

# Step-by-step Instructions: Using **eBird** for the Missouri Birding Challenge



**MISSOURI**  
BIRDING CHALLENGE



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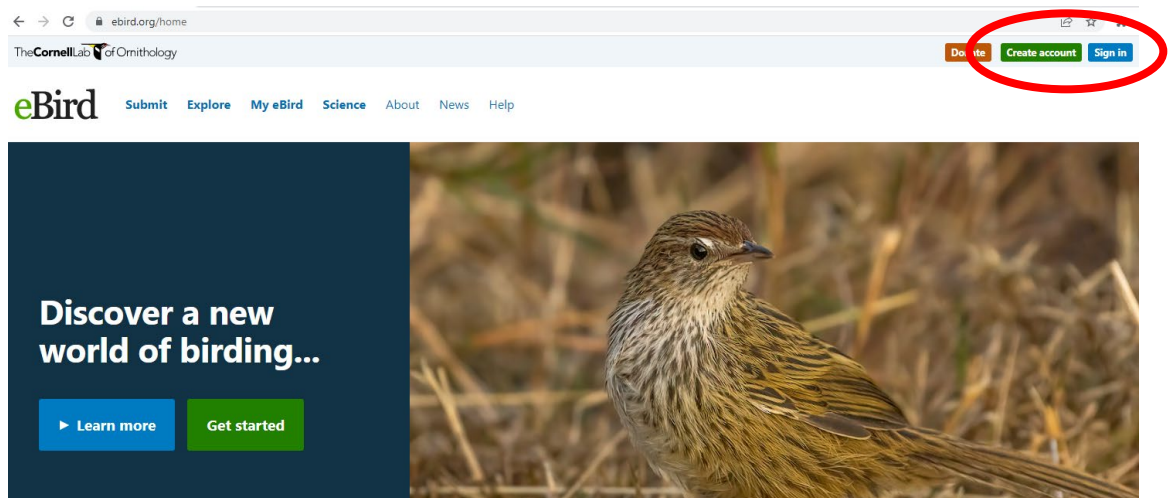
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*Generous contributions to the Missouri Birding Challenge were made by:*



## Getting Started: Create an eBird account

On the eBird homepage: <https://ebird.org/home>, click on “Create account” if you do not already have a free account. If you do have an account, click on “Sign in.”



## Submit birding checklists

There are two ways to submit your bird observations with eBird: through the eBird website or with the free eBird mobile app. The mobile app is a convenient way to keep track of birds as you observe them in real time. **Only select one submission method: website or mobile app.**

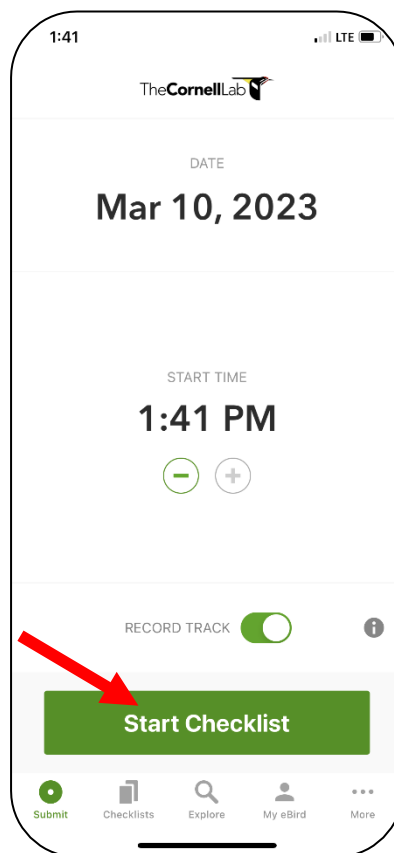
Only one member of your team will submit an eBird checklist for a particular location and time (e.g., Eagle Bluffs Conservation Area from 7:00 – 11:00 am). They will share that checklist with others on their team. If you move to a new location (e.g., Three Creeks Conservation Area 12:00 – 2:00 pm) then you will create a new checklist for that location even if it is in the same day.

**Only add birds to your checklist that you can positively identify.** It is ok to leave off birds if you are unsure what species it is. If you know it is a type of bird, you can add just the type (e.g., shorebird sp., sparrow sp.).

## Submit an eBird checklist on Mobile App:

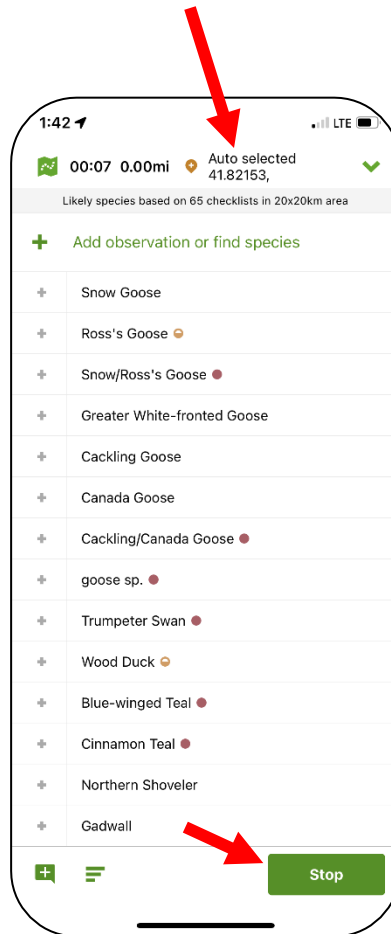
Download the free mobile app and sign in to your account. You may also have to download the Missouri pack, which includes Missouri specific species.

1. Click the green “Start Checklist” button.



2. You can change the location to a nearby birding eBird Hotspot by clicking on the “Auto selected...” location at the top. All Missouri Birding Trail sites are eBird Hotspots.

If you are at a location with no nearby eBird Hotspots, you can keep this as *auto selected* or name it something else. For example, if this auto selected location is your yard, you can name it My Yard.




3. Now you can select the birds you are observing and type in the number of individuals of each species you see or hear.

For example, you see six house finches, type “house” in the search field and all the birds with “house” in the name will show up.

