



House Wren Photo: Maxwell Giffen

Dear Atlasser,

This edition of the newsletter includes:

- Save the dates: Two Square Bashes confirmed
- Upcoming Sappy Hours
- Analysis sneak peak
- Monthly challenges
- Early season Atlassing targets
- The Atlas needs your photos
- Atlas-3 Quick-start
- Get your Atlas-3 swag
- Join the Atlas community on Discord
- Content wanted
- Support the Atlas!

The breeding season is upon us! Well, at least for a few species now... but as we creep towards spring we have lots of information to share.

Save the dates: Two Square Bashes confirmed!

We know a lot of you like to get a head start on your summer planning and we've just confirmed dates for two of our three Atlas HQ-led Square Bashes. One will be held at Silent Lake Provincial Park from Friday, May 30 to Wednesday, June 4 and another will be held at Bonnechere Provincial Park from Friday, June 6 to Wednesday, June 11.

Please do not contact the park directly about attending one of the Square Bashes. All of the registration and details will be forthcoming very soon – watch Atlas social media and newsletters for more information.

We're planning one other Atlas HQ-led Square Bash in the Grey-Bruce area and our fantastic team of Regional Coordinators are planning some local bashes as well. So watch for more details and we hope to see you out this summer!

Upcoming Sappy Hours

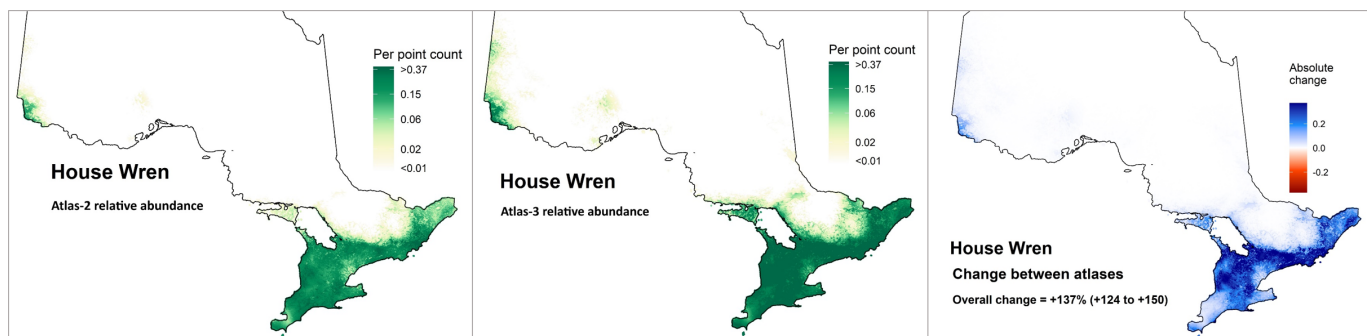
We're very excited to get our Sappy Hour sessions back underway. We have four planned between now and the end of April (all begin at 7 pm eastern time):

- February 11 – Summarizing and Celebrating Year 4
- February 25 – Early Results of Atlas-3
- March 11 – Filling Data Gaps
- April 8 – Atlas-3 Trivia

Register here: <https://tinyurl.com/29hj96bd>. The sessions will also be streamed on Facebook Live.

Analysis sneak peek

A dedicated team of data analysts has been working to build the models that will eventually turn all of your wonderful data into meaningful maps, graphs and other tools that will support bird conservation and land-use planning for years to come. In the next few editions of the newsletter and on social media, we wanted to give you a sneak peek!



The above maps show a preliminary* version of the predicted relative abundance of Northern House Wren across the province (we've cropped the maps to where the species is regularly found). The first map shows the modeled abundance for Atlas-2 (based on data collected between 2001 and 2005) using the same methodology of analysis as the second map that shows results from Atlas-3 (based on data collected between 2021 and 2024). The third map shows the relative change between those two maps. As you can see, it looks like Northern House Wren is doing well with positive changes in abundance throughout its range, while expanding northwards in Ontario.

