolina	4,620
Michigan	4,596

Data totals as of March 6, 2019



[Canada Jay](#) by Denis Hains, Quebec, Canada, 2019 GBBC.

Top 10 Canadian Provinces by Checklists Submitted

British Columbia and Quebec traded places compared to last year, as did Alberta and Nova Scotia. The remainder of the province list stayed the same, with several new checklist records. * New provincial checklist record

Province	Number of Checklists
Ontario	6,847
British Columbia	3,079 *
Quebec	2,615 *
Alberta	1,034
Nova Scotia	878
Manitoba	847*
Saskatchewan	454
New Brunswick	447
Newfoundland & Labrador	213
Prince Edward Island	132

Data totals as of March 6, 2019



[Black-throated Tit](#) by Santosh Kumar, Himachal Pradesh, India, 2019 GBBC.

Top 10 Countries by Checklists Submitted

Outside the U.S. and Canada, participation in the GBBC is rising steeply. In fact, India jumped over Canada to take the number two spot on this year's worldwide checklist totals for the first time since the GBBC went international in 2013. The United Kingdom moved up two places and Portugal got knocked off the list this year. Every country on the list set a new checklist record, including the U.S. and Canada! *New country checklist record (2013-present) [See Bird Count India's summary of GBBC participation.](#)

Country	Number of Checklists
United States	136,903*
India	21,524*
Canada	16,611*
Australia	2,811*
Spain	2,391*
Mexico	1,697*
United Kingdom	1,491*
Costa Rica	1,376*
Taiwan	1,091*
Colombia	1,046*

Data totals as of March 6, 2019



[Black-winged Saltator](#) by Fernando Navia,
Colombia, 2019 GBBC.

Top 10 Countries by Number of Species Reported

The list changes drastically when we rank the top 10 species-rich countries and Colombia outstripped other top contenders in the GBBC this year—the only country to surpass 1,000 species! There were plenty of species records broken during the count, too. *New country species number record (2013-present)

Country	Number of Species
Colombia	1,095*
Ecuador	948*
Brazil	844*
India	843*
Mexico	755
Peru	724*
Costa Rica	686*
United States	669*
Argentina	613*
Thailand	556

Data totals as of March 6, 2019

Trends & Highlights – U.S.

In the eastern United States, nostalgia broke out among veteran birders as lots of Evening Grosbeaks turned out for the GBBC—it's a bird that has been conspicuously absent for decades for unknown reasons. The northern finches also made it a special time for bird watchers in the northern states, with reports of Red Crossbill, Common Redpoll, Pine Grosbeaks, and Bohemian Waxwings. There were some Snowy Owl reports as well, but nothing that would indicate a significant irruption for the Arctic species or compare to the massive influx during the winter of 2013-14.



[Black-capped Chickadee](#) by Kathleen Curran,
New Hampshire, 2019 GBBC.

It was very cold in Northeast during the count and there are few reports of early migrants. Species such as Killdeer and American Woodcock, which are sometimes pushing in to the region in mid-February were a no-show in any significant numbers for the GBBC this year. Common Grackles and Red-winged Blackbirds were just beginning to arrive. Red-winged Blackbirds did not have a strong showing in northern U.S. this year but there were enough of them around overall to place them in the number-one spot for the most numerous species in the GBBC this year.

Some cool rare species were reported in the U.S. during the count. They include:

–a [Red-flanked Bluetail](#) in Los Angeles—the first U.S. report in winter and the first U.S. report for this species during the GBBC. This is an east Asian species;

–a [Tundra Bean-Goose](#) in Oregon, also native to east Asia. East Asian birds turn up in the western U.S. in the autumn and some end up spending the winter;

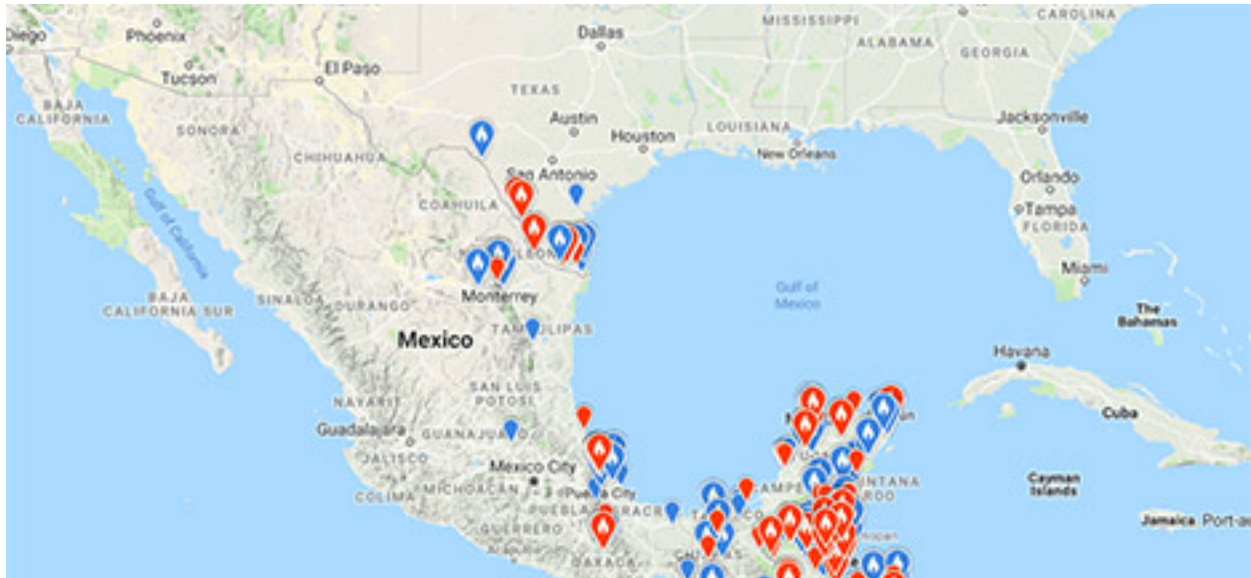
–one [White-throated Thrush](#) was reported in Arizona, a first for the state and the first U.S. report for the species outside of Texas;

