

Appendix I – eBird and the Atlas

Many Atlassers are also regular or even avid eBird users. There's no requirement to use eBird but this appendix is aimed at those who do.

About entering atlas data using eBird

Although it is feasible to use eBird to submit atlas data ([see below](#)), it requires some extra steps to fill in missing data which the atlas requires. We much prefer that everybody uses the NatureCounts app or website to submit atlas data. These platforms have several important features that eBird does not, including:


- Stronger emphasis on adding breeding codes
- Built-in quality control checks related to breeding codes
- Atlas-specific flags for provincially-rare, regionally-rare, and species of interest
- Ability to pin-point locations of specific sightings of interest on a checklist
- Built-in square map to help ensure checklists do not cross square boundaries
- Track logs that can be used for data analysis (tracks recorded in eBird are not available to the atlas)

Set up your atlas account to copy your atlas forms to your eBird account

To watch an Atlas-3 tutorial video going through these steps (Coming Soon).

Data collected for the atlas are compatible with eBird and you can set up your NatureCounts account so that your records get automatically transferred to eBird.

On the atlas website, once you are signed in, hover over your user name near the top right, then select profile (or [click here](#) to go directly to the profile page). At the bottom of the page is a section titled “eBird Exports.” Fill in your eBird account information here and be sure to save. You should now see the eBird Exports settings that look something like this:

eBird Exports 

You can save your eBird login information as part of your NatureCounts profile. This allows you to easily transfer your NatureCounts data into your eBird account where applicable.

An eBird login **username** is already saved within your NatureCounts profile. To remove or change the eBird login, please [click here](#).

Automatically push your NatureCounts data to eBird after entry:

If you select “Yes” beside “Automatically push your NatureCounts data to eBird after entry”, once you have filled in this information your atlas checklists will automatically appear in your eBird account. If you select “No” beside “Automatically push your NatureCounts data to eBird after entry”, then you will have to navigate to the form and manually press the “Share with eBird” one at a time.

Once an atlas form has been shared with your eBird account it will say “This checklist has been shared with eBird:” followed by the checklist ID and link (see Figure 1I).

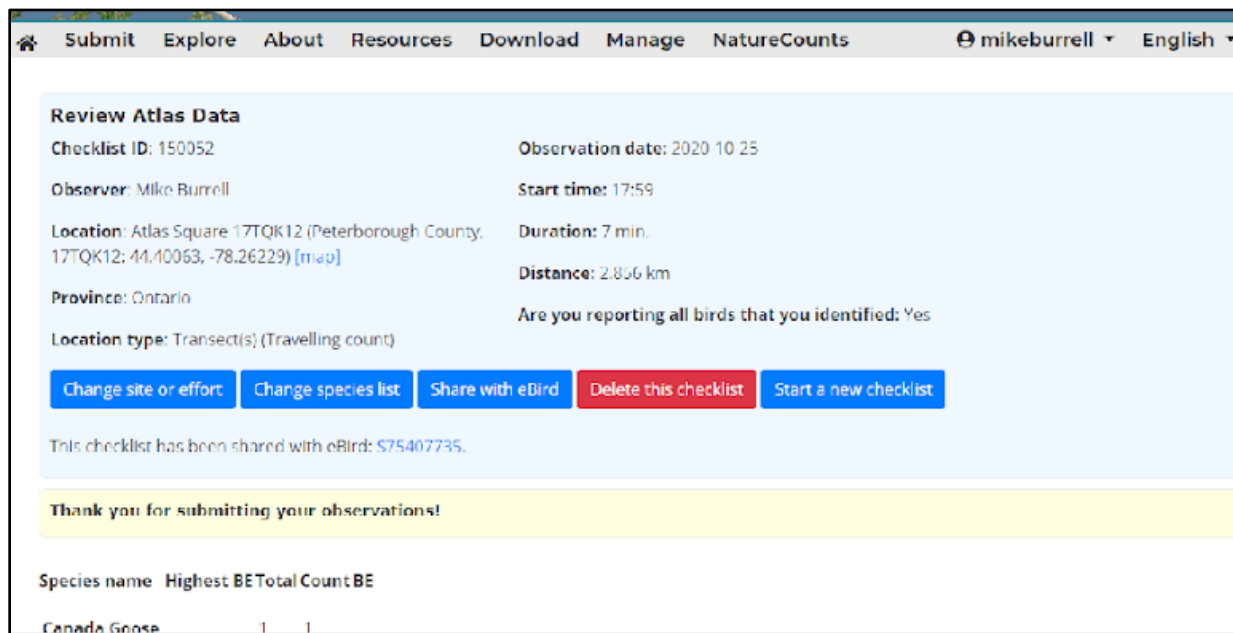


Figure 1I. A completed atlas form. Note the "Share with eBird" button (left of the red "Delete this checklist" button), and underneath those options, the eBird checklist link (in blue font, beginning with "S")

