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# BREEDING BIRD SURVEY NEWSLETTER

BBSN 1 USGS Eastern Ecological Science Center Breeding Bird Survey Fall 2026

## Announcements

Dear BBS Community,

Welcome to the very first Breeding Bird Survey Newsletter (BBSN)! As part of our efforts to increase engagement and communication with the Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) community, we are thrilled to bring you a newsletter full of information, updates, and news from the North American Breeding Bird Survey Program.

The past several years have been challenging for the BBS, from a global pandemic, to staffing changes, to funding cuts and hiring freezes. But through it all, the BBS has continued to deliver reliable and unbiased data that remains critical to informing avian conservation and management across North America.

As the BBS celebrates its 60th year, we're taking a retrospective look at where we've been, how far we've come, and where we're going over the next 60 years. We hope you will join us as the BBS enters a new era full of exciting opportunities, innovations, and collaborations.

Thank you,
Shannon Skalos, PhD
BBS Acting Program Manager

U.S. Department of Interior
U.S. Geological Survey

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# 60 Years On The Road:
## Celebrating the Legacy of the BBS

As we mark the 60th anniversary of the BBS, it's a time to celebrate an extraordinary legacy built by birders like you. Born out of Chan Robbins' vision to establish a statistically sound, continental-scale bird monitoring program following the DDT-era, the BBS officially launched in 1966. What began as a bold experiment in standardized point count methodology along roadside routes quickly grew into the gold standard for long-term population tracking across North America.

For six decades, your early morning alarms, carefully timed three-minute stops, and keen ears have driven continental avian conservation. From tracking the sharp declines in eastern woodland songbirds that launched Partners in Flight to providing the backbone data for the "3 Billion Birds" lost study, BBS data have repeatedly shaped avian conservation, management, and science.

None of this would be possible without the remarkable commitment of our observer community (i.e., YOU!). Every year, thousands of dedicated observers log tens of thousands of hours and miles, delivering the precise relative abundance data for hundreds of species that researchers and resource managers depend on. Whether you've run a single route for one season or dozens of routes across decades, your passion turns personal moments in the field into the vital data points that make the BBS the foundational dataset for North American breeding bird populations.

To express our appreciation during this milestone year, a special anniversary gift of exclusive BBS stickers was included in packets to all observers and state coordinators. We would like to extend a special thank you to Teresa A. Lewis, USGS Visual Information Specialist, for her amazing sticker design, which perfectly captures the spirit of the survey. While we cannot accommodate requests for additional stickers at this time, stay tuned for more next season!

Thank you for your tireless dedication to the BBS protocol, early mornings, and North America's birds. Here's to 60 years of groundbreaking community science and to 60 more years ahead!



Chan Robbins, founder of the BBS, conducting a BBS survey in 1986, USGS



60th Anniversary BBS sticker sheet sent to all US BBS observers and coordinators in 2026. Artwork and design by Teresa A. Lewis, USGS

# Staff Updates

By now, most of you have heard that Dave Ziolkowski Jr., our recent Program Manager and long-time BBS National Office team member has taken a new opportunity within USGS and is no longer with the BBS program. We thank Dave for his many years of dedicated service to the BBS and wish him well in his next endeavor. Below is a message from Dave to the BBS community:

*"After more than 20 years helping lead the BBS, I recently accepted a new opportunity here at the USGS Eastern Ecological Science Center, where I will be leading the Genetic Material Repository (GMR). The project is being developed to support emerging ecological genetics and biosurveillance efforts through scientific partnerships, and I am excited by the opportunity to help build a new resource that will expand our ability to observe and understand the natural world.*

*What has always made life in the BBS office so enriching for me is that it's about far more than a monitoring program, or a scientific research engine, or even the invaluable 60-year record of North America's bird populations at its core. It is about the people. Every year, thousands of coordinators, cooperators, and volunteers, just like you and me, come together around a shared interest in birds and a commitment to understanding them. As a lifelong birder and enthusiastic BBS observer myself, I have always felt a special connection to our flock, and I consider it one of the great privileges of my career to have worked alongside so many dedicated and generous people. I am deeply grateful for the friendships, mentorship, encouragement, and countless conversations we've had together that have enriched my life over the years.*

*I am equally grateful to have worked so closely with Mikey Lutmerding for much of my time with the BBS and with Shannon Skalos in recent years. Their talent, dedication, creativity, and commitment to the program have been evident through both routine and challenging times, especially during the uncertainties of the past year, and I have tremendous confidence in the future they will help shape. The BBS has always evolved to meet new opportunities while remaining true to its mission, and I am excited to see where the next chapter leads.*

*Although my role is changing, I am not going far. I will be down the hall from the BBS office, will continue to wake at unreasonably early hours to run my routes, will probably spill a little coffee on my forms and pants in the process, and will always make time to talk birds with fellow supporters of this extraordinary program.*

*Thank you for allowing me to be part of it.*

*Cheers, Dave"*



Dave Ziolkowski, USGS

You can contact Dave at dziolkowski@usgs.gov to congratulate him on 20+ years of service to the BBS and wish him well on his new position.

# Staff Updates Continued

**Keith Pardieck** left the BBS in 2021 to become the Science Team Manager for the Species Population Dynamics & Surveillance Science Team here at the Eastern Ecological Science Center. Here he oversaw the BBS, Bird Banding Lab (BBL), Population and Conservation Genetics, and the Unique Species Groups & Collections Management teams. In 2025, Keith retired from federal service after 29 years with USGS, 20 years of which were spent as the BBS Program Manager.

Keith is enjoying the warm beaches and excellent birding of Puerto Rico now. We congratulate Keith and wish him happy birding and relaxation during his well-earned retirement!



Keith birding and enjoying retirement in Puerto Rico. Photo: Keith Pardieck



El Yunque National Forest, Puerto Rico. Photo: Mitch Eaton, USGS

Following Keith's retirement, **Antonio (Tony) Celis-Murillo** became the Acting Science Team Manager for the newly created National Avian Monitoring Science Team here at the Eastern Ecological Science Center, which includes both the BBS and the BBL. Tony also continues to serve as Chief of the BBL. In his role as Science Team Manager, he works with the BBS team to support the long-term success of the survey and strengthen connections among North America's bird monitoring programs. While the BBS team carry out the day-to-day operations of the survey, Tony provides broader scientific leadership, strategic guidance, and support for the National Avian Monitoring Science Team as a whole.



Tony Celis-Murillo, USGS

Tony is an ornithologist, bioacoustician, and conservation scientist with more than two decades of experience in avian monitoring, research, and conservation. He earned his PhD in Natural Resources and Environmental Science from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign studying avian ecology and behavior. In his free time, Tony can be found out in the woods recording bird song and making films.

You can learn more about Tony here: Antonio Celis-Murillo Bio.

# Meet The US BBS Office

The BBS is made up of many people across North America, including our partners in Canada, our behind-the-scenes data analysts who produce the invaluable trend and relative abundance indices each year, and IT specialists who help keep our websites and databases running and secure. We'd like to introduce you to the team of people who make the BBS work at both the US and Canadian Offices.

**Shannon Skalos** is serving as Acting Program Manager for the BBS. Shannon joined the National BBS Office in 2024 and is a long-time BBS observer, ornithologist, and avid birder who brings a deep appreciation for both the program and the community that makes it possible. Her experience as a conservation professional, BBS observer, and state coordinator for Northern California provides a valuable perspective that will undoubtedly benefit the program moving forward. We are excited to have Shannon serving in this role and are confident that her knowledge, dedication, and enthusiasm for bird conservation will help guide the BBS into its next chapter. Shannon is now located at the new Sacramento, California BBS office.



Shannon Skalos, USGS



Nine-year-old Shannon holding a pair of binoculars with a dinosaur-themed background. Photo: Shannon Skalos

Shannon earned her MS in Avian Sciences and PhD in Ecology from UC Davis studying reproduction, habitat selection, and migration ecology of Northern Harriers in Suisun Marsh, California. In her free time, Shannon can be found birding, outdoor photography, bird banding, and watercolor painting.

You can learn more about Shannon here: Shannon Skalos Bio.



