

eBird update

By Mike Burrell

eBird use is growing incredibly fast with an increase of more than 65% in the number of checklists from 2010 to 2011 submitted for Ontario

IN ONTARIO in 2011, eBird saw 1,039 users submitting 56,861 checklists for over 6,000 different locations containing more than half a million bird observations of over 340 species.

Congratulations to Barb Charlton, Ken Burrell, Brandon Holden, Mike Burrell, and Tyler Hoar for the top five lists on eBird in 2011 (number of species). Equally impressive were the number of complete checklists submitted by the top five of Tyler Hoar, Patrick Mooney, Steve Thorpe, Mike Burrell, and Peter Blancher.

The 2012 eBird season is already well underway

As of the end of April, 273 species had been reported to eBird, up eight from where we were last year at this point. April saw Ontario eBirders submit over 12,000 checklists, averaging just over 400 per day. 2012 is currently on pace for over 100,000 eBird checklists submissions for Ontario making this the most complete annual bird record for Ontario ever. At this time, Josh Vandermeulen, Andrew Keaveney, Brandon Holden, Ken Burrell and Barb Charlton have all reported over 200 species to eBird. Similarly, Mike Burrell, Tyler Hoar, Donald Sutherland, Kingston Field Naturalists and Patrick Mooney have all submitted over 500 complete checklists. Congratulations to them all.

New eBird feature – email alerts

While eBird is constantly expanding with new features, the following will be of interest to all. Late in 2011, eBird launched rare bird and year needs alerts. These two alerts compliment the already existing life needs alert. All three of the alerts send you an email alert either daily or hourly (your choice) if something triggers your settings. The alerts can be specific for the entire province or can be narrowed to a particular county (or equivalent). The needs alerts work by comparing ebird reports with your

life or year lists for the region you specified. If you don't have a particular species on your life or year list, you'll get an email alerting you to the report. The rare bird alert works by sending you an alert via email whenever a rare bird is reported (both seasonal and geographic rarities) to ebird for the region you subscribed.

Now easily import your OBBA point counts into your eBird account

You can now very quickly and easily download your point count data from the second Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas in a format that can be easily and quickly uploaded to your eBird account. Just visit Nature Counts and click on the "eBird exports" link.

Did you know? Records submitted to eBird are permanently archived for the future and are already helping scientists and conservationists better manage the world's birds.

www.ebird.ca

In Memoriam

Jim Griffith

By Jean Iron

JIM GRIFFITH, a former OFO treasurer, passed away on 8 February 2012 in his 88th year. Born in Toronto on 2 February 1924, Jim began birding in his late 40s and travelled the world in pursuit of birds. He joined OFO in April 1989 and became Treasurer after the Annual Convention in the fall of 1995. Jim was a chartered accountant by profession, and brought these skills to the management of OFO's finances. He encouraged the Board and committee members to develop a vision for OFO with goals, objectives and budgets for each portfolio. A stickler for detail, Jim was also practical in all respects. For example, Mike Street called me as President with a proposal to form the Ontbirds listserv and that it would belong to OFO, but we had to decide quickly whether to accept and agree to pay its operating costs. I called Jim, who saw the tremendous potential of a province-wide birding listserv and said "Let's go for it — now." After conferencing with other Board members, Ontbirds was launched in September 1998 under OFO's ownership. Throughout his six and a half-year term as Treasurer, Jim's advice and guidance were highly valued.

An active member of the Toronto Ornithological Club (TOC), Jim was its Treasurer prior to taking on that role for OFO. He loved birding with veteran OFO and TOC member Harry Kerr, and they were often seen early in the morning on the Leslie Street Spit, in the Rouge Valley, Thicksion's Woods in Whitby, and other Toronto area birding hotspots. Jim's many birding friends will greatly miss his friendliness, good sense of humour and funny stories. Jim is buried in Toronto's Mount Pleasant Cemetery beside Joanne, his wife of 63 years. OFO sends condolences to his son Michael and daughter Laura.



Left Jim Griffith, Right Harry Kerr in Thicksion's Woods in the fall of 2006. Photo by Eleanor Beagan.