–a [Yellow Grosbeak](#) was spotted in Uvalde County, Texas.



White-throated Thrush by Jon Anderson, Arizona, 2019 GBBC.

The White-throated Thrush and Yellow Grosbeak are species native to Mexico and Central America that are turning up in new areas. There is a long-term trend of many such species moving slowly northward. This is most obvious with Green Jay (see map below), Clay-colored Thrush, and Ringed Kingfisher (which are always found in Texas during the GBBC). “Vagrants” like the White-throated Thrush and Yellow Grosbeak may also represent the leading edge of population shifts to the north for these and other species.

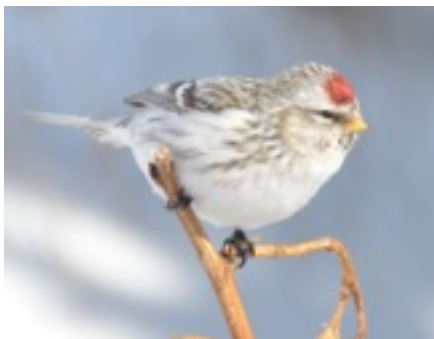


Reports of [Clay-colored Thrush](#) during the 2019 GBBC. Just 25 years ago, this species was considered a rarity in South Texas. Now we can see that they were found in nearly 20 locations along the length of the Lower Rio Grande Valley north to Laredo, with outliers well north in Del Rio and Corpus Christi! [View larger map.](#)

Watching southern birds expand northward will be an ongoing theme in a time of climate change, although the other troubling part of the equation is that the overall populations of many of these birds are declining. So even as they move into new areas, this does not necessarily mean that these are healthy, thriving populations. It's another reason why monitoring birds during special events and any day of the year in eBird is so important.

Trends & Highlights – Canada

Canada's GBBC participants found fewer familiar finches because so many of them moved southward after a skimpy crop of conifer seeds. Below are some of the more outstanding sightings in the provinces during the GBBC.

