

# Managing Christmas Bird Counts



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<https://iowabirds.org/Connections/CBC.aspx>

Iowa has a long history of documenting the state's Christmas Bird Counts. Since 1937 the IOU has compiled and published the summary of each year's data in *Iowa Bird Life*. This requires the help and cooperation of many different compilers across the state. In recent years this process has moved from publishing large, and difficult to read, spreadsheets of information to storing the data in a database and generating reports from that. This document should provide guidance to compilers to enter their information.

## Account Login

All count compilers/contacts must have a login on the IOU website. If you do not yet have one, it is easy to create one by selecting "Login" and then the "Create Account" button.

## Count Circle Information

There are currently 59 counts in the database, both current and historical. These are mapped and have a count circle map included. You may view them on the CBC page by clicking on the Map of Counts.

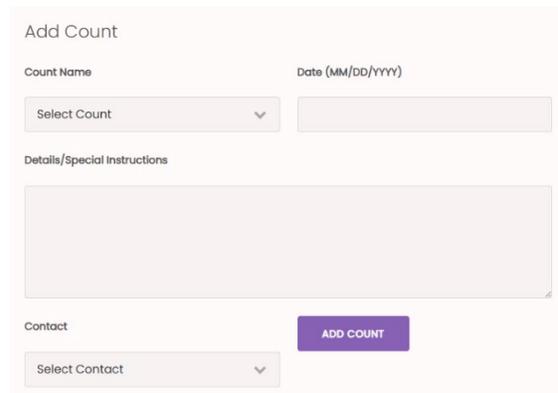
**If you want to create a new count**, work with the Iowa compiler and enter the information into the database using the available forms on "Create New Count".

## Count Date

**Each year you need to add your count to the calendar. You must be logged in to make this function available.**

### Add New Date

1. Select your count name
2. Enter the date
3. Type in any special instructions such as a meeting place or plans for dinner and compilation
4. Select a contact. This must be someone with a website account so that an email address is available. Generally it will be you.



The screenshot shows a web form titled "Add Count". It contains the following fields and elements:

- Count Name:** A dropdown menu with the text "Select Count" and a downward arrow.
- Date (MM/DD/YYYY):** A text input field.
- Details/Special Instructions:** A large, empty text area with a light gray background and a small downward arrow at the bottom right corner.
- Contact:** A dropdown menu with the text "Select Contact" and a downward arrow.
- ADD COUNT:** A purple button with white text.

## Edit Date

Sometimes weather requires postponing your planned count. Edit the date or any other information to keep the calendar (and data) accurate.

1. Click the pencil icon to edit.
2. Click the green checkmark to save changes.

Edit Count

Select your count and make changes as necessary.

Cedar Rapids

Count	Cedar Rapids
Date	12/20/2025
Details	Contact Jim at 319-721-1593 if you want to help
Contact	Jim Durbin

## Update Map

You may also upload an updated map from this form if you wish.

Add/Update Map

Maps must be in jpg or png format for uploading.

Des Moines

No file chosen

## Enter Data

Once you have gathered all the information from your field parties, you are ready to compile it and enter the data into the IOU site as well as the National Audubon site if you have registered your count there.

LOG IN TO ADD A COUNT TO THE CALENDAR OR EDIT A CURRENT ONE AND ENTER YOUR COUNT DATA.

The following documents may be downloaded and used for your count:



Be sure to enter your count data or send your results to [Christopher Caster](#) for the annual IBL summary.

Begin by selecting the season and your count. You may return to any of these sections to edit up until it has been reviewed and approved by the state compiler.

Season

2025 - 2026

Count

De Soto NWR

Weather/Effort  Species  Count Week Species

Review Entries  Note to Compiler

## Weather/Effort

Weather and effort data is straightforward. Total all the party hours and miles and get the weather readings from the day. Click the Update button to save.

The Total No. of Species Recorded field allows compilers to add a taxa to their totals in the event unidentified species were recorded. For instance, if your count had no identified Western or Eastern Meadowlarks seen, but did have 15 meadowlark sp., you may want to add those to your total species.

Total No. of Species Recorded		Effort					
<input type="text" value="62"/>		Observers	Field Parties	Field/Party Hours			
Weather/Effort		<input type="text" value="13"/>	<input type="text" value="9"/>	<input type="text" value="67"/>			
Weather		Car Miles	Foot Miles	Owl Hours	Owl Miles	Feeder Parties	Feeder Hours
High Temp (deg. F)	Low Temp (deg. F)	<input type="text" value="473"/>	<input type="text" value="21.75"/>	<input type="text" value="2"/>	<input type="text" value="2"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>
<input type="text" value="35"/>	<input type="text" value="27"/>	<input type="button" value="UPDATE"/>					
Snow Cover (Inches)	Wind (direction and speed)						
<input type="text" value="2"/>	<input type="text" value="NW 10-15"/>						

## Species

The species list consists of only species seen in recent years on Iowa CBCs. The state compiler can add a rarity for you if needed to complete the form. Contact through email or by using the Note to Compiler form.

Scroll through the list and add a number to any species recorded on count day. Click the Update button to save. Note any species preceded by \*\* that require details or documentation be sent to the state compiler.

Species			
Species preceded by ** require details or documentation. This list contains species recorded on previous counts. If you have one to add, please send a message to the compiler.			
Be sure to check any count week only species on the Count Week Species page.			
Snow Goose Individuals	Common Loon Individuals	Winter Wren Individuals	<b>**Great Black-backed Gull</b> Individuals <input type="text"/> <input type="button" value="UPDATE"/>
<input type="text" value="1"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Ross's Goose Individuals	Double-crested Cormorant Individuals	<b>**Marsh Wren</b> Individuals	
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	

## Count Week Species

Once you have saved your species, go to the Count Week Species list and check the ones which are count week only. Update when finished.

 This list shows all Iowa species not entered as seen on count day. Check any which were recorded count week only and update.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Snow Goose	<input type="checkbox"/> Mute Swan	<input type="checkbox"/> Wood Duck
<input type="checkbox"/> Blue-winged Teal	<input type="checkbox"/> American Wigeon	<input type="checkbox"/> American Black Duck
<input type="checkbox"/> Green-winged Teal	<input type="checkbox"/> Canvasback	<input type="checkbox"/> Redhead
<input type="checkbox"/> Ring-necked Duck	<input type="checkbox"/> Greater Scaup	<input type="checkbox"/> Surf Scoter

## Review Entries

Once the three sections are complete, you may review your entries for accuracy and make any edits as needed.

Weather/Effort		Species 62 entered		
		<b>Species</b>	<b>Individuals</b>	<b>CW</b>
Total Species	62	 Snow Goose	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
Observers	13			
Field Parties	9	 Canada Goose	5036	<input type="checkbox"/>
Field Hours	67			
Car Miles	473	 Trumpeter Swan	30	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foot Miles	21.75			
Owl Hours	2	 Tundra Swan	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
Owl Miles	2			
Feeder Parties	0	 Mallard	341	<input type="checkbox"/>
				
		 Green-winged Teal	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
				

## Note to Compiler

This is used to send a request for a species addition or anything else you wish.

Note to Compiler

If you have additional species recorded on your count that are not on the list, or simply have a few additional comments for the compiler, send them via this message.

Your Name

Your Email

Subject

Message

 I'm not a robot  
reCAPTCHA is changing its terms of service.  
[Take action.](#)

 reCAPTCHA  
[Privacy](#) - [Terms](#)