Advanced Atlasing: Revisiting Confusing Aspects of WBBA II Protocols

Nicholas M. Anich
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Tom Prestby
Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas

Top 7 issues that caused confusion

1. Atlas eBird vs. Regular eBird

2. Mobile Checklists

3. Complete Checklists

4. How often to enter codes

5. Block lines and hotspots

6. Spatial precision

7. Night checklists

1. There are multiple eBird portals

Atlas eBird
ebird.org/atlaswi

Wisconsin eBird
ebird.org/wi

eBird
ebird.org

Minimal difference

When to use Atlas eBird portal

When to use Atlas eBird portal

- In practical terms, this means that you will be using the atlas portal exclusively in June and July

- You will be using regular portal in winter and offseason

- During transition months (primarily March-May, August-September) may have to pay more attention to which portal you're on.

Why separate portals?

If you used the atlas portal with no breeding codes
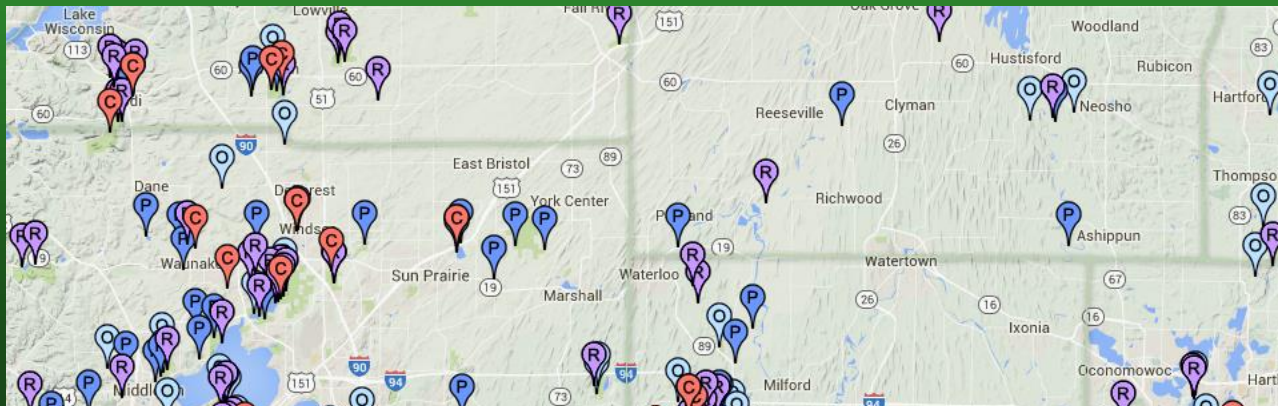
-Non-atlasing hours tallied as atlasing

WBBA II Effort Hours
(Diurnal/Nocturnal):

45.15 / 2.00

If you put breeding codes into the regular eBird portal

-We won't know if you stayed in block lines

-Your observations will not appear in atlas results!

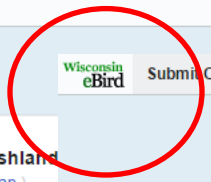# How do I check the portal on a list?

Can I fix it if the checklist is in the wrong portal? Yes!

Lower right of checklist

Change Portal

If you click "Change Portal", this checklist will be assigned to the portal you select below. This will allow you to switch to a portal-specific protocol if desired.

Change portal to: Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas ▾

eBird Chile
eBird Pacific Northwest
eBird Peru
eBird Portugal
eBird Québec
Eremaea eBird
ISS eBird
Klamath-Siskiyou eBird
LWBA
Maine eBird
Mass Audubon eBird
New Hampshire eBird
New Jersey eBird
New Zealand eBird
PR eBird
Texas eBird
Vermont eBird
Virginia eBird
Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas
Young Birders Network

Change Portal

Edit Species List   Review List

submitting a **complete check**...   ...dentify?   Edit Answer

Same location
Hot Pond (Xcel Energy), Ashland, Ashland County, Wisconsin, US

Same area and date
Another location near Hot Pond (Xcel Energy), Ashland, Ashland County, Wisconsin, US on Tue Mar 22, 2016

Same area
Another location near Hot Pond (Xcel Energy), Ashland, Ashland County, Wisconsin, US

Same date
Tue Mar 22, 2016

Different location and date

☐ Hide from eBird Output ?

⤳ Change Portal

But if you change a checklist over, make sure all those observations were in the correct block!

2. Can I enter mobile checklists?

Mobile atlasing is coming soon (*maybe* yet this year?)

For now, there is a workaround.

Enter your checklist through eBird Mobile. Use text comments box to take notes on codes.

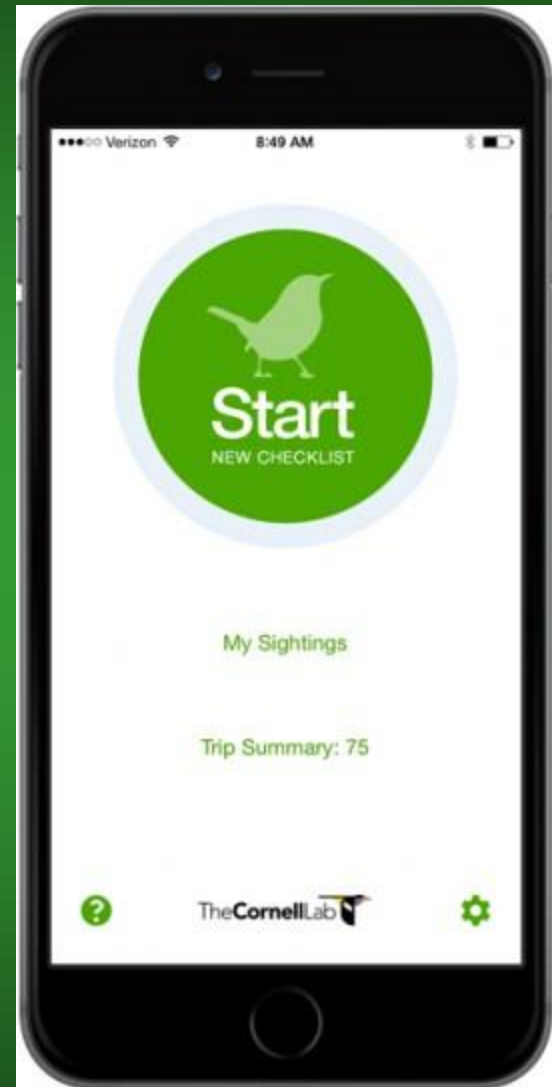# Can I enter mobile checklists?

When you get home
NO NEED TO RE-ENTER THE CHECKLIST

Simply get on computer and:

1. Double-check the location with regards to block lines (can use "Submit Observations", "Find it on a Map" to see where the location falls)

2. Switch the portal

3. Enter codes using drop-down menu

3. Entering "complete" checklists

What is a complete checklist?

Are you submitting a **complete checklist** of the birds you were able to identify?

○ Yes   ○ No   ?

◄   Save   ►

Entering "complete" checklists

Why do we do this?

