The Great Backyard Bird Count

HOW TO COUNT THE BIRDS: Easy as 1-2-3!

1) **Count birds anywhere** you like for at LEAST 15 minutes—or for as long as you wish. Keep track of the kinds of birds you see and how long you watched.

2) **Make your best estimate** of how many birds you saw of each species. For example, 5 Northern Cardinals, 3 American Crows. Huge flocks may be a challenge, but your best guess is still valuable.

3) **Enter your list(s) online** at www.birdcount.org.

Put in a new checklist:

--for each new day

--for each different location

--for the same location, same day, if you counted at a different time of day

Note: There are three ways to enter your bird lists at www.birdcount.org

1) Merlin Bird ID app

2) eBird Mobile app

3) eBird web page (desktops and laptops)

Look for more detailed instructions on the Great Backyard Bird Count website.

Note: **You can start entering bird lists at midnight local time on the first day of the count, anywhere in the world.** Data entry remains open until March 1, but the information you enter should only be from the four days of the Great Backyard Bird Count.

Easy!

Read ahead for specific details about how to set up a free account and enter your lists. If you already have a Cornell Lab account for eBird, Merlin Bird ID, Project Feederwatch, Nestwatch, etc. or, you can simply use that login information.

CREATE A NEW ACCOUNT

If you have **never** participated in the Great Backyard Bird Count before, or have not participated since before 2013, you'll need to set up an account. Merlin Bird ID app, eBird Mobile app or eBird.org will walk you through the process of setting up an account. You will be asked to provide your name and email and choose a personal username and password. Additional profile information is optional.

ENTERING DATA
The directions below pertain to uploading data into eBird on a desktop or laptop computer. The process is similar on eBird Mobile app except your location is calculated for you if your phone as a GPS system.

Map Your Location
Log in to your account on the device you are using.

— On the first screen, which asks "Where did you bird?" go to the "Find it on a map" field and **enter just your state or province (in the U.S. and Canada)** and press enter.

— The map will open. You can then zoom in further by entering the exact address for your birding location in the white space along the top edge of the map. *Note, if you are using a mobile device, it will automatically find your location.*

— After the map zooms in to your location, click your mouse on that spot, and a green marker will drop there.

— Name this new location in the window in the right column. These names are public on some maps, so it's best to use something you will recognize but does not give away private information such as an exact home address.

In the future, you will find this location in the drop-down menu under "Choose from your locations" on the "Where did you bird?" page, so you don't have to map it again—just click on it and then continue. If you are birding in a public park, refuge, or lake, check the name of existing red pins (hotspots) and if one of them matches the area you went birding, you can just click that to select it and enter your counts instead of adding another pin.

Adding A New Location
Log in to your account and go to the "Find It On a Map" field on the "Where did bird?" page. You'll follow the same process as detailed above and this new location will be added to the drop-down menu under "Choose from Your Locations."

NOTE: You cannot remove a location from the menu if there is any data associated with it from past counts.

Tip: If you don't want your name to appear on the maps with your birding location(s), go to "Profile" and put "Anonymous" in the "First Name" field, and "eBirder" in the "Last Name" field.

Date & Effort
Fill in the date for the checklist you are submitting and indicate the type of count you did:

1. **Traveling:** You traveled some distance—walking a trail, driving a refuge loop, field birding; the eBird Mobile app can now trace and measure your route automatically!
2. **Stationary:** You stayed in one place, perhaps watching your feeders from a window
3. **Incidental:** You saw a bird while you were doing something else—birding was not your main activity

Enter your start time, how much total time you spent counting birds, and how many people contributed to this checklist.

TIP: If you get an error message telling you to enter an integer (whole number) in the time section, check to be sure you haven't put in a colon or other punctuation mark in one of the boxes. Be sure to choose A.M. or P.M.

Enter Your Birds
Next, you will see a list of birds that could be in your area during February. In the boxes, enter your estimate for the number of individuals of each species you saw while you were counting. Use an "x" if you can't estimate the number.

Other Tools
Find these tools in the column on the right side of the page.

- Put the species list in alphabetical order (they are in taxonomic order by default).

- Show or hide rare species for your area.

Are You Reporting Everything?
It's important to let us know if you are reporting all the species you were able to identify. **You should always choose "Yes" in the right-hand column, unless you are leaving out some species on purpose.**

Rare Birds
If you have a bird on your list that you don't find on the main checklist, click "show rare species" in the right column. If the species is not there either, go to "Add a Species" to type

the species' name and add it to the list. **You can only do this through the eBird website.**

Flagged Reports

If you enter a species or a number of birds that is unusual, you will get a message asking you to confirm your report. If you're certain about what you saw, click the "complete" button. Your report will go to a person who reviews reports from your area. **This is a normal part of the process.** You may even be contacted by the reviewer to get more details about your report.

Giving More Details

If you do see something unusual, please tell us more about how you identified the bird. Look for the small "add details" button next to the bird name. It's VERY helpful if you have a digital photo.

Submit Your List

Hit the "Submit" button on the lower-right when you're done. You'll see a confirmation page that shows the list you submitted.

Submit Another List

If you have another list, select links on the right that allow you to submit from the same location and date, submit from the same area etc.

Correcting/Changing a Report

You can always go back to make changes to your checklists, location, or profile. Log in to your account and click on the "My eBird" tab on either the Great Backyard Bird Count or eBird websites. You'll see a summary of the data you've submitted. On the right side of the page, click "Manage My Observations" to choose individual records to edit. Choose "Manage Locations" to move or rename your mapped birding location(s).