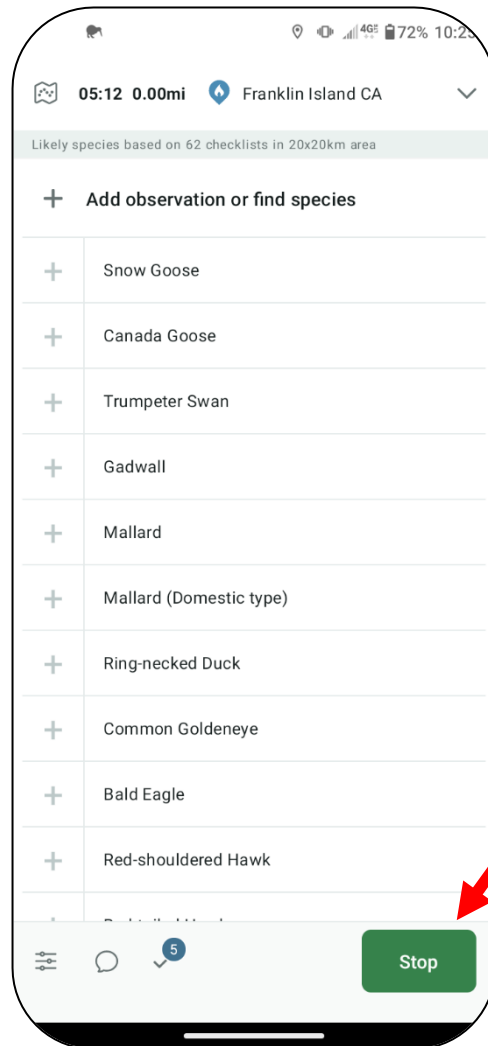
If a bird is considered rare, an “R” in an orange box will appear next to its name, like the Northern House Wren shown here. Rare birds require additional documentation such as a written description, photo, or sound recording. **Before you submit any rare bird sighting, please be positive it is that species.** A rare bird sighting needs to be accepted into eBird by a reviewer to be counted for the challenge. Refer to field guides or [All About Birds](#) for tips on bird ID.

+ house	×
+ House Sparrow	
6 House Finch	
+ House/Purple Finch	
+ Northern House Wren ●	R
+ House/Eurasian Tree Sparrow	R
Can't find your bird?	



**Note:** if you are using Merlin Bird ID app to ID species by field markings or sounds, you must confirm that the bird Merlin ID suggests matches the actual bird you are seeing or hearing. Sometimes the bird it suggests is not correct. Take photos and sound recordings you can refer back to as you look through field guides and other resources to confirm species ID.

- Once you are done birding at this site and have entered in all the birds your team observed in this bird outing, click the green “Stop” button at the bottom. This will stop your location Track and a timer and will auto-calculate distance traveled and the time you spent birding. These data help eBird to estimate bird populations for science.



## 5. Final checklist submission

a. Make sure the date and time are correct.

b. Check the location.

c. Choose if you were “Stationary” (stayed at a fixed location like watching from a window), “Traveling” (traveled a specific distance like walking a trail or driving a park loop), or “Incidental” (birding was not your primary purpose, like you saw a bird while driving).

d. Type in the number of observers.

e. Once you increase Observers to >1, click “Share checklist with...” and type in your team members’ eBird usernames or emails. Team members will receive an email and must Accept the list in their My eBird > Checklists page.

The screenshot shows the eBird checklist submission interface. At the top, the date and time are set to "08 Jan 2025 10:27 AM". Below that, the location is "Runge Conservation Nature Center". The checklist type is "Stationary". The "Observers" field is set to "2", "Minutes" is "10", and "Miles" is empty. A "Share checklist with..." button is visible. A question asks, "Are you submitting a complete checklist of the birds you were able to identify?" with a "Yes" button selected. Below that is an "Add comments" field. The checklist contains 6 species: 6 Canada Goose and 2 Bald Eagle. A "Submit" button is at the bottom right.

08 Jan 2025 10:27 AM

Runge Conservation Nature Center

Stationary

Observers: 2 +    Minutes: 10 ⌚    Miles: [ ]

Share checklist with...

Are you submitting a complete checklist of the birds you were able to identify?

Yes No

Add comments

6 Species +

6 Canada Goose

2 Bald Eagle

Submit

f. Click “Yes” if this list includes all birds you were able to identify. If this was an incidental checklist, then it will automatically be No.

g. Check to see if all the birds you saw are on the list and the number of individuals is accurate.

h. Click Submit!

08 Jan 2025 10:27 AM

Runge Conservation Nature Center

Stationary

Observers: 2 +    Minutes: 10 ⌚    Miles: [ ]

Share checklist with...

Are you submitting a complete checklist of the birds you were able to identify?