- Less "throwing away" data

- Better inference about species that were present and detectable

- More powerful analysis

- You were there anyway!

Entering "complete" checklists

Complete checklists not available for Incidental observation type.

We recommend :

-Traveling
-Traveling - Property Specific
-Stationary

protocols when you were actually birding.

Observation Type:

- Traveling - Property Specific — You traveled a specific distance within a block AND within a single property boundary, around a state natural area, driving a refuge loop, biking roads entirely through private...

- Traveling – General — You traveled a specific distance within a block but not within a single property bounda... walking a trail, driving a road, birding by bike.

- Stationary — You stayed at a fixed location — watching from a window, hawkwatching, seawatchin...

- Incidental — Birding was not your primary purpose — noting a bird while driving or gardening.

- Other — Choose... ▼

4. Should I enter a code for a species already confirmed in a block?

- Enter codes as often as you can

- We recommend entering codes every time you observe them

- Although we realize there is a balance with how much work it is at areas you bird very often.

- Hard for us to determine status of birds with no codes or comments – repeat sighting or forgot code?

- Personally, it's less work for me to enter it than it is to look up the status of that bird in the block!

How often to enter codes?

Eastern Meadowlark

What are these records?

Could they have informed the atlas?
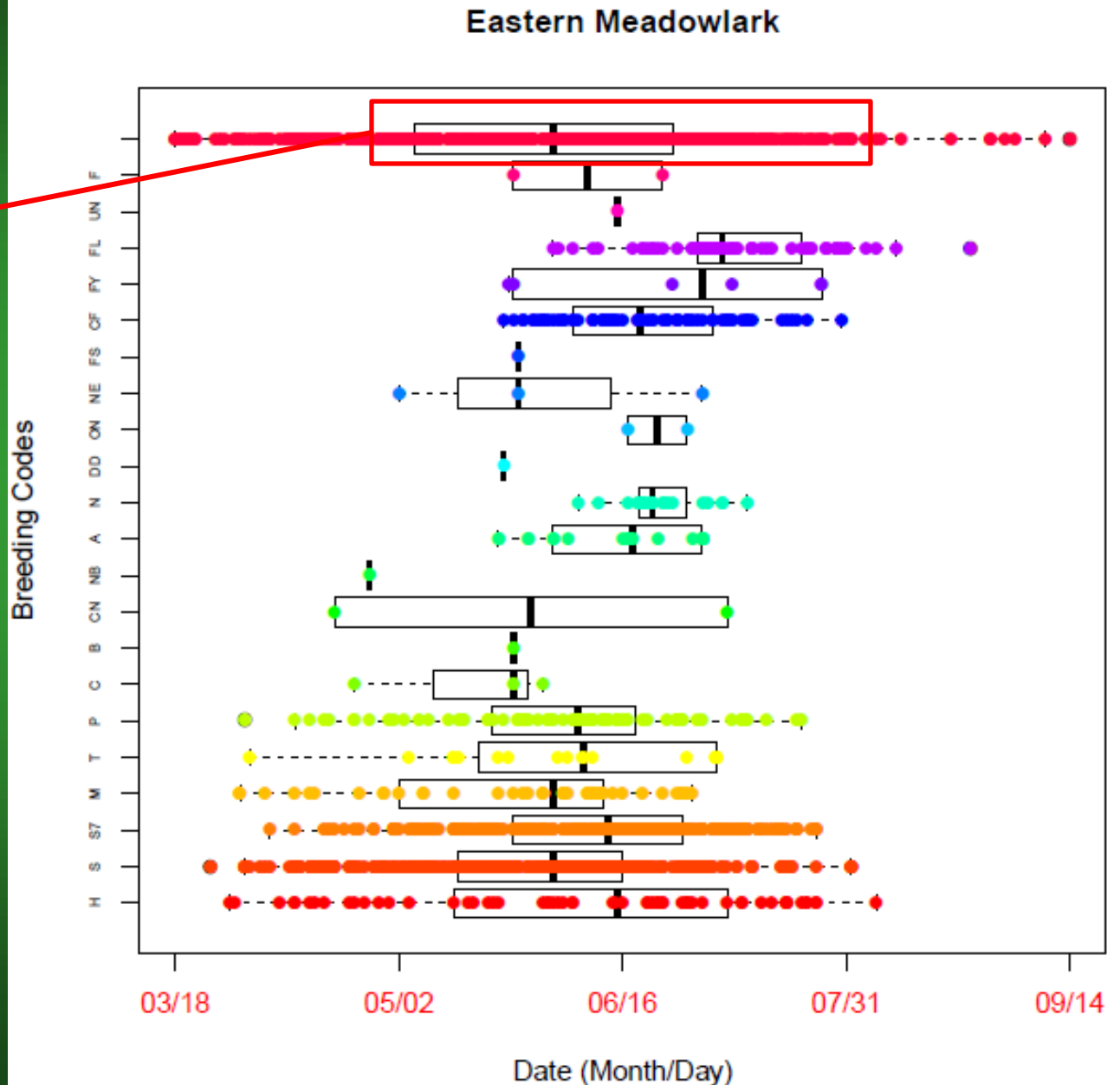
How often to enter codes?

- Will repeat entry of birds result in "double counting" inflating their apparent numbers?

  No, this will be taken into account

- Are changes in how we report checklists making it difficult to compare to WBBA I?

  No, things will be summarized the same way

5. Block line boundaries and hotspots/existing eBird locations

- A cardinal rule of atlasing is that species should be reported in the block where the breeding behavior was observed

- Beware eBird Hotspots (and your existing personal locations), which often do not jive with Atlas block lines

- It always helps to look at block lines before you go birding!

Multiple ways to find where block lines are

- On Atlas eBird, go to "Submit Observations", "Find it on a Map"