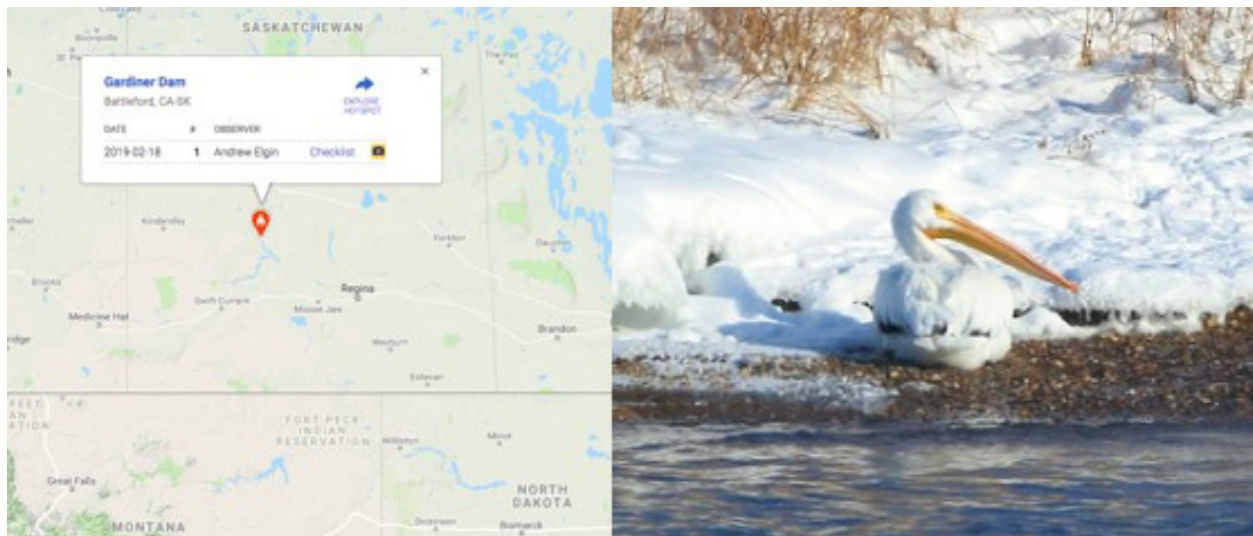


Quebec and **Ontario** reported good numbers of Evening Grosbeaks along with redpolls, Pine Grosbeaks, Bohemian Waxwings, and Snowy Owls. A [Common Goldeneye x Hooded Merganser](#) hybrid turned up on the Trent River and a [Varied Thrush](#) near Sault Ste. Marie, both located in Ontario. There were a few small flocks of (spring migrant) [Ross's Geese](#) scattered around southern Ontario.

[Hoary Redpoll](#) by Jean Able, Quebec, Canada, 2019 GBBC

In **British Columbia**, a [Dusky Thrush](#) discovered in mid-January near the Nanaimo River Estuary stuck around just long enough to be counted for the GBBC and was last recorded on February 15. California Scrub-Jays were observed in Vancouver and Maple Ridge, and one at Chilliwak was discovered on February 16.

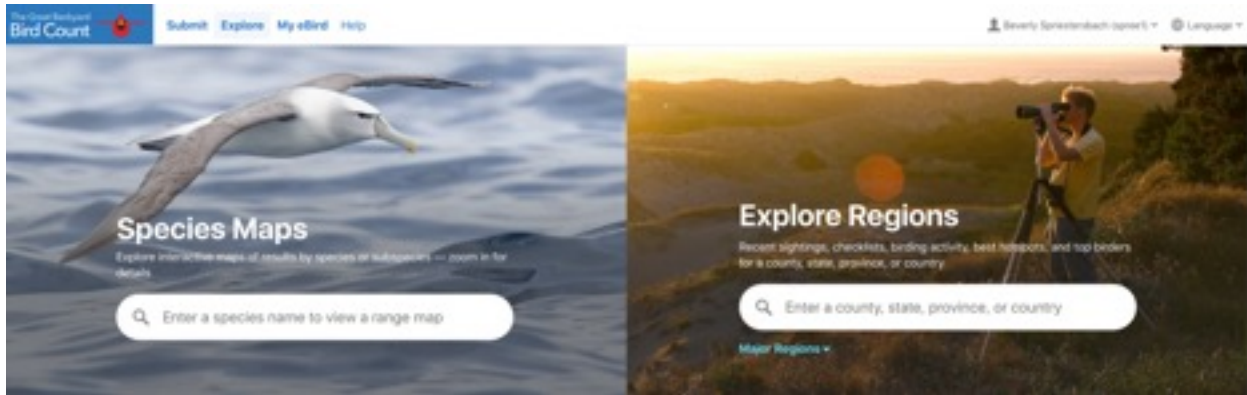
Amazingly, a Savannah Sparrow was somehow surviving the winter at Cape Spear, **Newfoundland and Labrador**, and was reported to the GBBC for February 18. Other notable sightings include a high count of 68 Tufted Ducks, and several reports of White-throated Sparrows and Fox Sparrows across the entire island. They are usually quite rare in winter, but this year there were more than 10 overwintering Fox Sparrows.



Andrew Elgin photographed a lone [American White Pelican](#) braving the Canadian winter in Saskatchewan during the GBBC!

A report of a single [American White Pelican](#) and one Double-crested Cormorant came from Gardiner Dam, Saskatchewan. These species are usually found here in small numbers in mid-December but there are no eBird records of these species making it past the first week of January, and February weather was especially harsh this year.

More to Explore



These are just a few of the stories coming out of the 2019 GBBC. Delve into more details, including results from your region, with our [Explore a Region](#) tool. See what's been reported across the world or in your neck of the woods. Or find out where a particular species has been reported using the Explore a Species tool. And check out just a sampling of the images submitted for the GBBC photo contest by visiting the [2019 Gallery](#).

Keep Counting with eBird!

The logo for eBird, with 'e' in green and 'Bird' in black.

Please keep observing and reporting birds! Just go directly to [eBird](#) to submit checklists using the same username and password you have for the GBBC. The data-entry process is the same. Please keep reporting birds—you can do so from anywhere in the world at any time of the year! Try the [eBird Mobile](#) app for iOS or Android to enter observations from the field. The information you supply is vital to

scientists studying changes in the numbers and distributions of birds, and to conservation leaders who use the reports to craft targeted plans to conserve declining species. Keep up with the latest bird sightings and create your birding profile so you can share your excitement about birds with a like-minded community around the world. Head over to [eBird.org](#).

***Thank you for participating in the
Great Backyard Bird Count!***

Thank you to GBBC founding sponsor, Wild Birds Unlimited.