



What's Sap? - August 2024

Red-throated Loon Photo: Tim Haan

Dear Atlasser,

This edition of the newsletter includes:

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It's hard to believe, but the peak season of year four of Atlas-3 has come and gone. Thanks to you all for your hard work helping the Atlas inch closer towards its coverage goals. Here's your latest Atlas news.

Late season Atlassing targets

Peak season may have ended and the days are getting shorter, but there's still plenty of opportunity to add important observations to the Atlas. Now is the best time of year for many species to upgrade breeding evidence with adults busily carrying food to hungry youngsters. Late nesting species like American Goldfinches and Cedar Waxwings may be especially conspicuous.

There's also early signs that White-winged Crossbills are invading northeastern Ontario and may be setting up for a fall or winter nesting season there, so if you consider a fall trip be sure to include some Atlassing. Don't forget our "[Crossbills in the Crosshairs](#)" article for tips for Atlassing crossbills.

Data entry deadline - August 31

Mark your calendars: August 31st is this year's deadline to submit point counts, special surveys, and general Atlassing data from the peak period (May 24 – July 10 in the south, June 1 – July 10 in the north).

This deadline is extremely important, more so than any previous year! Our team needs time to review the data this fall and then plan our coverage goals for the final year of data collection in 2025.

This **deadline of August 31** includes submitting any recordings made for [digital point counts](#) and the associated [digital point count log](#).

We only have one more peak period left in order to reach our coverage goals! So please try to have your data submitted by the end of August.

Big Atlas Weekend recap

The inter-Atlas celebration weekend was held over the June 28-30 weekend and Ontario was joined by fellow Atlases from Newfoundland, Maryland and DC, Pennsylvania, New York, North Carolina, and Puerto Rico. The weekend focused on some challenges to encourage Atlassers to get out and maximize their observations.

We would like to extend a heartfelt congratulations to Newfoundland, who have won the inter-Atlas competition and will take home the "Canary Cup"!

Here in Ontario, the winners of the individual challenges are:

- **Newly coded or upgraded species:** Paula O'Rourke upgraded thirteen square records over the weekend.
- **Nocturnal checklists:** Sheila Craig submitted two nocturnal checklists over the weekend.
- **Incomplete squares:** Roxane Filion submitted eight checklists from incomplete squares.

All three of the above were chosen at random from the Ontario Atlassers who completed each challenge. They will each receive a free Bird Academy course from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology of their choice.

And our "**Most Valuable Atlasser**" who we judged to have made the biggest overall contribution to the three challenges was awarded to Tyler Hoar, who will receive a pair of Vortex Binoculars as his prize.

Congratulations to all the winners and thank you to all who participated.

Win a pair of Vortex binoculars with the August challenge!

For the month of August, we want to grow our media library. Submit your photos or other media related to the Atlas – it could be Atlassers in action, birds, habitats, or breeding evidence. Each photo you submit will get you an entry for the prize – one pair of Vortex Binoculars! Open to anyone in Ontario, but please consider registering for the Atlas.

We're especially looking for photos now as we build our library to start planning for inclusion in the final Atlas products.

Submissions can be made via our media submission form: <https://www.birdsontario.org/media-submission/>

Special thanks to Vortex for their generous support of Atlas-3!

August Sappy Hour – data entry tips and tricks

Our next Sappy Hour will be August 28 and will cover tips, tricks and reminders for data entry. [Click here](#) to register.

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 the [discussion forum](#)).

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

Summer field crew report

The Atlas was again lucky to have an amazing team of talented field technicians conducting Atlas surveys in hard to reach places. In total, three teams of four spread out from Algonquin Park to the Manitoba border to collect data from dozens of key under-surveyed squares. Read all about their work in the [staff blog post](#).

2024 Northern Trips

The Atlas had funding to support six fly-in Atlassing trips into northern Ontario this year. Four of the trips covered Atlas blocks along James Bay and Hudson Bay and the other two trips were into northwestern Ontario. All but one trip were conducted entirely by teams of dedicated volunteers. These trips take a lot of funding, logistical planning, and dedication by the crew members but help us fill in key areas of the province that would otherwise be impossible to get Atlassers to. A huge shout out to all the Atlassers who helped out on one of these trips this year!