- Atlas Interactive Map – mobile or printable

- Atlas Static Maps
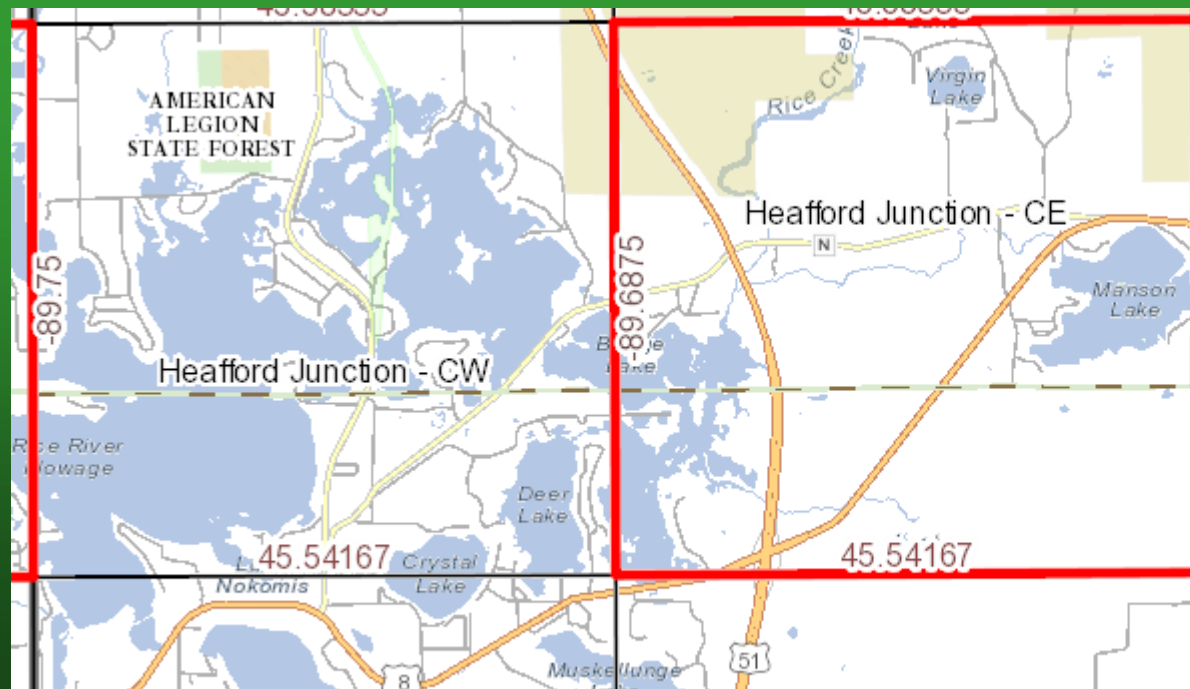
Block lines

- Horicon Marsh Auto Tour
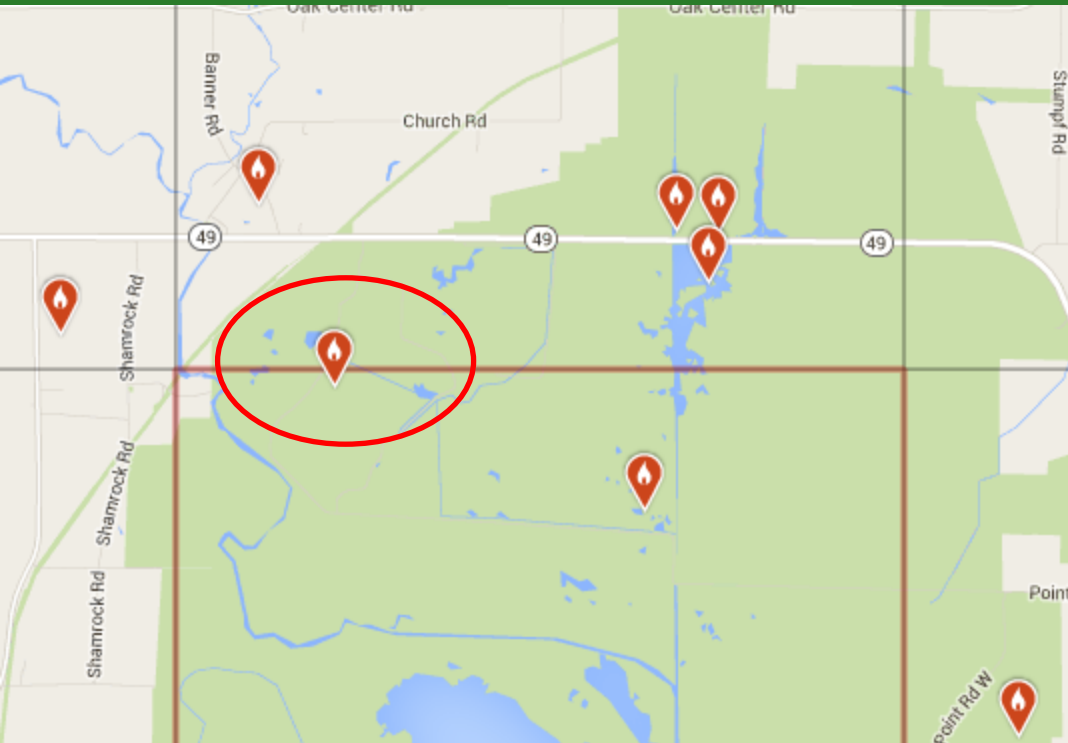
Block lines

- UW-Madison Arboretum
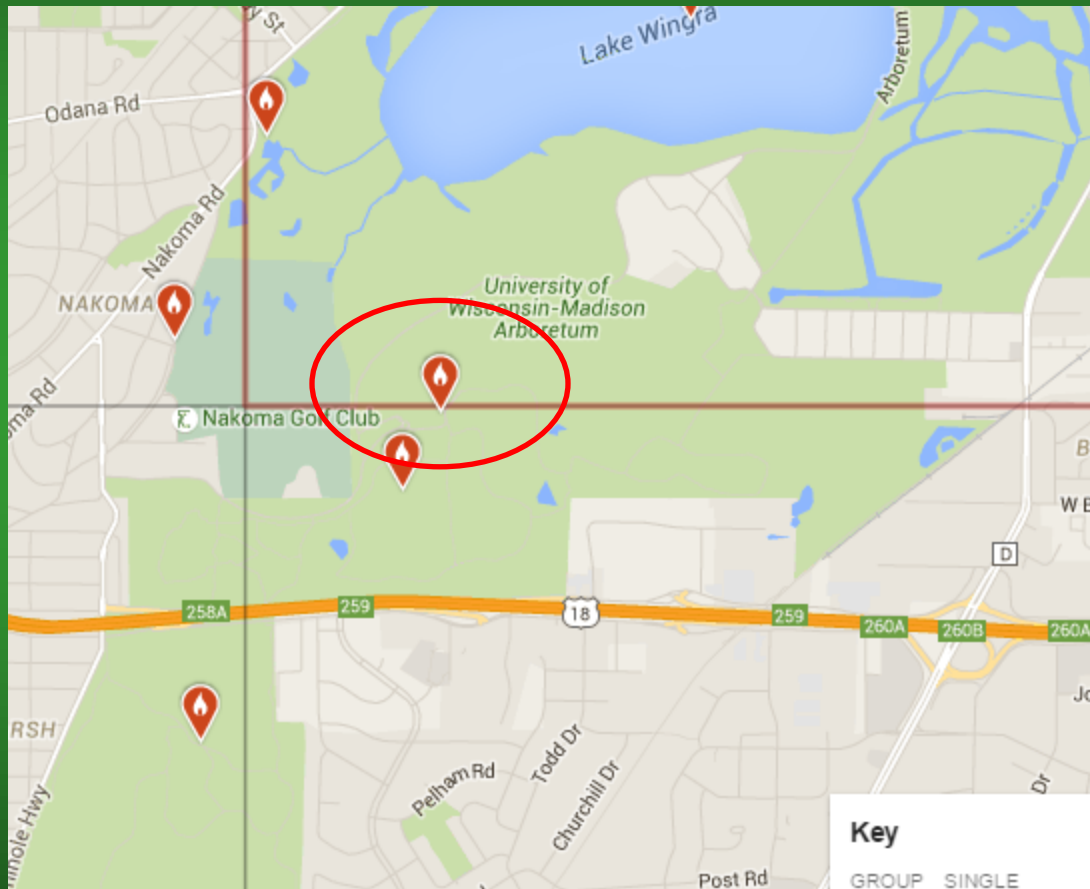
Block lines

- Even Lambeau Field!
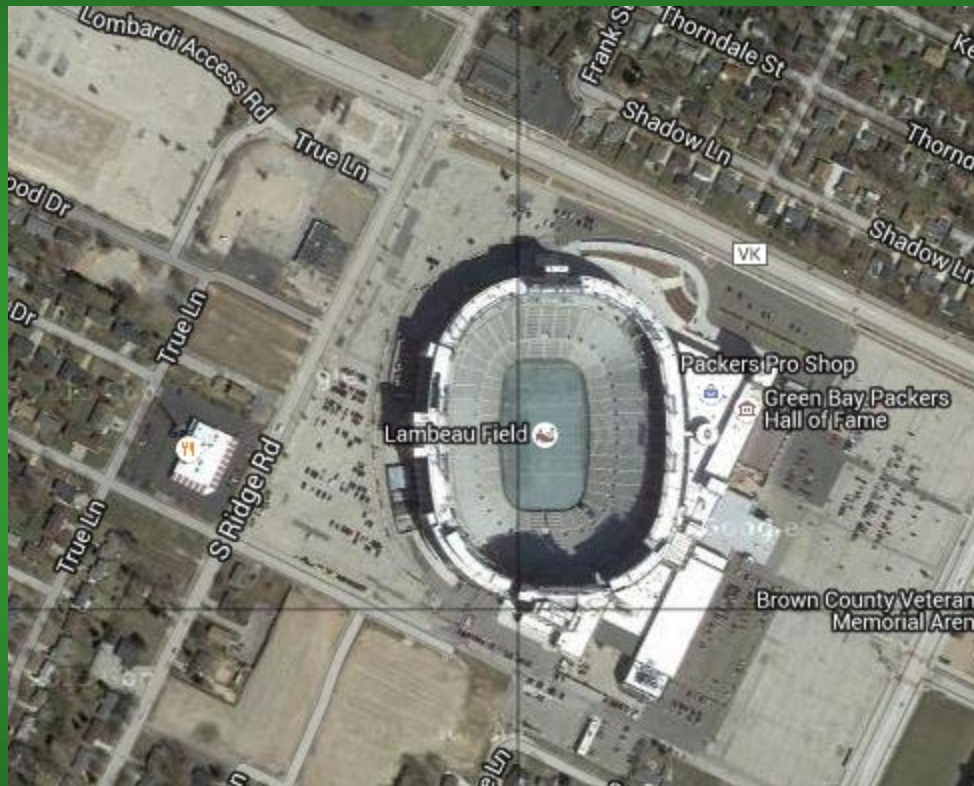
Block lines

What to do?

1. Awareness of issue

2. Use this, not this

unless you are absolutely sure of block line situation

Submit Observations   Explore Data   My eBird   Help

1 2 3   **Where did you bird?**

Identify the location where you made your observation

