

# INDIAN PEAKS FOUR SEASON BIRD COUNTS

Summer, Fall 2012

Newsletter

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## Breeding Count Summary

Total numbers were well below average. This was the worst numeric count since 1990. This was largely driven by poor numbers in the subalpine where the fewest number of birds was detected since 1985.

### Breeding Count Summary

#### Number of Species

2012 – 110

20-Year Average – 100

Last Year – 110

Record High – 112 (2001)

Record Low – 88 (1984)

#### Number of Individuals

2012 – 39 per count hour

20-Year Average – 42

Last Year – 43

Record High – 59 (2004)

Record Low – 31 (1982)

Species with poor numeric showings included broad-tailed hummingbird, olive-sided flycatcher, mountain chickadee, brown creeper, golden-crowned kinglet, ruby-crowned kinglet, hermit thrush, warbling vireo, yellow-rumped warbler, and dark-eyed junco; in other words, many of our most common species. My thoughts are that the very wet spring in 2011 contributed to poor productivity and low numbers this year. It is possible that the numbers may rebound in 2013 due to this year's mild spring.

There were a number of first time finds for the breeding count, including rose-breasted grosbeak at Caribou Ranch, and indigo bunting in the Sugarloaf area. Other good finds were wild turkey (2<sup>nd</sup> time on Breeding Count; Nederland), white-faced ibis (2<sup>nd</sup> time; Arapaho Ranch), Western scrub-jay

(2<sup>nd</sup> time; Sugarloaf), canyon wren (6<sup>th</sup> time; Sugarloaf), gray catbird (3<sup>rd</sup> time; Nederland), and sage thrasher (8<sup>th</sup> time; Caribou, Mount Audubon, Mountain Research Station).

Species absent or missed included golden eagle, sora, killdeer, savannah sparrow, and evening grosbeak.

Species with well-above average numbers white-tailed ptarmigan, three-toed woodpecker, hairy woodpecker, black-billed magpie, pygmy nuthatch, and Brewer's sparrow.

## Fall Count Summary

The total numbers on the fall count were the third highest, exceeded only by 1991 and 1992. Most species were numerically average to well above average, including accipiters, hairy woodpecker, three-toed woodpecker, black-capped chickadee, mountain chickadee, Townsend's warbler, Wilson's warbler, chipping sparrow, white-crowned sparrow, dark-eyed junco, red crossbill, pine siskin, and evening grosbeak. The 83 Townsend's warblers observed far exceeded the previous high of 29.

### Fall Count Summary

#### Number of Species

2012 - 88

Last Fall – 78

25-year Average – 83

Record High – 99 (1992)

Record Low – 70 (1996)

#### Number of Individuals

2012 – 41/count hour

Last Fall – 33/count hour

25-year Average – 34/count hour

Record High – 48/count hour (1991)

Record Low – 25/count hour (1982, 83 & 93)

There are several possible explanations for the high numbers. One is we

hit the peak of the migration. Another is that nesting success was very good this year. Remember from above that breeding count numbers were low. The dry spring and early summer could have resulted in high productivity for high elevation birds. This is one of the theories we have been looking at: that above a certain elevation, heat and drought are less limiting to reproduction than cold and abundant precipitation: periods of drought in the West might be the good times for many high elevation birds. The 1991/92 period was also warmer and drier than normal and saw high fall and breeding count numbers. However, the drought period centered around 2002 did not produce abnormally high fall numbers, though breeding counts were some of the highest.

Number of species was also above average. First time finds for the Fall Count included black-chinned hummingbird (Sugarloaf), red-eyed vireo (Ward South), and sage thrasher (Mount Audubon). Other good finds included wild turkey (4th time; Sugarloaf), Hammond's flycatcher (5th time; Ward North), and Cassin's vireo (2nd time;

Ward North).

Wild turkey has been a relatively recent find on the Indian Peaks Bird Counts. Sightings for all count periods have been since 2001, and all but one since 2006. My own experiences outside of the counts indicate more turkeys present west of the Peak-to-Peak Highway. Is this an upward range expansion?

Species normally seen that were absent or missed included green-winged teal, ring-necked duck, American wigeon, rufous hummingbird, Brewer's blackbird, and house finch. Overall, waterfowl species made a poor showing.

### **Looking Ahead**

<p><b>Winter Count</b></p>
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<p>Great Backyard Bird Count – February 15-18, 2013</p>
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Happy Birding,  
Dave Hallock

## 2012 INDIAN PEAKS BREEDING BIRD COUNT

Count day – June 16; Count period – June 1 – July 15; Weather: June was very dry while July was wetter than normal (between 7”- 9” of precipitation for the month). Twenty-nine observers, 21 (of 25) areas covered. Total party hours: 111.75.

