

Notes and Instructions for Feeder Watchers

The purpose of the feeder watcher program is to determine the highest number of each species seen on your feeders and the area around your feeding station. **Your complete feeder watch observation has two parts:**

1. The **Checklist**, which is a list of the highest number of each bird species you saw, and
2. **Effort**, which is the time you spent watching and counting and the number of observers in your household who contributed.

Checklists without effort data cannot be accepted.

How to count: Usually the same birds are coming and going so you will need to take a visual “snapshot” and tell us the highest number of each species you counted at a single glance during the entire observation period. Please do not add a count to one taken several minutes earlier—you are counting some of the same birds twice. If you saw four chickadees at eleven o'clock and six chickadees at eleven-fifteen, the count is six, not ten.

Timing: The observation is timed so please record the beginning of your watch and the end point. This can be accomplished while you are doing chores, working around home, and so forth as long as you are checking and counting at regular and constant intervals. If you leave home, stop the clock. Time spent on errands away from home does not count.

IMPORTANT: Two or more watchers observing one feeding area should contribute to one checklist and share one observation period.

IMPORTANT: Two or more watchers in one household *independently* covering separate feeding areas keep separate checklists and times, but submit one document with the highest number of each species culled from the lists *and* a grand total of the observation periods. (Do not total up your species counts, only the time values—remember the visual snapshot metaphor?)

We also need to know how many people in your household contributed, so please list the names of all participating observers.

Reporting: Call or email your results to your coordinators the afternoon of Count Day or as soon as possible. And please complete the checklist before you call or email. You will save your frantic coordinators time and effort talking on the phone and entering data if they receive your species list in taxonomic order with the observation times.

Rare and uncommon species: Please document with photographs and field notes. This includes Purple Finch and Common Redpoll. Unsorted House Finches and Purple Finches should be listed as *Haemorhous sp.*