Choose from Your Locations

**Ellis

Edit "My Locations" list

Find it on a Map (recommended method)

🔍 *Enter a block, a county, or 'Wisconsin'*

Select an entire block as your location (**strongly discouraged**)

🔍 *Enter a block name...*

Please consider using more precise locations when reporting to eBird so that

Block lines
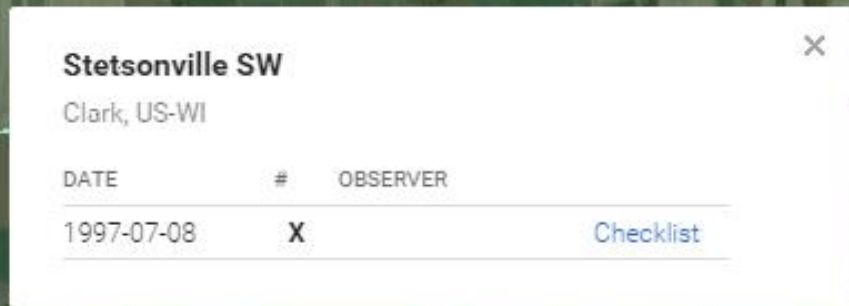
- The "find it on a map" option allows you to look at how hotspots and existing personal locations on your drop-down list relate to block lines.
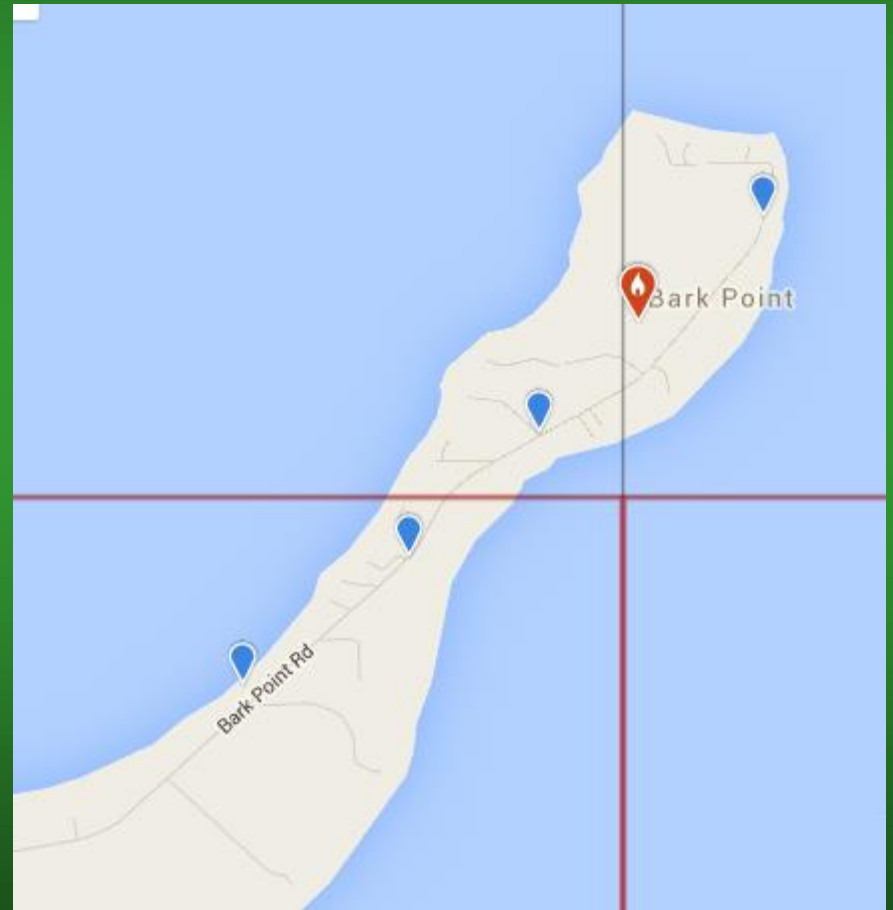
6. What is this whole putting-multiple-locations-in-1-block thing?

