NY Breeding Bird Atlas III – eBird Mobile Handout

— Using eBird Mobile —

Advantages Over Web Entry
- It's free and makes it easy to record the birds you see in the field.
- It notifies you when you are approaching the edge of a block.
- No birding homework! eBird Mobile avoids the time-consuming step of entering data in the computer after birding.
- Compatible with iOS and Android devices (cell phones and tablets).
- Passes information directly into your eBird account on the web.

— Getting the App on Your Phone —

1. Make sure you have an internet connection.
2. Download the App to your smart phone from Google Play or the App Store.
   a. Open your phone's web browser and type in help.ebird.org.
   b. Make the screen big enough so you can read it.
   c. Under "Getting Started" click on "Enter Sightings with eBird Mobile" and read through the instructions.
   d. Click on the link for "App Store" if you have an iPhone or "Google play" if you have an Android phone.
      i. For iPhone: Tap on the "Get" button. Enter your Apple ID password. When the app is finished downloading, tap on the blue button that says "Open."
      ii. For Android: Tap on "Install." When the app is finished downloading, tap on "Open."

— Setting Up eBird Mobile —

1. Once you've downloaded the app, you'll be asked to enter your eBird user information. If you have an eBird account, enter your user name and password. If you do not have an eBird account, you can create one in the app by choosing a user name and password.
2. Set your preferences for:
   a. the language you want your bird names displayed in,
   b. units of measurement for distance, and
   c. whether you want to see common names, scientific names, or both.
3. Download the bird pack for New York. This makes it easier to enter data offline.

— Submitting a Checklist to the Atlas —

Follow these steps every time you go atlasing. eBird provides detailed instructions with lots of pictures and useful links at help.ebird.org under Enter Sightings with eBird Mobile. If you are a visual learner, you can also watch the video tutorials on the Bird Academy website: https://academy.allaboutbirds.org/product/ebird-essentials/. The eBird Mobile FAQ is also especially useful. You are urged to use these web pages as you become more familiar with the app. Almost every question you are likely to have has already been answered by the eBird team! The instructions below are just enough to get you started with eBird Mobile.

1. **Change the portal to "New York Breeding Bird Atlas."** Whenever you go out atlasing, be sure to change your portal to the New York Bird Atlas. On the home screen, select the menu icon (Android) or more button (iOS) and then go to "Settings." Select the "Portal" option and use the drop-down menu to select "New York Breeding Bird Atlas." Return to the home screen and enter your checklist as normal. Every checklist you enter will now be automatically shared with the Atlas. *Note: If you are not atlasing, for example in winter, please change the portal back to "eBird."*

2. **Set Date & Time.** The date and time will be set to the current time. Adjust accordingly. Be sure "Record track" is on. Tap "Start Checklist"

3. **Select a Location.** The app automatically finds your position, but you should set your location to get a more precise species list. Tap on the auto selected location at the top of the screen and choose from among the three options. Be as specific as possible and try to use existing hotspots.

   Recent. Places you've been to recently. This choice includes your last 50 trips from eBird Mobile.

   Nearby. This option generates a list of public hotspot names near your location. *Important: Only use a hotspot if the point is in the same block where you are atlasing.*

   Map. This option lets you look at a map of public hotspots and personal locations near your location. Use an existing location or create a new personal location by pressing and holding. You can rename personal locations on the bottom of the screen.

   After choosing a location, tap "Use this location" in the lower right-hand corner.

4. **Enter Species List**.

   You will see a list of likely bird species for your area. You should report all the species you see and are able to identify. Don't leave out the European Starlings and House Sparrows. Count the number of individuals of each species, or at least approximate the number.

Quick entry. Tap the search bar to pull up the number pad. Type the number of individuals. Then tap the space bar to get a key pad. You can start typing the bird's name or use the 4-letter banding code. If you see more of a species you have already seen you can switch to the checked tab and just tap the number to add more. If you suddenly see 30 more starlings, type "30 EUST" or "30 Star" in the search bar and it will automatically be added to the number already observed. If you see an unusual species, tap on the species name to add comments.

5. **Add Breeding Codes.** This is an essential step for the Atlas! If you observe a breeding behavior, tap the species name in your checklist. A detailed page will come up. Below the number of birds you observed, there is a section for "Breeding Code." Select that and then choose the appropriate breeding code from the drop-down list. Hit "Done." On your main checklist you will see a small icon next to the species name with the breeding code you entered. If you later observe the same species exhibiting stronger breeding evidence, go through the same steps to upgrade the code accordingly. The codes are listed from weakest to strongest evidence in the list. Before submitting your checklist, review all the species and add breeding codes for as many as possible. Do this even if you know that species was confirmed on a different checklist. Do not overlook the possible codes (singing and in appropriate habitat) as they convey important information, too!

6. **Review.** Even if you are not ready to submit your data from the field, it is important to stop the track so your distance and time are recorded accurately.

   Type of observation. Traveling counts should be under 5 miles. It is considered a Stationary count if you moved less than 30 meters. This will be automatically filled in for you if you recorded your track. Change this to Incidental if your primary purpose was not birding—for example, birds seen while driving.

   Observers. The total number of people birding. You can also share the list with others by typing in their eBird user name or email address.

   Minutes. This is automatically calculated based on the time you started the checklist.

   Miles (if Traveling count). Look at your track (click on the small map icon). Did you back track? If so, alter the distance so you are only reporting the one-way distance.

   Are you submitting a complete checklist of the birds you were able to identify? This should be "Yes" unless you are submitting an incidental or historical checklist or for some reason you couldn't record all the birds you saw. Remember to include European Starlings, Rock Pigeons, and House Sparrows!

7. **Submit!** Check over your list first. Avoid embarrassing errors created by cold or fat fingers. Once submitted, checklists are marked "Accepted" in My Checklists and they are loaded to the eBird website where you can view and edit them if you like. Be sure and submit your checklists. They will be lost if you lose your phone.

8. **Editing.** If you need to edit a checklist for any reason, go to the checklists tab at the bottom of the app. Find the submitted checklist you want to update and select it. The checklist will open and you can edit the data in the app. You can also edit your checklist on the eBird website. If you want to add photos or audio recordings, it is easiest to upload them from the website.

— Checklist Recommendations —

To maximize the usefulness of your data for the Atlas, please follow these guidelines.

- Submit complete checklists with counts.
- Enter breeding codes for all breeding observations (there are no "safe dates").
- Record the highest/strongest code for each species on every checklist.
- Stay within block boundaries.
- Keep checklists under 5 miles (8 km).
- Have separate checklists for different habitats.
- Only report one-way distance.
- Enter day and night lists separately.
- Hide sensitive species (if necessary).
- Provide documentation (ideally photos or sound recordings) for rare species.

— Atlas Ethics —

Please be respectful of the birds, their habitat, and people by following these practices.

- **Respect species** by avoiding playback and keeping your distance from nests. You do not need to see a nest to confirm breeding.
- **Respect habitats** by staying on designated trails and following Leave No Trace principles.
- **Respect people** by following land access regulations and asking landowners for permission to access private land.

— Video Tutorials —

For more tips on getting started with eBird, check out the free eBird Essentials course on Bird Academy: https://academy.allaboutbirds.org/product/ebird-essentials

The Atlas also has video tutorials on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/@nybbaiii