

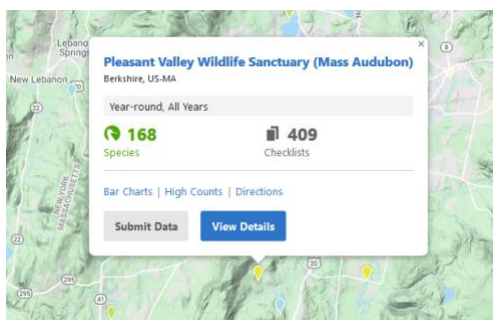
Submitting Sightings at Mass Audubon Sanctuaries to eBird:

1. Keep track of your bird sightings wherever and whenever you visit a Mass Audubon sanctuary.

THE FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS ARE WRITTEN FOR **COMPUTER OR LAPTOP USERS**. IF YOU ARE USING A SMARTPHONE TO ENTER YOUR eBIRD DATA, SKIP LATER INTO THIS FILE BY [CLICKING HERE](#).

2. From the [Mass Audubon eBird portal](#)
3. Select “Explore” tab.
4. Select “Explore Hotspots” link.
5. Within the Hotspot box at the top of the window, type in “(Mass Audubon)”. The name of the sanctuary you have visited will be shown in the resulting drop-down menu. All of Mass Audubon’s sanctuary “hotspots” now have a standard naming convention. For example:
 - “Canoe Meadows Wildlife Sanctuary (Mass Audubon)”, or
 - “Drumlin Farm Wildlife Sanctuary (Mass Audubon)”, or
 - “Blue Hills Trailside Museum (Mass Audubon)”, or
 - “Joppa Flats Education Center (Mass Audubon)”, etc.
6. Scroll through the sanctuary hotspot list and click on the hotspot where you went birding. You will then see a map, and a window titled with the full name of the sanctuary. For example, “Pleasant Valley Wildlife Sanctuary (Mass Audubon)”.

We’re asking that, unless you are contributing to a specific ongoing project within a sanctuary, eBirders should **only submit sightings using general, consistently-named hotspots**. Some larger sanctuaries have named hotspots for different areas or individual trails. On eBird, for instance, Allens Pond contains at least 6 different hotspots: “Allen’s Pond WS – Allens Neck (Mass Audubon)”, “Allens Pond WS—Allens Neck Trail (Mass Audubon)”, “Allens Pond WS—Beach Loop (Mass Audubon)”, “Allens Pond WS—East Branch (Mass Audubon)”, “Allens Pond WS—Quansett Trail (Mass Audubon)”, and “Allens Pond Wildlife Sanctuary (Mass Audubon)”. We are now asking users, unless you are contributing to a specific ongoing project within a sanctuary, to *submit data only to the general sanctuary hotspot, which will consistently be named by the full sanctuary name followed by Mass Audubon in parentheses* (e.g., “Allens Pond Wildlife Sanctuary (Mass Audubon)”). In the future we may establish some additional eBird data collection protocols and hotspots that are specific to particular areas of a sanctuary, but for now we prefer that all submissions be made to a general and consistently-named sanctuary hotspot. This will make it much easier for our scientists and sanctuary staff to use eBird data in our inventory and monitoring efforts.



7. Click the Submit Data button. (The other links and buttons – Bar Charts, High Counts, Directions, View Details, number of species reported, number of checklists submitted all are interesting, and will covered in a future blog, but for now just focus on the Submit Data process).
8. Use the drop-down menu to select the date of your visit.
9. Click the appropriate button describing the type of your visit. Your choices are:
 - a. Traveling
 - b. Stationary
 - c. Historical
 - d. Incidental
 - e. Other

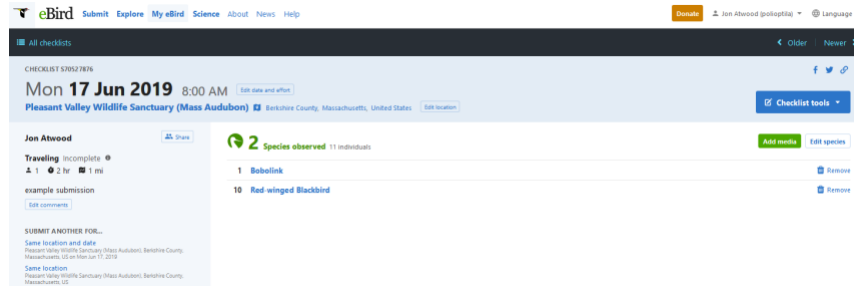
Most of the time you will probably select Traveling. Unless, for example, you are (1) reporting a list of birds you watched at a bird feeder while eating your lunch (Stationary), (2) you're getting caught up on entering information from old checklists where you didn't record details of the hours you were there or distance that you walked (Historical), or (3) you want to record a bird that you saw while walking into a sanctuary building from the parking lot (Incidental).

