GBBC Instructions

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

- **Count birds anywhere** you like for at least 15 minutes—or even longer if you wish. Keep track of the kinds of birds you see and how long you watched.

- **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.

- **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**: Look for the “Submit Observations” tab on the Great Backyard Bird Count (or eBird) website. You can start entering bird lists at midnight local time on the first day of the count, anywhere in the world.

**Easy!**
Read ahead for specific details about how to set up a free GBBC/eBird account and enter your lists. If you already have an account for the eBird, Project Feederwatch, Nestwatch, or YardMap projects, you can simply use that login information.
CREATE A GBBC/EBIRD ACCOUNT
If you have never participated in the GBBC before, or did not take part in 2013, you’ll need to set up an account at www.BirdCount.org or www.ebird.org, providing your name and email and choosing a personal username and password. Additional profile information is optional.

ENTERING DATA

Map Your Location
Log in to your account. Choose your country and state/province (if applicable), and county or city (optional), so you can quickly zoom to that location on the Google map. When the map zooms to your location, left-click with your mouse to place a “pin” at the site where you counted birds. Give that location a name (i.e. home, Central Park) in the box in the right-hand column of the page so you can use it again in the future. The larger red pins on the map are “hotspots” marked by others as being good places to find birds. Your personal location pin will be blue and slightly smaller.

TIP: You can zoom in further on the map by double-clicking with your mouse; using the tools on the left side of the map; using the magnifying glass icon; or by using shift + click to draw a box at the desired location.

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

- **Traveling:** You traveled some distance—walking a trail, driving a refuge loop, field birding
- **Stationary:** You stayed in one place, perhaps watching your feeders from a window
- **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. Also, if you started watching at 7:00 AM, for example, enter 7 in the hour box and leave the minute box blank.

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 to Try
Find these tools in the column on the right side of the page.

- Put the species list in alphabetical order
- Show or hide rare species for your area and show or hide subspecies. (If you are a beginning birder, we recommend leaving these boxes unchecked.) Sort by frequency: this places the birds in three groups—the ones seen frequently in your area, those seen rarely, and those that have not ever been reported yet.

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.

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. You can even embed that image with your checklist.

Submit Your List
Hit “Submit” on the lower-right when you’re done. You’ll see a confirmation page that shows the list you submitted. Click “Email Yourself” at the top-right if you want a copy of your checklist. If you were birding with one or more friends and want them to be able to add the list to their GBBC account (or eBird account) click “Share w/Others in Your Party.” DO NOT use this to send them a list to look at if they were not there. Just forward them the list you get for yourself by email.

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. Login to your account and click on the “My eBird” tab on either the GBBC 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).

Tip: If you don’t want your name to appear on the maps with your birding location(s), go to “Edit My Profile” and put “Anonymous” in the “First Name” field, and “User” in the “Last Name” field. Also choose a general name for your location if you do not want your specific address to be public.