

eBird 101

What eBird can do for you & getting started

(This is not a complete list of everything you can do with eBird, nor does it answer every question you may have. If you have a question while using eBird just click [HELP](#) at the top of the page and put some key words in the 'Have a Question?' space. This HELP section is very easy to understand and follow.)

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GETTING STARTED WITH eBIRD (on a computer)

Creating your personal eBird Account

Ready to join the eBird community and start submitting your checklists? Let's get started.

- Go to www.ebird.org and select **MY EBIRD** and hit ENTER.
- On the right side find **CREATE AN ACCOUNT**
- Fill in the requested information then select **CREATE ACCOUNT** to complete the process.
- Regarding data privacy, everyone has their own viewpoint and eBird wants to honor your desires. When you are in **My eBird**, scroll down the page and on the right find [My eBird Preferences](#). Click on this and select what you wish the click [SAVE CHANGES](#) at the bottom.
- You are now ready to submit checklists.

Submitting your first checklist and creating a new location (on a computer)

eBird is going to ask you some basic questions when you are submitting a checklist. Review this tutorial and make some notes so you are ready when entering that first checklist.

- Go to www.eBird.org and sign-in with your username and password
- Select **SUBMIT OBSERVATIONS**

- For your first observation, or entering a new location, you can use **FIND IT ON A MAP** by typing in the county and state like this **Geauga, OH**
- A map will display showing many **HOTSPOTS** (red teardrops indicate entries within the last 30 days). If you were birding an existing hotspot click on the blue or red 'teardrop' and the name will appear on the right. Select **CONTINUE**.
 - **NOTE:** If you were birding an existing HOTSPOT, like Wendy Park Whiskey Island, use the existing HOTSPOT rather than creating your own personal location.
- On the next screen complete DATE and OBSERVATION TYPE and other information requested. **CONTINUE**
- Your checklist appears. Either scroll down the list or type the bird name in the space on the right labeled Jump to Species. Enter a number seen for each bird. If you wish to make comments or include a picture, select **Add Details** and enter that data.
- When all entries have been entered, answer **YES** to the question "Are you submitting a complete checklist of the birds you were able to identify? ", then click **SUBMIT**. (If you were not able to identify one or more species, that's fine. You still answer YES if your list contains all the birds you WERE able to identify.)
- Your completed checklist will appear. Review it for accuracy and make any changes you wish by using the **Edit** buttons on the right.

Adding data and behavior information

The more information you can provide in eBird the better, but it is not required beyond identifying the species and number of individuals (counting or estimating).

Using the computer:

- After adding the number of individuals, click Show Details to open a new screen.
- Where it says Details, read what it says and add whatever you know about the birds.
- If you have pictures or recording, upload them in the next section (note below for uploading picture files).
- If it is near or within breeding season, add what you can about behaviors by using the drop-down menu.
- The next section is for Age and Sex of the individuals if you know it.

Uploading Pictures to Checklists

If you have taken pictures that you want to add to your checklist, process them (crop, adjust clarity, etc.) and file them in your computer somewhere you can retrieve them later. Then add them to the checklist by:

- Go into Details and find Media.
- Where it says Drop files here or Select, click Select.
- Find the folder and image in your computer and double-click the image for it to upload. Do this for each image you intend to upload
- When you are through, move on to the next bird or SUBMIT the checklist.

Posting a RARITY

Rarities are birds that are not usually seen in the area, or are out-of-season for that area. An example would be a Bobolink seen in December in Geauga County.

If you are certain of the identification take careful notes, or pictures, to back-up your sighting. You will be asked to support your sighting with written statements or pictures before submitting the checklist.

If using the computer to create the checklist, go to the top of the page on the right side and look for a small box next to the words **SHOW RARITIES**. Click on that box and you will see the list populate with RARE species for that area.

- Find your specie and add the number of individuals
- To the right you will see ADD DETAILS – click on that and a new screen will appear.
- Complete the information to the extent you can, including uploading picture(s) if you have them, then move to your next bird or go to SUBMIT.

eBIRD FEATURES – WHAT eBIRD CAN DO FOR YOU

Search Photos and Sounds attached to checklists

Do you enjoy seeing bird pictures or videos posted in eBird checklists? Here's a fast way to get right to the pictures or videos.