10. Enter information about Start Time, Duration, Distance, and Party Size. Approximate values are completely acceptable.

11. Click the Continue button.
12. From the “What Did You See or Hear?” page, scroll through the species list and enter counts of whatever birds you encountered. Again, approximate numbers are fine – if you saw a small flock of Bobolinks, 10 might be a very appropriate entry. Or maybe it was a big flock: entering 50 (or 75) would be fine. As data accumulate, over years of submissions by multiple observers, eventually these ‘guesstimates’ will even out and provide a useful index of abundance during a particular time period. Try to avoid using the easy (but mostly uninformative) option to simply enter an “X” indicating that the species was present, but no numerical estimate was possible.
13. In the lower right-hand corner select ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ in the “Are you submitting a complete checklist of the birds you were able to identify?” box. Try really hard to include **all** the species that you observed, even the common ones. In terms of the scientific analysis that eBird data are used for, complete checklists are much, much more valuable than ones where only a

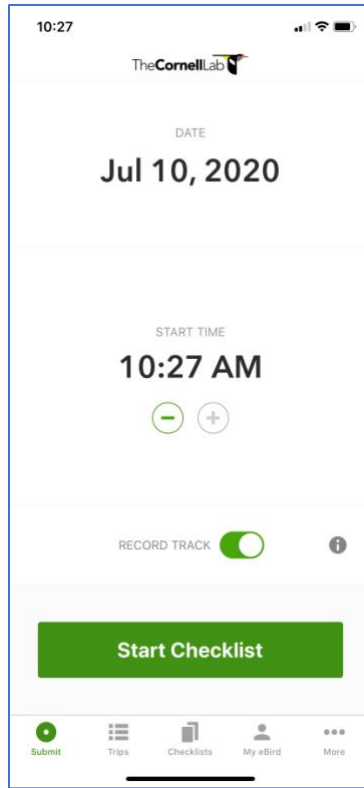
couple of incidental observations are entered (although, for purposes of your own record-keeping, recording that single Pileated Woodpecker might be of interest even if you didn't bother to guess how many Black-capped Chickadees you saw on your walk). And don't worry if you think "I only saw 10 species on this walk, but if I were Wayne Petersen he would probably have recorded 50". The point is to submit all of the birds that you were able to identify. Through the combined efforts of many eBird contributors, a full picture of the birdlife at each of our sanctuaries will emerge.

14. Click Submit. You'll then see a window summarizing your entry, allowing you to make any necessary additions or corrections:

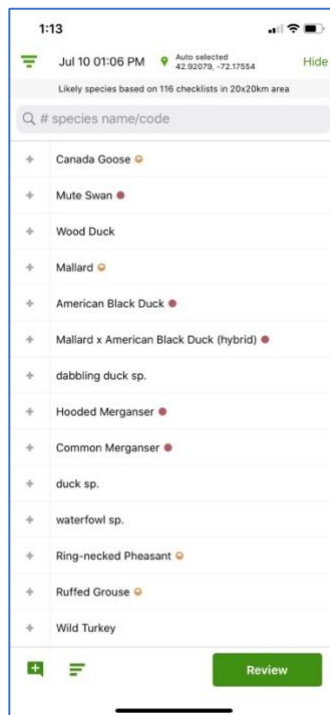


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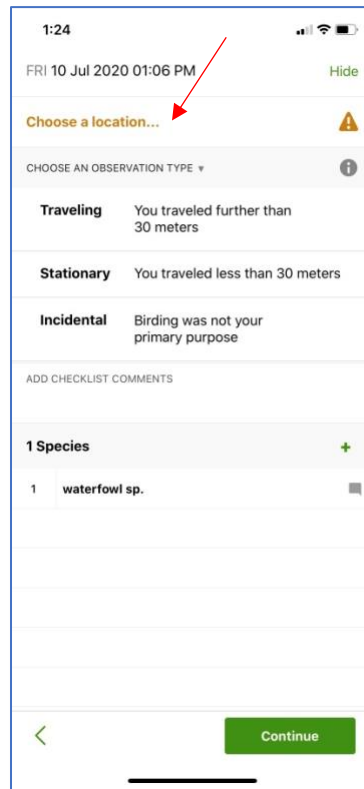
2. Open the eBird phone app (which you can download for free onto your phone from Google Play or other app sources). Although we're not going to use eBird's automatic tracking function, you should not turn off the Record Track button. The application uses this function to determine approximately where you are, and, with this info, to load appropriate checklists for you to use as the basis of your data submission.