Mikey Lutmerding scoping flocks of shorebirds and gulls on Poplar Island, MD, USGS

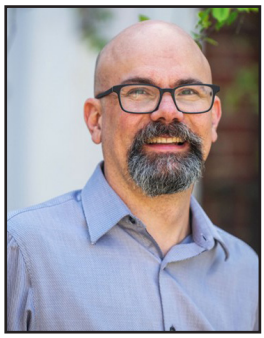
**Mikey Lutmerding** is our long-time BBS ornithologist and technical lead. For many years, Mikey has been a cornerstone of the BBS, providing exceptional expertise in survey operations, route administration, data management, analytical products, and observer support. His deep knowledge of the survey, unwavering commitment to data quality, and dedication to the BBS community have been instrumental to the success and continuity of the program. Countless observers, coordinators, researchers, and partners have benefited from Mikey's expertise and willingness to help. Mikey is located in the Laurel, Maryland BBS office.

Mikey earned his BS in Interpretive Biology & Natural History from Frostburg State University. In his free time, Mikey can be found birding, photographing birds, and more birding! Did we mention birding?

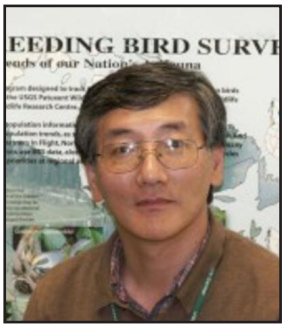
You can learn more about Mikey here: Mikey Lutmerding Bio.

# Meet The US BBS Office Continued

**Jeff Hostetler** is a Research Biologist with the USGS Eastern Ecological Science Center at the Patuxent Research Refuge. His background is in quantitative population ecology of birds and mammals and has also researched avian migration ecology. In 2023, he took over the USGS analysis of BBS data from John Sauer, who has assisted him in the transition as an Emeritus Scientist. Jeff is now the primary author on the annual BBS analyzed trends and analysis results and authors or co-authors numerous scientific research articles using BBS data. Jeff enjoys board games, word puzzles, and spending time in nature in his free time. You can learn more about Jeff here: Jeff Hostetler's Bio.



Jeff Hostetler, USGS




Jang Byun, USGS

**Jang Byun** is an IT Specialist with USGS Eastern Ecological Science Center at the Patuxent Research Refuge where he serves as the primary database and website manager for the BBS. Jang earned his BS in Computer Science with a minor in Mathematics, and his MS in Computer Science with an emphasis in databases, from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC). He served as a volunteer math coach for middle and high school students in competitions such as MATHCOUNTS and the American Mathematics Competitions (AMC) for more than five years and thoroughly enjoyed the experience. You can learn more about Jang here: Jang Byun's Bio.

**Meg Vossler** is a recent graduate from the University of Maryland where she studied environmental science & policy. Last summer, she completed an internship with the USGS monitoring breeding Common and Least Terns in the Chesapeake Bay where she conducted nest surveys, banded chicks, and contributed to various avian monitoring initiatives with federal partners. This year, she is returning to the USGS to assist the BBS with data entry, observer communication and organizational effectiveness. She hopes to continue her career in conservation with aspirations for grad school and research opportunities. She is particularly interested in avian conservation and is a newbie birdwatcher in her free time. Her highlight of the year was visiting the Oregon coast and getting to see Tufted Puffins nesting at Haystack Rock!



Meg Vossler, USGS



Leo Potisk, USGS

**Leo Potisk** is a recent graduate of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC), where he received his bachelor's degree in biological sciences. He became interested in avian conservation during his work on an Eastern bluebird monitoring research project through UMBC's Omland Lab. Leo has since gained experience mist-netting, nestbox trapping, banding, and radio tracking tagged birds. This year, he is excited to be working with USGS to process important BBS data and correspond with observers. He plans to attend graduate school in the future and hopes to combine his interests in conservation and genomics into a research career. His favorite local bird is the Tree Swallow and the most interesting bird he has seen is the endangered Elfin-woods Warbler, an endemic species of Puerto Rico.

# Meet The Canada BBS Office



Marie-Anne Hudson, CWS

**Marie-Anne Hudson** is the Section Head for the Canadian Wildlife Service's (CWS) new Species Assessment team, which includes the BBS as well as The State of Canada's Birds, Wild Species, and support to the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC). Much of her career has centered on the BBS, having started her career with CWS in 2010 as Canada's National Coordinator for the BBS. She then moved from day-to-day coordination into national program leadership. Her career has included work on the State of Canada's Birds reporting, migratory bird policy and permitting, wildlife science planning, biodiversity monitoring, and partnerships across government and the conservation community.

Marie-Anne holds a BSc in Applied Zoology and a PhD in Wildlife Biology from McGill University, where she examined how habitat and landscape features influence breeding bird communities and nest survival in urban green spaces. Before joining CWS, she co-founded the McGill Bird Observatory, a migration monitoring station. In her free time, Marie-Anne can be found chasing her kids around, gardening/birding, and stitching her love of nature, design, and art together via thread painting.


Willow English, CWS

**Willow English** is the National Coordinator for the BBS in Canada for the CWS and has been in this role since 2022. In addition to the BBS, Willow also contributes to the State of Canada's Birds project, and is a member of the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) Birds Subcommittee. In spring, she participates in shorebird surveys in the Canadian Arctic.

Willow completed her BSc Hons at the University of Victoria, and her MSc at Simon Fraser University, working on the reproductive ecology of Red-necked Phalaropes. Following a stint of field jobs ranging from Hawaii to Germany, she did her PhD on migration ecology in Arctic-breeding shorebirds at Carleton University. Outside of work, Willow volunteers with a wildlife rescue and window collision group, and enjoys birding, running and travelling.


Adam Smith, CWS

**Adam Smith** is a biostatistician/quantitative ecologist for the CWS, and an adjunct professor at Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada. He has been surveying two BBS routes annually since 2005, conducts the Canadian analyses of the BBS data, and has published more than 25 scientific papers that rely on BBS data.

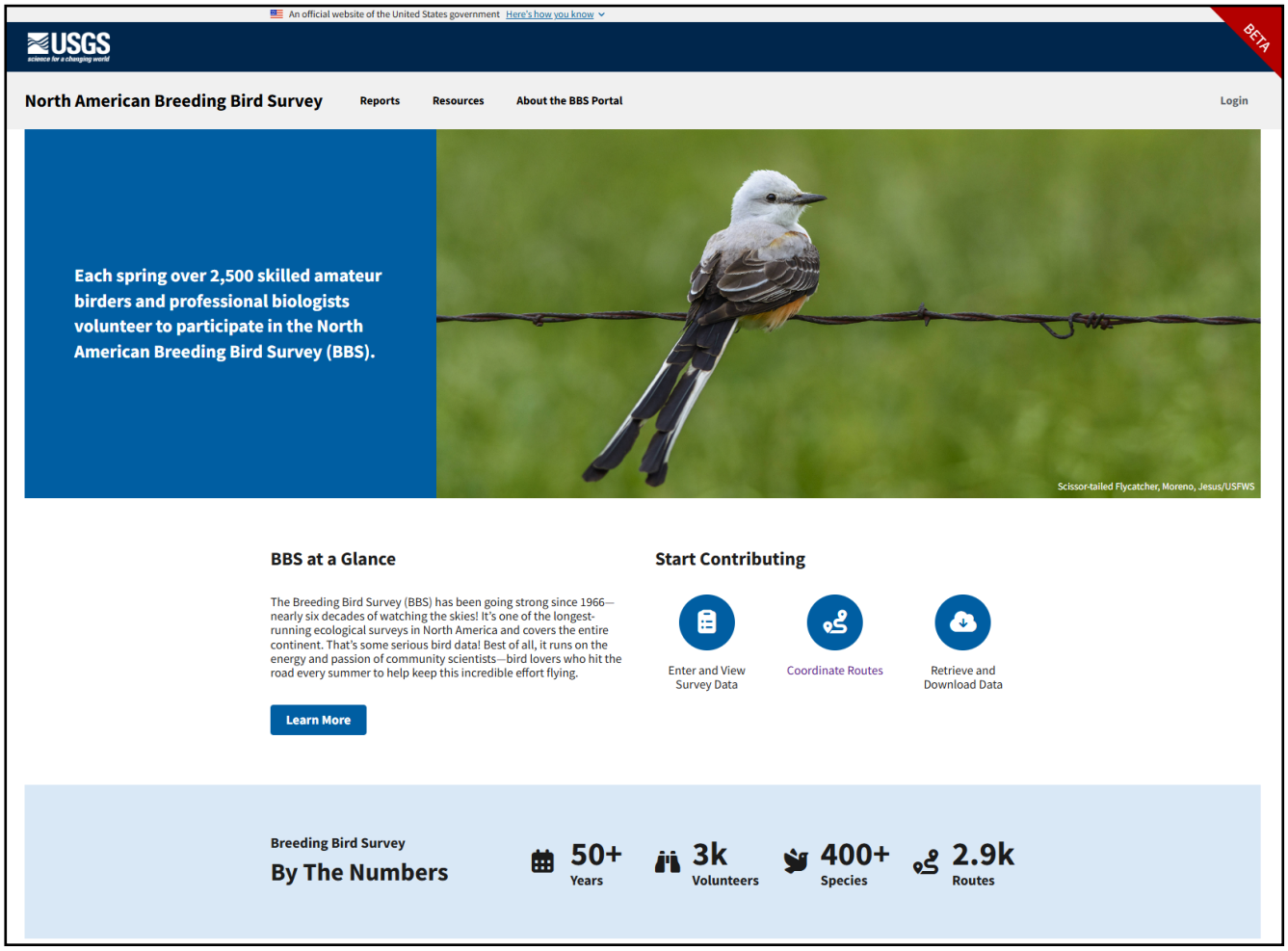
Adam holds a PhD in ecology from Carleton University, and over the course of his graduate studies, he transformed from a field biologist into a statistician. He specializes in using broad-scale bird monitoring data including the North American Breeding Bird Survey to track the status changing bird populations and to investigate the causes behind those changes. He also maintains the R-package bbsBayes2 that facilitates analyzing the BBS dataset using hierarchical Bayesian statistical models.