Submitting an eBird checklist to the Atlas

To copy eBird data to the atlas, you'll need the eBird checklist ID. To find it, open the eBird checklist and it will appear in two locations: right above the date, near the top-left corner it should say "Checklist" followed by the ID in the format "S#####". It also appears at the end of the URL (web address) in your web browser. Copy the checklist ID.

Then head to the NatureCounts [submit page](#) for the atlas and click the "Import from eBird" button. If you've already linked your eBird account, the window that pops up should have your eBird login and eBird password prefilled, so you just need to fill in the eBird checklist ID and then click "Import from eBird" (Figure 2I).

Import a checklist from eBird

If you have an [eBird account](#), you can import one of your checklists from eBird into NatureCounts. You will still be required to verify your data and complete any documentation requested. Please note that not all eBird checklists are suitable for the atlas (e.g. checklists that cover multiple atlas squares should not be imported).

eBird login:

eBird password:

eBird checklist ID (e.g. S123456)

save my eBird login in my profile

Figure 21. eBird import options. This window will pop up when you click “Import from eBird” at the start of the submit data page of the website. Fill in the necessary details to proceed with importing an eBird checklist to the atlas.

Once the eBird checklist import has completed, you’ll be taken through the normal data entry process, but all the information should be copied from eBird. Double-check everything, fill in any missing information (e.g. draw your travelling route or area search), and check any data warnings (e.g. breeding code warnings, requests for details for significant species). Once you’ve finished, be sure to submit the list.

Please note that eBird checklists which cross square boundaries should not be copied to the atlas.

You can also watch an Atlas-3 video tutorial for an example (Coming Soon).

Atlassing with another eBird user

Currently, the NatureCounts app/website do not support eBird checklist sharing with multiple observers so you will have to go into eBird after you’ve submitted the list and share through eBird. You can click on the eBird checklist link (see Figure 11, above) to go straight to the eBird checklist page where you can share with other observers you were with.

Managing atlas locations in eBird

The NatureCounts app/website do allow selection of eBird hotspots when picking your location but do not currently support eBird “personal locations”. Atlassers are strongly encouraged to pick locations as precisely as possible to reflect exactly where you are atlassing and if using the app, the pre-selected location based on your phone’s GPS is the best option for atlassing purposes. Many eBird personal locations and hotspots may cover very large areas and those should be avoided for data entry because it may result in your data being assigned to a location hundreds or even thousands of metres away or even the wrong square. If you choose to use a hotspot, ensure you are also recording your track log to ensure the exact location covered is recorded.

If you wish to “merge” your atlas-created locations with a personal location or hotspot within eBird, see the [eBird help file](#) for detailed instructions.

Making changes to your atlas forms

If you need to edit an atlas form, please do so on the atlas website. Any changes you make there will automatically be sent to eBird to update a linked eBird checklist, should it exist. Changes you make to your eBird checklist will not be sent back to the atlas. Note that if you edit your eBird checklist and then edit your atlas form, the changes you make in your atlas form will overwrite the changes in your eBird checklist.

When should you switch from eBird to NatureCounts each year?

The NatureCounts app/website will work year-round. If you are out actively atlassing at any time of year, please enter the data to the atlas, even if you don't find any breeding evidence; this is important for us to track effort. Remember that some species of birds in Ontario (e.g. Great Horned Owl; see [Appendix H](#)) may display breeding evidence at any time of the year and tracking how much atlassing effort is happening even outside of the main breeding season is important.

If you're just out birding, you can record the data in eBird and if you happen to come across breeding evidence, share it with the atlas as an incidental observation.

Please keep in mind that breeding evidence should only be entered on a checklist during that species' breeding season (including “X”). There is a list of breeding season dates ([click here](#)) for each species in the resources tab of the atlas website.