Canada Goose.....	19	Hammond’s Flycatcher.....	8	Sage Thrasher.....	7
Mallard .....	52	Dusky Flycatcher.....	40	European Starling .....	4
Green-winged Teal .....	3	Cordilleran Flycatcher .....	45	American Pipit .....	39
Ring-necked Duck .....	9	Empidonax species .....	5	Orange-crowned Warbler.....	1
Common Merganser .....	10	Warbling Vireo.....	106	Virginia’s Warbler .....	3
White-tailed Ptarmigan.....	22	Gray Jay.....	8	Yellow Warbler .....	12
Dusky Grouse.....	4	Steller’s Jay.....	78	Yellow-rumped Warbler ...	161
Wild Turkey.....	1	Blue Jay .....	1	MacGillivray’s Warbler.....	40
Double-crested Cormorant...	6	Western Scrub-Jay .....	1	Wilson’s Warbler .....	106
Great Blue Heron.....	2	Clark’s Nutcracker .....	57	Western Tanager .....	23
White-faced Ibis.....	12	Black-billed Magpie .....	54	Green-tailed Towhee .....	50
Turkey Vulture .....	8	American Crow .....	66	Spotted Towhee .....	4
Osprey .....	3	Common Raven.....	45	Chipping Sparrow.....	35
Sharp-shinned Hawk.....	2	Horned Lark .....	9	Brewer’s Sparrow .....	19
Cooper’s Hawk.....	3	Tree Swallow .....	112	Vesper Sparrow.....	8
Northern Goshawk .....	1	Violet-green Swallow.....	118	Fox Sparrow.....	24
Accipiter species .....	1	N. Rough-winged Swallow...	3	Song Sparrow.....	31
Red-tailed Hawk .....	4	Cliff Swallow .....	25	Lincoln’s Sparrow .....	120
Spotted Sandpiper .....	12	Barn Swallow.....	36	White-crowned Sparrow...	183
Wilson’s Snipe .....	8	Black-capped Chickadee ....	26	Dark-eyed Junco.....	238
Band-tailed Pigeon.....	11	Mountain Chickadee.....	178	Rose-breasted Grosbeak .....	1
Mourning Dove .....	22	Red-breasted Nuthatch.....	35	Black-headed Grosbeak .....	27
Great Horned Owl.....	2	White-breasted Nuthatch....	30	Indigo Bunting.....	1
Common Nighthawk.....	2	Pygmy Nuthatch.....	43	Red-winged Blackbird .....	34
White-throated Swift .....	5	Brown Creeper.....	11	Brewer’s Blackbird.....	6
Broad-tailed Humming.....	304	Rock Wren.....	22	Common Grackle.....	5
Rufous Hummingbird.....	2	Canyon Wren .....	1	Brown-headed Cowbird.....	37
Belted Kingfisher .....	1	House Wren.....	89	Brown-capped Rosy-Finch...	6
Williamson’s Sapsucker .....	5	American Dipper .....	10	Pine Grosbeak .....	16
Red-naped Sapsucker.....	11	Golden-crowned Kinglet ....	10	Cassin’s Finch.....	23
Downy Woodpecker.....	8	Ruby-crowned Kinglet .....	225	House Finch .....	12
Hairy Woodpecker.....	36	Western Bluebird .....	1	Red Crossbill.....	116
Am. Three-toed Wood.....	10	Mountain Bluebird .....	46	Pine Siskin.....	220
Northern Flicker .....	50	Townsend’s Solitaire .....	32	Lesser Goldfinch.....	1
Olive-sided Flycatcher.....	3	Swainson’s Thrush .....	22	American Goldfinch.....	6
Western Wood-Pewee .....	15	Hermit Thrush.....	110	House Sparrow.....	17
Willow Flycatcher.....	2	American Robin .....	310		
		Gray Catbird .....	1		

Totals: 110 species; 4326 individuals; 39 individuals per count hour. Participants: Linda Andes-Georges, Bev Baker, Maureen Blackford, Barbara Bolton, Earl Bolton, Maggie Boswell, John Brocklehurst, Diane Brown, Diane Carter, Bob Cohen, Michelle Durant, Marty Dick, Libby Ellis, Virginia Evans, Mike Figgs, Jean-Pierre Georges, Dave Hallock, Paula Hansley, Jim Holitza, Steve Jones, Bill Kaempfer, Nan Lederer, Gary Matthews, Lisa McCoy, Merle Miller, Mark Pscheid, Jeannie Reynolds, Cara Stiles, and Lucy Stroock.