Yes (selected)    No

Add comments

6 Species +

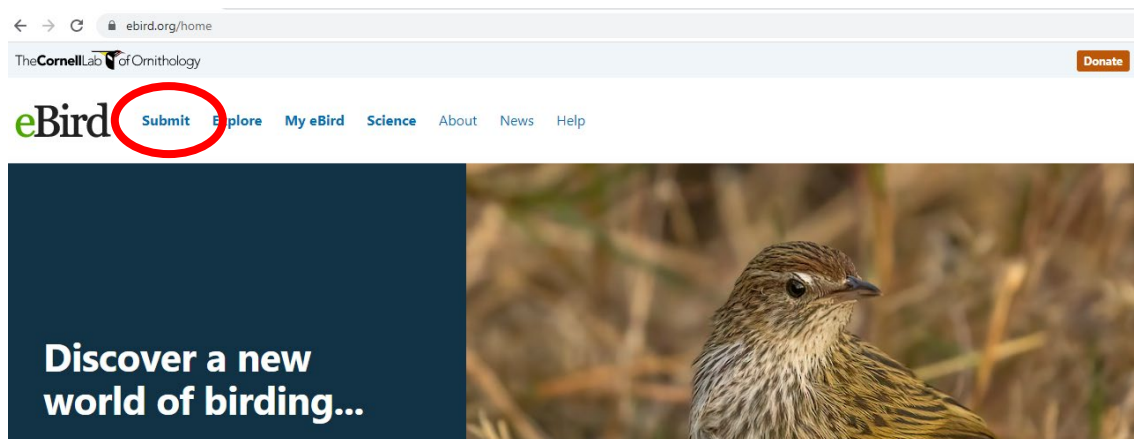
6	Canada Goose
2	Bald Eagle

Submit

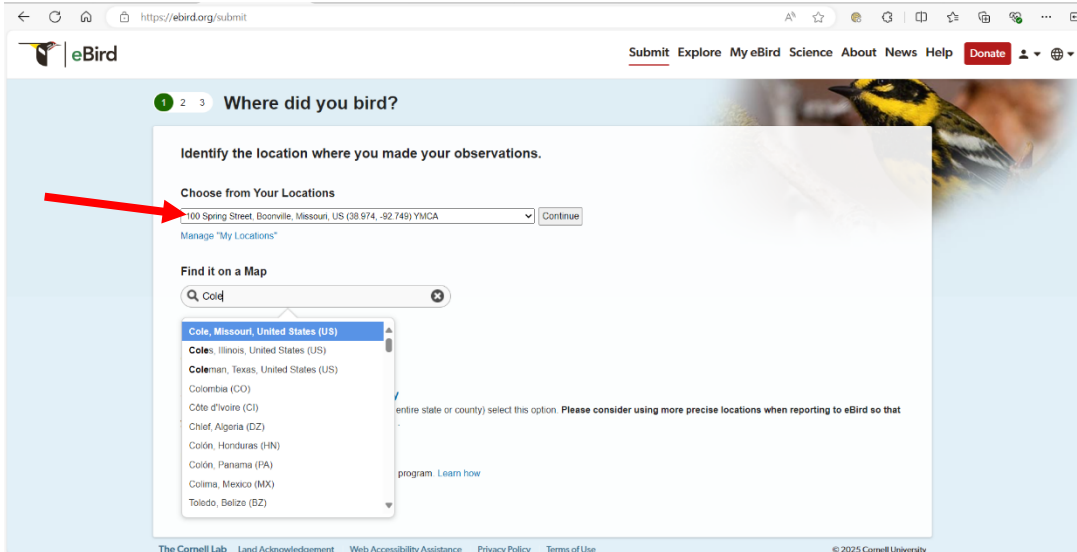
## Submit a checklist through the eBird website

This section is for those who prefer to submit eBird Checklists through the website instead of the eBird mobile app. Only use one submission method per eBird checklist: website or mobile app.

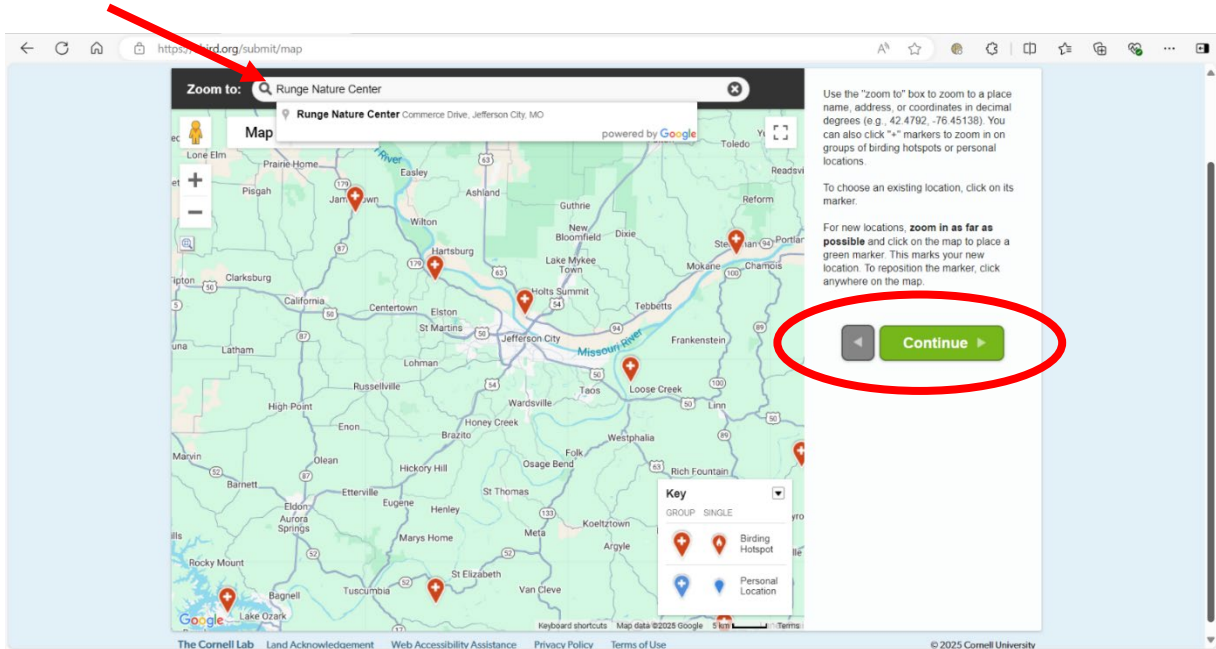
1. Click on “Submit” at the top of the eBird homepage ([www.ebird.org/home](http://www.ebird.org/home)).



2. Choose a location on the map by typing in the county where you birded. You can also select a place you have already submitted an eBird checklists from under the “Your Locations”. If you select from “Your Locations” then you can skip step 3.



3. After you type in and select the county, a map will pull up of the birding locations in that county. Select the location where you birded by clicking on it, or type in the name or address in the “Zoom to” box. Once a location is selected (e.g., Runge Nature Center), click the green “Continue” button on the right.



**Note:** The most helpful location to select is a “Birding Hotspot” indicated on the map in red. If you did not bird at one of the hotspots, then select a “Personal Location.” This is either a new location or one that you have already birded and is marked on the map in blue.

4. Choose the date you observed the birds and the observation type. For the Missouri Birding Challenge, you should only select from Traveling, Stationary, or Incidental.

Then type in the remaining required information (start time, duration, distance, and party size).

Click Continue.

