

2020 GBBC Summary

March 13, 2020

You did it again! The 2020 Great Backyard Bird Count broke more records and attracted more participants than ever before. So, the first order of business is to extend our sincere gratitude 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.



Note the incredible jump from last year to this year.

Species: **6,942** (last year 6,699)

Checklists: **249,444** (last year 204,921)

Estimated Participants: **268,674** (last year 224,781)

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 reflect website totals through March 10, 2020.

Killdeer taking a bath by Bill Winkler, Pennsylvania, GBBC 2020

Top 10 Most Frequently Reported Species



Northern Cardinal by Cindy Sedlacek, New York, GBBC 2020

Northern Cardinal tops this list, as it nearly always does. An exciting visitor to the most-frequently reported birds is the Red-bellied Woodpecker.

Species	Number of Checklists
Northern Cardinal	70,168
Dark-eyed Junco	59,318
Mourning Dove	58,361
Downy Woodpecker	52,276
Blue Jay	50,808
House Sparrow	49,180
House Finch	48,796
American Crow	48,639
Black-capped Chickadee	43,775
Red-bellied Woodpecker	40,826

Data totals as of March 10, 2020

Note: This is the number of GBBC checklists reporting these species. All Top 10 species are common in North America, reflecting continued high participation from this region.

Top 10 Most Numerous Species



Snow Geese by Laura Frazier, Maryland, GBBC 2020

Snow Goose jumped to the top of this list bumping last year's most numerous species, Red-winged Blackbird, to fifth place. As the image above makes abundantly clear, geese flock in large groups during the winter. Many Atlantic seaboard species stayed farther north this year due to historically milder weather.

Species	Number of Individuals
Snow Goose	7,194,952
Common Murre	3,524,448
Canada Goose	2,046,596
blackbird sp.	1,950,137
Red-winged Blackbird	1,223,911
European Starling	1,117,755
Common Grackle	957,801
Ring-billed Gull	812,712
Mallard	778,553
Greater White-fronted Goose	759,459

Data totals as of March 10, 2020

Note: These are the sum of how many individuals were observed across all GBBC checklists. These Top 10 species are common in North America, reflecting high participation from this region.



California Quail by Patricia Ediger, Washington, GBBC 2020

Top 10 States by Checklists Submitted

Familiar birdy U.S. states populate the top 10 list for the greatest number of checklists submitted. New York edged Texas and took over the second place spot, compared to last year. Most states experienced record highs for the number of checklists submitted and none of the top 10 states were below 5,000. ***New state checklist record.**

State	Number of Checklists
California	13,331*
New York	10,535*
Texas	10,193*
Florida	10,076*
Pennsylvania	8,899*
Virginia	7,088*
Ohio	7063*
North Carolina	6419*
Washington	6255*
Michigan	5314*

Data totals as of March 10, 2020

Top 10 Indian States by Checklists Submitted

Worldwide, India stood strong in the #2 spot for highest number of checklists submitted by country. Each year participation has grown in India with incredible numbers worth noting.



Yellow-eyed Babbler, Ankush Chowdhury, Uttarakhand, India, GBBC 2020

State	Number of Checklists
Tamil Nadu	12,764
Kerala	3,701
Uttarakhand	2,568
Karnataka	2,104
Andhra Pradesh	1,464
Maharashtra	779
Assam	432
Himachal Pradesh	322
Madhya Pradesh	315
Delhi	314

Data totals as of March 10, 2020



Boreal Owl by Sylvie Desmeules, Quebec, Canada, GBBC 2020

Top 10 Canadian Provinces by Checklists Submitted

The top three provinces for number of checklists submitted from Canada were the same this year as last, with Nova Scotia jumping to fourth place. Several provinces set their own new checklist records and overall it was strong year for Canada. * **New provincial checklist record**

Province	Number of Checklists
Ontario	9,609*
British Columbia	3,499*
Quebec	3,041*
Nova Scotia	1373*
Alberta	1,255*
Manitoba	599
Saskatchewan	495*
New Brunswick	405
Newfoundland & Labrador	249*
Prince Edward Island	136

Data totals as of March 10, 2020



Collared Aracari by Andy Holwell, Costa Rica, GBBC 2020

Top 10 Countries by Checklists Submitted

Outside the U.S. and Canada, participation in the GBBC is rising steeply with India remaining the standout, trailing only the U.S. now. In fact, every country on the top-10 list set a new checklist record this year. The increase in checklists from Argentina is especially noteworthy, having tripled from 511 in the 2019 count to 1,550 checklists for the 2020 count! ***New country checklist record.**

Country	Number of Checklists
United States	169,234*
India	26,979*
Canada	20,742*
Australia	3,163*
Spain	2,911*
Costa Rica	2,117*
Mexico	1,906*
Argentina	1,550*
Colombia	1,512*
United Kingdom	1,506*

Data totals as of March 10, 2020



Anhinga by Jeanne Kaufman, Florida, GBBC 2020

Top 10 Countries by Number of Species Reported

Two countries surpassed 1,000 species—congratulations Colombia and Ecuador! There were many other species records broken during the count, too. ***New country species number record.**

Country	Number of Species
Colombia	1,129*
Ecuador	1,082*
Brazil	935*
India	916*
Peru	838*
Mexico	743
Costa Rica	693*
United States	661
Argentina	641*
Thailand	590*

Data totals as of March 10, 2020

Trends & Highlights – U.S.

