

The Great Backyard Bird Count

February 13-16, 2026



How to Participate

Step 1: Find a comfortable place to watch birds for **15 minutes or more**, at least once over the four days of **February 13-16, 2026**.

Step 2: Count all the birds you **see or hear** and note them on the **Bird Count Tally Sheet**. Fill out one tally sheet per day you observe.

Your data will be used by scientists to analyze bird populations and migrations, so it is important that everyone count birds in the same way. For each species (type of bird) you see, keep track of the **highest number of individual birds that you observe at any one time**. Be careful not to count the same bird over and over! Don't add another Blue Jay to your tally each time you see a Blue Jay. You could be seeing the same bird. Instead, count the total number you see at one time and then report the highest number.

For example:

Species of Bird	Tallies	Highest Group Tally Enter this # in the tally sheet.
Blue Jay	3, 5, 4, 2	5
Cardinal	2, 1, 3, 2	3

Step 3: Return the Bird Count Tally Sheet(s) to the library. We will enter the tallies into Cornell Lab's eBird website.

Tally sheets must be returned to the library by February 23, 2026 to be included in the library count.

Or, if you prefer, you may enter your tally on your own through the **Merlin Bird ID by Cornell App** or through the **eBird website or app**. Visit <https://www.birdcount.org> to learn more.

Identifying Birds

Don't worry if you can't identify all the birds you see. If you don't know the name of the species, **DON'T GUESS!** For help identifying birds, check out any of the bird field guides, a bird watching kit, or binoculars from the library or consult these online resources and apps:

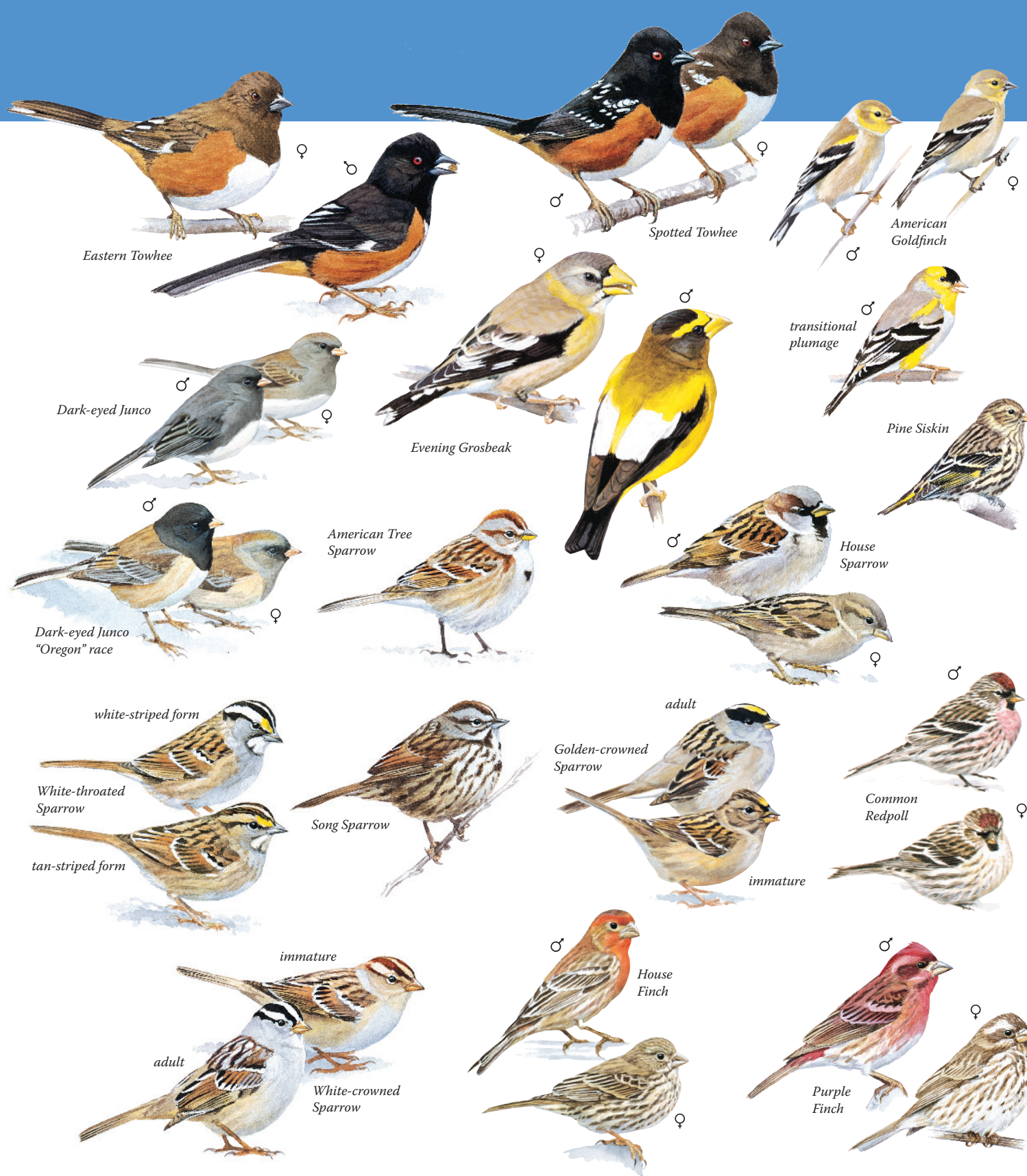
- **Audubon "Guide to North American Birds"** at <https://www.audubon.org/bird-guide>
- **Cornell Lab "All About Birds"** at <https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/>
- **Merlin Bird ID by Cornell Lab App:** Free global bird guide with photos, sounds, maps, and more. Download the app from the iOS App Store or Google Play Store. Learn more at <https://merlin.allaboutbirds.org/>
- **Audubon Bird Guide App:** Free and complete field guide to over 800 species of North American birds. Download the app from the iOS App Store or Google Play Store. Learn more at <https://www.audubon.org/app>