# BBS News

## BBS Modernization Project

A new, modernized BBS website and data entry portal is coming soon! Over the past year, we have been working with the USGS Fort Collins Science Center (FORT) Ecoinformatics and Wildlife Technology Branch (ECOTECH) Development Team to update our website, data entry portal, servers, and databases to give the BBS website a fresh new look and meet the Department of Interior's cyber security and data management requirements, all while maintaining the integrity of the BBS database and BBS user functionality.

Currently, the new website is in the development and testing phases, but we anticipate the launch of the new website to happen this winter or early spring, prior to the 2027 BBS season. While we don't have specific dates for the launch just yet, we will keep the BBS community informed about timelines and how to create your new login credentials using login.gov, which will be a requirement to log in to the new website.



Homepage for the beta version of the new BBS website developed by the USGS FORT ECOTECH development team.

# BBS News Continued



## National Avian Monitoring Program within EESC

The BBS is now part of a new Science Team: The National Avian Monitoring Program! The USGS Eastern Ecological Science Center (EESC) is home to two foundational avian monitoring programs: The BBS and the Bird Banding Lab (BBL). Both programs offer unique, but complementary, comprehensive, long-term datasets that can both identify species declines, as well as help determine drivers for declines. With both programs under one umbrella, we will be able to develop innovative analytical techniques to utilize both datasets together to improve North American avian research, conservation, and management.

Read the links below to learn more about these two programs and how they work together to deliver foundational science for North America's birds.

- BBL and BBS: Foundational Science in Flight
- Every Bird Counts - Delivering Gold Standard Science for North America's Birds

## BBS Data and Results

Each year, the BBS National Office compiles, cleans, and prepares the raw BBS data for publication and release to the public. We are happy to share the 2026 BBS raw data release is now available! This data release contains all the bird data you've collected from 1966-2025 for over 700 species of birds. You can access the full data release on our USGS Science Base webpage, as well as retrieve specific data from our BBS raw data retrieval webpage*.

With the 2026 data release, the species count data have been updated in the vacant routes map through 2025. If you have ever wondered where to view your data alongside previous years' data for individual routes, this is the easiest way to do so. Visit the vacant routes page*, choose your country and state in the drop-down menus, find your route, click on the "Info" link, then click the "Count Data" tab. Once you set the years of data collection, you will be able to view all available raw data for each route through the 2025 season. Pro tip: you can copy and paste the generated table into a spreadsheet!

After each annual data release is published, BBS data analysts with the USGS and Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) produce annual BBS results. The USGS 2026 analyzed results have also now been published and are accessible on our USGS Science Base webpage, as well as the BBS interactive results website, which has been updated with the most recent results. The CWS 2026 analyzed results have also been updated and published on their BBS results website.

*Note: resources linked on this page will be moved to our new website in the near future.

# BBS News Continued...

## Datasheet and Map Archive

Have you ever wondered what we do with the 60 years' worth of datasheets that have been mailed back to the BBS National Office? They are scanned and digitally archived!

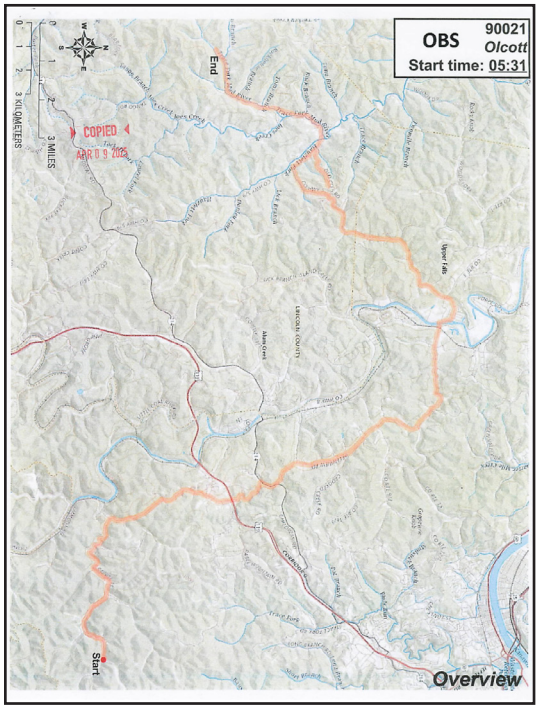
The BBS National Office maintains a digitial copy of every datasheet that has been returned to us since 1966. So far, we have scanned all datasheets through 2022. Our student interns are hard at work scanning the remaining datasheets from 2023-2025, as well as scanning 2026 datasheets as they are being processed with your return mail.

Once archived, we store all digital copies on an internal website for easy access should we ever need to revisit a datasheet from a previous year. It's not often that we need to look at these, but having an organized digital archive sure beats looking through thousands of sheets of paper trying to find what we need!

We are also in the process of creating a digital archive of all current route maps in anticipation of a paperless BBS Program in the near future.

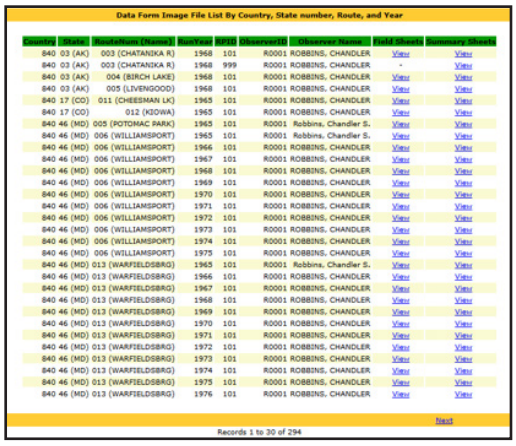


Picture of the BBS physical datasheet archive (left), USGS.




A scanned image of a BBS route map (above), USGS.

Screenshot of the internal BBS datasheet archive website (right), USGS.



# BBS News Continued...



## The Future of the BBS

As we reflect on the past 60 years of the BBS Program, we are also looking toward the future and exploring ways to modernize the survey to better meet the needs of observers and data users alike. We recognize the importance of maintaining this long-term, consistent dataset and its central role in avian conservation and management. Scientifically and statistically rigorous data are the foundation of effective conservation planning, and preserving the integrity of the BBS dataset remains our highest priority. At the same time, advances in statistical methods and spatially explicit conservation planning have created new opportunities for using BBS data. Researchers and resource managers increasingly want to identify critical habitat, migration corridors, range shifts, and other spatial patterns that can guide conservation actions. However, because the BBS was not originally designed as a spatially explicit survey, stop-level coordinates were not collected. Today, we receive dozens of requests each year for stop coordinates and related spatial information.

To meet modern data needs while maintaining program consistency, we are preparing several updates to the BBS Program in the coming years. **First,** we plan to begin annual stop coordinate collection. While many observers already record these, doing so has always been optional and intended mainly to help observers relocate stops. Collecting coordinates annually will allow the BBS to document exactly where birds are counted each year and to track fine-scale shifts in stop locations over time, providing the spatial data needed by today's researchers.