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <https://ebird.org/submit/effort?locID=L337282>. The page title is "Date and Effort" and the location is "Runge Conservation Nature Center, Cole County, Miss...". The form contains the following fields:

- Observation Date:** Jan 7, 2025
- Observation Type:**  Traveling (You traveled a specific distance — walking a trail, driving a refuge loop, field birding),  Stationary (You stayed at a fixed location — watching from a window, hawkwatching, seawatching),  Historical (Birding was your primary purpose, but you cannot estimate start time, duration, and distance; use Traveling or Stationary if you can estimate these),  Incidental (Birding was not your primary purpose — noting a bird while driving or gardening),  Other (Choose...)
- Start Time (AM/PM):** 7 : 00 AM (Use 24-hour Clock)
- Duration:** 1 hrs 15 min
- Distance:** 0.5 miles
- Party Size:** 2 (Enter the total number of people in your birding party)
- Checklist Comments:** Team name

A green "Continue" button with a right-pointing arrow is circled in red at the bottom right of the form.

5. Choose the birds you observed and how many individuals of each. You can type in the species on the right in the “Jump to Species” search bar. Once you’ve entered your birds, click “Yes” if this checklist included all the birds you were able to identify. Click Submit.

1 2 3 What did you see or hear? Runge Conservation Nature Center, Cole County, Miss... Change  
Tue Jan 07, 2025 7:00 AM Change

GROUPS BASED ON 35 COMPLETE CHECKLISTS FOR RUNGE CONSERVATION NATURE CENTER

FREQUENT (10% OR MORE)

- 8 Canada Goose *Branta canadensis* Add Details
- Wild Turkey *Meleagris gallopavo*
- 1 Mourning Dove *Zenaidura macroura* Add Details
- Red-shouldered Hawk *Buteo lineatus*
- Red-headed Woodpecker *Melanerpes erythrocephalus*
- 1 Red-bellied Woodpecker *Melanerpes carolinus* Add Details
- 1 Downy Woodpecker *Dryobates pubescens* Add Details
- Hairy Woodpecker *Dryobates villosus*
- Northern Flicker *Colaptes auratus*
- 2 Blue Jay *Cyanocitta cristata* Add Details
- 3 American Crow *Corvus brachyrhynchos* Add Details
- Carolina Chickadee *Poecile carolinensis*
- Black-capped Chickadee *Poecile atricapillus*
- Tufted Titmouse *Baeolophus bicolor*
- Golden-crowned Kinglet *Regulus satrapa*
- White-breasted Nuthatch *Sitta carolinensis*
- Red-breasted Nuthatch *Sitta canadensis*
- Carolina Wren *Thryothorus ludovicianus*
- European Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*
- Eastern Bluebird *Sialia sialis*
- Hermit Thrush *Catharus guttatus*
- American Robin *Turdus migratorius*
- Cedar Waxwing *Bombycilla cedrorum*

Jump to Species...

Alphabetic

Show Rarities

Show Subspecies

Group by Most Likely ?

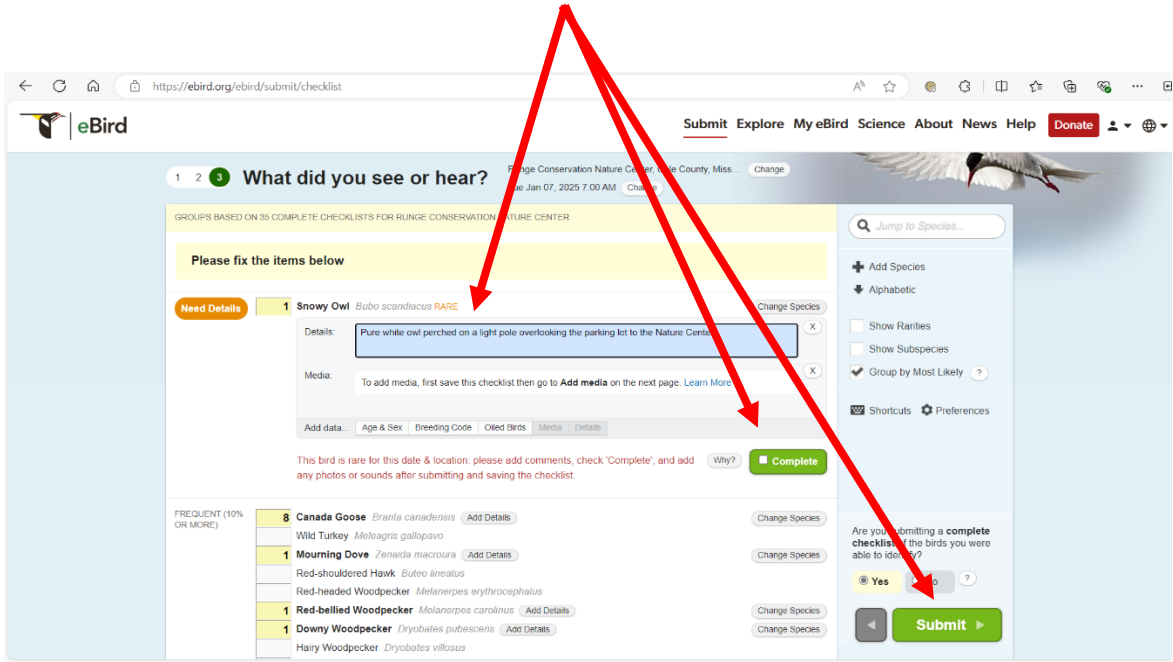
Shortcuts Preferences

Are you submitting a complete checklist of the birds you were able to identify?

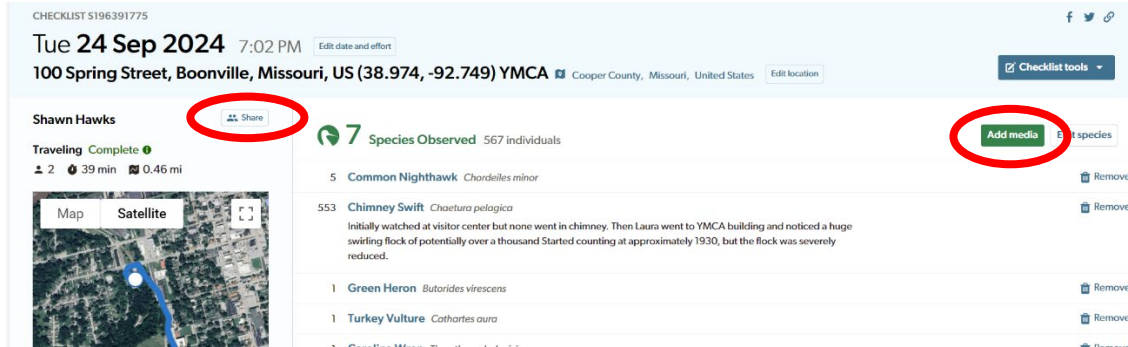
Yes  No ?