- Go to www.ebird.org and select **EXPLORE DATA**.
- Then select **Search Photos and Sounds**. What you see are the very latest pictures attached to checklists *from around the world!*
- **Click any picture** for a larger image PLUS valuable information below the picture.
- If you **click on the data in the lower right**, you can explore the checklist or find that pictures file in the Macaulay Library at Cornell Lab of Ornithology.
- To view a specific species, **go to the top of the page and type the species name** (e.g., American Kestrel) in the search box and click **Search**. As you scroll through pictures you can click any one for a larger image as discussed above.
- For **audio recordings** or **video**, click on the appropriate icon **below the green box containing the word Species**.

Explore Data – Explore a Region (Locate Hotspots)

Use this feature to find places to go birding (Hotspots) and learn what birds are being seen when you plan to go there.

Before you start, find the name of the county where you are going (e.g., Phoenix, AZ is in Maricopa County and Burton, OH is Geauga County).

- Go to www.ebird.org
- Select **EXPLORE DATA** then type in **Geauga, OH**. Hit enter.
- Notice the tabs near the top: Overview – Hotspots – Recent Visits – Illustrated Checklist
- Click on **Hotspots** than click **LaDue Reservoir**. The result is the list of all birds seen there for all months and all years.
- If you want to visit in a specific month, use the dropdown menu and change All Months to the **month of your visit** and change ALL YEARS to **LAST TEN YEARS** then click **SET**.
- The list you see (Overview) is organized by the most recent sightings for that month at the location.
- Click on the **RECENT VISITS** tab. This shows you the most recent visits for that month. To view a checklist just click on the blue date. Study checklists for species seen, time spent birding, distance traveled, etc.
- Click on the **ILLUSTRATED CHECKLIST** tab. You now have an illustrated checklist for the month you selected. You can change the month to ALL MONTHS if you want a complete species list for this hotspot.
- At the top right of this page is a map showing the **hotspot location** on Google Maps.

Explore Hotspots

This feature lets you see hotspots in two ways: by typing the name of the hotspot or the closest city/state to the area you are interested in. Either way, hotspots appear in different colors based on numbers of birds seen (see color legend on the right of the screen). *Notice the information on the right of the screen that allows you to select different map types and to select hotspots that have only recently been covered. Play with them and see the results.*

- Select **Explore Hotspots**
- Type in the name of a hotspot (Frohling Meadows) or a city (Chagrin Falls) or county (Geauga, OH) then **ENTER**
- Consider the information on the right of the screen to change the type of map or select only recently covered hotspots
- Click the teardrop of your choice for data. Then click **View Details** to see a checklist of all birds seen at that location. This screen is just like what you saw in EXPLORE REGION and you can continue as you did above.

Species Maps

A great tool for finding where a specific bird has been seen in an area you are interested birding.

- Under **EXPLORE DATA** select **Species Maps**
- **Enter the name** of the bird (use suggestions they offer as you type) and the world map shows purple areas.
- **Enter the location** (using suggestions they offer as you type) and the map gets more detail.
- **Enter the DATE information** then click **Select Date Range** and the map is populated with locations meeting your specific requests.

Exploring, Creating and Learning from Bar Charts

What we can learn from Bar Charts

- **Relative abundance** of species from January to December based on the height/thickness of each green bar (4 bars/month)
- Identify **year-round birds**, **summer-only breeding birds**, **birds that just migrate through** the area in spring/fall and **birds that winter here**, all based on the how the bars appear on the chart.
- **Arrival and departure dates** for all migrants (also a feature at the bottom of the EXPLORE DATA page).
- **Locations where birds have been seen** (map feature) so you can go there looking for them.
- **The data can stimulate questions** that may have interesting answers (e.g., Why does the abundance of Wood Thrush's drop in early August yet we still see birds posted into October? Do half the birds leave? Do birds stop singing and switch to calls and we are not familiar with the calls?)
- Change the **Date Range** and learn how many species can be expected during a particular month or season.