**Second**, we are working to modernize data collection and reduce our paper footprint. Since 1966, the BBS remains a paper-based survey, and our offices handle thousands of sheets of paper each year. We are developing digital methods for delivering datasheets and maps to observers, improving data entry, and supporting digital data collection. Observers may still use traditional paper forms or field notebooks if they prefer; the goal is not to change how data are collected, but to offer additional options to meet the preferences of individual observers. We are working closely with partners to ensure all data collection methods meet BBS standards without compromising data quality.

**Third**, as our workflows become more digital, we are expanding our national presence to better support the BBS community. Beginning in November 2026, a BBS position will be based in California, enabling a more geographically distributed workforce and strengthening support for observers and partners across the West. We look forward to increased collaboration with our western participants.

**Finally**, we hope to develop an annual data and results report that will be released alongside our annual dataset and analyzed results. This clear, accessible report will help broaden awareness and understanding of BBS findings and highlight the program's importance to North American bird conservation.

We are excited for the future of the BBS as we work to build the next 60 years of this essential program!

# BBS By The Numbers

In celebration of the BBS's 60th anniversary, we want to share with you the statistics that make up the BBS each year. The BBS is jointly managed and implemented by the USGS and the Canadian Wildlife Service and so the following two pages breakdown the number of routes run and total number of observers by year and country since the BBS began in 1966.

The graph below (Figure 1) and table on the next page (Table 1) shows the number of routes run and observer participation by year for each country. The dark blue bars represent U.S. routes run and the light blue bars represent Canadian routes run. The dark orange lines represent U.S. observers and the light orange lines represent Canadian observers. With nearly 600 routes run by 400 total observers in 1966, the BBS grew to a high of 3,371 routes run by 2,087 observers across both countries in 2017. Since then, the BBS has experienced a steady drop in the number of routes run by 1-3% per year, with a precipitous 10% drop in 2021 following the first missed year of surveys in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In total, this represents a 16% reduction in routes run from 2018 to 2025. While the number of routes run each year is still above 2,500, reversing this downward trend and returning to over 3,000 routes run each year to maintain our 1995-2025 30-year average of 3,081 routes run is our goal.

In response to this declining trend, we began a strategic increase in outreach before, during, and after the 2026 season. This included the return of the mini memo, more frequent email correspondence and reminders, and attending in-person, high-impact outreach events, like the American Ornithological Society's annual meeting. As a result (we think), **we have seen an increase in the number of routes run in 2026**; up to 2,894 routes as of the writing of this newsletter!

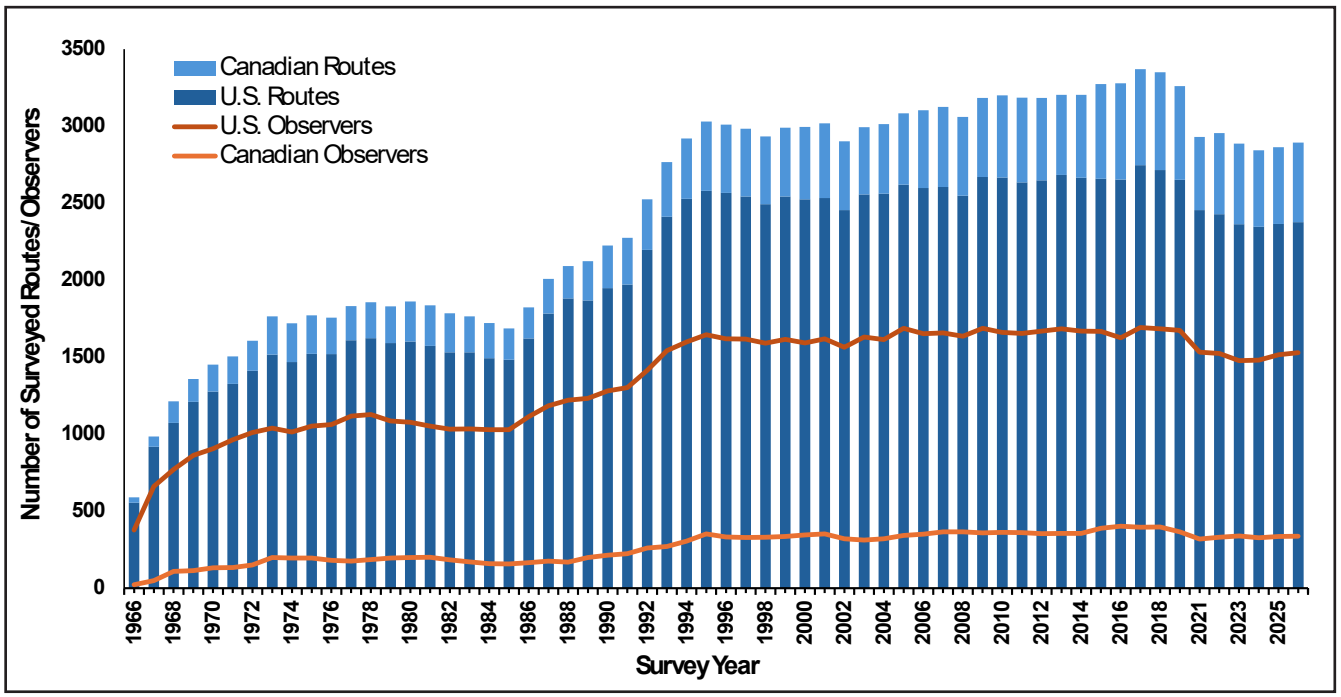



Figure 1. The total number of BBS routes run and total number of observers participating each year by country (U.S. or Canada). Stacked bars represent total routes run survey wide (U.S. + Canada combined).

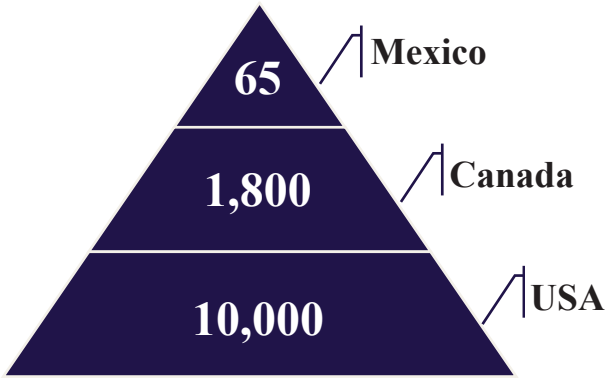
# BBS By The Numbers Continued...

Table 1. The total number of BBS routes run and total number of observers participating each year by country (U.S. or Canada) and survey wide (Total: U.S. + Canada combined). Note: numbers are subject to change in future data releases and reports based on ongoing QA/QC and late date entry.

