

How to Get your Local Bird Checklist

A Quick Guide to getting a list
of all the birds in your area



LEARN
THE BIRDS

Once you have a list of the birds found in your local area, you'll be able to better focus on first learning the birds closer to home.

Then, once you feel good about these birds, you can branch out to the hundreds of other birds found in the region.

WHERE TO FIND YOUR LOCAL BIRDING CHECKLIST

There are a number of places to look online, or organizations you can contact, to find your local or regional birding checklist.

These include:

- ◆ Nearby nature or wildlife sanctuaries, parks, refuges, preserves, reserves, or management areas
- ◆ Regional bird conservation organizations or ornithological societies, such as BirdLife International, or local bird chapters, such as the Audubon Society
- ◆ Universities with a biology or ecology department
- ◆ State or regional online records committees
- ◆ E-resources, such as eBird

Some of the above will have their bird checklists easily accessible and downloadable for interested people like you. If you can't find something online, consider reaching out to any of these entities directly via their contact page to inquire about a downloadable bird checklist for the state, province, region, or country.

WHAT SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN YOUR CHECKLIST?

- ◆ Ideally, you'll have a checklist that you can download and print out for your own use

On it, make sure the region of the birding location is noted as well as the last time the list was updated. The latter is important if bird names are changed, especially, and will help make sure you have the most up-to-date list version.

WHAT SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN YOUR CHECKLIST? (cont.)

- ◆ The order or major family names should be bolded or distinguished from the species names, and species should be listed in taxonomic order

This will greatly help when you're sorting through your field guide to ID birds and check off those you've seen. It will also make sure you're on the right track to understanding how your field guide is organized.

- ◆ An indicator showing rare or accidental birds on that list should be clearly marked

As you're IDing birds, it's good to know which ones you're most likely to spot, and which might be a rarity. This is beneficial when you're trying to ID a bird and are deciding between two different species. See whether the rarity bird is likely to be found in your region at the time of year you're birding. If not, the likelihood of it being the rarity bird is low.

- ◆ Your checklist should have one species per row, ideally with a place for you to checkmark it off on the side

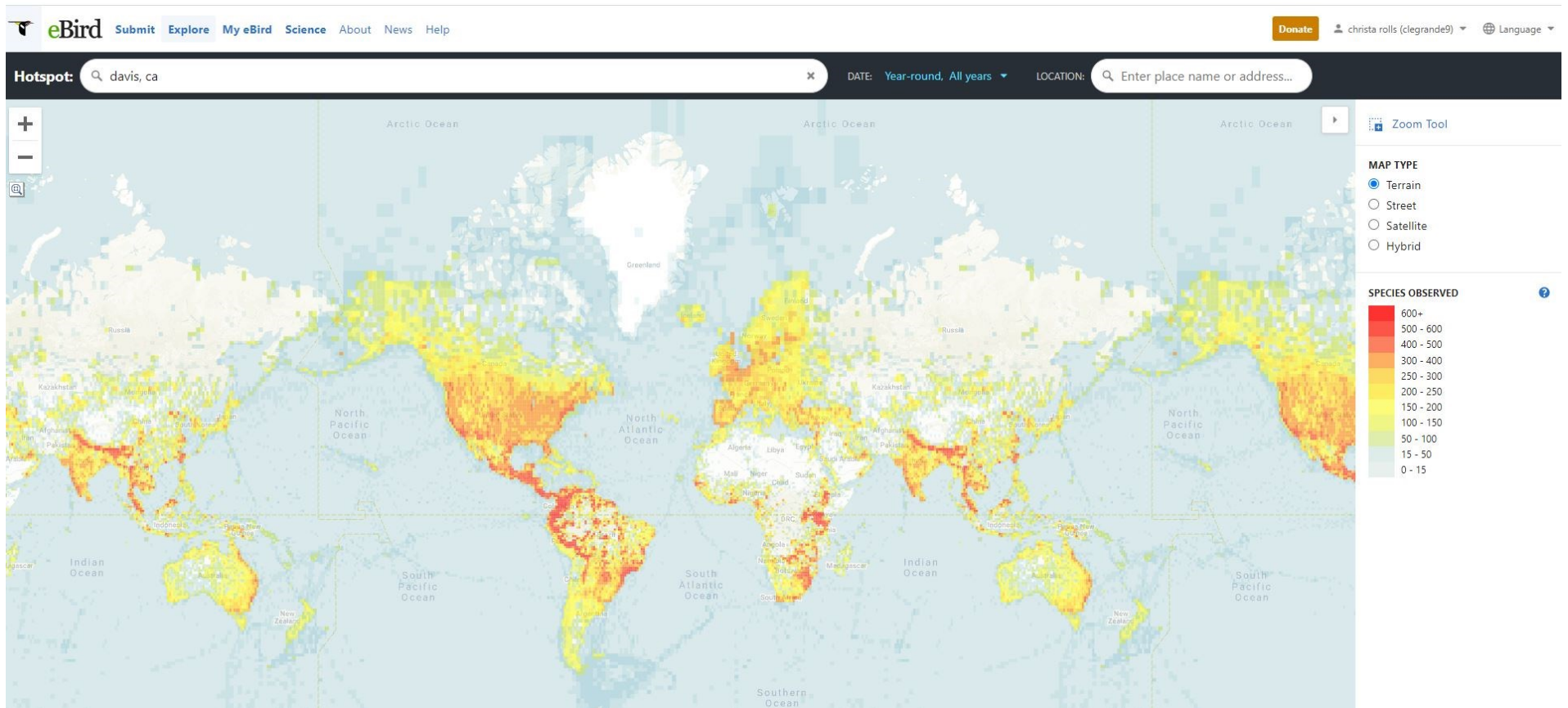
As you see the birds on your checklist, mark them off! This will allow you to add to your life list, too.

