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## The World's Biggest Bird-a-thon comes to India!

*During the four days between 18 and 21 February, more than a thousand birdwatchers throughout India will come together to document as many birds in as many locations across the country as possible.*

*Over one lakh birdwatchers globally participate in the annual **Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC)**, and last year India was the second highest contributing country worldwide, and discovered more species than any other!*

In [2021](#), India stood second in terms of the number of species reported, behind Colombia and third in terms of the number of checklists uploaded, behind the United States and Canada. The most common birds reported in India were Common Myna (except in the western parts), Red-vented Bulbul in the North, East, South, Central and West regions; Rose-ringed Parakeet in North, West, South. GBBC is a fun event attracting those new to birding, young and old. Lots of local birdwatching walks and talks are planned across the country for the public to join in.

As Malyasri Bhattacharya, a passionate birdwatcher from Kolkata said, ***“Gbbc and Cbc for me is one of the most exciting time of the year. The time following the end of winter and start of autumn when one can witness the maximum number of bird diversity. From the migratory waterbirds to the forest birds following redstarts and thrushes. The last year GBBC was super for me as I have travelled through three states covering four different regions. Not only that GBBC gives us the opportunity to interact with people and address the importance of birdwatching to a greater audience. Last year the birdwalk with super excited Van Gujjars was the best memorable part. Hope this year too it will cheer up all those locals who never got the opportunity to go for a birdwalk even in their backyards..”***

There is a serious side to GBBC as well, with the power of citizen science helping to answer questions about whether birds in India are doing well or declining.



Vidhya Swaminthan, Professor at Stella Maris College, Chennai stressed that ***"I really look forward to the GBBC and CBC every year as they bring together bird enthusiasts from across the country and the world in a marathon of bird watching. I love looking at the light flashes on the Real-time checklist submissions map on eBird.org whenever possible. It is absolutely amazing to think that my few checklists join thousands of others to generate data that matters and that can make a difference to the lives of the birds around us."***

Along with GBBC, there are also campuses expected to take part in the sister event [Campus Bird Count](#) – an effort to regularly monitor birds that make their home in educational and institutional campuses. Outside protected areas such as national parks and wildlife sanctuaries such habitats are becoming increasingly important for our wildlife.

In India, the GBBC is coordinated by [Bird Count India](#), an umbrella group of a large number of birding, nature and conservation organisations. Anyone is welcome to participate in the GBBC, further details of which are available at <https://birdcount.in/event/gbbc/>. The basic activity is to list all bird species seen at a particular location over a period of 15 minutes or more, at any time during the four days, and upload the list to the bird recording platform eBird [www.ebird.org/india](http://www.ebird.org/india). This can be repeated as often as is possible.

More information about the GBBC, Campus Bird Count, and other associated events in India can be found at [www.birdcount.in](http://www.birdcount.in). The [global GBBC](#) is organised by Cornell University and the Audubon Society in the USA.

Some high-resolution photos are freely available to download from <http://bit.ly/2jFW85a> and use in publicity for GBBC 2022. In all instances, please ensure the appropriate photographer is credited.

For publicity, posters in English and other languages can be downloaded from [here](#).

## About Bird Count India

Bird Count India is a consortium of organisations and groups working together to increase our collective knowledge about bird distributions and populations. The partnership conducts periodic bird-related events and activities, offers support and resources to birding groups for conducting their own events, and provides information on bird monitoring. Read about us at [www.birdcount.in](http://www.birdcount.in).

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