

State of New Mexico  
Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department

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## News Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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# New Mexico State Parks Participating in World's Longest-Running Wildlife Census

*Count Birds for Science During Audubon's 119<sup>th</sup>  
Annual Christmas Bird Count*

**Santa Fe, NM:** This holiday season, people who enjoy watching birds and visiting New Mexico State Parks can do both at 14 locations statewide. New Mexico State Parks and the National Audubon Society invite volunteers to participate in the annual [Audubon Christmas Bird Count](#), the world's longest-running citizen science program. This December and January, birders and nature enthusiasts will contribute at locations that include fourteen New Mexico State Parks.

"The Christmas Bird Count is a fun tradition that anyone can participate in" said Sugarite Canyon State Park Ranger, Scott Chalmers. "Adding your observations to more than a century of data helps conservationists discover trends, so our work will have a major impact." This year, the Christmas Bird Count will mobilize hundreds of volunteer bird counters across the state, including at 14 New Mexico State Parks. The Audubon Christmas Bird Count uses the power of volunteers to track bird populations at a scale that scientists could never accomplish alone.

Volunteers of all ages are welcome to contribute to this fun, nationwide science project. Each individual count is performed in a count circle with a diameter of 15 miles. At least ten volunteers, including a compiler to coordinate the process, count in each circle. The volunteers break up into small parties and follow assigned routes, which change little from year to year, counting every bird they see.

"If you are a beginning birder, you will be able to join a group that includes at least one experienced volunteer," said Ranger Chalmers. "If your home is within the boundaries of a count circle, then you can even stay at home and count the birds that visit your feeder as long as you have signed up in advance."

To join a Christmas Bird Count taking place at a New Mexico State Park, please contact:

- Bluewater Lake State Park:** December 15 (John Trochet, 916-736-3560)  
**Bottomless Lakes State Park:** December 15 (Jeffrey Beauchamp, 575-625-4018)  
**Brantley Lake State Park:** December 14 (Tom Hines, 575-885-1869)  
**Caballo Lake State Park:** December 29 (John Douglas, 575-541-0133)  
**Percha Dam State Parks:** December 29 (John Douglas, 575-541-0133)  
**Clayton Lake State Park:** January 5 (Christopher Rustay, 505-414-0342)  
**Eagle Nest Lake:** December 14 (Mary Jo Kelly, 575-586-1189)  
**Cimarron Canyon State Park:** December 14 (Mary Jo Kelly, 575-586-1189)  
**Hyde Memorial State Park:** December 29 (Lonnie Howard, 505-995-9799)  
**Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park:** December 15 (Wayne Treers, 575-528-8696)  
**Rio Grande Nature Center State Park:** December 22 (Dave Mehlman, 505-350-3616)  
**Santa Rosa Lake State Park:** December 20 (Bill West, [wingswestnm@earthlink.net](mailto:wingswestnm@earthlink.net))  
**Storrie Lake State Park:** December 15 (Chris Ruge, 505-429-7744)  
**Sugarite Canyon State Park:** December 29 (Scott Chalmers, 575-445-5607)

The Audubon Christmas Bird Count is a citizen science project organized by the National Audubon Society. For more information and to find a count near you, visit [www.christmasbirdcount.org](http://www.christmasbirdcount.org).



*A Birder at Sugarite Canyon State Park*



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*The Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department provides resource protection and renewable energy resource development services to the public and other state agencies.*

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