



Brown Thrasher Photo: Wendy Hill

Dear Atlasser,

This edition of the Atlas newsletter includes:

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Year three Kick-off



April and early May brought the celebration of the Kick-off of year three, and Atlassers across the province celebrated with nearly twenty events! We heard great stories from Atlassers and Regional Coordinators who enjoyed getting together, sharpening their Atlassing skills and getting geared up for year three. THANK YOU to everyone who participated or helped run one of the kick-off events.

Atlas-3 quick start

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

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

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

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



NatureCounts App – new and improved!

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

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

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

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

Congratulations to the April challenge winner

Congratulations to Susan Nagy of London who was the lucky winner of the April challenge and who will be receiving a pair of Vortex Diamondback binoculars!

The April challenge was to share photos, video or audio related to the Atlas. We received over one hundred submissions last month. Congratulations again to Susan and thanks to everyone who shared their stories as part of the challenge and got people talking about the Atlas!

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

I enjoy Atlassing because it combines my love of birding with the opportunity to be a contributor to a very worthwhile project. Atlassing has taught me to slow down and focus more on observing, not just the birds themselves, but their behaviours which include their courtship displays, building nests and feeding their young.



Win a pair of Vortex binoculars with the May challenge

For the month of May, we want to celebrate all the improvements to the NatureCounts App. To be entered for your chance to win, use the app to submit ten complete checklists with at least one coded (breeding evidence) species. For a bonus entry, use social media to share [this video](#) about the challenge, being sure to tag the Atlas (ONBreedingBirdAtlas on Facebook, and ONBirdAtlas on Twitter and Instagram). The prize – one pair of Vortex Binoculars! Thank you to Vortex for generously supporting the Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas!

If you're interested in learning how to use the NatureCounts App to submit Atlas data, check out this [tutorial video](#). If you're already familiar with the NatureCounts App and would like to know what new improvements have been made, be sure to watch the [recording of the Sappy Hour](#) on this topic!

Atlas Swag

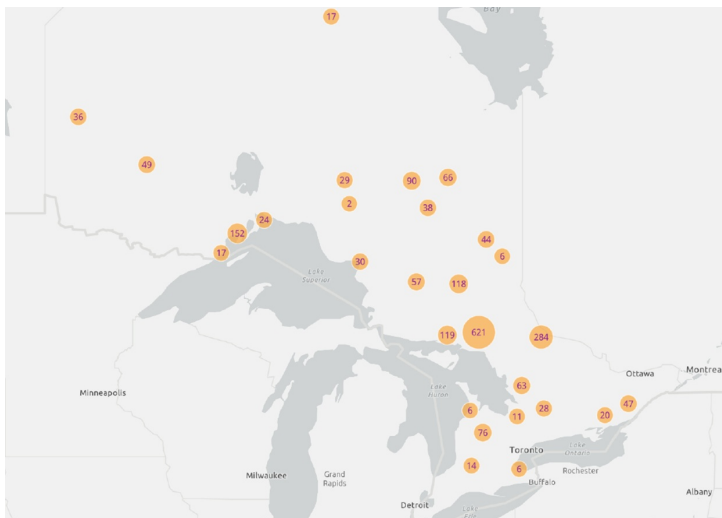
You can now purchase almost anything (T-shirts, caps, mugs, tote bags, stickers, etc.) with the Atlas logo on it. To view the merchandise and make your purchases, click [here](#). Looking forward to seeing you stylishly sporting your Atlas gear!



Digital point counts now online!

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

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



Photos needed

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

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

Join us on a square bash this summer!

Square-bashes are enjoyable, multi-day events, bringing together atlasers with all levels of experience from across the province to focus their efforts on key coverage gaps focused around Provincial Parks. Thanks to Ontario Parks for generously providing free camping for square-bash participants. Last year's events were a great success and we're hoping to build on that in 2023.

You could come for the entire duration of the event, or just part of that time. Our goal is to provide adequate coverage for as many squares as we can in and around the parks, while having as much fun as possible. Square bashes are a ton of fun and a great opportunity for new and seasoned Atlasers alike.

We have three planned square bashes:

- **MacGregor Point Provincial Park: Monday May 29 – Friday June 2, 2023.** This event ties in with the [Huron Fringe Birding Festival](#) which runs on the adjacent weekends. The Huron Fringe is a beautiful area at the southern end of the Bruce Peninsula with among the highest number of breeding species anywhere in the province, from Golden-winged Warblers to Upland Sandpipers to Broad-winged Hawks. If you're heading to the Festival, consider adding a few days onto your trip and help out the Atlas – or just come for the Square-bash. [REGISTER HERE.](#)
- **Sharbot Lake Provincial Park: Friday June 2 – Wednesday June 7.** At last, a square-bash event in southeastern Ontario! This event takes place in the rich amalgam of habitat along the edge of the Canadian Shield, and is particularly convenient for atlasers from the Kingston and Ottawa areas. It's right in the core of the Golden-winged Warbler range with Cerulean Warblers and many others a definite possibility. [REGISTER HERE.](#)
- **French River Provincial Park: Friday June 9 – Friday June 16.** This will be a canoe-based trip along the historic French River in one of the province's most gorgeous landscapes at the northeast corner of Georgian Bay. The area is rich in Common Nighthawks and Eastern Whip-poor-wills, Sandhill Cranes, boreal warblers and too many others to list. [REGISTER HERE.](#)

Please do not contact the parks or the Huron Fringe festival about these square-bash events. Arrangements are made through the Atlas-3 office. Be sure to register with the links above even if you only plan to come for part of a day.

Single-day square bash in Parry Sound

There is also a single-day square bash in the Parry Sound region, in square 17TNL82, taking place Saturday May 27 from 9am - 12pm. We will pair experienced birders with novice birders to ID birds by sight & sound, all experience levels are welcome. We encourage participants to come together after for lunch and to share stories, what we saw, and connect. Registration: <https://form.jotform.com/231008875424253>

Join the Atlas community on Discord

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

Until next time!

- The Atlas-3 Team

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Vortex

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Baillie Fund

Wildlife Habitat Canada

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Canada (Canada Summer Jobs)

Newmont

Parks Canada Agency

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

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Royal Ontario Museum

Sustainable Forestry Initiative

University of Alberta

Wild Birds Unlimited

WildTrax

Ministry of Northern
Development, Mines, Natural Resources
and Forestry

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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