How do these maps work? We take all the bird data that was collected on Atlas checklists (including point counts) and then use information we know about the habitat and climate suitability of an area to fill in the missing pieces. So, if a location didn't get surveyed by Atlassers but is very similar to an area that did, the model would predict a similar number of individuals of that species are likely in the unsurveyed location.

***Please note: this map is an early draft; the dataset is not yet finalized and Atlas analysis is still a work in progress.**

Monthly challenges

We're giving away TWO pairs of binoculars as part of the February challenge! Here's how you can enter:

New Registrants: Sign up for the Atlas and start submitting checklists with breeding evidence (any time from 2021 to the present). For every checklist with at least one species coded with breeding evidence, you'll earn an entry to win a pair of binoculars!

Current Atlassers: Already registered? Awesome! Keep entering checklists and data. But if you inspire a new Atlasser to join, both you and the new registrant could win! If the new person wins, they get to pick the Atlasser who encouraged them to join, and both of you will receive a pair of binoculars!

Our March challenge will run for two months: you can earn entries by completing owl surveys during the months of March and April. Watch <https://www.birdsontario.org/challenge> for more details.

Early season Atlassing targets

Even though the ground is still covered in snow in most of the province and the arrival of colourful warblers may seem far away, now is a perfect time to head out and get a head start on the final year of Atlassing!

In southern Ontario, Bald Eagles and Common Ravens have already started working on nests and Great Horned Owls

and Eastern Screech-Owls should be hard at work claiming and defending territories (as we write this, Atlas coordinator, Mike Burrell reports he's been hearing "his" local pair of Great Horned Owls dueting on many of the last several nights!). Most year-round resident species like many woodpeckers, Black-capped Chickadees, cardinals, and Carolina Wrens should be in full song. Watching for stick nests in the leafless trees is most easily done from now until April.

Further north, crossbills may be setting up for a nesting season, so you might consider refreshing yourself on [tips for Atlassing crossbills](#). In the second half of February, Canada Jays will start collecting nesting material as they construct their late winter nests. Bald Eagles and Common Ravens should also be starting to build nests, while Great Horned Owls should be in full song now.

While work can be done in any square, finding species in squares where they haven't yet been reported is especially useful. You can use the [species maps](#) on the website to find squares in which these early nesters haven't yet been reported.

Wherever you are, now is also a great time to catch up on any delayed data entry. Did you find some Eastern Screech-Owls or Great Horned Owls in southern Ontario during a Christmas Bird Count? Don't forget to enter those records into the Atlas too!

The Atlas needs your photos

We know there are many talented bird photographers out there. What better way to support the Atlas than to contribute and potentially see your images featured in the final published materials?

This off-season we'll be reviewing all the submitted photos to start choosing which ones may be used in the final publications. We also have a continued need for photos for social media posts and other promotional material, so there are a lot of opportunities to share your beautiful images.

The Atlas is looking for good quality photos of all Ontario breeding birds, preferably taken in Ontario during the breeding season (and in breeding habitat wherever possible). We're especially interested in photos that depict elevated breeding evidence (e.g. courtship displays, nests, young, birds carrying food, etc.).

Please submit the highest resolution versions of your images possible using the [media submission form](#), which includes instructions for sending batches of images.

Thanks to everyone who has submitted images already!

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 Canada	Natural Resource Solutions Inc.,	RBC Foundation
TD Friends of the Environment Foundation	Hodgson Family Foundation	Employment and Social Development Canada (Canada Summer Jobs)
Vortex	Baillie Fund	Newmont
The McLean Foundation	Wildlife Habitat Canada	Parks Canada Agency
Clean Foundation	Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry	US Fish & Wildlife Service
	Project Learning Tree	

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

Boreal Avian Modelling Project	Royal Ontario Museum	WildTrax
Natural Resources Canada	University of Alberta	Sustainable Forestry Initiative
Ontario Parks	Wild Birds Unlimited	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 Natural Resources, and Ontario Nature).

Charitable Registration No. 11902-4313-RR0001

We respect your right to privacy - click [here](#) to view our privacy policy.

[Donate](#) | [Unsubscribe](#)