The Winter That Wasn't

In much of the northeastern United States and southeastern Canada, the winter of 2020 was remarkable for its mildness. Few storms brought snow or ice and temperatures have been above average almost all winter long. Bird observations from this winter reflect that, with the following patterns especially apparent:



Common Merganser by James Harding, New Jersey, GBBC 2020

- Ducks and geese have overwintered farther north than usual, with fewer pushing south to mid-Atlantic states like Virginia.
- Half-hardy insectivorous birds, like [Ruby-crowned Kinglet](#) and [Eastern Phoebe](#), have overwintered in northern areas in what may be record numbers.

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



Siberian Accentor by Mark Scheel, Washington, GBBC 2020

— A [Siberian Accentor](#) (“Sibe” or Siberian vagrant), a member of a family (Prunellidae) with no representatives in the New World. Dozens of people saw this bird near Woodland, Washington, on GBBC weekend.

— A [Pink-footed Goose](#) pleased birders in [Delaware](#), [Pennsylvania](#), and Newfoundland.

— A pair of [Barnacle Geese](#) in [Massachusetts](#) also likely hailed from Greenland and were likewise especially unusual for mid-winter since most records are from fall or spring migration.

Trends & Highlights – Canada

Canada's GBBC participants found fewer winter finches this year due to the great cone and seed crop up north in the boreal forest of Ontario, Quebec, and Newfoundland. The great food crop, along with less snow and mild temperatures throughout much of Canada, resulted in many species of birds staying north.

Notable rare species reported in Canada during the count:



Slaty-backed Gull by Charles Fitzpatrick, Newfoundland and Labrador, GBBC 2020

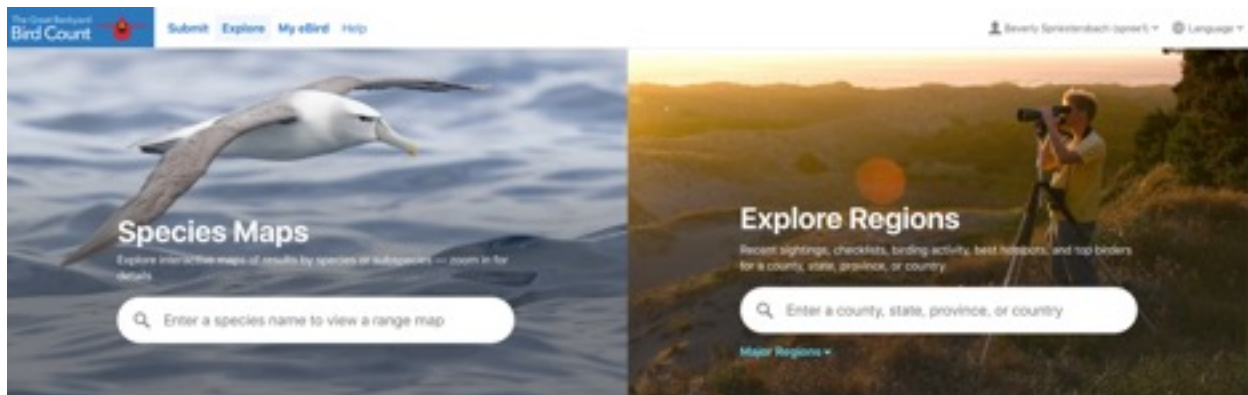
— [Slaty-backed Gull](#) (left) is a western Pacific species that remains a red-letter bird anywhere in the Atlantic basin. This species is typically found in coastal areas of northeast Asia and occasionally along the Alaskan coast. But Charles Fitzpatrick found this gull in Newfoundland and Labrador, a superb hotspot for gull-watching, especially around St. John's.

— [A Pink-footed Goose](#) was reported in Newfoundland and Labrador. This is only the second time this species has been found there in mid-winter.

— [An Eastern Phoebe](#) turned up in Ontario, which is pretty impressive for this location in February and likely a sign of the milder winter.

In addition to the phoebe, other rare sightings underscoring the more moderate Canadian winter this year included [Rose-breasted Grosbeak](#) and [Indigo Bunting](#) in Nova Scotia, both typically found much farther south, spread out through Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean, and the southern tip of Florida at GBBC time.

More to Explore



These are just a few of the stories coming out of the 2020 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.

Keep Counting with eBird!



Please keep observing and reporting birds! 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.