



Loudoun County Bird Atlas Data Entry Guide

Entering Data from a Daily Field Card

The following step-by-step instructions will help you successfully enter your atlas sightings in the online atlas database and share your findings with anyone interested in the birds of Loudoun County. If you run into problems, please contact your Regional Coordinator or the Atlas Coordinator for assistance. While these instructions will help you with the basics, we encourage you to explore the other features of the database. For example, the “VA-Lou2009” tab (located on left side of home page under the atlas logo) provides maps of each block, results by species, block, and region, as well as other important information.

- 1) Navigate to the data entry home page hosted by USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center.
Note: The url is http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/bba/index.cfm?fa=explore.ProjectHome&BBA_ID=VA-Lou2009.
Note: You can also navigate to the data entry home page by clicking on the “Bird Atlas 2009-2013 Data Entry Link” on the right side of the LWC atlas page (http://www.loudounwildlife.org/Bird_Atlas.htm).
Recommendation: Add these two sites to your Favorites list for easy access in the future.
- 2) Click on the “Log in to this atlas here” link on the right side of the “Atlas Home” page. This will take you to the “Atlas Login” screen. Fill in the 3 text boxes following the format below:

First & Last, or e-mail:	FN space LN (Example, Bob Jones) or your email address
Observer Code:	Enter first name. If first name is less than 4 characters long, enter first name and first letter of last name (Example, Bob Jones will use “bobj”)
Password:	Only required for Regional Coordinators
- 3) Click the “Go” button on the “Atlas Login” page to go to the “My Atlas View” page.
- 4) On the “My Atlas View” page, there is a box on the top left labeled “My 2009 Assigned Blocks.” This box lists your assigned block(s) and any open or final field cards. Next to your block name is a “Status & Reports” column, which will have a “start new: Daily Field Card” link. Click on this “Daily Field Card” link to navigate to the “FieldCard: Enter Effort” page.
- 5) On the “FieldCard: Enter Effort” page you will enter the date, locations you covered, time of day (in 24 hour military notation), hours in the field, and whether you were owling. These details will help us determine how and when each block is covered, target areas, and dates in need of further coverage.
Note: If you surveyed different sections of your block we encourage you to enter each section on a separate line.
Recommendation: Scroll down to bottom of the page for two examples of how an entry should be completed.
- 6) When you are ready to move on, click the “Go” button at bottom of the page to navigate to the “Field Form: Sightings Entry” page.
- 7) On the “Field Form: Sightings Entry” page, you will see your assigned block name and a list of species. Enter the evidence codes from your field card in the appropriate columns (OBServed, POSSible, PRObable, or CONfirmed categories) for each species you encountered while atlasing.

Note: If you collect data for a bird that is not on this list, submit an Atlas Verification Form and contact your Regional Coordinator for assistance.

Recommendation: Refer to the “Collecting Data” section, starting on page 6 of the Atlas Handbook, for a description of each column/category and evidence code. The bottom of the “Field Form: Sightings Entry” screen also offers some helpful tips.

- 8) When you have entered your evidence codes, click the “Save” button - you will still have an opportunity to make edits after clicking this button. If you do not click the “Save” button, you will lose the results you just typed.
- 9) Clicking the “Save” button will take you to the “Field Form Report” page. This page provides a summary of your atlas sightings and effort (time/travel). You will see a listing of the species you sighted with the codes entered. A message will appear if you entered an inappropriate evidence code. Review your list carefully for errors. Click on the “EDIT or Correct” link if you need to make changes to your data. When you are satisfied that you entered your data correctly, click on the “FINALIZE” link.

Note: You always have the option to edit your atlas time and/or travel by clicking on the “Edit or add trips” link.
- 10) After you click “FINALIZE,” a pop-up box will appear to confirm that you are ready to finalize your data. Once you click the “OK” button to continue, you will no longer be able to edit your data unless you contact your Regional Coordinator for assistance.
- 11) You should now be on the “Field Form Report” page. This page displays your finalized sightings, which are now ready for your Regional Coordinator to review. Once the report is reviewed, your data will be posted in the “Results” section in the “VA-Lou2009” tab (located on left side of page under the atlas logo) for other atlasers and the public to view.

Note: Write the “Document ID” number (found in the top center of the “Field Form Report” page) on your paper field card for easy tracking.

Note: You may print the “Field Form Report” page for your records.
- 12) Navigate back to the “My Atlas View” page by clicking on the words “My Atlas View” at the bottom of the “Field Form Report” page. The “My Atlas View” page displays a list of any open or final cards for your assigned block(s) in the “My 2009 Assigned Blocks” box (top left corner of page).

Note: Once you become familiar with this database, you will find there are often multiple ways to navigate to the same page. For example, you can also navigate to the “My Atlas View” page by clicking on one of the “My Atlas View” tabs located on the left side and top of your screen.

Entering Data from an Incidental Reporting Card

The Incidental Reporting Card is used to report data collected outside of your block, but within county limits. Entering incidental data is very similar to entering data from a field card. Here are the basic steps for data entry, with emphasis on differences from daily field card entry.

If you are entering incidental data for a Special Area please refer to the “Entering Data for a Special Area” section on the next page for directions.

- 1) Log onto the data entry homepage. Click on the “Incidentals” tab on the left side of the screen (underneath the atlas logo) to navigate to the “Incidentals” page.
- 2) On the “Incidentals” page, the “Type of Incidental” should read “I – Incidental block.” Do not change this value. Use the list box labeled “Block” to select a quad and block.

Note: Refer to bottom of the screen for helpful tips.

