



American Robin Photo: Mark Peck

What's Sap?- June 2023

Dear Atlasser,

Hello and happy June (AKA peak season)! We have an abbreviated newsletter for you this month since we know you're all busy!

This edition of the Atlas newsletter includes:

- **Big Atlas Weekend**
- **Congratulations to the May challenge winner**
- **Win a pair of Vortex binoculars with the June challenge**
- **June Sappy Hour - how to win the Big Atlas Weekend**
- **Join a mini square bash near Peterborough**
- **Barriers for Citizen Science in Ontario survey**
- **Atlas-3 quick start guide**
- **NatureCounts App – new and improved!**
- **Get your Atlas-3 swag**
- **Photos needed**
- **Join the Atlas community on Discord**
- **Content wanted**
- **Support the Atlas!**

Big Atlas Weekend

The Big Atlas Weekend is back! This exciting annual event is a fun way for birders to document breeding birds and come together as a birding community. For many birds in our area, breeding peaks in late June. It's a great time to confirm breeding and fill gaps in the atlas datasets.

This event is being coordinated by Maryland and DC, New York, Newfoundland, North Carolina, Ontario, and Puerto Rico!

Each project will randomly select an atlasser from each of the categories below. Winners will receive a free [Bird Academy course](#) of their choice. Eligible checklists must be complete, and submitted to NatureCounts between 6 pm June 23 and 11:59 pm (Eastern Time) June 25. Social media posts must be public.

- Nocturnal checklists submitted between 20 minutes after sunset and 40 minutes before sunrise
- Newly coded or upgraded species in a square
- Checklists with breeding codes from a square with less than 20 hours of survey effort
- Atlas-related photos on Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter with the Atlas tagged (@ONBreedingBirdAtlas on Facebook, @ONBirdAtlas on Instagram and Twitter)

The person who completes the most of the above challenges will earn the title of MVA - Most Valuable Atlasser - and will win a pair of Vortex Binoculars.

The event schedule is as follows:

- June 21: Kickoff Webinar: 6–8 pm (Eastern Time) [Register here: <https://tinyurl.com/425z6yuf>]
- June 23-25: Competition: Friday 6 pm – Sunday 11:59 pm (Eastern Time)
- June 28: Awards Ceremony: 6–8 pm (Eastern Time) [Register here: <https://tinyurl.com/2n4h6bap>]

Don't forget your [Big Atlas Weekend T-shirt!](#) Let's all get out atlassing between June 23 and June 25!

To learn more visit birdsontario.org/big-atlas-weekend

Congratulations to the May challenge winner

Congratulations to Emily Rondel of Toronto who was the lucky winner of the May challenge and who will be receiving a pair of Vortex Diamondback binoculars!

Emily was chosen at random from the 156 Atlassers who submitted at least ten checklists using the NatureCounts app. In total, 390 Atlassers submitted a total of 5,710 May checklists. Thanks to everyone who submitted checklists as part of the challenge!

Here's a note that Emily provided about her Atlassing:

I enjoy Atlassing because it encourages me to do what I love (birding) in new and interesting places. Exploring new roads for my Point Counts pushes me to discover pockets of habitat I would never have otherwise found. Taking advantage of Atlas opportunities for Square Bashes or Far Northern trips has gotten me out of the rut of visiting the same old locations over and over. The Atlas has allowed for a larger appreciation of Ontario's natural landscapes – and of course, its birds! Photo: Mark Peck



Win a pair of Vortex binoculars with the June and July challenges!

For the months of June and July, we want to encourage you to upgrade breeding evidence and visit new squares. To be entered for your chance to win, simply upgrade the breeding evidence for any species in a square. You'll get an entry each time you manage to do this, so be strategic – visiting a square with little or no coverage could net you dozens of entries if those species have no breeding evidence yet!

The prize – one pair of Vortex Binoculars! Thank you to Vortex for generously supporting the Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas!

June Sappy Hour – how to win the Big Atlas Weekend

Our next Sappy Hour will be June 21 at 7pm Eastern Time, and will cover a number of topics about atlassing at this time of year, including how best to plan ahead to help your chances of winning a prize on the Big Atlas Weekend (and how to help Ontario bring home the cup!). [Click here](#) to register.

Our other future Sappy Hours are planned out for the next several months, but if you have a topic you'd like to see covered, please contact us at the [Atlas office](#) (or reach out through social media or the [discussion forum](#)).

Missed a Sappy Hour? Check out the [playlist](#) on our YouTube channel of all the past Sappy Hours.

Join a mini square bash near Peterborough

Peterborough and Kawartha Lakes Atlassers are teaming up to conduct a mini square bash over the last weekend of June (June 24/25) to fill some gaps in Kawartha Lakes. All atlassers are welcome to help!

To register or to get more information, fill out this form: <https://forms.gle/QXqey3B1WxrGp5f6A>

Barriers for Citizen Science in Ontario survey

Newfoundland Atlas coordinators would greatly appreciate it if you could take two minutes to fill out [this quick survey](#) on the barriers to participation in citizen science. The authors will be compiling this information to present to the ornithological community as an important piece of information on the inclusivity of Birds Canada's programs.

Atlas-3 quick start

We've prepared some new resources for getting started with Atlas-3. Maybe it's for yourself and you haven't taken the plunge yet or maybe you know a birder who just needs a nudge to see how easy it is to participate. Whatever the reason, we want to show everyone just how easy it is to get Atlassing.

