

The next big citizen science event of the year is the Great Backyard Bird Count February 13th through 16th. This one is really as easy as 1-2-3 since it can be in your own backyard. This is a great way to get your children or grandchildren involved in. You can also use a park or other area to count birds in. And don't forget large store parking areas. Help the kids learn the names of some species. Get friends involved, especially if they have yards with good natural areas or have feeders because they enjoy watching birds at the feeders.

The 1-2-3 is as follows:

1. Plan to count birds for at least 15 minutes on one or more days of the count, February 13–16, 2009. You can count for longer than that if you wish! Count birds in as many places and on as many days as you like—one day, two days, or all four days. Submit a separate checklist for each new day. You can also submit more than one checklist per day if you count in other locations on that day.
2. Count the greatest number of individuals of each species that you see together at any one time. You may find it helpful to print out your regional bird checklist to get an idea of the kinds of birds you're likely to see in your area in February. You could take note of the highest number of each species you see on this checklist.
3. When you're finished, enter your results through the web page at <http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc/>. You'll see a button marked "Enter Your Checklists!" on the website home page beginning on the first day of the count (February 13, 2009). It will remain active until the deadline for data submission on March 1, 2009.