If you're interested in participating in a northern trip, check out the [Northern Trips](#) information page on the Atlas website where you can read more or sign up to be considered for future trips. You can also check out the Birds Canada blog post "[Filling the Gaps: Advancing Bird Conservation Data in Northern Ontario](#)". We'll be sharing more information about 2025 trips soon.

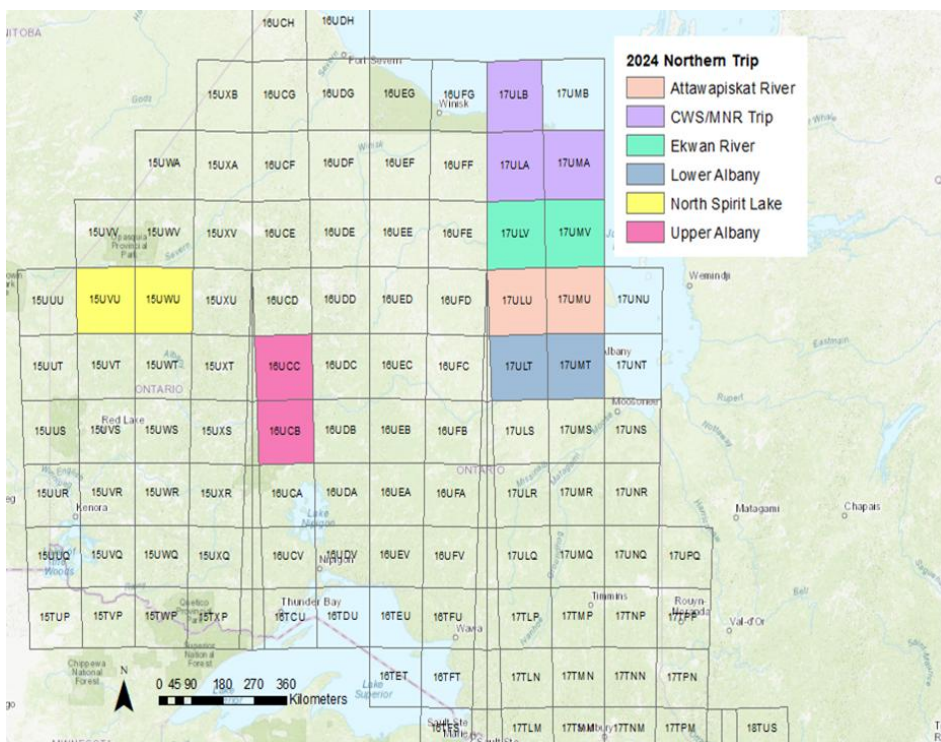


Figure 1. Map showing locations of the 2024 northern trips

Square Bashes recap

Our three Atlas-HQ led Square Bashes were a huge success this year, filling critical gaps with the enthusiastic support of many Atlassers.

Pinery Provincial Park (May 24 – 29) had 16 participants who logged 115 hours and completed 179 point counts. The weather was pretty rainy for the second half of the bash so that made it challenging but we did a great job getting a bunch of squares covered that were in need of help. Highlights included a Kirtland's Warbler (probably "just" a migrant), a Dickcissel, a Wilson's Phalarope and more Horned Larks than you can shake a stick at.

Bon Echo Provincial Park (May 31 – June 5) had 16 participants who logged 145 hours and completed 289 point counts. The weather was absolutely perfect and the bugs weren't even too bad. The bash helped us survey a lot of area near Bon Echo that needed coverage. Participants enjoyed the rich diversity of the southern Canadian Shield with highlights including Red-headed Woodpecker, Prairie Warbler and recently fledged young Barred Owl.

Mikisew Provincial Park (June 7-12) had 12 participants who logged 105 hours and completed 161 point counts despite some cool and rainy weather. This Square Bash built upon a previous Square Bash at the same location to wrap up coverage for many of the squares in one of southern Ontario's hardest to cover areas. The high diversity of warblers and other forest birds of the Canadian Shield was on full display for all who helped. A Black-backed

Woodpecker nest was among the highlights.