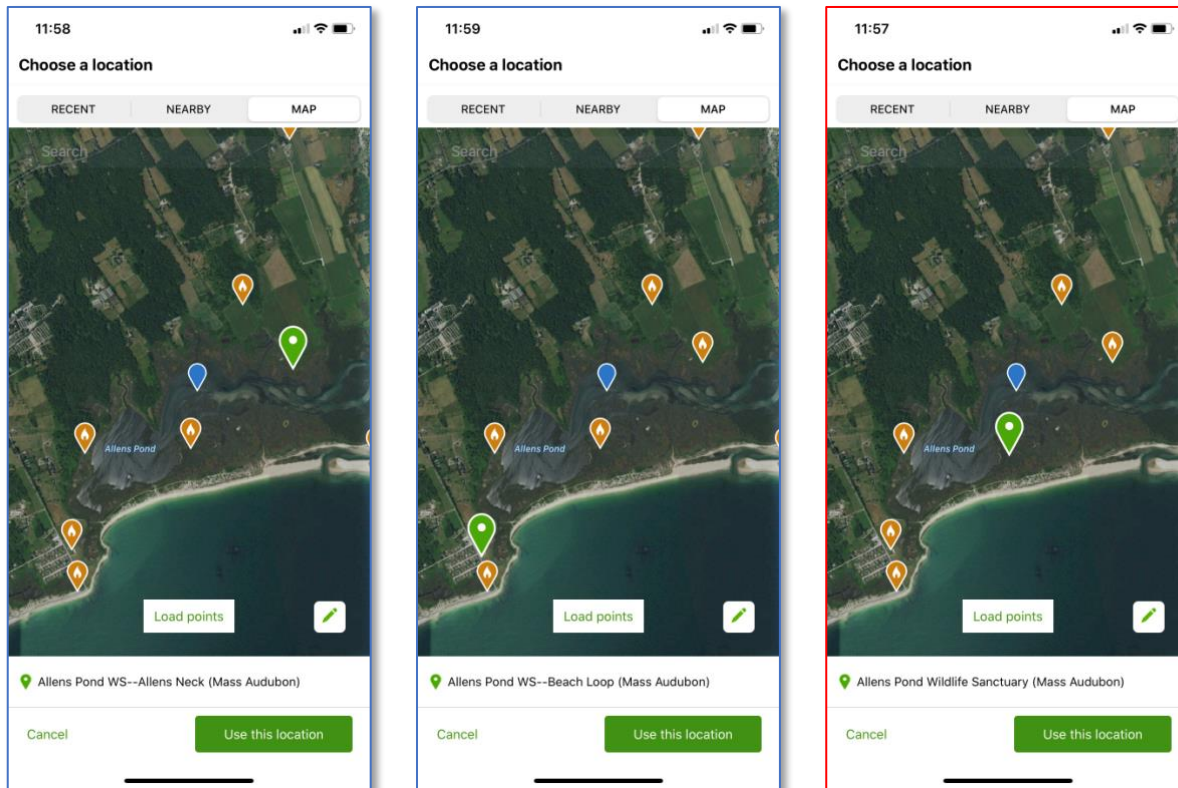
3. Click "Start Checklist". In a few seconds, eBird will load a checklist for you to use in recording your observations.



4. Scroll through the species list and enter counts of whatever birds you encountered. Approximate numbers are fine – if you saw a small flock of Bobolinks, 10 might be a very appropriate entry. Or maybe it was a big flock: entering 50 (or 75) would be fine. As data accumulate, over years of submissions by multiple observers, eventually these ‘guesstimates’ will even out and provide a useful index of abundance during a particular time period. Try to avoid using the easy (but mostly uninformative) option to simply enter an “X” indicating that the species was present, but no numerical estimate was possible.
5. Click “Review”.
6. Click the “Choose a location” header