USE E-BIRD TO DOWNLOAD YOUR LOCAL BIRD CHECKLIST

The data on eBird is sourced from citizen scientists, so it's possible for some information to be incorrect. However, the majority of additions to the site are by enthusiastic and competent birders. Also, eBird's system for checking incorrect data is quite robust.

This being said, it's also not perfect in that there are checklist data missing from large parts of certain countries, including those in northern and central Africa, the Middle East, and west and central Asia.

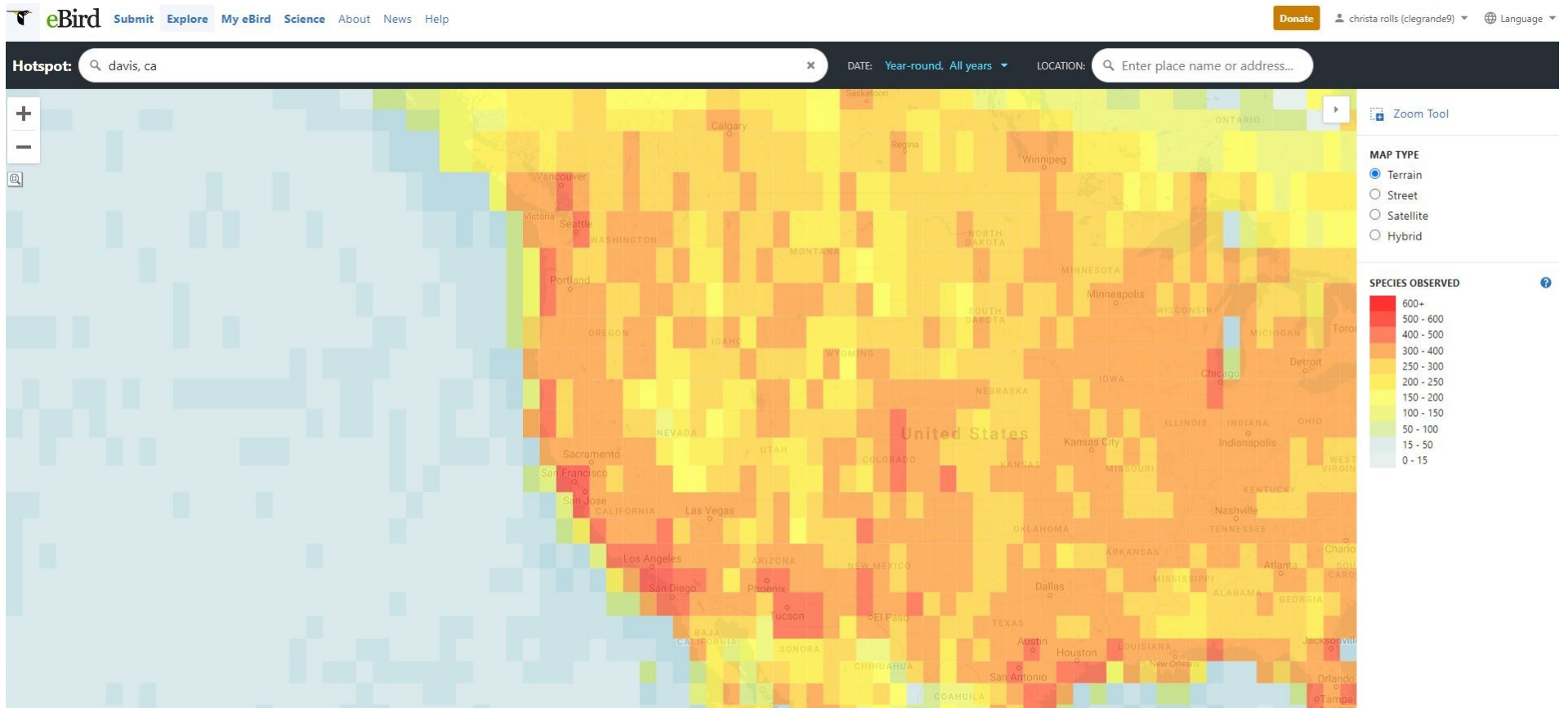
If this is the case for where you are seeking out a bird checklist, reach out to the entities listed in the first section of this guide.