Explore Bar Charts: Counties

- Select **EXPLORE DATA** and scroll down the page to select **BAR CHARTS**.
- In the list of states select your state (**OHIO**), then, to the right, select **COUNTIES** (or one of the other categories).
- Scroll down the page and select **CONTINUE**.
- Select your county (**GEAUGA**) then **CONTINUE**.

So many options for you at this point...

- **Change Date** at top as you wish.
- **Scroll down the page and notice** the **year-round birds** (green from January to December), **Spring and fall migrants that do not stay to breed** (green April/May, blank, green again Aug/Oct), **winter birds** (green from Oct/Nov through March) and **accidentals** (one or two **thin** green lines during the year).
- Select **Map** to see the locations (hotspots and personal locations) where a species has been seen.
- **Click the name of the bird** for some interesting abundance and occurrence graphs.

Explore Bar Charts: Hotspots

In this feature you select the hotspot or hotspots you are interested in. An example might be a Park District selecting all their park locations (if each happens to be a hotspot). The resulting chart reflects information reported by birders in their parks. They might compare eBird data to data collected by their own Naturalists.

- Select **EXPLORE DATA**, then **BAR CHARTS**
- Select your **state** (Ohio) then, on the right, the **sub-region** (Hotspots in Ohio)
- Scroll down the page and select **CONTINUE**
- Now **find and check your Hotspot(s)** from the long list of Hotspots, go the bottom of the page and select **CONTINUE**.

Want to sort the data by seasons, months and years? Click **Change Date** and click what you want. For example, lets explore the hotspot **LaDue Reservoir** and see what can be expected there in March for the last 5 years. Start by going to the hotspot as we just described above and click **Change Date**, then:

- Select **Entire Year (Jan-Dec)**.
- Further down find the months shown in little boxes. Change both dates below to March.
- Where it says **CHOOSE A RANGE OF YEARS** type the beginning year (2013) and ending year (2017). **Click CONTINUE**.

Look at the top of the species list and see “95 species (+12 other taxa). This means that in the last 5 years, 95 species were recorded and 12 that people were unsure about (e.g., Lesser/Greater Scaup). To know what birds can be expected, follow down the Marcy column and wherever a green bar is, that species was seen.

Arrivals and Departures

This feature is at the bottom of the EXPLORE DATA page. It provides first documented arrival date and last documented departure date, based on your selections. We will just describe how to enter the feature. By now you will be familiar with making selection regarding dates and data.

- Scroll down the EXPLORE DATA page and find and click on [Arrivals and Departures](#).
- Select your state and county from the dropdown menus then click **Continue**.
- At the top of the page, make your selection of Arrival/Departure/High Counts, then set your date range and **Submit**.

Species you need (email alerts)

After you create an account you can request daily emails alerting you to species you have not seen this year (TARGET SPECIES) in your county or state, as well as Rare Bird Alerts for the state. Just click on the heading and follow the prompts.

My eBird: Reviewing your personal data

Click on **My eBird** to access ALL the data you have entered via checklists from your first entry to the most recent. See your [LIFE LIST](#) from all your checklist entries, sorted by county, state and country. You can even enter historical data into eBird if you have a minimum amount of information (see HELP menu)

View ALL the birds you entered in a COUNTY for any year

- Click on **My eBird** and then click the **County** tab.
- For any county listed, click the **BLUE NUMBER** in the YEAR column. You now have a list of all species you reported in that county that year.
- On the list you can **CHANGE YEAR** to get a list as far back as you have entries.

View ALL the birds you entered in a STATE for any year

- Click on **My eBird** and then click the **STATE** tab.
- For any state listed, click the **BLUE NUMBER** in the YEAR column for a list of all species you reported in that state for THAT year.
- On the list you can **CHANGE YEAR** to get a list as far back as you have entries.

List every location in Ohio where you posted a Rusty Blackbird in 2017:

- In **My eBird**, click the **STATE/PROVINCE** tab,
- Find **Ohio** on the list and click the **blue number** in the YEAR column.
- **CHANGE DATE** to 2017
- **Scroll down the list and find Rusty Blackbird and click on the name.** A list of locations, dates and numbers seen appears.

