Bird observations made by IBA Caretakers and other volunteers can provide valuable information about the state of IBAs and the birds they support. We recommend Caretakers submit their bird sightings using www.eBird.ca unless they are reported online already through another established monitoring program (e.g. http://www.bsc-eoc.org/volunteer; these data are published and freely available to download via NatureCounts).

Benefits of using eBird.ca

- Bird records (high counts, dates of arrival, species lists etc.) within IBAs can be instantly retrieved on-line, which helps you select the best time to go birding, and helps us keep IBA site summaries up-to-date.
- These data can be freely used by scientists, agencies and conservation organizations, which encourage them to make more informed decisions about proposed developments and conservation activities.
- It's a safe archive of your species' life list!

How to eBird

Step 1: Plan your trip. Be safe. Ensure you have permission to enter private property. Review the Site Summary information (trigger species).

Step 2: Bring the IBA bird observations form to ensure you collect the right information. The BirdLog app can be used to enter bird sightings via your smart phone while out in the field too!

Step 3: Back at home, set up an eBird account or log in at www.ebird.ca to enter your data.

Step 4: Notify your IBA coordinator that you’ve entered eBird data on your Annual Report.

Step 5: Play with your, and other people’s, data!

Report your location (where you birded)

Follow these general guidelines to record and report your birding location(s) within IBAs:

- Use existing ‘hotspots’ within IBAs wherever possible.
- Provide the most specific location possible, particularly for species at risk, either by entering a coordinate (e.g. latitude/longitude) or by ‘zooming in’ using the map feature (coordinates are auto-generated).
- Enter observations made outside of IBA boundaries separately from observations made within boundaries.
- Enter the location of your midpoint for a traveling count (see below).
- For area counts, plot the location at the center of the area surveyed (see below).

Report your protocol (how you birded)

Where possible, be specific about the type of count you did, rather than selecting casual observation:

Stationary Count = observations made from within an area approximately 30 meters (30 yards) in diameter over a known period of time (duration required).

Traveling Count = observations made over a known period of time while traveling a known distance by foot, vehicle or boat (distance estimate & duration required).

Area Count = observations made while thoroughly searching a given location or area (area estimate and duration required).

Casual Observation = incidental observations made, such as a Bald Eagle flying over on your way to work.
Submitting partial vs. complete checklists

eBird will ask you if you are submitting a partial or a complete checklist. A **partial (IBA) checklist** would include trigger species, but not information about non-trigger species (e.g. waterbirds for a coastal waterbird wintering site but not landbirds such as crows or sparrows).

**Complete checklists** are a record of every bird species you observed during your session. Please enter complete checklists whenever possible; this data is most valuable for scientific purposes.

eBird recognizes that observer skill varies.

Submitting species and abundance data

Based on the date and location you enter, eBird will automatically produce a checklist of the most probable species you encountered during your outing. Follow these guidelines when entering your observations:

- Enter the number of each bird species observed rather than entering ‘x’; ‘x’s’ indicate a bird was seen, but does not tell us how many use the area. Your best estimate, even if not 100% accurate is needed to support the IBA Program.
- If possible, differentiate between adult and juvenile birds during breeding; the IBA Program solely requires counts of adult/breeding individuals. To enter this information, answer “yes” to the question "Do you want to add age/sex or species comments?" that appears at the top of the checklist page.
  - **Adult** = a mature bird capable of breeding.
  - **Immature** = a bird that may look like an adult (molted out of juvenile plumage), but is not yet a breeding adult.
  - **Juvenile** = a bird with juvenile plumage. Juvenile plumage doesn’t last long for many songbirds (just a few weeks after leaving the nest/fledging), but can last up to a year for larger birds like hawks.
- Use the comments field to enter observations about nests, breeding evidence, etc.

Reporting Rare & Sensitive Species

It is important to record and report observations of rare species. In British Columbia, all sightings of species at risk should be reported to the appropriate provincial and federal authorities. Sightings of White-headed Woodpecker, Sage Thrasher, Western Screech Owl, Yellow-breasted Chat, Williamson’s Sapsucker and Lewis’s Woodpecker should be immediately reported to Environment Canada at Megan.Harrison@ec.gc.ca or 604-350-1983.

To avoid disturbing rare or sensitive birds, wait they have left/migrated before reporting the sighting on eBird.ca. Please contact your IBA Coordinator at iba@bcnature.ca to discuss any questions or concerns.

Questions?

For more information about eBird, please visit: [http://ebird.org/content/ebird/about](http://ebird.org/content/ebird/about)
[http://ebird.org/content/canada/about/tutorial](http://ebird.org/content/canada/about/tutorial)

To download the eBird app: [http://ebird.org/content/ebird/news/birdlog](http://ebird.org/content/ebird/news/birdlog)

Tips on identifying and counting flocks:
[http://www.bsc-eoc.org/volunteer/bccws/index.jsp](http://www.bsc-eoc.org/volunteer/bccws/index.jsp) (see resources button on left)

Contact the BC IBA Coordinator at:
iba@bcnature.ca.