1. Go to ebird.com/hotspots#

The eBird map shows species lists compiled from eBird users around the world. Anyone who has submitted a bird sighting list for a particular location has their checklist added to the larger eBird database.

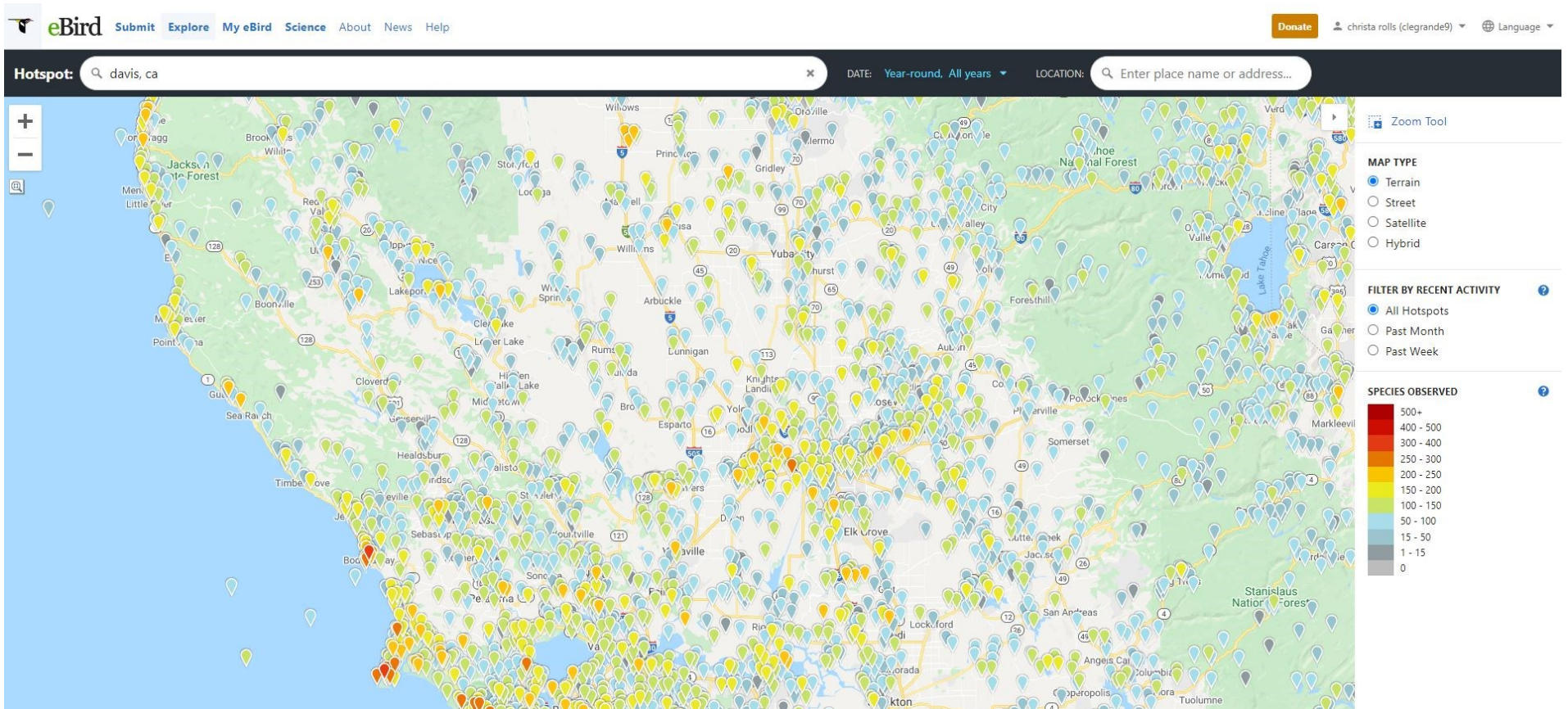
Note these lists are not always comprehensive, as they are based on sightings compiled during different times of year and lengths of survey time. Once multiple lists are compiled from multiple users and/or days, the overall species list for a location grows.



