

January 25, 2021

### Things to Do During Covid: Count Birds

By Lydia Holley

Mark your calendars for February 12 through February 15, 2021. For those four days, people around the globe will go outside and count birds for the Great Backyard Bird Count hosted by The Cornell Lab of Ornithology, The Audubon Society, and Birds Canada. Just as the name implies, you do not have to leave your backyard to participate, but you can watch online as others send in their reports, so you will not feel alone in your efforts.



Participants are asked to count birds for a minimum of 15 minutes each day of the Great Backyard Bird Count, although you can count for a longer period of time should you wish. Take a pencil and piece of paper to record the number of birds and the different species sighted. Not a regular bird watcher? The official website of the Great Backyard Bird Count, [birdcount.org](http://birdcount.org), has a free bird identification app you can download. Take note of the time you counted and make a list for each day you count.

In order to input your counts, you are required to have a Cornell Lab account, which is available through the [birdcount.org](http://birdcount.org) website. You will be asked your location, so they will know where the bird was sighted. Since the location name is public information, come up with a cute nickname for your backyard. You can put the counts in until March 1.

One of the most exciting parts of the Great Backyard Bird Count is watching the interactive map which shows the number and place of reports submitted. You will immediately feel a part of a global community. Last year, over 250,000 people in over 190 countries participated in the Great Backyard Bird Count, counting over 27 million birds and almost 7,000 species.

Want to attract more birds to your backyard? Plant more native plants. By participating in the Great Backyard Bird Count, you can compare each year's totals to see if your efforts are paying off.

For more information, call 903-675-6130, email [hendersonCMGA@gmail.com](mailto:hendersonCMGA@gmail.com), or visit [txmq.org/hendersonmq](http://txmq.org/hendersonmq).