## 2012 INDIAN PEAKS FALL BIRD COUNT

Count day – September 15; Count period – September 8-23. Thirty-five participants. Seventeen (of 25) areas covered. Total party hours: 98.55. Total party miles: 159.25.

Canada Goose.....	14	Three-toed Woodpecker.....	11	American Robin.....	236
Mallard .....	34	Woodpecker species.....	5	Sage Thrasher.....	1
Lesser Scaup.....	2	Northern Flicker.....	75	American Pipit.....	59
Common Merganser .....	4	Hammond's Flycatcher .....	3	Orange-crowned Warbler...	11
Duck species.....	2	Say's Phoebe.....	2	Yellow Warbler .....	4
White-tailed Ptarmigan.....	3	Cassin's Vireo.....	1	Yellow-rumped Warbler ...	205
Dusky Grouse.....	9	Warbling Vireo.....	9	Townsend's Warbler.....	83
Wild Turkey.....	1	Red-eyed Vireo .....	1	MacGillivray's Warbler.....	7
Great Blue Heron.....	1	Gray Jay.....	19	Wilson's Warbler.....	90
Turkey Vulture .....	3	Steller's Jay.....	181	Warbler species .....	2
Osprey.....	2	Pinyon Jay.....	1	Green-tailed Towhee .....	19
Northern Harrier .....	1	Clark's Nutcracker .....	59	Chipping Sparrow.....	223
Sharp-shinned Hawk.....	4	Black-billed Magpie .....	30	Brewer's Sparrow .....	5
Cooper's Hawk.....	12	American Crow.....	50	Vesper Sparrow.....	18
Northern Goshawk .....	3	Common Raven.....	47	Fox Sparrow.....	2
Red-tailed Hawk .....	18	Horned Lark .....	8	Song Sparrow.....	8
Buteo species.....	2	Tree Swallow .....	4	Lincoln's Sparrow .....	23
Golden Eagle .....	1	Violet-green Swallow.....	4	White-crowned Sparrow ...	175
American Kestrel .....	4	Barn Swallow.....	32	Sparrow species.....	10
Prairie Falcon.....	2	Black-capped Chickadee ...	93	Dark-eyed Junco.....	532
Falcon species.....	1	Mountain Chickadee.....	480	(Oregon) .....	3
Wilson's Snipe.....	1	Red-breasted Nuthatch.....	57	(Gray-headed) .....	(403)
Band-tailed Pigeon.....	54	White-breasted Nuthatch...	26	Red-winged Blackbird .....	1
Mourning Dove .....	2	Pygmy Nuthatch.....	81	Brown-capped Rosy-Finch...	1
Great Horned Owl.....	3	Brown Creeper.....	28	Pine Grosbeak .....	36
Black-chinned Hummingbird	1	Rock Wren.....	2	Cassin's Finch.....	15
Broad-tailed Hummingbird.	15	House Wren.....	7	Red Crossbill.....	140
Hummingbird species.....	1	American Dipper .....	3	Pine Siskin.....	355
Belted Kingfisher .....	3	Golden-crowned Kinglet ...	46	Lesser Goldfinch.....	2
Williamson's Sapsucker.....	2	Ruby-crowned Kinglet .....	60	American Goldfinch.....	12
Red-naped Sapsucker.....	2	Mountain Bluebird .....	42	Evening Grosbeak .....	28
Downy Woodpecker .....	14	Townsend's Solitaire.....	22		
Hairy Woodpecker.....	34	Hermit Thrush.....	5		

Totals: 88 species; 4,047 individuals; 41 individuals per count hour.

Participants: Linda Andes-Georges, Maureen Blackford, Barbara Bolton, Earl Bolton, Diane Brown, George Coffee, Andy Cowell, Marty Dick, Libby Ellis, Virginia Evans, Mike Figgs, Ted Floyd, Jean-Pierre Georges, Dave Hallock, Paula Hansley, Jim Holitza, Barbara Hoover, Steve Jones, Bill Kaempfer, Elena Klaver, Nan Lederer, Gary Matthews, Merle Miller, Sally Miller, Naseem Munshi, Carol Newman-Holitza, Christian Nunes, Cara Stiles, Lucy Stroock, Jeff Thompson, Michael Tupper, Tom VanZandt, Tom Wilberding, and Judy Wright.