2. Zoom closer to your specific locale or area of interest.

The pixel sizes on the map will change as you zoom in. The pixels and associated colors correspond to the total number of species observed and recorded into eBird in that area.

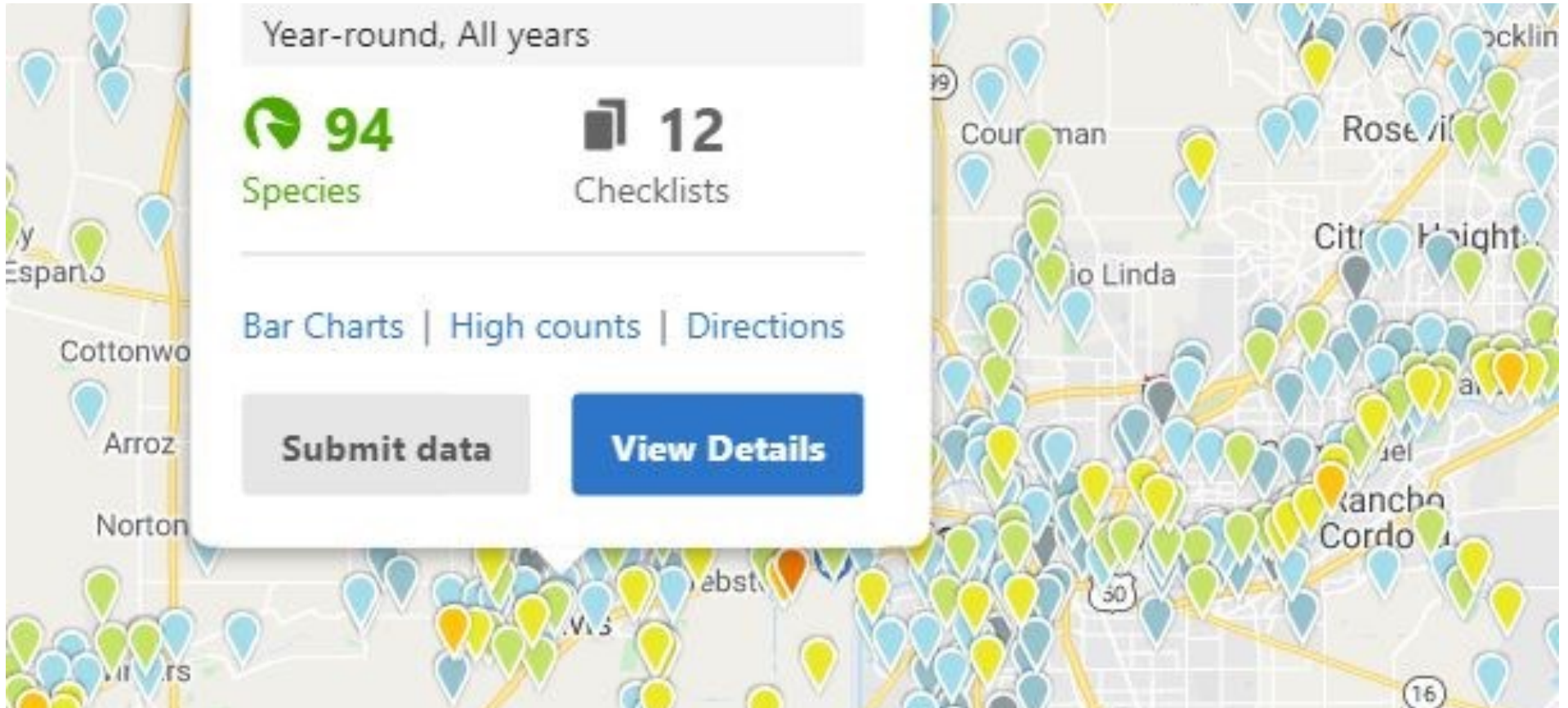
Once you zoom in close enough, you'll see these rectangular pixels turn into individual points that you can click on.