| Year | U.S. Routes | Canadian Routes | U.S. Observers | Canadian Observers | *Total Routes* | *Total Observers* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1966** | 554 | 35 | 378 | 22 | *589* | *400* |
| **1967** | 919 | 66 | 661 | 48 | *985* | *709* |
| **1968** | 1074 | 140 | 771 | 108 | *1214* | *879* |
| **1969** | 1210 | 148 | 863 | 113 | *1358* | *976* |
| **1970** | 1277 | 175 | 905 | 132 | *1452* | *1037* |
| **1971** | 1327 | 178 | 964 | 134 | *1505* | *1098* |
| **1972** | 1411 | 196 | 1011 | 151 | *1607* | *1162* |
| **1973** | 1516 | 249 | 1039 | 199 | *1765* | *1238* |
| **1974** | 1469 | 251 | 1014 | 196 | *1720* | *1210* |
| **1975** | 1522 | 249 | 1052 | 195 | *1771* | *1247* |
| **1976** | 1520 | 236 | 1062 | 181 | *1756* | *1243* |
| **1977** | 1610 | 221 | 1117 | 175 | *1831* | *1292* |
| **1978** | 1624 | 233 | 1127 | 186 | *1857* | *1313* |
| **1979** | 1591 | 239 | 1085 | 195 | *1830* | *1280* |
| **1980** | 1601 | 261 | 1078 | 199 | *1862* | *1277* |
| **1981** | 1573 | 263 | 1053 | 201 | *1836* | *1254* |
| **1982** | 1531 | 254 | 1033 | 184 | *1785* | *1217* |
| **1983** | 1531 | 234 | 1034 | 171 | *1765* | *1205* |
| **1984** | 1494 | 228 | 1029 | 159 | *1722* | *1188* |
| **1985** | 1484 | 202 | 1029 | 157 | *1686* | *1186* |
| **1986** | 1622 | 201 | 1114 | 165 | *1823* | *1279* |
| **1987** | 1783 | 225 | 1184 | 175 | *2008* | *1359* |
| **1988** | 1881 | 211 | 1221 | 169 | *2092* | *1390* |
| **1989** | 1869 | 254 | 1233 | 198 | *2123* | *1431* |
| **1990** | 1949 | 277 | 1281 | 214 | *2226* | *1495* |
| **1991** | 1972 | 304 | 1303 | 224 | *2276* | *1527* |
| **1992** | 2197 | 329 | 1414 | 260 | *2526* | *1674* |
| **1993** | 2412 | 355 | 1543 | 271 | *2767* | *1814* |
| **1994** | 2529 | 392 | 1599 | 305 | *2921* | *1904* |
| **1995** | 2581 | 449 | 1646 | 352 | *3030* | *1998* |
| **1996** | 2567 | 444 | 1619 | 332 | *3011* | *1951* |
| **1997** | 2543 | 440 | 1617 | 329 | *2983* | *1946* |
| **1998** | 2493 | 440 | 1591 | 331 | *2933* | *1922* |
| **1999** | 2543 | 447 | 1616 | 336 | *2990* | *1952* |
| **2000** | 2526 | 470 | 1593 | 345 | *2996* | *1938* |
| **2001** | 2533 | 486 | 1619 | 353 | *3019* | *1972* |
| **2002** | 2456 | 446 | 1564 | 320 | *2902* | *1884* |
| **2003** | 2557 | 437 | 1631 | 313 | *2994* | *1944* |
| **2004** | 2562 | 451 | 1614 | 321 | *3013* | *1935* |
| **2005** | 2621 | 462 | 1687 | 343 | *3083* | *2030* |
| **2006** | 2599 | 505 | 1653 | 351 | *3104* | *2004* |
| **2007** | 2606 | 520 | 1658 | 366 | *3126* | *2024* |
| **2008** | 2548 | 513 | 1636 | 366 | *3061* | *2002* |
| **2009** | 2670 | 513 | 1687 | 359 | *3183* | *2046* |
| **2010** | 2667 | 534 | 1661 | 362 | *3201* | *2023* |
| **2011** | 2636 | 549 | 1655 | 361 | *3185* | *2016* |
| **2012** | 2648 | 536 | 1670 | 354 | *3184* | *2024* |
| **2013** | 2683 | 521 | 1685 | 356 | *3204* | *2041* |
| **2014** | 2666 | 537 | 1670 | 356 | *3203* | *2026* |
| **2015** | 2658 | 615 | 1668 | 389 | *3273* | *2057* |
| **2016** | 2654 | 625 | 1626 | 403 | *3279* | *2029* |
| **2017** | 2747 | 624 | 1692 | 395 | *3371* | *2087* |
| **2018** | 2715 | 635 | 1684 | 398 | *3350* | *2082* |
| **2019** | 2652 | 609 | 1674 | 365 | *3261* | *2039* |
| **2021** | 2455 | 476 | 1532 | 319 | *2931* | *1851* |
| **2022** | 2429 | 526 | 1525 | 331 | *2955* | *1856* |
| **2023** | 2364 | 523 | 1478 | 339 | *2887* | *1817* |
| **2024** | 2347 | 496 | 1480 | 328 | *2843* | *1808* |
| **2025** | 2365 | 499 | 1516 | 336 | *2864* | *1852* |
| **2026** | 2377 | 517 | 1529 | 337 | *2894* | *1866* |

# BBS By The Numbers Continued...

Have you ever wondered how many birds have been counted in the BBS's history? Or how many miles BBS observers have driven in pursuit of counting breeding birds? The following two pages highlight just some of the incredible contributions by BBS observers over the past six decades. As a result of your contributions, BBS analysts are able to provide population trend estimates and relative abundance indices for nearly 550 species of North American breeding birds today! With every year of data you collect, the BBS database and the subsequent analyses become more robust and rigorous, allowing us to provide reliable data and statistically sound results. Thank you, BBS observers and assistants!




**12,000**
Total # of Observers[1]



**3,770,000**
Total # of Miles Sampled[2]



**148,000**
Total # of Routes Run[3]



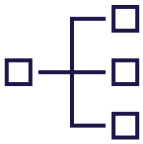
**7,400,000**
Total # of Point Counts Conducted[4]

[1]Approximate number of unique observers who ran at least one route and submitted data. Does not include assistants.
[2]Approximate number of miles sampled by multiplying the total number of routes run over 60 years by 25.5 miles. Does not include miles of scouting or travel to and from routes.
[3]Approximate total number of routes run over 60 years.
[4]Approximate number of point counts conducted by multiplying the total number of routes run by 50 stops.

# BBS By The Numbers Continued...





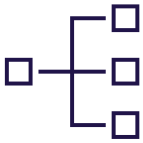


**109,242,000**
total birds detected in the USA and Canada from 1966-2026*

**~700** species/taxa*

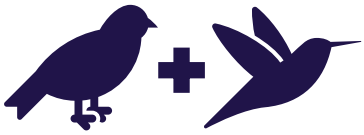






An additional **207,000** total birds detected in Mexico from 2008-2018*

**~350** species/taxa*







**109,449,000**
total birds detected in the BBS database 1966-2026*

**~700** species/taxa*

*Only breeding birds included in totals and number of species/taxa. Migrants and unidentified species/taxa not included. All numbers are approximate to account for changes that may occur based on ongoing QA/QC and updates to the BBS Master Species List.

# Welcome New Observers!

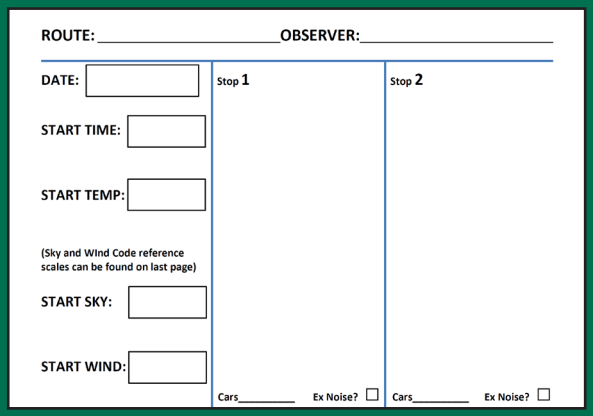
If 2026 was your first year, thank you for joining the flock of thousands who make the BBS a success! Through your efforts and those of your peers, federal, state, and local conservation and resource management agencies have reliable bird population information on which to base sound conservation and management decisions. We want your BBS observer experience to be as enjoyable and meaningful as possible. In working towards this goal, we provide many resources conveniently located on our website*. For instance, via the "Data Entry" link on our home page, you can log into our online data entry system where you can take the methodology training, enter your survey data, and maintain stop location information for your route(s). You can also use this site to easily update your contact information and to view and print your historical data. The comprehensive online Dendroica bird sound reference tool is available year-round via the "Learning Tools" link and is especially handy for brushing up on identification skills throughout the winter and spring. If you have any questions or problems regarding the BBS, please do not hesitate to contact your state coordinator or us at the BBS National Office.

Here are a few guidelines to help ensure that your next BBS season is as productive and enjoyable as possible:

1. Read the Instructions for Conducting the North American Breeding Bird Survey. Pay close attention to the methods and observer requirements, as well as survey dates and start times that are listed on your coversheet.
2. Scout your route before the actual survey day to avoid unexpected delays.
3. Submit your data electronically for faster feedback.
4. *Please* return your maps and a copy of your paper datasheets in a timely manner at the end of each season.
5. **HAVE FUN!**

Pro Tip: If you are someone who doesn't use our standard, pre-printed data forms in the field then you will almost certainly find our Add-As-You-Go forms helpful! They offer a lot of free space to allow observers to write-in the species detected at each stop and are maximized to keep data tidy in the field. Before heading into the field, print out a copy of our Add-As-You-Go datasheets.

You can also enter your data online in the Add-As-You-Go format! When entering your count data for your route, simply look at the top of the count entry page for the "Add-As-You-Go" link and click it. This link toggles between the two different entry formats: "Form Species List", which matches the standard forms you receive from us in your packet, and "Add-As-You-Go", which allows you to enter your species list and counts on a stop-by-stop basis, the way you collected them in the field.


ROUTE:_____OBSERVER:_____

DATE: | Stop 1 | Stop 2

START TIME:

START TEMP:

(Sky and WInd Code reference scales can be found on last page)

START SKY:

START WIND:

Cars_____ Ex Noise? ☐ | Cars_____ Ex Noise? ☐

Add-As-You-Go BBS datasheet, USGS

*Note: resources linked on this page will be moved to our new website in the near future.



