

Palo Alto Christmas Bird Count: Instructions for Party Leaders

1) The count is meant to be a fun event, but is also part of Audubon's Citizen Science program. To get a representative count for your area, put in as much time as you can manage.

2) When you download or receive your **forms**, please immediately **FILL OUT THE TOP LINE OF EVERY PAGE**. Regions are numbered 1 to 8; your "party" number is assigned by your region coordinator. Familiarize yourself with the forms (especially the substantially revised bird order) ahead of the count.

COUNT DAY:

3) On count day, have each party member enter contact information on the **participant list**. Check entries for LEGIBILITY. Let your party members know about the countdown (**new location**, below).

4) On the **Party Count Statistics form**, include

- Time and mileage information for each team (sub-party). (If you take a non-birding pause, the "Hours" might be less than the difference between start and stop times.) Record any owling (nighttime birding) separately.
- Temperature (range) and weather.
- Summary of all areas covered: identify overall areas, plus **limited** details.

5) Any birds with a "**W**" in the left column of the checklist require a **writeup** (Rare-bird documentation form -- be sure to **include description** on the reverse side).

AFTER COUNTING:

6) The day ends with a **countdown and dinner** at the Environmental Volunteers EcoCenter, Palo Alto Baylands (see below), where we try to tally everything seen during the day. If you attend, you get to announce your own rarities and other neat finds! Arrive after 5 PM. Dinner (charge for pizza and salad) is at 6:15, followed by the countdown. BYO beverages (and, if you like, some to share). Refrigeration is **not** available. **Alcoholic beverages are not allowed.**

7) **Return your completed forms** to your region coordinator at or before the countdown, or drop them off at the EcoCenter before the countdown (ask for Arlene). If you cannot do any of those, please try to inform your coordinator pre-countdown of any “**W**” or other interesting species found; then mail your forms to Al Eisner, 3538 Farm Hill Blvd. #4, Redwood City, CA 94061, or email clean full-size copies to eisner@slac.stanford.edu. If you prefer to enter bird totals in Excel format, contact Al for the Excel form.

Directions to the Environmental Volunteers EcoCenter for the Countdown:

Take Embarcadero Road in Palo Alto to its north end, and turn left at the “T”. Continue toward the duck pond, and park in one of the “P” areas noted on the Baylands map below (we have been assured that the gate will remain open!). The EcoCenter is across the road from the middle (and smallest) of the three parking areas; the entrance is on the side away from the road.

IMPORTANT: road, lots and paths are unlighted; be sure to bring a flashlight.