3. Click the pinpoint that indicates the most number of species recorded

Refer to the color-coding chart for this. If you see yellows, oranges, and reds on the map, those will contain species lists with a greater number of species.

Also, click on the pinpoints that are a light or dark blue. You'll note they don't have as many species, but often, THIS is a great place to start! Don't overwhelm yourself with a list of hundreds of birds.



4. Click “View Details” on the pinpoint pop up

On this page, you’ll see all the birds seen at this particular location with details about who observed the bird, how many birds of that species were observed, and the day on which the birds were seen.

Overview

Illustrated Checklist

MORE ABOUT THIS HOTSPOT

- [Explore Hotspots](#)
- [My eBird](#)
- [Bar Charts](#)
- [Life List](#)
- [Target Species](#)
- [Printable Checklist](#)

94
Species observed

12
Complete checklists

Sightings

Updated 8 sec ago.

- [Last seen](#)
[First seen](#)
[High counts](#)

[Show all details](#)

SPECIES NAME	COUNT	DATE	OBSERVER
1. Common Merganser	5	18 Feb 2020	Ann Burris
2. Pied-billed Grebe	3	18 Feb 2020	Ann Burris
3. Sora	1	18 Feb 2020	Ann Burris
4. Double-crested Cormorant	4	18 Feb 2020	Ann Burris
5. Great Blue Heron	2	18 Feb 2020	Ann Burris
6. Great Egret	1	18 Feb 2020	Ann Burris
7. Snowy Egret	2	18 Feb 2020	Ann Burris
8. Green Heron	1	18 Feb 2020	Ann Burris
9. Red-shouldered Hawk	1	18 Feb 2020	Ann Burris
10. Red-tailed Hawk	2	18 Feb 2020	Ann Burris
11. Western Screech-Owl	1	18 Feb 2020	Ann Burris
12. Red-breasted Sapsucker	1	18 Feb 2020	Ann Burris
13. Acorn Woodpecker	23	18 Feb 2020	Ann Burris

Top media LAST 30 DAYS

No media submitted

[Latest media](#)

Recent visits

OBSERVER	DATE	SPECIES
Ann Burris	18 Feb 2020	41
Jonathan Geary	13 Jul 2019	2
Isabelle Allemeersch	24 Mar 2019	2
Claude Velter	24 Mar 2019	7
Richard Beilfuss	14 Oct 2018	37
Christopher Adlam	7 Sep 2018	12
Michael Rogner	19 Oct 2017	1
Mike Kinberg	5 Feb 2017	1
Nick Dorian	29 May 2016	16
Vickie Becker	29 Apr 2016	9

Checklists submitted within the last hour are not shown.

[More recent visits](#)

Top eBirders

Updated 8 sec ago.

Click the “Printable Checklist” link to have the full list in a checklist format.

You can also Click the most recent date under the “Recent Visits” section to see which birds were observed most recently at that location. This is most pertinent if the recent visit is within the last month and you want to see which birds are in the area. A printable checklist option is also available from these Recent Visits lists.

5. Print your Checklist and Highlight the Most Common Birds

Print out your checklist so you can have it handy as you go out birding or watch birds in your backyard.

Having a list with you in person, especially if it's fairly comprehensive, allows you to see and compare which birds might be in your area ahead of time.

Highlight the species that are most common so you know which birds you're likely to see most often.

Focusing on common birds first will reduce your overwhelm as you first learn and identify birds. Start to feel good about those in your backyard or commonly seen in a local park or trail, then start moving on to trying to ID others.

NOW, TRY IT OUT!