Submit

**Note:** If you observed a bird that is considered rare it will appear as “Need Details” and additional documentation is required. Add a detailed description of the bird in the details box. Then click on the green “Complete” box. You can also add photos or sound recordings of the bird **after** you submit the checklist by reviewing the submitted checklist (see details in Step 6 below).



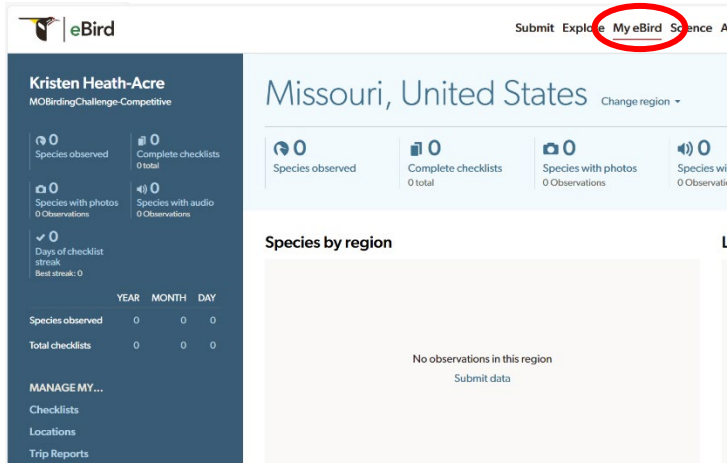
6. Share checklist(s) with others on your team using their eBird username. Once you submit your data through the website, **then** you can share the checklist with others in your party by clicking the “Share” button on the left side of your screen by your name.



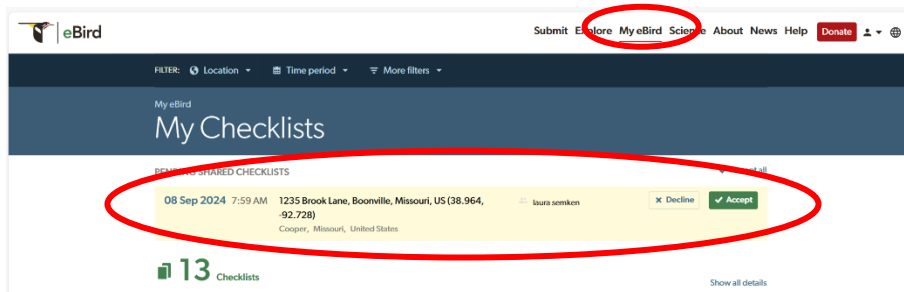
Once you click “Share,” a box will show up where you can type in your team members’ emails or eBird usernames and click “Share Checklist.”

You can also add photos and sound recordings to your checklist from here by clicking the green “Add media” button on the right side of the screen.

7. Once you share an eBird checklist, your teammate will have to accept the checklist. The teammate can do this on the eBird website by clicking on “My eBird” then “Checklists” on the left side of the screen. Alternatively, when a checklist is shared, an email is sent to that person with a link to accept the checklist.



The next screen should show any checklists shared with you that you can accept.

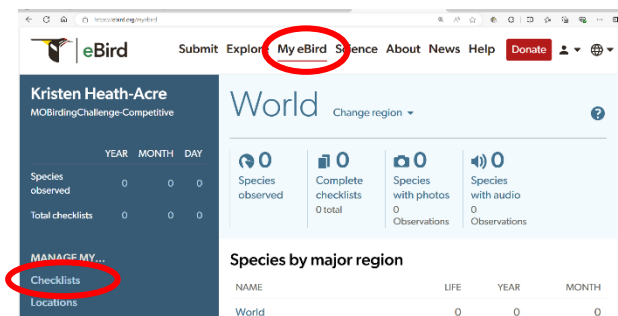


To look at the checklist details, click on the checklist’s **date** in blue, bold text.

## Edit Submitted Checklists

If you forgot to add a bird or details to your submitted checklist or need to make any edits to a submitted checklist this is how you will make those edits. Changes may include: add media (pictures, sounds recordings), share checklists with teammates, add or remove species, change number of individuals, etc.

1. Go to [www.eBird.org](http://www.eBird.org) and sign in to your account. Then click on “My eBird” at the top of the screen.
2. Click on “Checklists” on the left side of the screen.



3. Find the checklist you want to edit and click on the blue bold date.

DATE/TIME	LOCATION	COUNTY	STATE/PROVINCE	REGION
12. <b>06 Oct 2024</b> 7:49 AM	Burr Oak Woods CA	Jackson	Missouri	United States
11. <b>05 Oct 2024</b> 12:42 PM	Smithville Lake--Little Platte Recreation Area	Clay	Missouri	United States
10. <b>05 Oct 2024</b> 11:45 AM	Smithville Lake--Smith Fork Park	Clay	Missouri	United States
9. <b>05 Oct 2024</b> 10:40 AM	Smithville Lake--Crows Creek Picnic Area	Clay	Missouri	United States
8. <b>05 Oct 2024</b> 10:35 AM	Crows Creek Campground Road, Smithville, Missouri, US (39.387, -94.517)	Clay	Missouri	United States
7. <b>05 Oct 2024</b> 9:36 AM	6600 Northeast 176th Street, Smithville, Missouri, US (39.412, -94.517)	Clay	Missouri	United States
6. <b>05 Oct 2024</b> 9:30 AM	Camp Branch Marina, Smithville, Missouri, US	Clay	Missouri	United States

4. You can see all the checklist details and use the appropriate Edit buttons to make changes.

Sun 6 Oct 2024 7:49 AM

Burr Oak Woods CA Jackson County, Missouri, United States

Shawn Hawks +18 [Share](#)

