

2018 Florence Christmas Bird Count Summary

by Vjera Thompson, Count Coordinator and Compiler

The Florence Christmas Bird Count was held on Saturday, December 15, 2018. The weather was mellow, with no rain and fairly calm conditions. We had 41 participants in the field and one Home Counter report. We changed the location of the countdown this year, and 35 counters enjoyed the hospitality and delicious food of Best Thai Cuisine at our countdown dinner gathering.

We recorded 120 species, plus 2 for count week, which is close to our average of 126. Count week birds were Common Goldeneye and Mountain Quail that carefully avoided detection on count day.

Our most unusual bird was also a new bird for the count. A Sedge Wren, Oregon's 3rd state record and the 1st found in Lane County, was discovered a couple days before the count and was refound on count day. Since then observers have discovered a second Sedge Wren is present at the same location! The location of the Sedge Wren, on private property owned by the McKenzie River Trust, also provided high numbers of sparrows and wrens. Record high counts of Marsh Wren (97), Lincoln's Sparrow (21), and Swamp Sparrow (8) were found at this location.

Other record high counts included Bufflehead (587), Red-winged Blackbird (383), Ancient Murrelet (11 in two flocks that were spotted during ocean watches), and a wintering Osprey that was seen by two different teams. We also had a record high count of 22 Gray Jays, thanks to two teams that went up into the mountains.

Species not found included most owls, Northern Shoveler, Gadwall, White-tailed Kite, Surfbird, and Purple Finch.

Thanks to team leaders John Polo, Kit Larsen, Alan Contreras, Linda Gilbert, Ellen Cantor, Judy Franzen, John Sullivan, Pat Blue Heron, Adele Dawson, Magnus Persmark, Tye Jeske, and Vjera Thompson. Thanks also go to Ellen Cantor for doing the upfront coordination.