- 3) Use the “Detailed location” text box to enter information regarding where you atlasted within your block.
- 4) In the “Date” text box, enter the date you went atlasting by either typing the date in MM/DD/YY format or clicking on the “show calendar” link and selecting the date.
- 5) In the “Hours” text box, enter the number of hours spent atlasting and click in the appropriate circles to indicate whether the hours are “Estimated” or “Actual” and whether you were owling.
- 6) When you are satisfied that the information you entered is correct, click the “Continue” button to navigate to the “Field Form: Sightings Entry” page.
Note: Refer to bottom of the screen for helpful tips.
- 7) On the “Field Form: Sightings Entry” page you will see the block name and a list of species. Enter the evidence codes from your Incidental Reporting Card in the appropriate columns for each species you encountered while atlasting. When you have entered your data, click the “Save” button (you will still have an opportunity to make edits after clicking this button).
Note: This process is exactly like entering data from a daily field card – refer to step 7 in the “Entering Data from a Daily Field Card” section on the first page for details.
Recommendation: Refer to the “Collecting Data” section, starting on page 6 of the Atlas Handbook, for a description of each column/category and evidence code. The bottom of the “Field Form: Sightings Entry” screen also offers some helpful tips.
- 8) The “Field Form Report” page provides a summary of your atlas sightings and effort (time/travel). Carefully review your data and note any messages added by the program. Click the “EDIT or Correct” link to make changes or the “FINALIZE” link if you are satisfied with your data entry.
Note: Write the “Document ID” number (found in the top center of the “Field Form Report” page) on your paper Incidental Reporting Card for easy tracking.
- 9) Once you click the “FINALIZE” link, your incidental data is finalized and ready for your Regional Coordinator to review. Click on the “My Atlas View” link at the bottom of the “Field Form Report” page. The “My Atlas View” page will display a “My 2009 Incidentals” box, which allows you to view any open or final incidental cards. Once your incidental data is reviewed, it will be posted for other atlasers and the public to view (navigate to “VA-Lou2009” tab and click on “Results”).
Note: You may print the “Field Form Report” page for your records.

Entering Data for a Special Area

If you collect data for a Special Area, please use a new/separate field card when surveying the area to prevent data mix-ups. We recommend writing the Special Area name on the front of the card to help you distinguish it from your other field cards. Data entered for Special Areas will be used for both the Special Area and the block. Entering Special Area data is similar to entering data from a regular daily or incidental field card. Here are the basic steps for data entry, with emphasis on differences from regular field card entry.

- 1) Log onto the data entry homepage. Click on the “Special Areas” tab on the left side of the screen (underneath the atlas logo) to navigate to the “Special Areas” page.
- 2) A. *If your assigned block includes a portion or all of a Special Area:*
 On the “Special Areas” page, click the “My field cards for Special Areas” list box arrow. Choose the appropriate Special Area and block from the list and hit the “Continue” button to navigate to the “Field Card: Enter Effort” page.

Note: If no blocks are listed, you do not have any Special Areas in your assigned block(s). You can skip the remaining steps unless you collect incidental data in a Special Area.

B. *If you collect incidental data while enjoying a Special Area outside your assigned block:*
On the “Special Areas” page, click the “Start an Incidental” list box arrow. Choose the appropriate Special Area and block from the list and hit the “Continue” button to navigate to the “Incidentals” page.

3) A. *If your assigned block includes a portion or all of a Special Area:*

The “Field Card: Enter Effort” page allows you to enter the date, locations you covered, time of day, hours in the field, and whether you were owling. Enter your effort and click the “Go” button to navigate to the “Field Form: Sightings Entry” page.

Note: This process is exactly like entering effort for a daily field card – refer to step 5 in the “Entering Data from a Daily Field Card” section on the first page for details.

B. *If you collect incidental data while enjoying a Special Area outside your assigned block:*

The “Incidentals” page allows you to enter the locations you covered, date, hours, and whether you were owling. The “Type of Incidental” should read “I – Incidental block.” When you have completed this page, click the “Continue” button to navigate to the “Field Form: Sightings Entry” page.

Note: This process is exactly like entering data from an Incidental Reporting Card – refer to steps 2-6 in the “Entering Data from an Incidental Reporting Card” section for details.

4) The “Field Form: Sightings Entry” page allows you to enter the evidence codes from your Special Area card in the appropriate columns for each species you encountered. Click the “Save” button at the bottom of the page once you have carefully entered your observations.

Note: This process is exactly like entering data from a regular daily or incidental field card – refer to step 7 in the “Entering Data from a Daily Field Card” section on the first page for details.

Recommendation: Refer to the “Collecting Data” section, starting on page 6 of the Atlas Handbook, for a description of each column/category and evidence code. The bottom of the “Field Form: Sightings Entry” screen also offers some helpful tips.

5) After clicking the “Save” button, you will see a summary of your sightings and effort (time/travel). Carefully review your data, noting any messages added by the program. Click the “EDIT or Correct” link to make changes or the “FINALIZE” link if you are satisfied with your data entry.

Note: Write the “Document ID” number (found in the top center of the “Field Form Report” page) on your paper Special Area field card for easy tracking.

6) Once you click the “FINALIZE” link, your Special Area data is finalized and ready for the Regional Coordinator to review. Click on the “My Atlas View” link at the bottom of the “Field Form Report” page and look in the “My 2009 Assigned Blocks” box. At the bottom of the box you will see “Special Areas/All Years: My Assigned Blocks.” Click on the “My Assigned Blocks” link to view any open or final Special Area and regular field cards. Once your data is reviewed, it will be posted for other atlasers and the public to view (navigate to “VA-Lou2009” tab and click on “Results”).

Note: You may print the “Field Form Report” page for your records.