Traveling Complete 22 3 hr, 27 min 2.21 mi

50 Species Observed 533 Individuals 8 Species with Photos

6 Mourning Dove *Zenaidura macroura* Remove

1 Yellow-billed Cuckoo *Coccyzus americanus* Remove

1 Chimney Swift *Chaetura pelagica* Remove

150 Double-crested Cormorant *Nannopterum auritum* Remove

## Create and Share a Trip Report

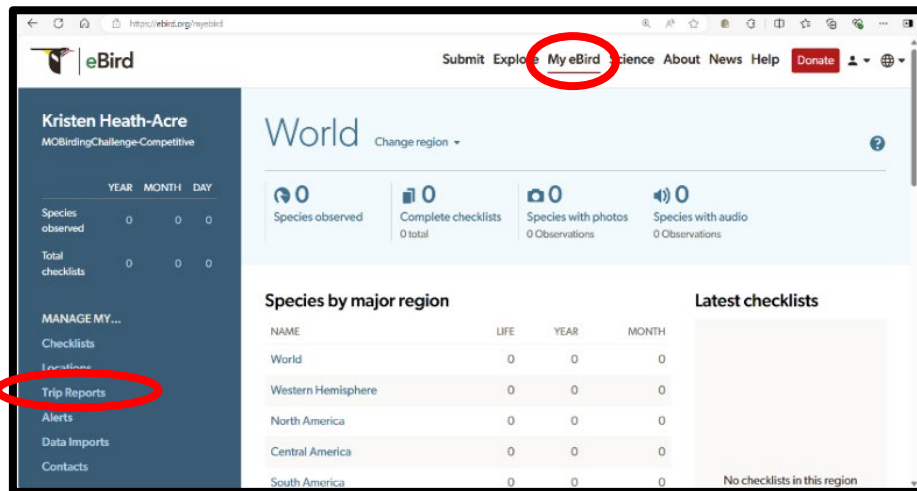
New to 2026: Teams do not need to share every challenge checklist with the challenge category eBird account, but **must** submit a Trip Report for each category you've registered for, following these instructions:

After your team submits their **last checklist**, only **one team member will compile an eBird Trip Report** that includes all of their team's checklists. The Trip Report for your team is **due by May 25, 2026**, to be included in the prize drawing or to be given recognition.

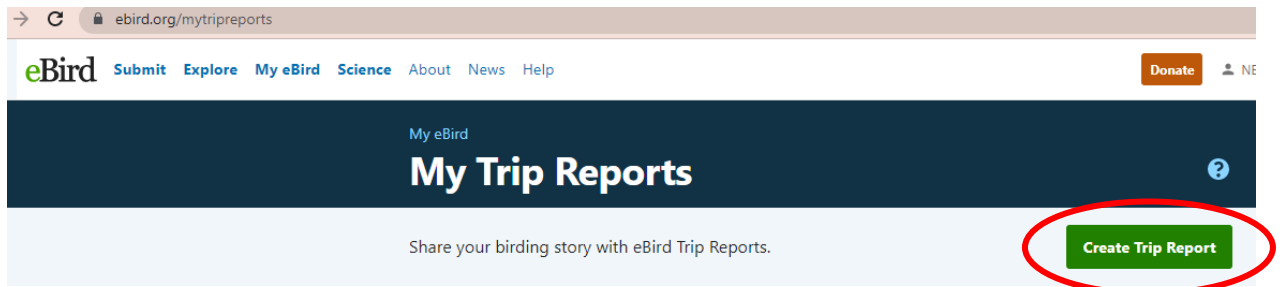
**NOTE:** If you are participating on more than one team, you must submit separate Trip Reports for each team.

You must create an eBird Trip Report on the website; you cannot create a Trip Report on the mobile app.

1. Go to "My eBird" at the top of the screen. Then click on "Trip Reports" under the "MANAGE MY..." section on the left side.



## 2. Click on “Create Trip Report”



3. The name of the Trip Report must use the following format:  
“**MissouriBirdingChallenge2026 - Your Team Name**”.
4. Select the date range you birded for the challenge. The dates should only include days from May 1-22, 2026.
5. Choose a visibility, any option works. If you’re not sure, select Link-only.
6. Click the green “Create Trip Report” at the bottom right.

A screenshot of the 'Create Trip Report' form on the eBird website. The form is titled 'Create Trip Report' and has several sections: 'Name' with a text input field containing 'Missouri Birding Challenge2025-Nuts for Nuthatches'; 'Dates' with dropdown menus for start date (1 May 2025), start time (12:00 AM), end date (15 May 2025), and end time (11:59 PM); and 'Visibility' with three radio button options: 'Limited', 'Link-only' (which is selected), and 'Public'. At the bottom of the form, there are two buttons: 'Cancel' and 'Create Trip Report', with the latter circled in red.

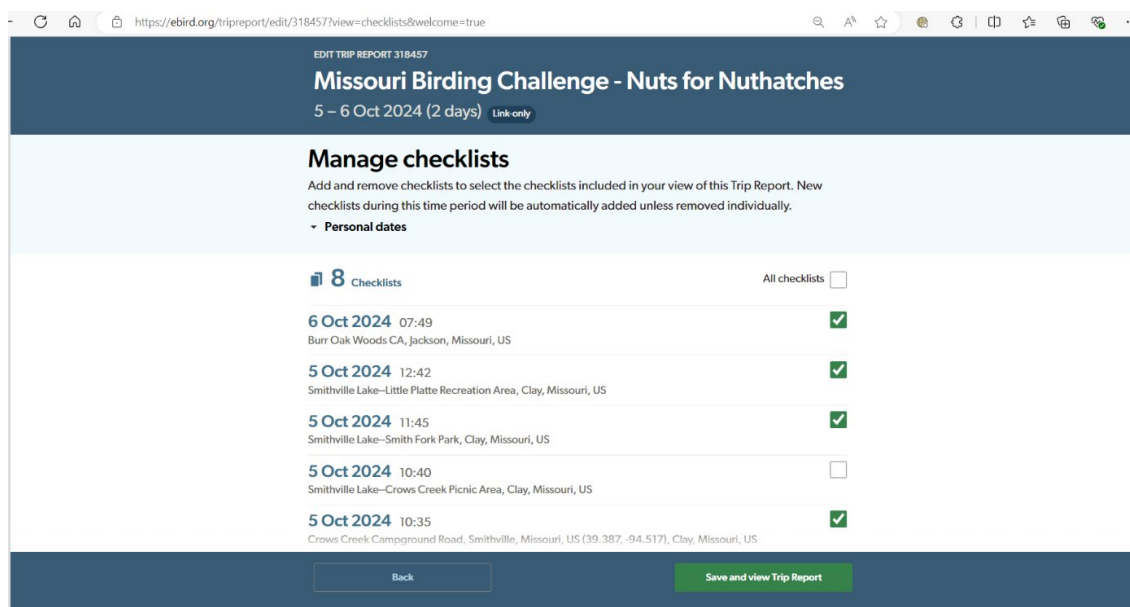
7. **This step is very important:** only select the checklists to be included for **your Missouri Birding Challenge team** (i.e., when you were birding with your entire team and only in Missouri). This page will show all checklists submitted for the entire date range you selected. **You must un-check any checklists**

