

eBird 101

Getting started and exploring popular features

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.

Getting Started:

- Creating your personal eBird Account
- Submitting your first checklist and creating a new location
- Adding Data and Behavior information
- Uploading Pictures after Checklist is created
- Posting a Rarity (a bird out of its usual region or time of year)

Popular Features:

- Explore a Region (County) and locate hotspots
- Explore Hotspots
- Explore Species Maps
- Explore Bar Charts
 - Explore Bar Charts: County
 - Explore Bar Charts: Hotspots
- Search Photo's and Sounds

MY eBird:

- Exploring MY EBIRD – your personal data
 - Life Lists for any location
- Sharing Checklists from MY EBIRD
- Species you need – Target Species and Rare Bird Alerts
- Using eBird Mobile on iPhone

GETTING STARTED WITH eBIRD on a computer – the Mobile App is different (see online videos for help using the mobile app).

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 **CREATE AN ACCOUNT** and hit ENTER.
- On the right side find **CREATE ACCOUNT** at the top right of the screen.
- 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. Once you are in eBird, go to **My eBird**, scroll down the page and on the left find 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, use **FIND IT ON A MAP**. Type in the county and state like this **Geauga, OH**
- A map will display showing many **HOTSPOTS** (red teardrops). You may have to zoom in to find your location.
 - If you were birding at a hotspot, click on the red teardrop and the hotspot name will appear on the right. Select **CONTINUE**.
 - If your birding location is not a HOTSPOT, zoom in to find the location, move your cursor over it and click. A green marker will appear as well as a box on the right where you can type a name for your new PERSONAL LOCATION (use address or description that makes sense to you, like 123 Main St. or Next to Home Depot). Then click **CONTINUE**
 - **NOTE: USE EXISTING HOTSPOTS WHEN BIRDING WITHIN HOTSPOTS. Do not create personal locations within hotspots.**
- On the next screen complete DATE and OBSERVATION TYPE. Depending on the observation type, other information will be requested (start time, duration of birding, number of people, etc.). Complete the information then select **CONTINUE**
- The checklist appears and it is time to enter your sightings. You can either scroll down the entire list (it is in taxonomic order) and add numbers observed for birds you saw, or, use the box to the right labeled Jump to Species (type the common name of the bird and it will take you to the correct spot in the checklist). Enter the number seen for each bird. If you wish to make comments, select **Add Details** and enter that data (see below for details). NOTE: When estimating large numbers of birds (e.g., 600 Double-crested Cormorant) you can add a comment like “Estimate” if you estimated, or “Actual count” if you counted 600. For info on counting birds go to HELP and type in Counting birds and get answers.
- When all entries have been entered, go to the bottom right of the screen and 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 by using the **Edit** buttons on the right.

Adding data and behavior information

The more information you can provide eBird the better, but it is not required beyond identifying the species and number of individuals.

- After adding the number of individuals, click Add 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 AFTER the checklist is submitted. (See 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 after Checklist is created

Adding media (pictures, video and sound files) is a separate operation AFTER creating a checklist. Upload your media (pictures and/or audio files) to your computer, process images as you like (crop, adjust clarity, etc.) and file them where you can get back to them later.

- Log into eBird (sign in), go to [My eBIRD](#) and select [Manage my Checklists](#)
- Find the checklist to which you want to add media and click on the DATE to open the checklist
- The checklist appears – look to the right side and select [Add Media](#)
- Find the specie you wish to add media to and select [Add Media](#)
- A window appears showing your computer files. Find the picture or audio file in your computer and double-click on it to upload to the checklist. If you wish to add more than one image of the same bird, select [Add Media](#) again.
- When you finish adding media, move on to the next bird or select [DONE](#) in the upper right corner.

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 right of the page 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 (later) if you have them, then move to your next bird or go to [SUBMIT](#).

eBIRD POPULAR FEATURES – WHAT eBIRD CAN DO FOR YOU

Explore a Region (regions are Counties in the USA)

Use this feature to find places to go birding (Hotspots) and/or learn what birds are being seen or have been seen in past years during the time you plan to go there (like Pheonix, AZ in February).