Get your LIFE LIST for ANY LOCATION you have submitted checklists (two methods)

1. In **My eBird**, click the **County** or **State** tab, then **click the blue number under LIFE**. Scroll down the **Location** column and find an entry for **Frohring Meadows** and **click on the name**. Your year list for Frohring Meadows appears.
2. **ALSO:** If you know a specie you saw this year at Frohring (e.g. Tree Swallow), find it on the COUNTY/STATE LIFE LIST, click on its name, scroll down the list and find FROHRING MEADOWS and click on it. A complete list of all species appears.

Sharing checklists from MY eBIRD

You first need the email of your recipient(s) email in your CONTACTS.

- Go to **My eBird** and click **Manage my contacts** (look on right)
- Type in recipient email address and click **Add**.
- Now find the new contact in your list of **All Contacts** under **Alias** and **type their name over the email address**.

- You only do this once for each new recipient.

Now, go back to the top and click **My eBird** then **Manage My Checklists**.

- Find the checklist you want to share and click **Share** on the right.
- From the list of Contacts **click the person(s) name** you wish to share the checklist and it will move to the **To** box.
- Type a message if you wish but it is not required
- Click **Share Checklist** and you are done!

Using eBird Mobile on iPhone

- Touch the eBird icon on your phone screen
- After the app updates (if it does) touch **Start New Checklist**
- Touch **Choose a Nearby Hotspot** (will discuss other options later)
- Choose your hotspot by **Touching name of hotspot**
- Decide if you want to let the app Record Track (uses battery and data). To turn off just **Touch button in lower right of screen**
- If Time and Date are OK, touch **Start New Checklist** at bottom of screen
- Look near the top for the words All, Likely (default), Checked
 - Pressing **ALL** will list all the birds in the database, including rarities
 - Pressing **LIKELY** list birds most likely at that locations
 - Pressing **CHECKED** shows the list of birds you enter (touch this)
- To enter a specie, touch **# species name/code** and a keyboard will appear
- Start typing the *common name* of the bird and a suggested menu will appear for you to choose from – keep typing until you see your bird
 - (To make this quicker, if your bird is one type of, say, Swallow, type **Swallow** and all swallows will appear for you to choose from. This is quicker than typing Northern Rough-winged Swallow.)
- When prompted, enter the number you observed (you can add more later as you see them) then tap **Done** (top right of screen).
- When you are all done birding:
 - Tap **Review & Submit**
 - Starting at the top, tap **Yes** for complete checklist
 - Change # of observers if more than you
 - Duration – tap the icon of a stopwatch to get the minutes
 - If you have any comments, enter under Checklist Comments
 - Review the list and if all is well, tap **Submit**

Create a New Personal Location (for eBird Mobile app only)

You create new personal locations for a couple reasons: to be accurate with your reporting (for researchers using the data) and to make it easy to create future checklist at that location.

- Touch **Create a New Personal Location** and the marker on the map shown is where you are standing at that moment.
- If you are happy with that spot, you can modify the name to make it easier for future use by tapping at the beginning of the address or coordinates and typing what you wish (like **Corn Field at Munn & Bell**).
- If you want the marker to be somewhere else, **find that location on the map** (move map around with your finger tip) and **hold your finger tip on the spot for a few seconds** – the marker will appear at that spot.
- If you want to modify the name, do so now as described above.
- Touch **Next** to continue. In the future this location will be found under “Choose nearby personal location”.

Choose Nearby Personal Location

- Open eBird Mobile and **Press Start**
- Touch **Choose a Nearby Personal Location**
- **Find the location** on the list and **touch it**
- Proceed as before from Date & Time screen

Adding a rarity on eBird Mobile (for iPhone)

Look at the top left of your screen for the word **ALL** and tap on it. Now you can either find your specie or start typing the name for it to appear.

- Find the name of the bird and TAP ON IT – another screen will appear where you can enter the Number Observed, Breeding Code information, and Comments. Fill in as much as possible.
- If you have picture(s) you can state “pictures to follow” and upload them later (see next section to learn how to upload pictures).
- When you are finished, tap Done.
- You will see a black box next to the entry – Tap on it and a check mark will appear, indicating you are aware the sighting is a rarity.