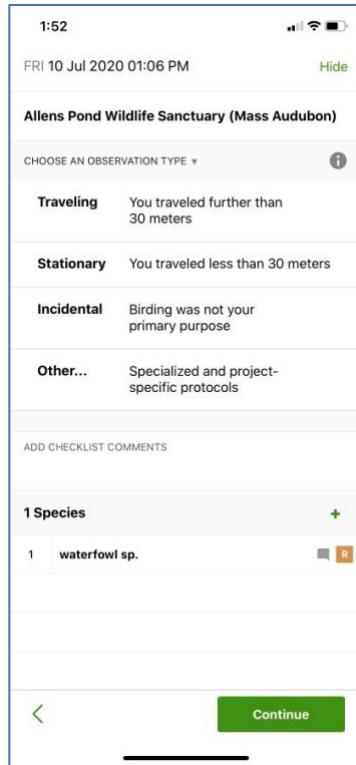


2. Click the “Map” header. You will see a Google Earth image that allows you to scroll and zoom to the approximate location of the sanctuary that you’re visiting. When you are in the general area, zoom in and click “Load Points” to enable you to see markers that identify the location of existing hotspots. When you click on any of these points that marker will turn green, and you will see that hotspot’s name at the bottom of your screen.



Unless you are contributing to a specific ongoing project within a sanctuary, we’re asking that eBirders **only submit sightings using general, consistently-named hotspots, instead of lat/lon coordinates, specific locations within each sanctuary, or actual paths that you may have walked.** Some larger sanctuaries have named hotspots for different areas or individual trails. On eBird, for instance, Allens Pond contains at least 6 different hotspots: “Allen’s Pond WS – Allens Neck (Mass Audubon)”, “Allens Pond WS—Allens Neck Trail (Mass Audubon)”, “Allens Pond WS—Beach Loop (Mass Audubon)”, “Allens Pond WS—East Branch (Mass Audubon)”, “Allens Pond WS—Quansett Trail (Mass Audubon)”, and “Allens Pond Wildlife Sanctuary (Mass Audubon)”. Unless you are contributing to a specific ongoing project within a sanctuary, we are asking users to *submit data only to the general sanctuary hotspot, which will consistently be named by the full sanctuary name followed by “Mass Audubon” in parentheses* (e.g., “Allens Pond Wildlife Sanctuary (Mass Audubon)”). In the future we may establish some eBird data collection protocols and hotspots that are specific to particular areas of a sanctuary, but for now we prefer that all submissions be made to a general and consistently-named sanctuary hotspot. This will make it much easier for our scientists and sanctuary staff to use eBird data in our inventory and monitoring efforts.

Once you have located the correct hotspot (among the 3 screenshots shown above the correct one is outlined in red), click “Use this location” in the lower right corner of the screen. Your screen should now look like this:



Note that the correct sanctuary hotspot name now appears at the top (in this example, “Allens Pond Wildlife Sanctuary (Mass Audubon)”).

3. Finally, select the Observation Type that best describes your visit. Your choices are:
 - a. Traveling
 - b. Stationary
 - c. Incidental

Most of the time you will probably select Traveling. Unless, for example, you are (1) reporting a list of birds you watched at a bird feeder while eating your lunch (Stationary), or (2) you want to record a bird that you saw while walking into a sanctuary building from the parking lot (Incidental).

In this example, we’ll select Traveling, and the following window will appear. Here, I’ve filled in the number of Observers (2, in this example), approximate length of the visit (90 minutes, for example), and approximate distance traveled (1.5 miles). Click Continue.

2:02

FRI 10 Jul 2020 01:06 PM Hide

Allens Pond Wildlife Sanctuary (Mass Audubon)

TRAVELING ▾ ⓘ

Observers	Minutes	Miles
2	90	1.5

Share checklist with...

Is this a complete checklist of the birds you were able to identify?

Yes No

ADD CHECKLIST COMMENTS

1 Species +

1	waterfowl sp.	
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< Submit

4. Note that in this example we've selected 'Yes' in response to the question, "Is this a complete checklist of the birds you were able to identify?". In your eBird submissions, try really hard to include **all** the species that you observed, even the common ones. In terms of the scientific analysis that eBird data are used for, complete checklists are much, much more valuable than ones where only a couple of incidental observations are entered (although, for purposes of your own record-keeping, recording that single Pileated Woodpecker might be of interest even if you didn't bother to guess how many Black-capped Chickadees you saw on your walk). And don't worry if you think "I only saw 10 species on this walk, but if I were Wayne Petersen he would probably have recorded 50". The point is to submit all of the birds that you were able to identify. Through the combined efforts of many eBird contributors, a full picture of the birdlife at each of our sanctuaries will emerge.
5. Click Submit. You're done! Thank you!!!!

Thanks so much for your help. In light of many factors associated with the covid-19 pandemic, Mass Audubon's science team is revisiting many of our regular activities, including our efforts to track bird populations at the various sanctuaries. Your contributions to our eBird hotspot records will be really helpful. In future blogs we'll cover some of the exciting products that eBird data can provide, and how you can use this information to improve your birding skills and knowledge!