- In WBBA I, everything was plotted at block level.


Here's a Yellow-headed Blackbird record from WBBA I.

Stetsonville SW

Clark, US-WI

DATE	#	OBSERVER	
1997-07-08	X		Checklist

© 2015 Google

6. What is this whole putting-multiple-locations-in-1-block thing?

- In WBBA I, everything was plotted at block level.

Taylor

Stetsonville SW

Clark, US-WI

DATE	#	OBSERVER	
1997-07-08	X		Checklist

×

Clark

Marathon
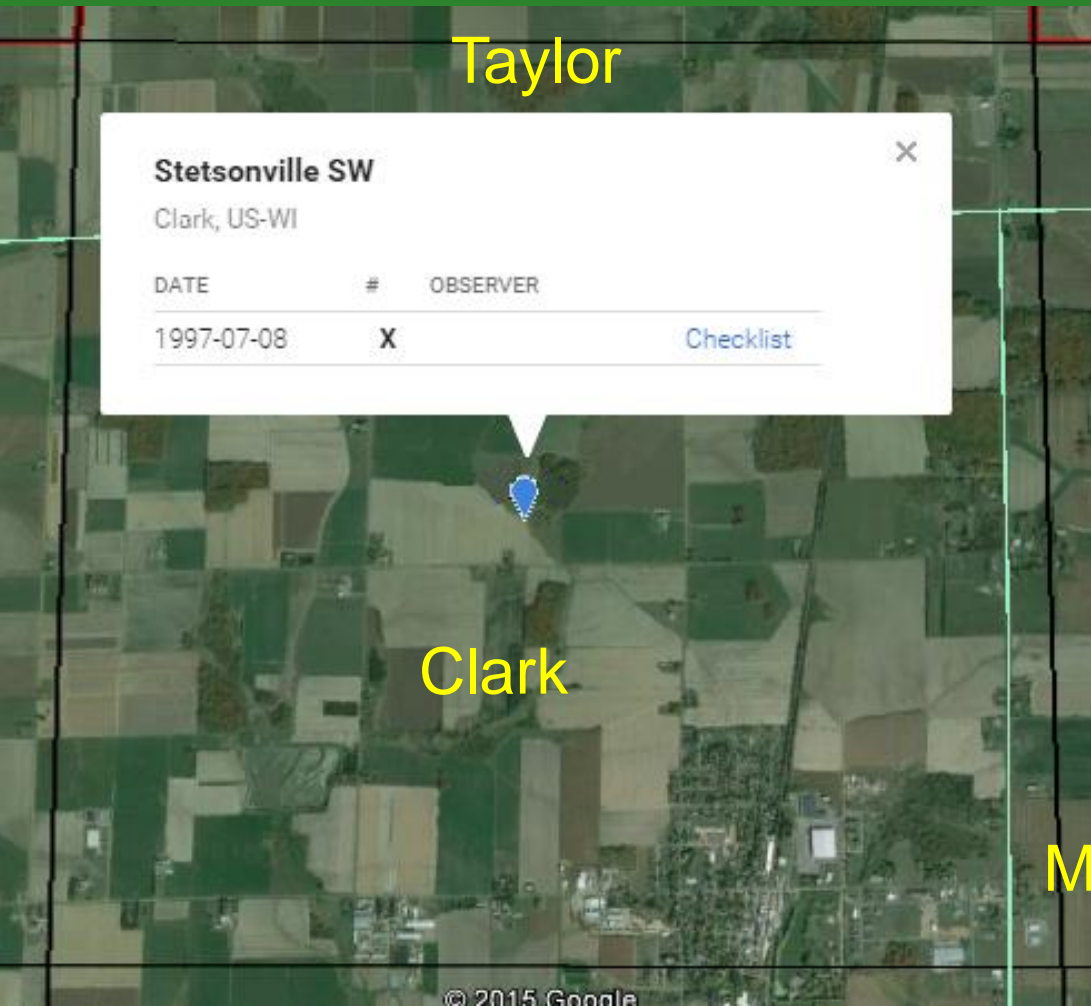
Here's a Yellow-headed Blackbird record from WBBA I.

Where was it?

What COUNTY was it even in?

© 2015 Google

Location Precision

- It's the 21st century, we can do better

- Better information for conservation

- Better information for scientists

- In general, whenever you can make a location that's closer to the bird location, it's more useful

- But there is a tradeoff – plotting every bird to exact location is not feasible

- Find a happy medium, split blocks up in a way that makes sense to you

Location Precision
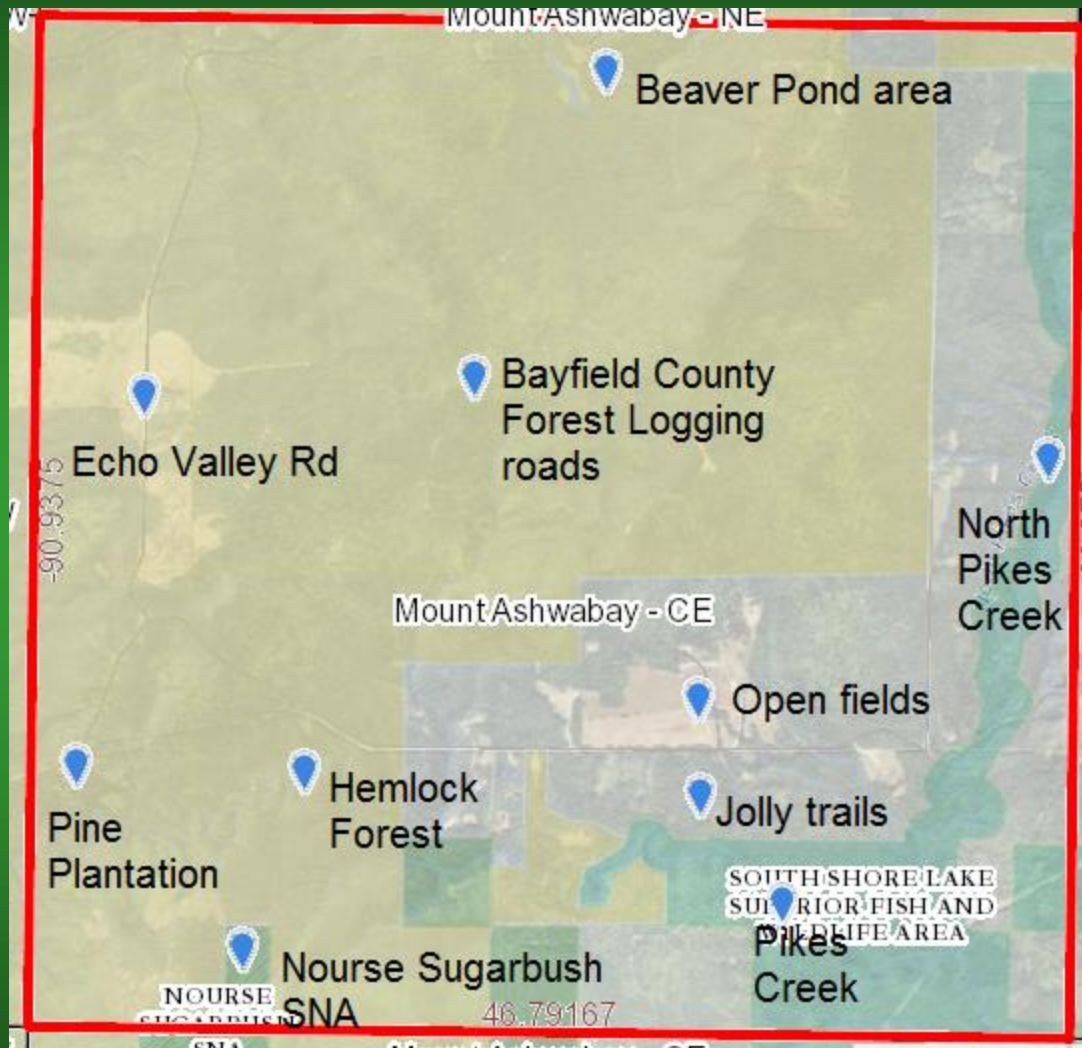
- Specific locations often represent <u>habitats</u>