# Observer Milestones

Many factors have contributed to the success of the BBS, but none has been more important than the participants who conduct the surveys (i.e., YOU!). Each year nearly 2,000 people in the United States perform surveys across more than 2,600 BBS routes. This predominantly volunteer workforce represents an elite and highly skilled group of birders whose experience rivals and often surpasses that of trained professionals. Assisting them are an additional 1,000 or so assistants* who take on the burden of tasks such as driving, recording data, collecting GPS coordinates, counting cars, and recording stop descriptions in the field.

With the completion of the 2026 BBS season, 147 observers had achieved the following BBS milestones** (Recipients appear in alphabetical order grouped by award category. Only participants who have agreed to the BBS Privacy Statement to have their names published in acknowledgements, recognition materials, and other outreach materials are listed here):

**10-years, 92 participants:** Bob Archer, Bruce Auchly, Chris Beal, Stephanie Beilke, Leah Breidinger, Charles Caron, Cinda Crosley, Raul Delgado, Don Delong, Scott Evans, Charles Fisher, Matt Fraker, Gerald Frost, Kimberly Guilliam, Steve Heinrich, Marjorie Hershman, Christine Herwig, Matt Johnson, Jon Kauffman, Ron Kittinger, Joseph Lautenbach, Susan Lenard, Leslie Lupo, Jennie Macfarland, William Mackin, Jim Mcginity, Cynthia Mitchell, Neil Paprocki, Ellen Pehek, Rachael Pierce, Nancy Price, Billy Reiter-Marolf, Victoria Rothman, Casey Rucker, David Sarkozi, Kristina Smucker, Marian Sole, Michael Swaim, Katie Theule, Kristen Warren, Sally Waterhouse, Dave Williams, Curtis Wolf, Greg Wright, Vin Zollo, Alisa Zych.

**20-years, 31 participants:** Jason Beason, Gregory Bennett, Gregory Birrer, John Bissell, Ryan Brady, Jay Davis, Rita Dixon, Daniel Erdely, Vanessa Fields, Deborah Grove, Steve Hodge, Derek Huebner, Andy Jones, Kay Kavanagh, Nathan Kuhnert, Patrick Magee, Evan Mann, Kristina Mayo, Mark Morrissette, Daniel Moss, Melvin Nenneman, Bridget Olson, Tracey Ostheimer, Brian Rapoza, William Shelmerdine, Damien Simbeck, Mike Stoakes, Ryan Tomazin, Wendy Ward, Nick Winstead, Quentin Yoerger.

**30-years, 7 participants:** Robin Garwood, Mark Korducki, Gretchen Mehmel, Jon Roti Roti, James Sipiora, Beth Siverhus, Eric Soehren.

**40-years, 10 participants:** Jeffrey Baughman, Douglas Harr, Nancy Martin, Joseph Merchak, Mark Oberle, Rich Terrell, Sharon Sarappo, Susan Staats, David Stage, Susan Wise-eagle.

**50-years, 1 participant:** Bill Tweit.

**50 Routes sampled, 6 participants:** Robert Donnelly, Lisa Horzepa, Kamal Islam, Catherine Pohl, Nick Winstead, Brenda Wright.

**100 Routes sampled, 1 participant:** David Suddjian.

We realize that observer milestones have not been recognized since 2018. If you achieved an observer milestone between 2019 and 2025, we have compiled a comprehensive U.S. Observer Milestones document that can be found on our website under the "Summaries of Annual Effort" link on the homepage! Please know that each and every observer is a valued member of the BBS community, and your accomplishments are appreciated whether they are highlighted here or not. Our goal is to revive annual observer milestones, starting with this newsletter to ensure observers receive the recognition they deserve. We are currently brainstorming new observer milestone awards that will both match the milestone achieved, as well as accommodate the future of the BBS as we move towards a more digital format.

*We value and appreciate contributions made by assistants on routes but because our database only stores observer numbers, we are unable to calculate their years of service.

**Years-of-service calculations are based on the actual number of years that observers returned data for one or more of their assigned BBS routes.

# Featured Observer

Since 1977, Ed Harper has faithfully run the Reed Point BBS route in central Montana, documenting profound shifts in the region's bird communities over 46 consecutive years. His meticulous, long-term observations mirror the staggering continental trend of nearly 3 billion breeding birds lost since 1970, a finding that relied heavily on BBS data, highlighting the essential role BBS observers play in avian conservation and management. As Ed reflected on his decades in the field in a recent article, stating "I am content to know I have added something to citizen science while amassing great memories, some to last a lifetime."

Ed shared his experience in a moving article for Montana Outdoors, offering a heartfelt look at the beauty of the landscape, the birds he came to know so well, and the changes he saw over nearly half a century. We highly recommend reading his full story in the link above!

Please join us in congratulating Ed, who has now retired from the BBS, after an extraordinary 46 years of service!

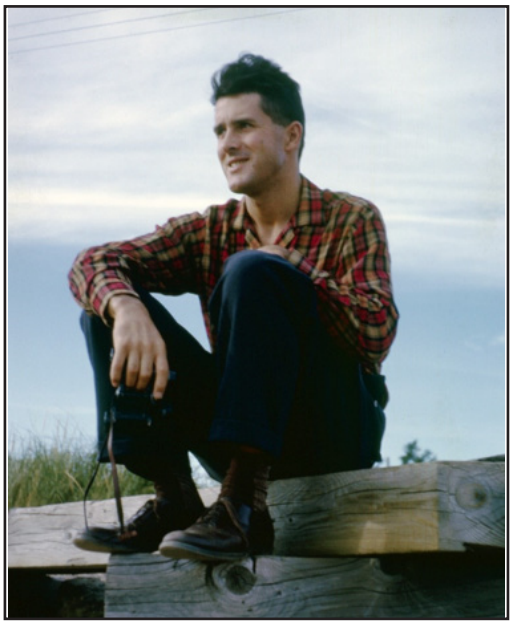


# In Memoriam

Just as we welcome new observers to our flock, we want to recognize the amazing contributions of observers who have passed away. Whether they were with the BBS for decades or just a few years, these observers contributed invaluable data towards the long-term success of the BBS. Below are observers (listed in alphabetical order by last name) who have passed away that we have been notified of since 2020.

Marlin Andrus, James Bair, Peggy Baker, Derek Buchner, Edward Brinkley, Dave DeSante, Dane Ferrell, Joseph Garvin, Mary Gustafson, Daniel Hatch, Janet Hewitt, Sharon Hines, Homer Klonis, Dan LaShelle, Meta Little, Keith Lockhart, Florence McGuire, Richard Mayfield, John Murphy, Gregg Painter, David Powell, Robert Janssen, Tom Johnson, David Junkin, Robert Welch, Mike Wolder.

If you are aware of observers who recently passed away who are not on the list above and you believe they would have liked to have been recognized for their contributions to the BBS, please contact us at the BBS National Office.



Tony Erskine in Kingsport, Nova Scotia, August 24, 1963. Photo courtesy of CWS

As the BBS celebrates its 60th anniversary, it also mourns the loss of Anthony John "Tony" Erskine of the Canadian Wildlife Service, who helped establish the survey in Canada.

Working with USGS's Chan Robbins, Tony recruited volunteers and set up routes across Maritime Canada. On June 2, 1966, he ran the first Canadian BBS route in Nova Scotia.

Tony later became Canada's National BBS Coordinator, expanding routes nationwide, collaborating with provincial coordinators and observers, and documenting the program's development. His thoughtful approach to route placement and continuity balanced scientific rigor with practical field realities.

Beyond the BBS, Tony led some of Canada's earliest boreal bird surveys, contributed to the Maritime Nest Record Scheme, authored the first Maritime Breeding Bird Atlas, and wrote several books, including *Birds in Boreal Canada*. His work provided essential data and insights into Canada's birds.

Tony's legacy endures in the routes he created, volunteer observers he recruited, and the BBS dataset he helped curate. The entire BBS Program owes much to his vision and dedication. We offer our heartfelt condolences to his friends, family, and CWS colleagues for their loss.

# Coordinator's Corner



State Coordinators are essential members of the BBS because they have their fingers on the pulse of the regional birding community, are familiar with the local roads and landscapes, and are dedicated to the success of the BBS each year. They act as a crucial link between the National Office and the thousands of BBS observers, helping us field questions and concerns, recruit highly skilled observers, and assign routes, among many other tasks. Many state coordinators are even conservation and management professionals who utilize BBS data in their work. These individuals know first-hand how invaluable the continued contributions of BBS observers are, and so are dedicated to the continued success of the BBS.