**that are not for your Missouri Birding Challenge team** (e.g., birding in a different state, birding without your teammates).

For example, if you are participating in the Backyard Birder category, only select the checklists from your yard. If you are participating in the Dabbler or Competitive category, only select the checklists where you were birding with your entire team in Missouri.

8. After carefully selecting the appropriate checklists, click “Save and view Trip Report.”

If you are unsure if a checklist should be included, you can click on the checklist (bold, blue date) and check the details of that checklist, including the comment notes where you should have included your team name.

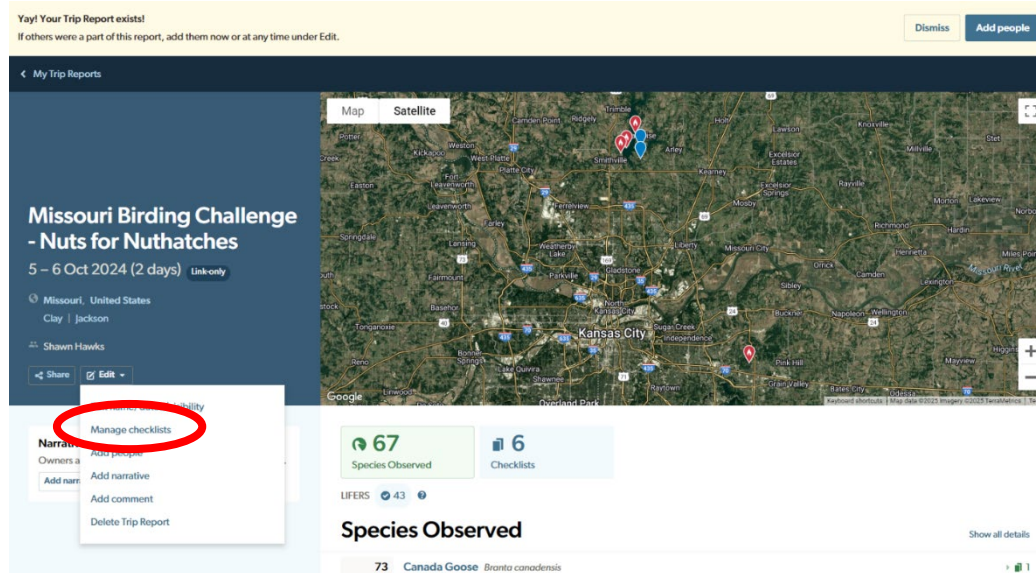


9. On the Trip Report you just created, click the “Edit” button on the left side.

10. Click “Edit narrative” and type in your team name, names of team members, and the name of the MDC bird webinar that the team attended live or watched.

11. Click “Add people” and type in the usernames or emails of your team members and the eBird [Challenge category account \(page 27\)](#). If you do not share your Trip Report with the competition account, your team will not qualify for the prize drawing or recognition.

12. If you need to add or remove a checklist from your team's Trip Report, click on the "Manage checklists."



13. Double check your Trip Report is shared and includes all of your team's checklists for the Missouri Birding Challenge.

14. Once the Trip Report is created, copy the link and email to [MissouriBirdingChallenge@mdc.mo.gov](mailto:MissouriBirdingChallenge@mdc.mo.gov) with the appropriate email subject line: "[Challenge Category] Trip Report + Your Team Name".

15. **Remember:** to be eligible for challenge drawings or recognition, you must:
- Share your Trip Report with the appropriate challenge category.
  - Edit your Trip Report to include these items to the Narrative: team name, names of team members, and the name of the MDC bird webinar that the team attended live or watched.
  - Send an email to [MissouriBirdingChallenge@mdc.mo.gov](mailto:MissouriBirdingChallenge@mdc.mo.gov) with your Trip Report link.
  - All instructions for these steps are above.

**The Trip Report will show:**

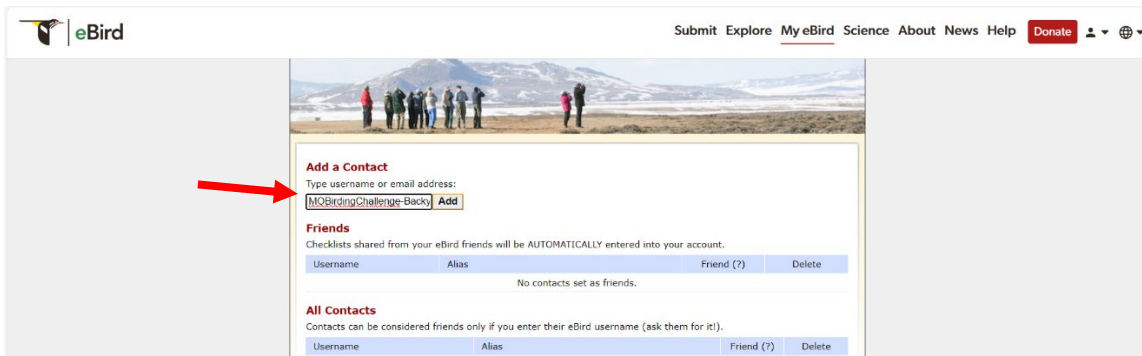
- Trip Report details (name, dates, counties your team birded in for the competition, names of team members you share the report with, narrative)
- All checklists included, and any media you added to checklists.
- Total species your team observed for the Missouri Birding Challenge from all included checklists.