- Or <u>property boundaries</u> (use Traveling – Property Specific protocol)

Location Precision
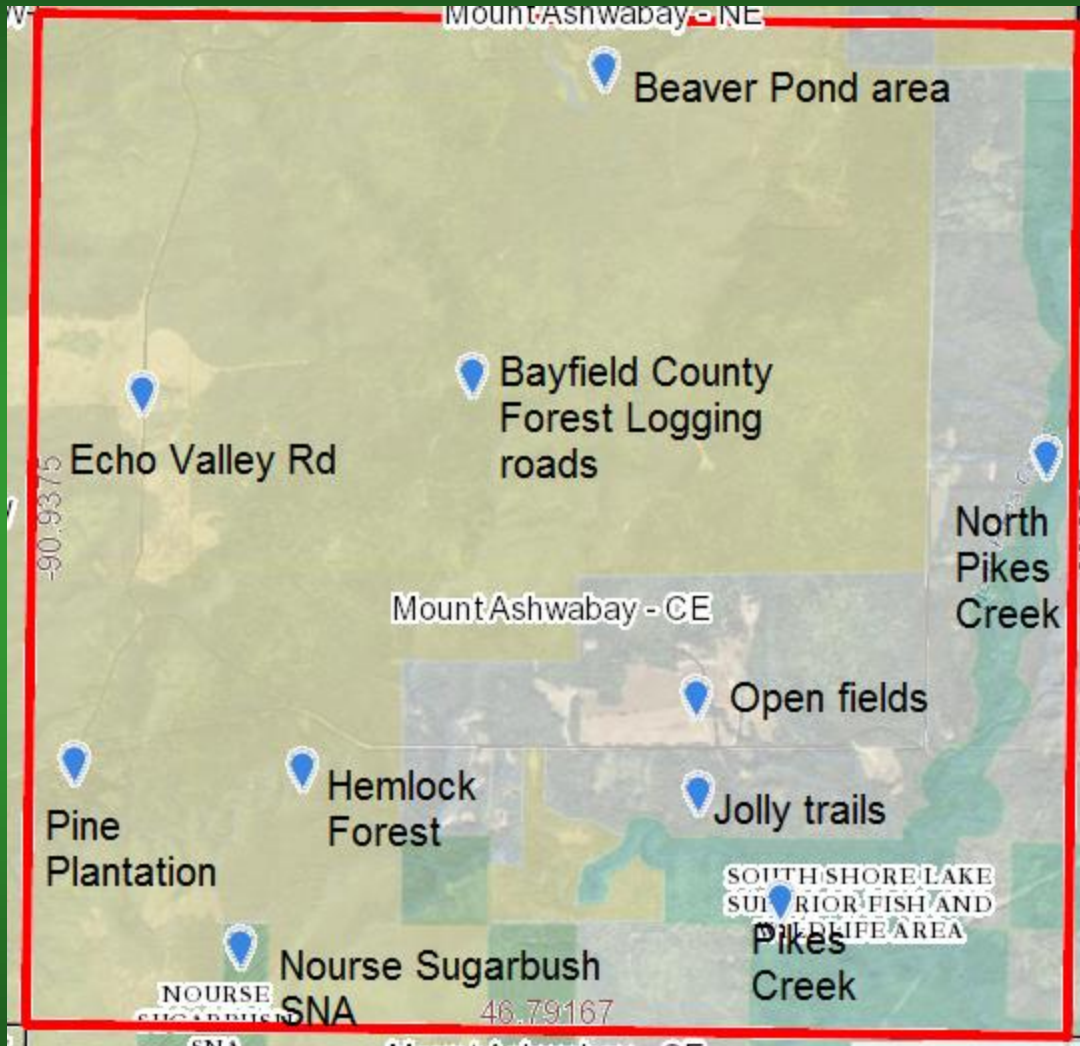
- Pushpins represent a center point of a region that you define