Over the past few years, we have had many new State Coordinators join our flock. We want to give them a warm welcome and introduce them to the BBS community. As a reminder, you can find contact information for every State Coordinator, as well as the National Office, on our Contact Us webpage.

- **Simon Fitzwilliam, Florida -** Simon is a Biologist with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) where he assists scientists with conservation research on state-threatened avian species; he also helps maintain Florida's statewide wading bird database, as well as serves as the Florida BBS State Coordinator. BBS data is regularly used by FWC staff to inform FWC's State Wildlife Action Plan, a comprehensive statewide plan for conserving wildlife and natural areas for future generations. Outside of work, Simon loves teaching his child avian ecology while watching his bird feeders in his front yard.

- **Michelle Kemner, Idaho -** Michelle is a Wildlife Ecologist with Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG), primarily focused on nongame migratory birds. IDFG uses information from BBS to help inform their State Wildlife Action Plan. Most of Michelle's career has been spent in the Great Basin Desert, so she is quite familiar with those birds; however, her BBS route is in the mountains above Boise. Prior to running her route each year, Michelle spends time hiking all over the mountains to refamiliarize herself with all the birds. She still gets totally geeked out when she comes upon a small opening in the forest dominated by sagebrush and hears a Brewer's Sparrow, for example, which she always associated with the desert. One of Michelle's favorite birds is the White-crowned Sparrow, whose song reminds her of her first job studying White-tailed Ptarmigan above timberline in Colorado.

- **John Herbert, Massachusetts -** John is the Massachusetts BBS State Coordinator and is the Director of Bird Conservation for Mass Audubon. John received his PhD in Ecology & Evolutionary Biology from Tulane University and has nearly 20 years of experience working on the conservation of North American migratory birds. The BBS is meaningful to John because it is critical to understanding how our bird populations change over time and helps us develop conservation strategies. John's favorite place to go birding in Massachusetts is at Allens Pond Wildlife Sanctuary.

- **Nick Winstead, Mississippi -** Nick is an Ornithologist with the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, & Parks at the Mississippi Museum of Natural Science. Nick took on the role of Mississippi BBS State Coordinator in 2025, but he has been a BBS observer for 20 years as of 2026!

# Coordinator's Corner Continued...



- **Jess Brooks, Nevada -** Jess is a Biodiversity Wildlife Staff Specialist with the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) based in Reno, Nevada. She has been with NDOW for 11 years and has served as Nevada's BBS State Coordinator for three years. One of Jess's favorite parts of being the Nevada State Coordinator is getting to work with the amazing NDOW staff, Audubon partners, and volunteer observers who help cover more than 30 routes across Nevada each year. And while Jess enjoys birds of all kinds, she definitely has a soft spot for owls.

- **Meghan Oberkircher, New York -** Meghan is a Wildlife Biologist for the New York Department of Environmental Conservation based in Albany, NY. Meghan's favorite bird is the cedar waxwing and she spends most weekends enjoying nature and birds with her dog hiking in the Shawangunks and Catskills.

- **Joy Jensen, Oregon -** Joy manages interdisciplinary residencies & fellowships at the Patricia Valian Reser Center for the Creative Arts at Oregon State University. She's an Oregon Master Naturalist and can also fix your typewriter. Joy took on the role of Oregon BBS State Coordinator in 2025, after serving as Co-Coordinator with longtime BBS Observer and now-retired Oregon State Coordinator, Paul Adamus. Joy has been a BBS observer since 2021, and her current favorite routes take her to the Klamath-Siskiyou region and to Eastern Oregon's Wallowa Mountains and the sagebrush sea. High on her list of Most Under-rated Birds is the Band-tailed Pigeon.

- **Sam Miller, Rhode Island -** Sam is an Ornithologist with the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management's Division of Fish and Wildlife, where he leads the state's nongame bird program. His work focuses on applied research, conservation, and habitat management, all of which leverage data collected by the BBS community's hard-working volunteer observers. Sam's primary research interests are migration ecology and coastal bird management, and his favorite place to go birding is Block Island, RI where he also runs the Block Island BBS route.

- **Gaby Karakcheyeva, Utah -** Gaby is a Conservation Ecologist at the Tracy Aviary in Salt Lake City, UT. She loves studying birds and finding ways to conserve them. Gaby has previously worked as a bird bander with various banding stations, Wildlife Technician for the Utah Department of Wildlife Resources, and as a former student at the University of Utah. She is excited to support BBS because she believes we can make huge differences for birds by collecting large datasets like this and work to analyze and apply them for the purposes of conserving our habitats and those that inhabit them. Gaby's favorite bird right now is a Common Nighthawk and she is eager to contribute to the BBS Program!

- **Megan Massa, Vermont -** Megan is the Data Manager at the Vermont Center for Ecostudies where she works with many different community science projects, including regular use of BBS trend data. Stepping in as the Vermont State Coordinator led to Megan running her first BBS route, and she is very happy she did! Megan got into professional ornithology through birding and is happy to be able to give back to the BBS Program as the Vermont State Coordinator.

# Coordinator's Corner Continued...

We also want to give a big **THANK YOU** to our recently retired State Coordinators! These individuals have dedicated years to helping make the BBS successful, often in addition to running several routes themselves. We wish them a happy retirement and hope to still see them out on a BBS route!

- **Todd Schneider, Former Georgia State Coordinator:**



Todd Schneider extracts a bird from a mist-net while his son watches. Photo: Roy Brown

*"In 1996, Joe Greenberg, the long-standing Georgia state BBS coordinator, decided it was time to step down and asked me if I would be willing to take his place. I agreed, and three decades later I wonder where the time went. It has been an absolute pleasure working with the national BBS staff and interacting with other state and provincial coordinators. I always tell people that the BBS program is the largest, and the most significant, breeding bird monitoring effort in the Western Hemisphere, and possibly the world. While I have three decades as a state coordinator, several others have even more years, a tribute to the passion of all involved with this incredible conservation program.*

*Running routes has not been without a few memorable moments. Two come immediately to mind. The first was when running my Nashville, Georgia route. Everything started out normally but about halfway through a thunderstorm popped up, dropping an incredible amount of rain for about ten minutes. I couldn't even see most of the hood of my truck through the windshield. As the rain began to subside the paved road was covered in about 4 inches of water from an overflowing wetland. Out of the corner of my eye, I caught a glimpse of something moving in the middle of the road. It was a 3-foot long plain-bellied watersnake (nerodia erythrogaster) with a bright orange belly swimming down the middle of the road like it was a river. The second was a bit more perilous. I was about halfway through my Barges, Georgia route which runs along a dirt road through Hannahatchee Wildlife Management Area. As I approached a larger creek, I could see something was wrong. When I got closer it became apparent the road had washed out. Not just a few rills and gullies but the entire road from shoulder to shoulder, a gully 30 feet wide and 15-20 feet deep. It would have been catastrophic if I hadn't been paying attention. My assistant and I were able to bypass this obstacle in ten minutes and continue the route."*

Todd served as the Georgia State Coordinator from 1996 to 2026, an impressive 30 years! Just as impressive, Todd has also run a combined total of 100 BBS routes across several routes in this same time period. Todd is now retired from the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. We wish Todd well in his retirement and hope he enjoys lots of birding in the future.

Note: The Georgia State Coordinator role will be filled by an incoming Wildlife Biologist to the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

# Coordinator's Corner Continued...

- **Peter Beck, Former Southern California State Coordinator:**



Wildlife Biologist Peter Beck, USFWS, Public Domain, https://www.fws.gov/media/wildlife-biologist-peter-beck

Pete served as the Southern California BBS State Coordinator from 2013 to 2025, but his tenure with BBS goes back to 2003 when he started running routes as an observer. As of 2026, Pete has run a combined total of 108 BBS routes! Pete has recruited numerous new observers, scouted long-abandoned routes, helped create several new routes, and has helped many observers and the National Office navigate the challenging issues that have plagued many of the Southern California routes due to development, traffic, road construction, or deteriorating road conditions. It hasn't been an easy task, but Pete has done this job diligently and skillfully over the past 12 years and we will miss his invaluable contributions here at the National Office. Pete also recently retired from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and is enjoying his retirement in Northern California. Pete plans to continue running BBS routes, pick up some new routes in Northern California, continue to contribute to the California Breeding Bird Atlas, and continue section hiking the Pacific Crest Trail. Thank you, Pete, and happy retirement!