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 [Gauga, OH](#) in the space under EXPLORE REGIONS. Hit enter.
 - At the top, in blue, you will see **ALL YEARS**. You can click on it and change to **CURRENT YEAR** or **CURRENT MONTH**. Once selected, you can scroll down the list and see what birds have been seen recently, in chronological order.
 - If you have a question about a bird or want to see the checklist it appeared in, just click on the **blue date** to the left of the observers name.
 - Now look on the right of your screen and scroll down to see **TOP MEDIA** (pictures people attached to their checklists), **RECENT VISITS**, **TOP eBIRDERS** and **TOP HOTSPOTS**. Clicking any of these takes you to more information.
- Under **HOTSPOTS** click [LaDue Reservoir](#). The result is the list of all birds seen there for [all months](#) and [all years](#), starting with those seen most recently.
- If you want to visit in a specific month, go near the top and click **YEAR ROUND ALL YEARS**, then select the month of your visit and click **SET**. The list you see is chronological and starts with the most recent (or current) year.
- To view a checklist just click on the **blue date**. You can study the checklists for species seen, how long they birded, how far they traveled, etc.. When you see lists with lots of birds, often the observers birded a long time and/or traveled quite a distance to see so many species.
- Click on the blue [ILLUSTRATED CHECKLIST](#) tab upper right. You now have an illustrated checklist for the month you selected, as well as bar charts for when you can expect each species.
- At the top right of this you can request directions or see a map of the area (uses 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 (Frohring 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.

Explore 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.

Explore, Create and Learn 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.
- 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 have been seen.

- Click the name of the bird for some interesting abundance and occurrence graphs.

Explore Bar Charts: Hotspots

In this feature you can create a chart for one hotspot or many hotspots. For example, selecting all the park locations in a county Park System (if each location happens to be a hotspot). The resulting chart reflects information reported by birders in those 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 **Hotspots**
- 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 (2015) and ending year (2020). **Click CONTINUE**.

Look at the top of the species list and see “107 species (+15 other taxa). This means that in the last 5 years, 107 species were positively recorded and that people were unsure about 12 species (e.g., Lesser/Greater Scaup). To know what birds can be expected, follow down the March column and wherever a green bar is, that species was seen in March.

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**.

My eBird: 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, STATE or HOTSPOT

- Click on **My eBird** and click **Change Region** (in blue)

- Under **REGION**, type the county or state you are interested in (e.g., Ohio, United States) then hit **ENTER**
- To see a list of the birds, click on the number above **Species Observed**
 - The list you see can be sorted in a number of ways by clicking tabs
 - Click on the name of the bird and see how much data is presented
 - Species info
 - Scroll down to find info about your sightings, pictures and audio you have submitted, and your personal bar chart for that specie in that region
 - Click on the date to the right of the bird name to see the specific checklist for that sighting
 - Click on the location and get your Life List for that location
 - Click VIEW ALL to see every location in the state (or county) where you have seen the species

Sharing checklists from MY eBIRD

You first need the email address of your recipient(s). This goes into your CONTACTS.

- Go to **My eBird** and click **Manage my contacts** (look on left)
- Type in recipient email address OR their eBird user name (mine is mvalencic) and click **Add**.
- Now find the new contact in your list of All Contacts, and under Alias you **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, click on the date to open it, then look for and click **Share** (to the right of your name).
- 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!

ALERTS (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.

- Go to **My eBird** and select **Manage my alerts**.
- Follow the instructions to select alerts for RARE BIRDS or SIGHTINGS OF BIRDS I HAVE NOT SEEN.

Using eBird Mobile on iPhone or Android

eBird Mobile is easy to use and a convenient way to enter checklists in real time.

- Go to eBird.org and click HELP
- Under **Getting Started** look for **Enter sightings with eBird Mobile**. Click it then watch the 4 min video to get started.