- How exactly you split up checklists is up to you

- Any specific point is more useful than center point

Location Precision
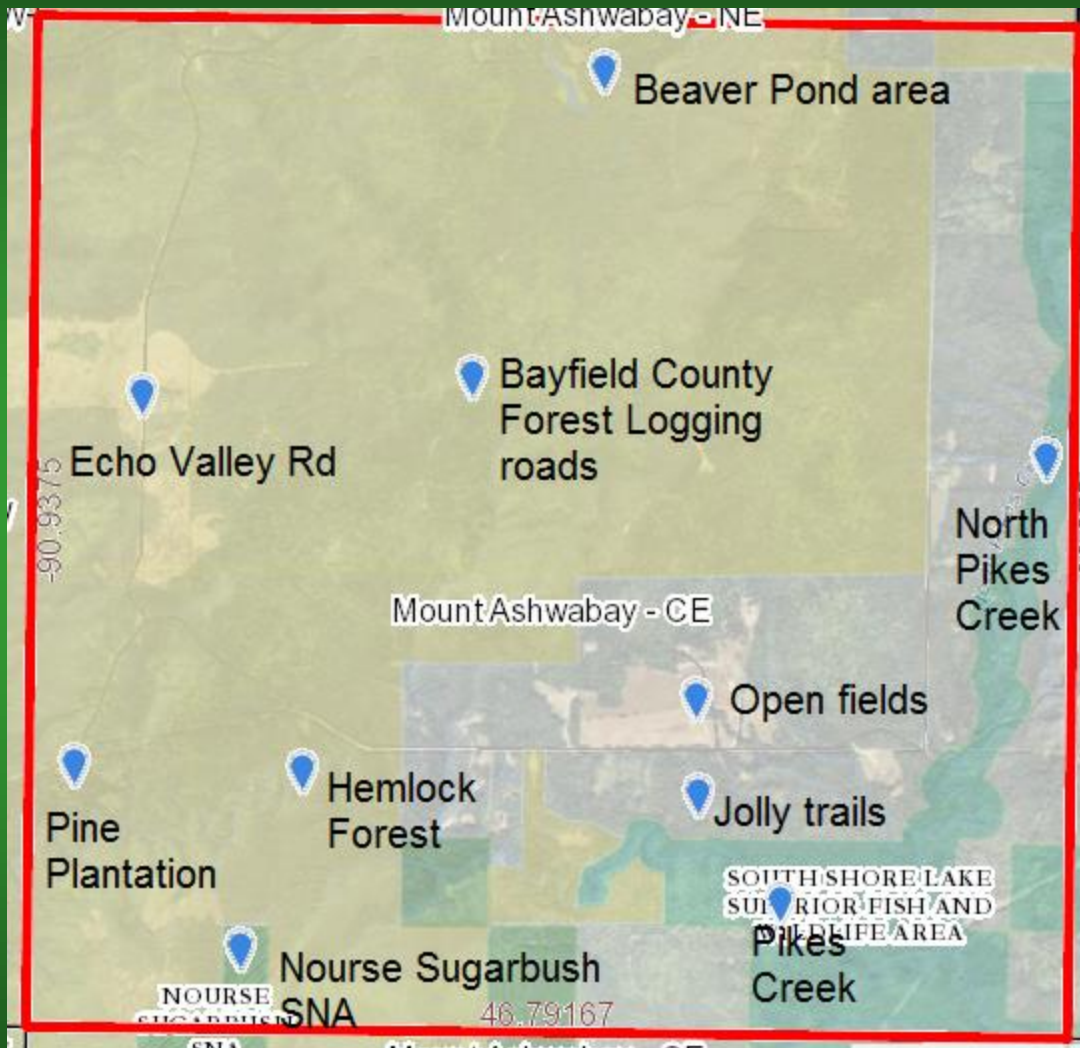
- Breaking up locations might seem tedious at first

- But becomes helpful during repeat visits to block

Location Precision
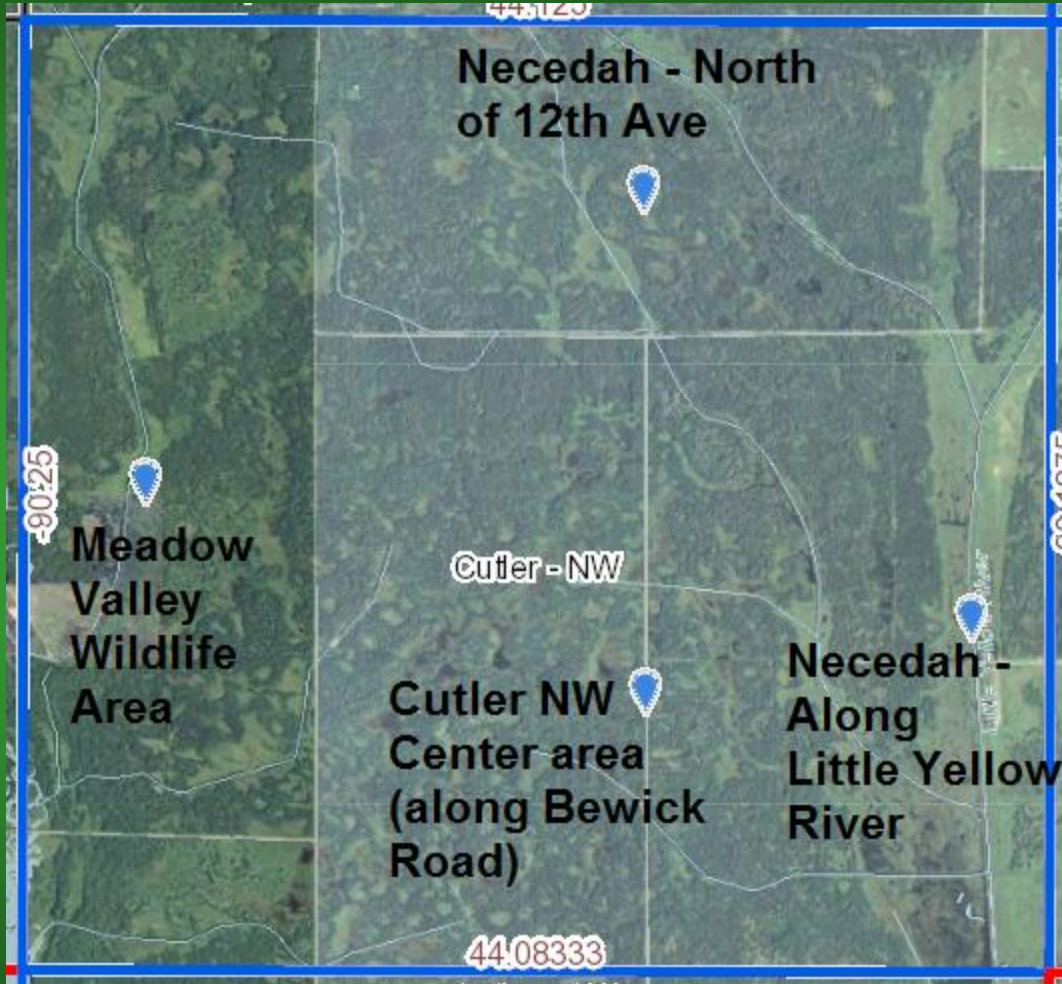
- Some blocks are quite uniform in properties and habitats

- Some blocks may not need as many unique locations

- Keep checklist distances under 5 miles (blocks are 3 x 3 miles)

7. Coding night hours

- To be complete, a block must have night survey

- Atlas eBird tracks nocturnal hours

WBBA II Effort Hours
(Diurnal/Nocturnal):

45.15 / 2.00

- How does it do this?

  - The cutoff for when a checklist is considered nocturnal is 40 minutes before sunrise and 20 minutes after sunset

  - It uses the start time of the checklist to determine if the checklist is nocturnal or not

