

MDC encourages birders to help with Audubon Christmas Bird Count

The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) encourages experienced birders to become citizen scientists by helping with the National Audubon Society's 119th Annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC) between Dec. 14 and Jan. 5 – including about 20 counts in Missouri.

The CBC is an annual bird census where thousands of volunteers across the U.S., Canada, and many countries in the Western Hemisphere count birds over a 24-hour period between Dec. 14 and Jan. 5. CBCs gather data on winter bird populations to track their long-term trends. Each CBC has a coordinator that assigns portions of a 15-mile diameter count circle to participants to count all birds seen and heard. Learn more at audubon.org/conservation/join-christmas-bird-count.

Missouri hosts about 20 CBCs, some of which are listed below. If interested in participating, contact the CBC organizer listed.

- Mingo National Wildlife Refuge on Dec. 15
Contact Bill Eddleman at eddllemanw@sbcglobal.net
- Big Oak Tree State Park on Dec. 17
Contact Bill Eddleman at eddllemanw@sbcglobal.net
- Trimble (Smithville Lake, Clay and Clinton Counties) on Dec. 15
Contact Kristi Mayo at writebirds@gmail.com
- Maramec Springs on Dec. 15
Contact Louise Wilkinson at louwilk8@gmail.com
- Columbia on Dec. 15
Contact Laura Hillman at hillmanl@health.missouri.edu
- Big Spring on Dec. 14
Contact Steve Paes at steve.paes@mdc.mo.gov
- Joseph on Dec. 15
Contact Tom Nagel at thjnagel@gmail.com
- Poplar Bluff on Dec. 21
Contact Bruce Beck at beckbugs42@gmail.com
- Cole Camp Prairies on Dec. 27
Contact Ryan Steffens at ryanthenaturelover@gmail.com
- Liberal on Dec. 21
Contact Dana Hoisington at priariestatepark@dnr.mo.gov
- Kansas City/Unity Village on Dec. 30
Contact Mike Stoakes at mstoakes@juno.com
- Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary on Jan. 1
Contact Randy Korotev at rlkorotev@outlook.com
- Swan Lake National Wildlife Refuge on Jan. 1
Contact Steve Kinder at dmkinder@yahoo.com

For a full list of CBCs, visit

audubon.maps.arcgis.com/apps/View/index.html?appid=fadfb421e95f4949bdc20c29a38228bd.

MDC State Ornithologist Sarah Kendrick offers these CBC tips:

- If you've never participated in a CBC, tell the organizer so they can place you with an existing team of birders.

- Share your level of birding knowledge when you contact the CBC organizer so they can make sure you're with a team with the experience to properly identify birds seen or heard.
- Dress warmly. Most CBCs will be held regardless of weather unless inclement weather is dangerous.
- Bring snacks and beverages to stay fueled for a long day.

For more information on Missouri birds, visit MDC's online Field Guide at nature.mdc.mo.gov/discover-nature/field-guide/search.