

## RESIDENT BIRD COUNTS 1992

JAMES D. LOWE

*Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology  
159 Sapsucker Woods Road  
Ithaca, New York 14850*

The total number of censuses and studies increased again this year, as it has each year since publishing was resumed four years ago. This year's counts come from 31 states, two Canadian provinces, the District of Columbia, and Mexico. California had the most counts with 24; followed by New York with 18.

There have been no changes in the way the data are reported this year. For the Winter Bird Population Study (WBPS), the first value following each species is the average number of individuals encountered per visit (rounded to the nearest tenth), and the value in parentheses is the number of visits during which the species was encountered (frequency). For the Breeding Bird Census (BBC), the first value following each species is the number of territories (rounded to nearest half territory), and the value in parentheses is the number of territories per 40 ha. A "+" after a species indicates that less than one-quarter of the species' territory occurred on the plot. The number of nests and fledglings observed is indicated by an N and FL, respectively.

The data reported for mean start temperature summarize the temperatures at the start of visits only. Participants are encouraged to supplement these data with summaries of the weather for the entire study period. Especially useful are deviations in temperature and precipitation from long-term averages for each month. This information is usually available from National Weather Service stations, airports, or regional data sources such as Cornell's Northeast Regional Climate Center (phone 607-255-1751). See BBC #11 for an example of the type of data requested.

One major change in the Resident Bird Counts program did take place this year. The computerized databases for both the BBC and WBPS have been transferred from the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Anyone who wants computerized data should now contact Sam Droege at the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, Laurel, MD, 20708. His phone number is (301)498-0490. These data are now available to researchers free of charge.

Participants are required to use standardized reporting forms and to adhere to a set of minimum requirements outlined in the BBC and WBPS instructions and in primary references (Williams 1936, Kendeigh 1944, James & Shugart 1970, James 1978, Robbins 1970, 1981, Marshall 1991). Study plots should be at least 10 ha in size and a minimum of eight visits are required. Those wishing to establish new plots should send a description of the proposed plot to the RBC editor well in advance of field work. Descriptions should include: location, habitat type, plot size, shape, and an outline of the plot on a topographic map. Final decisions on the suitability of count data for publication rest with the editor.

To facilitate collection of habitat data, a standardized habitat classification system was introduced in 1991. This system combines elements of those developed by the U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, U.S. Geological Survey, and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The RBC system incorporates a hierarchical approach to classifying habitats, as well as categorical variables for describing plot topography, hydrology, and fragmentation.

Data forms and instructions for the BBC, WBPS, and habitat classification system, may be obtained from the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, Resident Bird Counts, 159 Sapsucker Woods Rd., Ithaca, NY, 14850.

**Literature Cited**

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**Corrections to Vol. 63:**

Page 35, BBC #2 (Riparian Woodland), Band-tailed Pigeon should be changed to Common Ground-Dove. This correction should also be made in the 1989 data.