  - Watch for the nocturnal icon on night checklists

Mon Aug 10, 2015 8:52 PM ☾ Nocturnal

Coding night hours

- Submit a separate checklist for night effort, carefully noting the start time
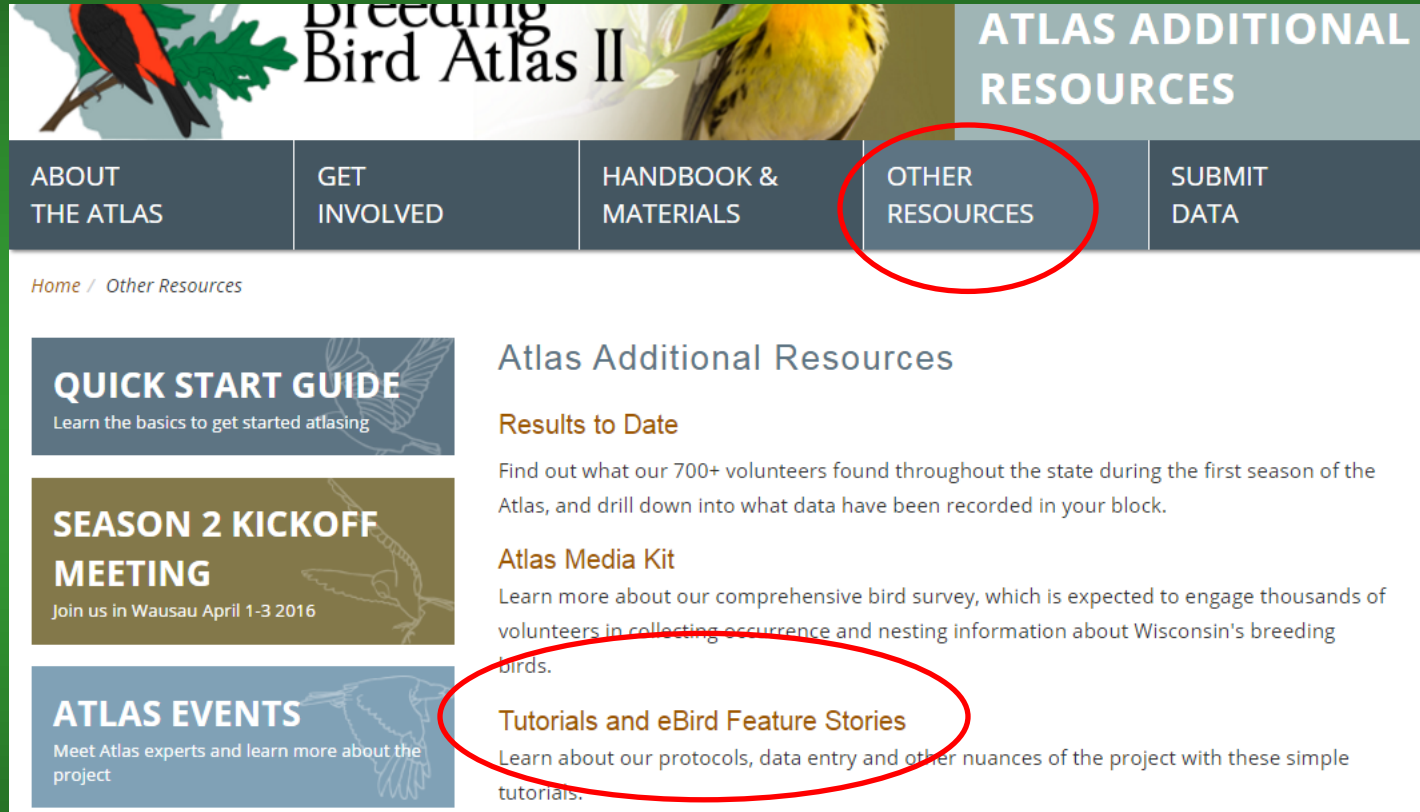
Coding night hours

- Because it's important to record that night effort happened, you can even enter a blank checklist into Atlas eBird to record night effort for a block, even if you had no detections.
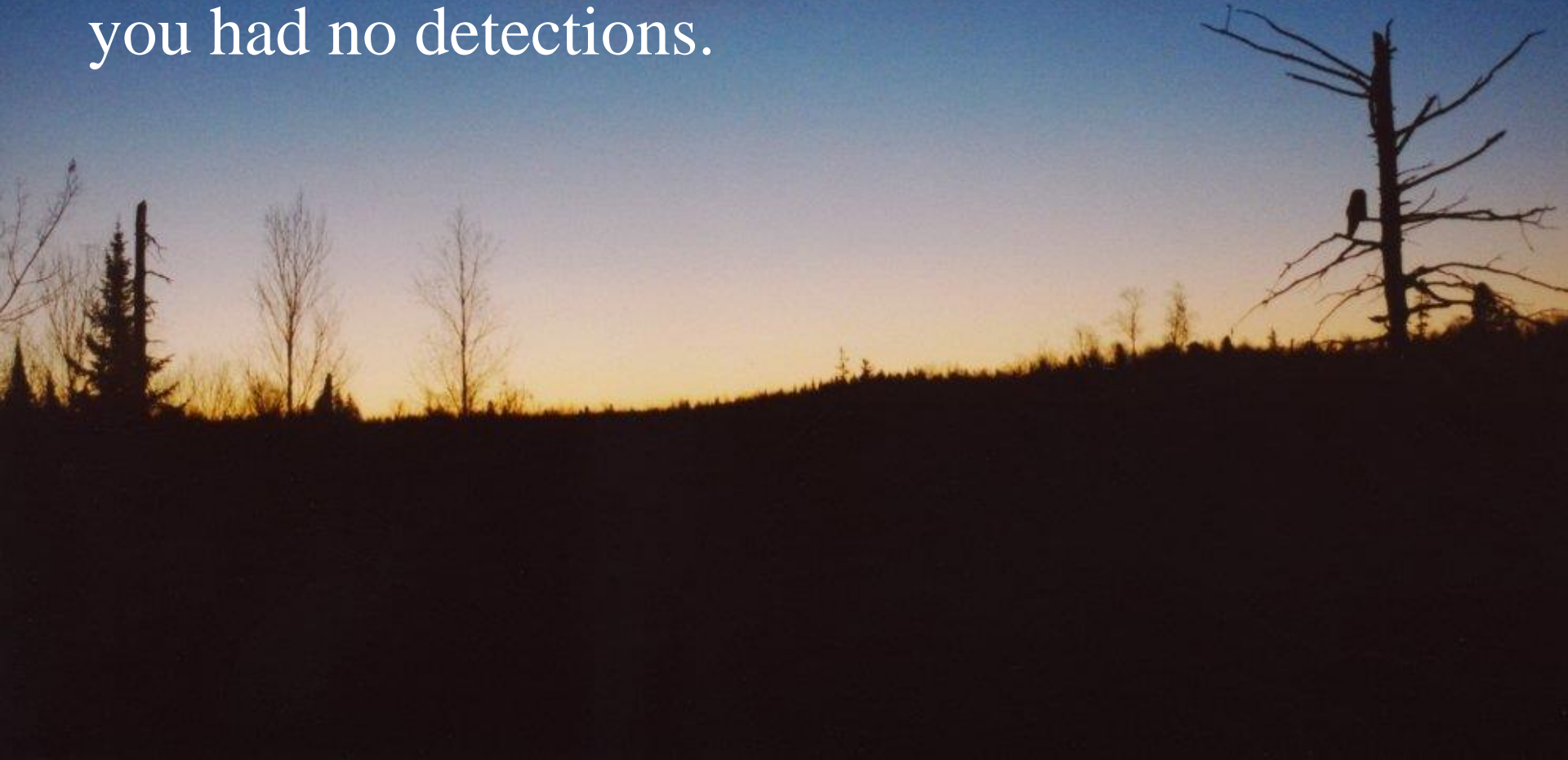
Detailed Tutorials are Available on These Topics

Or consult the Atlas Handbook!

www.wsobirds.org/atlas