



## **Bear Creek Community Bird Survey**

### **Project Overview and Objective:**

This project is a collaboration between the Rogue Valley Audubon Society, Klamath Bird Observatory, Rogue River Watershed Council, the Southern Oregon Land Conservancy, and the southern Oregon birding community.

In September of 2020, multiple fires damaged or destroyed much of the riparian (riverside) habitat along the Bear Creek Greenway in Jackson County, OR. The Bear Creek Greenway is a 20-mile paved path that runs through a large swath of riparian habitat in an otherwise mostly urban part of the Rogue Valley, and is an important community resource for both recreation and wildlife habitat. Riparian vegetation is a crucial habitat type for many bird species who rely on deciduous plants and nearby water to breed, survive the winter, or rest and refuel during migration.

The objectives of this survey are to 1) generate a long-term dataset to track changes in bird populations along Bear Creek over time, and 2) quantify how bird populations respond to habitat changes and restoration efforts as the riparian habitat recovers from the 2020 fires. Surveys will take place in severely burned, moderately burned, and unburned areas so that changes in the burned areas can be compared with unburned areas.

### **When to Survey:**

Each survey transect will be visited twice a month. Surveys will occur during the second and fourth weeks of the month. Surveys must start within an hour of sunrise and will take between 1.5 and 2.5 hours to complete.

### **Who Can Survey:**

This survey is meant for experienced birders who can confidently identify all or nearly all birds they are likely to see or hear in riparian habitat in southern Oregon and who are comfortable walking 2-3 miles on a flat, smooth surface. Less experienced birders may participate if they are accompanying a more experienced survey leader.

### **Materials Needed:**

- Map of survey location
- Binoculars
- Stopwatch, smartphone, or other timing device
- Notebook or smartphone with the eBird Mobile App
- Reliable transportation
- Water and snacks as needed

### **How to Sign Up:**

Go to [roguevalleyaudubon.org](http://roguevalleyaudubon.org) and select the **Bear Creek Community Bird Survey** project from the **Our Work** or **Volunteer** tabs at the top of the homepage. Select the **[BEAR CREEK COMMUNITY BIRD SURVEY VOLUNTEER SIGN-UP SHEETS](#)** link to access the signup spreadsheet. Select the site you would like to survey from the tabs at the bottom of the spreadsheet. Each site has a map and site description linked in its respective tab. Once you have chosen your site, select which week you would like to survey. You may survey any day within that week. If there are multiple surveyors, select one of your participants to be the survey leader. **Make sure the survey leader's email address in the signup sheet is the same email address associated with his/her eBird account.** Once you have signed up, the eBird locations associated with your survey transects will be shared with your survey leader. The survey leader will be responsible for submitting the data.



You will need an eBird account to submit your data (detailed instructions on submitting data can be found in the protocol below). If you do not already have an eBird account, go to the eBird Northwest homepage <https://ebird.org/pnw/home> and click the **Create account** button at the top right. **Find instructions for entering eBird lists at <https://support.ebird.org/en/support/solutions/articles/48000957911>.**

### Survey Protocol:

1. Download maps, site directions, and UTM coordinates. All survey materials can be found on the Rogue Valley Audubon Society website ([roguevalleyaudubon.org](http://roguevalleyaudubon.org)) under the **Our Work** and **Volunteer** tabs.
2. Navigate to the beginning of your survey transect. **Surveys should start within an hour of sunrise and finish within four hours of sunrise.** Each site consists of two 800-meter transects. Make sure your survey of each transect takes no less than 30 and no more than 45 minutes. The total time at the site will be between 1.5-2.5 hours including surveying two transects and walking back to your car.
3. Record your start time.
4. Walk the length of the transect and record each bird species seen or heard and tally the number of individuals. **Do your best to count every individual bird you detect, but also not to double count birds.** Record unknown birds (or unknown sparrow, warbler, raptor, etc.). Do not spend more than 2 minutes trying to identify an unknown bird.
5. Stop recording once you get to the end of the transect. Record your finish time. **Each transect should be completed in 30-45 minutes.** Any bird detected after reaching the end of the transect should not be counted. **Do not count the birds on your walk back to your car.**

### Submitting your data:

6. Log in to your eBird.org (<https://ebird.org/pnw/home>) account.
7. Click the **Submit** button at the top of the eBird.org homepage. Under the **Choose from Your Locations** option, choose the appropriate hotspot for your transect. This location will be shared with your eBird account by a Bear Creek Community Bird Survey organizer prior to your survey.
8. Select the date you completed your survey and select **Traveling** as the Observation Type.
9. Fill in the **Start Time**, **Duration**, **Distance** (800 m or 0.5 miles) and **Party Size** fields. Additional notes can also be entered here. **Use your exact start time and exact number of minutes surveyed.** Click **Continue**.
10. Enter your bird observations into eBird. Click **Yes** above the Submit button where it asks "Are you submitting a complete checklist of the birds you were able to identify?" Click **Submit**.
11. Carefully review your list for any mistakes or omissions. Once your list has been reviewed, click the **share** button on the left of the screen and write in **Bear Creek Community Bird Survey** in the box that opens below. Once you have filled in this box, click the green **Share Checklist** button.
12. You can also enter your detections as you walk the transect using the eBird Mobile App. Simply select your appropriate transect hotspot before you begin, and share your list once you have submitted your data. Directions for how to use the eBird Mobile App can be found at: <https://ebird.freshdesk.com/en/support/solutions/articles/48000957940-getting-started-with-ebird-mobile->
13. Once you have completed entering your data, go back to the sign-up sheet and type in the date the survey was completed and entered into eBird.
14. Repeat this process for each transect you survey.

**\*Note:** Due to the continued and increased prevalence of Covid-19 in Jackson County and nationally, we are asking that volunteers complete surveys for this project in groups of no more than four people and that masks and social distancing are used at all times. We are also asking that volunteers do not carpool with anyone not in their household. Thank you for your cooperation in keeping the Jackson County birding community safe.