Check out our new quick-start page: www.birdsontario.org/quick-start

And we have a new "Getting Started with Atlas-3" video playlist that covers all of the basics in six short videos:

- [Introduction](#)
- [Quick-Start Guide](#)
- [Breeding Evidence Codes](#)
- [Special Surveys](#)
- [Significant Species](#)
- [Submitting checklist Data Using the NatureCounts App](#)



NatureCounts App – new and improved!

If you haven't checked out the NatureCounts App for a while (or never!) then you'll be delighted— over the past two years it has undergone extensive testing and upgrades and we couldn't be more excited about its utility. The "new and improved" app got rave reviews at our kick-off events this past month and we hope you'll all give it a try.

Version 4.3.4 was released in April so make sure you've updated. Some of the new features include:

- Safe dates are now built right into the app
- Warning pops up if you leave a square
- Built in timer
- Ability to download draft checklists
- Quick entry (type a number then the species name or four letter code to quickly add that number to the species' total)
- Better syncing with eBird locations

Please leave a rating and/or review wherever you get your apps. And don't forget to leave us feedback if you have ideas for improvements or notice something that seems "off" using the app [feedback form](#).

Atlas Swag

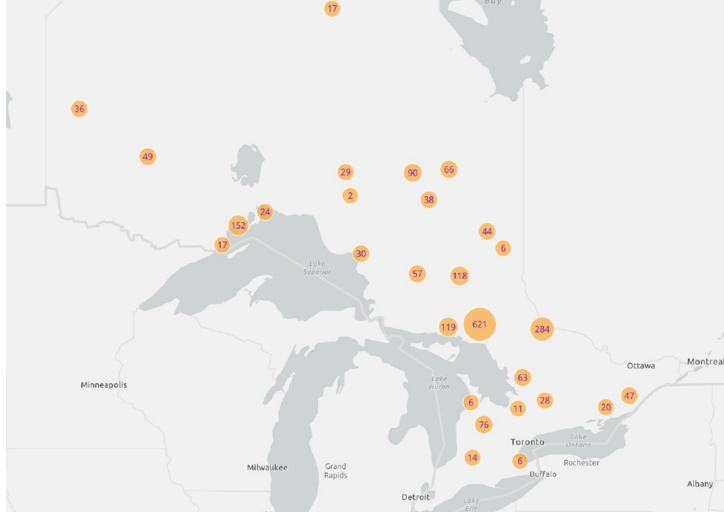
You can now purchase almost anything (T-shirts, caps, mugs, tote bags, stickers, etc.) with the Atlas logo on it from the online [Atlas store](#). Looking forward to seeing you stylishly sporting your Atlas gear!



Digital point counts now online!

Over the first two years of the Atlas, almost 3,000 digital point counts were conducted across the province. These have now all been analyzed and the results incorporated into the Atlas, check out the map below!

Anyone can conduct digital point counts and the digital recorders are available for loan from most regional coordinators. Please [check-in with your RC](#) to arrange to borrow a unit and find out where your help would be most useful if you'd like to conduct some this summer.



Photos needed

Even though we've still got three field seasons to go, we're already starting to think about the publication of the results and one of the things we will need are photos. So, we're giving you a heads-up that our August challenge will be related to submitting media to us through our [media submission form](#).

So this summer when you're out, please carry a camera and document what you find. We'll be asking for photos showing breeding evidence, birds, habitats and Atlassers in action. If you do, you'll be well-positioned to participate (and maybe win!) the August monthly challenge.

Join the Atlas community on Discord

Got a question about a specific Atlas topic or just want to connect and share stories with other Atlassers? Join the Atlas Discord, a communication server with different channels, each specific to an Atlas topic! For detailed instructions on how to join, check out: birdsonario.org/discussion

Invite link: <https://discord.gg/JCfgr3egG>



Content wanted!

Do you have a cool Atlassing story, adventure, or observation to share? Please [send them](#) to us for either a blog post or short newsletter item.

Support the Atlas!

The Atlas team is hugely appreciative to everyone for their volunteer efforts in support of the project. If you would like to help even more, please consider making a donation in support of the project, too. You can now donate directly to Atlas-3 by following [this secure link](#). You will receive a charitable receipt for income tax purposes from Birds Canada - and an extra warm feeling inside, knowing you're supporting the project with a donation and your volunteer efforts. Thanks so much for considering this!

Until next time!

- The Atlas-3 Team

The Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas-3 thanks the following for their financial support:

Environment and Climate Change
Canada

TD Friends of the Environment
Foundation

Vortex

Natural Resource Solutions Inc.,

Hodgson Family Foundation

Baillie Fund

Wildlife Habitat Canada

The McLean Foundation

RBC Foundation

Employment and Social Development
Canada (Canada Summer Jobs)

Newmont

Parks Canada Agency

The Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas-3 thanks the following for their in-kind support:

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WildTrax

Natural Resources Canada

Sustainable Forestry Initiative

Ministry of Northern
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and Forestry

Ontario Parks

University of Alberta

Wild Birds Unlimited

COVID-19: *The Atlas team reminds all atlasers to be aware of the latest COVID-19 conditions in Ontario. Please follow all public health guidelines and restrictions, and check for updates frequently. Information on the latest conditions and public health guidance can be found on the Government of Ontario [website](#). Follow the links to the most current situation in the province.*



This email was sent by [Birds Canada](#) on behalf of the [Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas](#) partners (Birds Canada, Environment and Climate Change Canada, Ontario Field Ornithologists, Ontario Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry, and Ontario Nature).

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