

Illinois SBC 2024 Instruction Sheet

1. COUNT DATE: **May 4th (official day)** or May 5th (extra day)
If you have 10 or more volunteers or multiple parties you should only be counting on the official count day. The second day is an extra day for counties with few volunteers (usually 5 or less) to be able to cover more of their county.
2. DURATION OF COUNT: We ask that you try and count at least 8 party hours (this is as a whole for the county).
3. COUNT AREA: Within the boundaries of a single county. (**Avoid duplication of coverage**).
4. DUE DATE: **June 1st**. Owing to publication deadlines, the county reports must be received on time. If you need extra time please let me know.
5. REPORT SUBMISSION: The **original** REPORT FORM, DATA SHEET, and any DOCUMENTATION FORMS should be sent directly to: Tara Beveroth, Illinois Natural History Survey, 1816 S. Oak St. Champaign, IL 61820, or they may be sent through e-mail to beveroth@illinois.edu. ****Please use the 2024 e-mailed excel spreadsheet (updated) when submitting electronically.**
6. INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE REPORT FORM:
 - a) Record the actual number of individual birds recorded (by sight or sound) for each species in the blank space provided in front of the species name. **Please write legibly.**
 - b) For those species not seen or identified, leave the accompanying blank space empty (do not use "0"s)
 - c) WRITE-IN SPECIES can be added in the blank spaces on the back of the REPORT FORM. Some species must be documented (note the back on the REPORT FORM). Included on the back of your report form is a list of species that need documentation. **Any species not on the species list that you detect should be cross checked with the list of species that need documentation.** If your species is not on the documentation list, simply write the species in as an additional species and you do not need to document. Species that do require documentation will be excluded from the final report if undocumented.
 - d) When submitting final count results through USPS, use the original *yellow* and *pink* data sheet. If submitting via email please use the excel file template provided to you through your 2024 e-mail. ****Templates may change as nomenclature or species documentation changes, so please use the 2024 template.**
 - e) If you are counting over two days you will need to submit two report forms.
7. INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE DATA SHEET:
 - a) If your county is being covered **both days** of the count fill out both sides of the pink data sheet, one for each day. Party hours and miles need to be compiled for both days. Complete every space in the HEADING portion of the DATA SHEET; incomplete data creates gaps and confusion. **Also, if you count over two days you need to submit two final report species lists (one for each day) if you want your observations to count towards possible SBC records.**
 - b) Please note the special provisions for "OWLING/RAILING" Hours; the actual hours of birding should be recorded in the spaces provided. Daylight hours are those hours beginning ½-hour before sunrise and ending ½-hour after sunset. All other hours are OWLING/RAILING Hours.
8. COMPILATION OF PARTY HOURS AND PARTY MILES:

What is a PARTY: Observers who travel together (birding group) within hearing and/or seeing distance of each other are considered as only one party. A person walking or driving alone is also considered one party. If two people observe half the day together and then split up, they become two parties.

What are PARTY HOURS: Only time you are birding is counted as party hours, so lunch breaks etc. should not be included in your time compilation. Each party is responsible for compiling the hours they are observing, and then the compiler is responsible for compiling the different parties observation hours together.

PARTY (birding group) and PARTY HOUR examples:

1. Four persons, together, began birding at 6:30 a.m. (½ hour after sunrise) and continued until 6:00 p.m. They

walked 5 miles in 7 hours and drove 78 miles in 4 hours; they took a ½-hour lunch break (did not do any birding during their lunch break). Combined results: 11 party hours and 83 party miles

2. Four persons began, together, at 7:30 a.m. then split into two groups of two from 9:30-11:00, then rejoined. All continued birding together until they quit at 5:30 p.m. As a foursome, they walked 5 miles in 6½ hours and drove 24 miles in 2 hours; while split up, the first two walked 1½ miles in 1½ hours and the other two walked 2 miles in 1½ hours. There was no driving while the groups were split. Combined results: 2 parties, 11½ party hours and 32½ party miles.
3. Three persons, together, began birding at 2:00 a.m. and continued until 11:30 p.m. At 7:00 a.m. they all went separate directions (this is now 3 parties), then rejoined at noon. They all went separately again at 1:30; two joined together at 3:30 and the third rejoined at 5:30. They remained together the rest of the time. As a group of three they walked 3 miles in 2½ hours (5:30-7:00 a.m. and 5:30-6:30 p.m.) and drove 46 miles in 3½ “daylight” hours (noon-1:30 and 6:30-8:30). The group of two walked 2½ miles in 2 hours (3:30-5:30). Individually, the first person walked 6 miles in 7 hours (7:00-noon and 1:30-3:30); the second walked 5 miles in 7 hours (same time as the first); and the third walked 8 miles in 9 hours (7:00-noon and 1:30-5:30). All driving was done when the three were together. Combined results: 3 parties, 31 party hours (+ 6½ owling hours), and 71½ party miles (+ owling miles which do not have to be recorded).

COMPILATION OF PARTY HOURS AND PARTY MILES from above three examples.

| BIRDING GROUP | PARTY HOURS | | | PARTY MILES | | |
|----------------------------|-------------|----------------------------|----------|-------------|--------------------------|----------|
| | TOTAL | (On foot) | (By car) | TOTAL | (On foot) | (By car) |
| 1 -- 4 persons (1 party) | 11 | (7 on foot, 4 by car) | | 83 | (5 on foot, 78 by car) | |
| 2 -- 4 persons (2 parties) | 11½ | (9½ on foot, 2 by car) | | 32½ | (8½ on foot, 24 by car) | |
| 3 -- 3 persons (3 parties) | 31** | (27½ on foot, 3½ by car)** | | 71½ | (25½ on foot, 46 by car) | |

OTHER PARTY HOURS

On the DATA SHEET there are two spaces under party miles and party hours for “OTHER” types of birding. Only count these hours if you are solely observing birds the whole time. If you are not **do not count the hours unless combined observation time is >2 hours**. Examples of “Other Party Hours” are listed below. :

1. Boating and Canoeing
2. Bicycling
3. Sitting/Working (and Feeder Watching):
 - a) If an observer is sitting patiently somewhere without moving (such as in a photographic blind, in a tree stand, while fishing, etc.), and is intensively observing and actively recording the birds present at that location for 2 or more hours, **count that total effort as 1 hour walking and 1 mile walking** (regardless of the number of hours spent at that site).
 - b) If an observer is sitting at a site, not intensively birding, but casually observes and reports birds, **count that effort as ½ hour and ½ mile walking for the first 2-hour period and ½ hour and ½ mile walking (for a maximum of 1 hour and 1 mile walking) when there are 4 or more hours of sitting at a site.**
 - d) Feeder observers and observers waiting “inside” {a car, shelter, etc.) for rain to subside, **may count ½ hour walking and ½ mile walking for each 2 hours of waiting/observing** if birding continued throughout that period.

OWLING/RAILING HOURS

OWLING/RAILING HOURS -- those hours before and after the official daylight hours. When recording owling/railing hours, please record the earliest time that owling/railing began and the latest time that it continued in the spaces provided for both the morning and evening hours on the DATA SHEET.

OFFICIAL DAYLIGHT HOURS -- those hours between ½-hour before sunrise and ½-hour after sunset. See the additional information sheet identifying the Official Daylight Hours for each county.