



Magnolia Warbler Photo: Abbey Lewis

Dear Atlasser,

This edition of the newsletter includes:

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## Important tips for using the NatureCounts App in areas with poor cell reception

If you're venturing into areas with poor or no cell service, the NatureCounts App is still the best option for data collection. However, to ensure your data are collected and saved properly, here are some important tips:

1. Wait until you have a reliable internet connection before editing or trying to submit draft checklists. We've had a very small number of reports of checklists being partially corrupted when submitted in areas with poor cell service.
2. Before leaving wifi or cell service, go to the “edit location” screen (like you were selecting the location for a new checklist) and scroll around the map in the area you'll be atlassing. This will load the background imagery and your phone will “cache” a limited amount of this imagery for when you're offline. If you'll be conducting

point counts, select point counts as your protocol so the point count stations also load in this way.

3. If the App is taking a long time to load between screens while in poor connection areas, switch to airplane mode and the App will switch to “offline” mode and work more quickly.

## NatureCounts App not saving off-road designation

We are aware that the NatureCounts App is not properly saving the off-road designation when you select it during App data collection/submission. Please keep selecting whether the station was on- or off-road so that when this gets fixed your data will be correct. For Point Count checklists submitted while this is an issue, the Atlas team will be fixing these later this year. If you update the on-road/off-road status on the website version of your checklist, it will save properly. Thanks for your patience and understanding!

## Congratulations to our May monthly challenge winner!



Congratulations to **Carey Purdon** who was the winner of our May monthly challenge! Carey submitted 78 checklists using the NatureCounts App and was one of 150 Atlassers who submitted at least 10 checklists that way last month. In May alone, over 400 Atlassers collected 6,700 checklists using the NatureCounts App - great work everyone!

Carey writes “I would like to acknowledge the late John Miles, an amazing birder who was instrumental in helping me to learn about, to appreciate, to grow and to evolve in the art of bird watching. The Atlas provides an enjoyable, meaningful forum for these goals. With the Atlas work I have the privilege of making a small contribution to the Atlas and science. Good luck to all my fellow Atlassers.”

We have more Vortex binoculars and Atlas swag to give away each month this summer. The June and July challenges will involve upgrading breeding evidence (including new breeding evidence) in a square.

Check the Atlas-3 [challenges page](#) to stay up to date to maximize your chance of winning a prize this year.

## Big Atlas Weekend June 28-30

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, Pennsylvania, and Puerto Rico!

A prize winner will be selected 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 28 and 11:59 pm (Eastern Time) June 30.

1. Nocturnal checklists submitted between 20 minutes after sunset and 40 minutes before sunrise
2. Species records with new or upgraded breeding evidence in a square
3. Checklists with breeding codes from a square with less than 20 hours of survey effort

**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:

1. June 26: Kickoff Webinar: 6–8 pm (Eastern Time) [Register here: <https://tinyurl.com/vzfm5ukr>]
2. June 28-30: Competition: Friday 6 pm – Sunday 11:59 pm (Eastern Time)
3. July 3: Awards Ceremony: 6–8 pm (Eastern Time) [Register here: <https://tinyurl.com/ysa5wuv6>]

Let's all get out atlassing between June 28 and 30th!

To learn more visit [birdsonario.org/big-atlas-weekend](https://birdsonario.org/big-atlas-weekend)

## Changes to square maps

As per our established Atlas protocol, **surveys on First Nation Reserve Lands may only be conducted with explicit permission from the First Nation**. We're excited to share that we've updated the PDF square maps so that all First Nation Reserve Lands are now shown clearly on the maps you can download from the [square resources page](#) of the Atlas website! You can also explore the entire province and see where First Nation Reserve Lands fall in relation to square boundaries and point counts on the [First Nation Reserve Lands and Atlas map viewer](#).

## New “map-based” option for entering six interval point counts



The latest version of the NatureCounts App (v6.0 and above) now makes it easier than ever to collect six interval point counts (AKA “advanced point counts”). The map-based interface lets you see the surrounding area with the distance bands overlaid and then plot where each bird is detected. It then collates the information organized by time and distance band for you. Interested in checking it out? Watch the [“how-to” video](#) on the Atlas-3 YouTube channel.

## Changes for digital point counts

Have you completed [digital point counts](#) in the past or are you considering doing some this year? There are a few small but important changes you need to be aware of. The process for collecting the digital point counts ([watch a video](#)) has not changed, and neither has the upload of the files ([watch a video](#)). However, this year, we are also asking everyone to download and fill out a log of the recordings they made and email it to the Atlas office once the audio files are uploaded. This will help us ensure that digital point counts are processed quickly and correctly for interpretation. The downloadable log sheet can be found on the [digital point count webpage](#).

## Get your Atlas-3 swag

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

## Photos needed

Help us build our photo library for final publication. Please consider submitting your media to us through our [media submission form](#).

## 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](https://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!

Happy Atlassing

- 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

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

Employment and Social Development  
Canada (Canada Summer Jobs)

Newmont

Parks Canada Agency

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

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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