Huge thanks to all the participants of the Square Bashes, some of whom attended multiple bashes this year. Special thanks to Mike Cadman and all the Regional Coordinators who helped lead and of course to Ontario Parks for helping facilitate the camping arrangements.

In addition to the HQ-led bashes, this year at least six regions organized and hosted regional Square Bashes that by all accounts were equally successful driving local coverage to key areas in need of help. If you think you might be interested in helping your region host a Square Bash, please get in touch with your [Regional Coordinator](#).

Find out more about Square Bashes at: <https://www.birdsontario.org/square-bashes/>

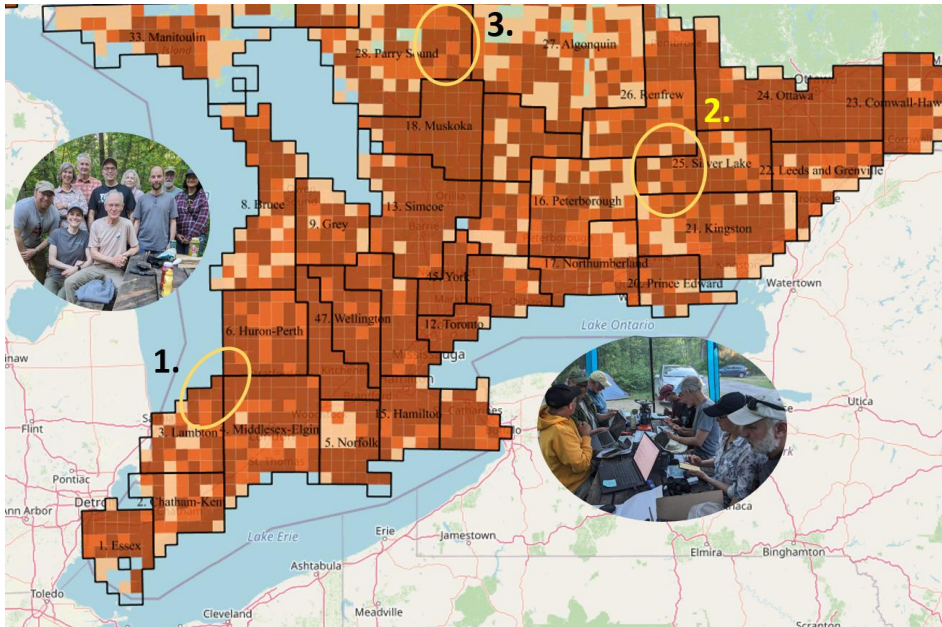


Figure 2. Map showing locations of the 2024 Atlas-led square bashes. 1) Pinery Provincial Park Square Bash. 2) Bon Echo Provincial Park Square Bash. 3) Mikisew Provincial Park Square Bash.

Atlas-3 quick start

New to the Atlas or just looking for a refresher? Check out the Quick-Start page: www.birdsontario.org/quick-start or head over to our “[Getting Started with Atlas-3](#)” video playlist that covers all of the basics in six short videos. Maybe 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 and fun it is to get Atlassing.

Get your Atlas-3 swag

Looking for some Atlas-3 gear? Check out our project merch at the store [here](#).

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: birdsontario.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 sincerely appreciates the volunteer support for the project. If you would like to consider helping even

more, please make a donation or recruit others to make a donation in support of the project. You can now donate directly to Atlas-3 by following [this secure link](#) – or click on the donate button at the bottom of this e-newsletter. You will receive a charitable receipt for income tax purposes from Birds Canada, along with an extra warm feeling inside, knowing you're supporting the project even more. For those that are able to, we thank you 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
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TD Friends of the Environment
Foundation

Vortex

The McLean Foundation

Clean Foundation

Natural Resource Solutions Inc.,

Hodgson Family Foundation

Baillie Fund

Wildlife Habitat Canada

Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources
and Forestry

Project Learning Tree

RBC Foundation

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Canada (Canada Summer Jobs)

Newmont

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US Fish & Wildlife Service

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

Boreal Avian Modelling Project

Natural Resources Canada

Ontario Parks

Royal Ontario Museum

University of Alberta

Wild Birds Unlimited

WildTrax

Sustainable Forestry Initiative

Plenty Canada

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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