# Pro Tips

**Checklists**
- Keep ‘em Complete! Report all species you were able to identify by sight or sound.
- Start a new checklist after traveling 1 mi., after 1 hr., and/or entering into a different habitat.

**Location**
- Place your checklist at the exact spot where you conduct a stationary survey, or if traveling, in the middle of your track.

**Traveling?**
- Report the unique distance you walked, i.e. do not include any repeat portions of trail in your total distance estimate.

**Nests**
- Minimize disturbance! Avoid leaving a trail to a nest that may attract predators.

**Add comments**
- Add notes to your checklists and species to help data reviewers interpret sightings and behaviors encountered.

**Rare species**
- Visit: priority-species.ncbirdatlas.org.
  1. Start new stationary checklist at the site of encounter.
  2. Include comment about identification, and/or take photos & vocal recordings.

**Tricky Codes**
- If uncertain, code it but leave a comment with the species and contact us for help! Learn at: breeding-behaviors.ncbirdatlas.org
- H: Best for species that do not sing, females, and independent young. Ask yourself, will this species breed at this location?
- S: For singing bird present in suitable nesting habitat during breeding season. Can use for some other vocalizations, e.g. owl calls, woodpecker drumming, woodcock peenting.
- FL: Poor flyers with down, and/or yellow gape.
- FY: For young that have left the nest, but still dependent on adults. Avoid using for species that disperse great distances, e.g. terns, hawks.
- NY: For young in a nest (inc. nestlings in count).

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# Atlasing Basics

**Follow these six rules to help us achieve our goals!**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>eBird</strong> (mobile)</th>
<th>Download the free eBird app for quick and accurate data collection in the field. Create an account at: <a href="http://www.ncbirdatlas.org">www.ncbirdatlas.org</a></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>NCBA eBird portal</strong></td>
<td>Switch to our data portal and make it easier for us to organize Atlas data. It also helps fund our project! To change your portal visit: change-portal.ncbirdatlas.org</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Priority Blocks</strong></td>
<td>Focus effort in 3x3 sq. mi. “priority” blocks to spread coverage equally across the state. Locate, explore and adopt blocks at: blocksignup.ncbirdatlas.org. Note: you can still Atlas anywhere in NC!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>&lt;1 hr.</strong></td>
<td>Checklists under 1 hr. keeps you focused and prevents individual birds from being counted more than once.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>&lt;1 mi. (precise location)</strong></td>
<td>Travel &lt;1 mi. and use an accurate location of where you Atlased. This helps us associate the birds you observed with habitats and other environmental conditions. Please avoid using hotspots as these may not always represent where you Atlased.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use Codes</strong></td>
<td>Slow down! Watching birds closely is fun and rewarding. Recording their behaviors provides a much richer data set for conservation and management of populations.</td>
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**May 2023**

field-guide.ncbirdatlas.org
Breeding Codes

Most codes describe a behavior that is often easily recognizable, but their main purpose is to help determine a species’ breeding status, which can be less obvious.

1. Take time to learn the meaning of each code. Details and quizzes at: breeding-behaviors.ncbirdatlas.org
2. Record appropriate (see #1) codes whenever and wherever observed.
   - If unsure, code it using your best judgement, but also
   - Leave a comment for the species and contact us for help!

Block Schedule

You can complete a block in one year! But don’t feel rushed either! You can also spread effort out over multiple years.

- **Nov-Dec**: Early winter Atlasing.
- **Jan-Feb**: Late winter Atlasing.
- **Mar-Apr**: Focus on species such as Northern Cardinals, Loggerhead Shrike, Wayne’s Black-throated Green Warbler, and Ruffed Grouse.
- **May-Jun**: By mid-May, most birds have already set up territories and are singing to defend them. Trips to your block beginning early in the morning will be the best way to detect these birds.
- **Jul-Aug**: By late summer many species have stopped or slowed singing, but nesting may still be ongoing. Some species will be raising a second brood or re-nesting after a failed first clutch.
- **Sep-Oct**: Keep Atlasing, but can also scout new priority blocks.

Contact Us

We are here to help!

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