Click “Show all details” to see the date and location where your team observed each species.

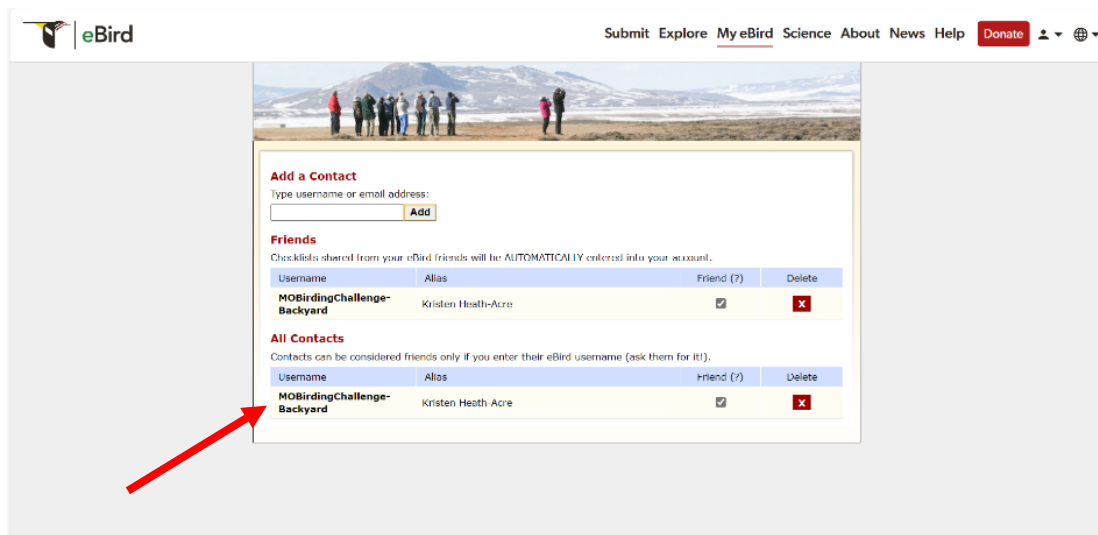
## Optional: Add your teammates to your contacts

The benefit to this approach is that shared checklists are automatically added to your account, so you can skip step 6 on page 16.

1. Go to “My eBird” and under “MANAGE MY...” on the left side of the screen Click on “Contacts.”
2. A new webpage will open. Type in the eBird username or emails of your teammates and click “Add.”



**Note:** if you do not see the teammate’s account pull up, check the spelling or try their email instead.



## Optional: Create a Yard Location

Creating a yard location is a fun way to organize and track the birds in your yard for the Missouri Birding Challenge and beyond. This is especially helpful for any teams participating in the Backyard Birder category.

1. Submit an eBird checklist from your yard. Take note of the location of this checklist (e.g., auto selected GPS points, or name the location “yard”). See page 5, step 2.

2. Click on “Explore” at the top of the home screen. Then click on “Yard Totals.”

The screenshot shows the eBird website's 'Explore' page. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'Submit', 'Explore', 'My eBird', 'Science', 'About', 'News', and 'Help'. Below this are two large hero images: 'Explore Species' (featuring a bird in flight) and 'Explore Region' (featuring a sunset with birds). Both have search bars. Below these are sections for 'MORE WAYS TO EXPLORE' (Species Maps, Search Photos and Sounds, Explore Hotspots, Bar Charts), 'SPECIES YOU NEED' (Target Species, Alerts), and 'COMPARE YOUR TOTALS' (Top 100, Yard Totals, Patch Totals). The 'Yard Totals' link is circled in red. At the bottom, there is a 'LEARN BIRDING SKILLS' section with links for 'eBird Essentials', 'Media Bird ID', and 'Photos + Sound'.

3. Click the green button “Add a Yard.”

The screenshot shows the eBird 'Add a Yard' interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'Submit', 'Explore', 'My eBird', 'Science', 'About', 'News', 'Help', and a 'Donate' button. Below that, the page title is 'Add a Yard'. The form has three main sections: 'Yard name' with a text input containing 'The Yardbirds'; 'Locations' with a text input containing '1235 Brook Lane, Boonville, Missouri, US (38.964, -92.728), US-MO'; and 'Add from My Locations' with a search input. At the bottom, there are two buttons: a green 'Save Yard' button and a white 'Cancel' button.

4. Create a name for your yard. Choose the location of the checklist you created from your yard (e.g., Auto selected..., yard). Then click Save Yard.

Your Yard Location is complete!

Now, whenever you submit a checklist from your yard, eBird will track it and show you the total species you have observed from your yard.

The screenshot shows the eBird 'Yard Totals' page for 'The Yardbirds' in Missouri. The page is updated 6 hours ago. It features a summary table for 'The Yardbirds' and a 'Yard leaders' section.

Category	Complete Checklists (Rank)	Species Observed (Rank)	Last Species Added
Life	1 (537)	16 (487)	Jan 6, 2025: American Tree Sparrow ( <i>Spizelloides arborea</i> ), Black-capped Chickadee ( <i>Parus atricapillus</i> ), Blu...
Year	1 (84)	16 (62)	Jan 6, 2025: House Finch ( <i>Haemorrhous mexicanus</i> ), Northern Cardinal ( <i>Cardinalis cardinalis</i> ), Red...
Month	1 (84)	16 (62)	Jan 6, 2025: House Finch ( <i>Haemorrhous mexicanus</i> ), Northern Cardinal ( <i>Cardinalis cardinalis</i> ), Red...

Rank	Name	Complete Checklists	Species Observed	Last Species Added
1	Scott Alford	7	49	Jan 7, 2025: Common Grackle ( <i>Quiscalus quiscula</i> ), LeConte's Sparrow ( <i>Ammodramus leconteii</i> ), ...
2	Anita Otal	8	39	Jan 6, 2025: Rock Pigeon ( <i>Columba</i>

2026 Missouri Birding Challenge eBird Accounts by  
Challenge Category

**MOBirdingChallenge-Fledgling**

**MOBirdingChallenge-Backyard**

**MOBirdingChallenge-Dabbler**

**MOBirdingChallenge-Competitive**

**MOBirdingChallenge-BigDay**