With Pete's retirement, we now have a vacant State Coordinator position for **Southern California** we are looking to fill. If you or someone you know may be interested in taking on this role, please reach out to us at the BBS National Office.



Black-throated Gray Warbler. Photo: Matthew Betts/USGS

**THANK YOU, STATE COORDINATORS!**

# BBS Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)



Here at the BBS National Office, we frequently receive some of the same or similar questions from the BBS community. Many answers can be found on our website in various locations, like the About BBS page, Participate page, or the American Bird Association's Birding Magazine BBS Article. Nonetheless, we still receive many questions so below are answers to some of your frequently asked questions (FAQs). Have a question you'd like answered? Contact us at the National Office or your state coordinator!

**Q: I detect this species every year. Why isn't it on my route's species list?**

*A: The route list includes the 65 most frequently detected breeding species ("Top-65"), based on both abundance and detection frequency. A low-density species may not yet meet the threshold, so adding it as a write-in is fine. If a species is unusual or rare for your area, please provide comments documenting the identification.*

**Q: I entered my data online. Do you still need my paper forms?**

*A: Yes. The BBS uses field forms to verify flagged records during annual data checks and archives them for future reference. If forms are unavailable, the National Office may contact you for verification.*

**Q: Do I need to make copies of my data forms?**

*A: Yes. Keep a copy in case your forms are lost or delayed in transit. You'll also need them to complete your final data check after the annual review.*

**Q: Do I need to transcribe data collected in a notebook or on Add-As-You-Go forms?**

*A: No. Just complete the cover sheet and submit that along with the data sheets you used in the field. No transcription to the standard BBS forms is needed.*

**Q: Why weren't my updated stop descriptions included with my map?**

*A: If you update your stop descriptions online and want them included with next year's map, please print two copies and attach them to your map. If you cannot print them, please add a note saying, "Stop descriptions updated online, please include next year."*

**Q: Can I move my route because of increasing traffic or development?**

*A: Maybe. These changes are important for BBS to document, so routes generally should remain in place. When possible, try surveying on weekends, especially Sundays, when traffic and the associated noise is typically lower. Safety comes first - if portions of a route are unsafe, do not attempt to survey. Contact the National Office and your State Coordinator to discuss options.*

*Note: resources linked on this page will be moved to our new website in the near future.



# Upcoming Events

Below is a list of just some of the many birding festivals and ornithological meetings taking place across North America over the next year. To find more festivals and events, visit the Cornell Lab's Birding Festivals and Events page. To find more ornithological meetings, visit Birdnet's professional meetings page.

### Alaska Bald Eagle Festival
November 6, 2026
Haines, AK, US
https://www.visithaines.com/events/annual-events/alaska-bald-eagle-festival/

### Rio Grande Valley Birding Festival
November 11-15, 2026
Harlingen, TX, US
http://www.rgvbf.org/

### North Shore Birding Festival
December 3-6, 2026
Mount Dora, FL, US
https://northshorebirdingfestival.com/

### Morro Bay Bird Festival
January 14-18, 2027
Morro Bay, CA, US
http://morrobaybirdfestival.org/

### San Diego Bird Festival
February 17-21, 2027
San Diego, CA, US
https://www.sandiegobirdfestival.org/

### Port Aransas Whooping Crane Festival
February 25-28, 2027
Port Aransas, TX, US
https://www.portaransas.org/whooping-crane-festival/

### Wilson Ornithological Association Annual Meeting
March 17-20, 2027
Kearney, NE, US
https://wos2027.org/

### The Biggest Week in American Birding
May 7-16, 2027
Oak Harbor, OH, US
http://www.biggestweekinamericanbirding.com

### American Ornithological Society Annual Meeting
August 2-6, 2027
Madison, WI, US
https://americanornithology.org/meetings/annual-meeting/

### The Association of Field Ornithologists Annual Meeting at the 3rd Ornithological Congress of the Americas
August 9-12, 2027
Guanaqueros, Chile
https://afonet.org/events/oca/

### Raptor Research Foundation Annual Meeting
October 11-16, 2027
Salt Lake City, UT, US
https://raptorresearchfoundation.org/events/

### Cape May Fall Festival
October 14-17, 2027
Cape May, NJ, US
https://njaudubon.org/cape-may-fall-festival/

# BBS Literature



Did you know, the BBS National Office compiles a comprehensive bibliography of all primary literature, scientific reports, theses, and dissertations that use BBS data? Below are just a few recent and impactful publications that relied heavily on the BBS data you collect in their analysis. You can access the BBS Bibliography page here.

- Marra, P.P., Cooper, N.W., Loss, S.R. et al., Status, threats and conservation of Earth's migratory birds. *Nature Reviews Biodiversity* 2, 488–505 (2026). https://doi.org/10.1038/s44358-026-00177-7

- Robinson, O.J. et al., Same view through a different lens: Comparing population trends for North American birds using eBird and the Breeding Bird Survey. *Ornithological Applications* 128(1), 1-14 (2026). https://doi.org/10.1093/ornithapp/duaf077

- Rosenberg, K.V., et al., Decline of the North American avifauna. *Science* 366, 120-124 (2019). https://doi.org/10.1126/science.aaw1313

# Request for Information

- Do you have a fun story from your BBS route you'd like to share?
- Any upcoming events and dates to share with our community? We will be glad to add any relevant dates to our Calendar section.
- Do you have any questions that you feel might be relevant to other BBS observers? We would love to include them (and the answer) in a future Frequently Asked Questions section.

Please send your suggestions to Shannon Skalos at sskalos@usgs.gov

### To cite this BBSN:

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Cover Photo: Black Vulture, Aransas National Wildlife Refuge, Texas, USA. Shannon Skalos.

*All photos in this BBSN are U.S. Geological Survey, public domain unless otherwise noted.

# Appendix: BBS Species Updates

Each year, the BBS incorporates the taxonomic updates to the official North American Checklist that is maintained by the American Ornithological Society into our BBS Master Species List (MSL). Given the scope of the BBS (routes in the USA and Canada run during the height of the breeding season), many of the annual changes will be unseen by observers since we limit the list to the species occupying the aforementioned area in that date range. However, should you detect a vagrant or expanding species that does not appear in the database search field when entering your data, please let us know and we can make it available with a simple update in the MSL.

Below are some of the changes that have already been implemented in the BBS MSL as a result of the 66th Supplement to the American Ornithological Society's *Check-list of North American Birds*. Stay tuned for the next round of updates based on the recently released 67th Supplement. Questions? Please contact Mikey Lutmerding (mlutmerding@usgs.gov).

1. Herring Gull was split into three species: **European Herring Gull**, **Vega Gull**, and **American Herring Gull**. Observers will now see American Herring Gull listed on their datasheets. Observers along the Pacific Coast (especially Alaska) should keep an eye out for a BBS first Vega Gull!

2. The genus for Cooper's Hawk and American Goshawk has been changed from *Accipiter* to *Astur*. Observers will see that "Unidentified Accipiter" has been replaced with "Unidentified Sharp-shinned/ Cooper's Hawk/Goshawk" to account for the genus change.

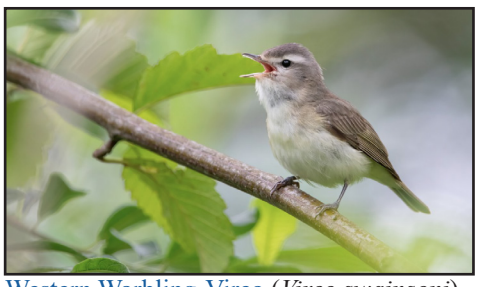
3. Birds in the genus *Amazona* will no longer be called "Parrot". That part of their common name has been replaced by "Amazon" (e.g., Red-crowned Parrot is changed to Red-crowned Amazon).

4. Warbling Vireo was split into two species: **Western Warbling-Vireo** and **Eastern Warbling-Vireo**. The BBS MSL now includes both species and an "Unid. Western/Eastern Warbling-Vireo" option. Because their distributions are largely distinct, most historical records could be assigned to one species. However, in areas where both species may occur, records were conservatively retained as unidentified.

   If your route lists "Unid. Western/Eastern Warbling-Vireo," please report birds to species when possible. In areas where the species overlap or hybridize, and in the south-central/western regions where the migrant species may overlap with the breeding species, use caution when identifying individual birds. Observer expertise will help the BBS refine species boundaries as additional data become available.



Eastern Warbling-Vireo (*Vireo gilvus*), Photo: Michael Stubblefield.



Western Warbling-Vireo (*Vireo swainsoni*), Photo: Mason Maron.