Modified from Great Backyard Bird Count "How to Participate" webpage at <https://www.birdcount.org/participate/> and Audubon Mississippi "How to Participate in the Great Backyard Bird Count" at https://ms.audubon.org/sites/default/files/how_to_participate_in_the_great_backyard_bird_count.pdf (January 2022)



Project FeederWatch

Common Feeder Birds



Common feeder birds found in the winter in North America

Can't identify a bird right away?

Use this space for observation notes or sketches for later identification:



Northern Cardinal



Mountain Chickadee

Steller's Jay



Black-capped Chickadee



Carolina Chickadee



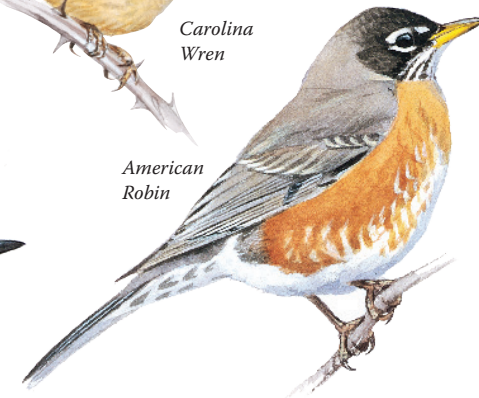
Tufted Titmouse



Blue Jay



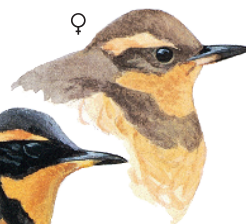
Carolina Wren



American Robin



Chestnut-backed Chickadee



Varied Thrush



European Starling



Mourning Dove



Brown-headed Cowbird



Red-winged Blackbird



European Starling

Great Backyard Bird Count 2026 Tally Sheets

Fill out one section for each date you observe birds on 2/13/26 -2/16/26. Return to Longwood Public Library by 2/23/26.

Your Name: _____ Date: _____

Bird count address: _____

Start time: _____ AM / PM Minutes spent counting: _____

Are you reporting all the species you identified? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Your Name: _____ Date: _____

Bird count address: _____

Start time: _____ AM / PM Minutes spent counting: _____

Are you reporting all the species you identified? ☐ Yes ☐ No

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