

2023 Youth Birding Competition Rules

ADVANCED REGISTRATION REQUIRED. Visit tinyurl.com/birdingcomp2023 or email jennifer@carpenternaturecenter.org to register.

1. Teams must register in one of three age divisions:

Participants in the 16 year old and up division are allowed to have an adult chaperone/driver but must identify birds on their own – Adults must not help locating or identifying birds.

Participants in the 11-15 year old division must bird with adult supervision – Adults should not help locating or identifying birds.

Participants in the 10 year old & under age division must bird with adult supervision – Adults may provide limited help locating or identifying birds.

2. Teams must register in one of two categories:

Backyard Birder - Team members must stay within line of sight of their rooftop at all times.

Carpenter Nature Center Count Circle – Teams can travel as much of the [Hastings Birding Area](#) as they want.

3. If a team comes to a consensus on the identification of a bird, and the adult knows it is wrong, they can strike the species from the list. Teams cannot count that individual bird again, though if they encounter the species again and correctly identify it, it can go on the list. This helps avoid the identification becoming a “guessing game” until they hit upon the correct identification.

4. Teams registered in the Backyard Birder category must have at least 1 participant and not more than 5. Teams registered in the CNC Count Circle category must have at least 2 participants and not more than 5.

5. Teams must compete within the age division of their oldest participant.

6. All birds counted must be identified by at least 2 team members. NOTE: If a participant is the sole team member in their home, adult supervision may confirm the identification, as long as the correct ID is proposed by the participant.

7. Birds must be conclusively identified by sight or sound. A bird only identified to group (i.e. scaup, either greater or lesser) may be counted as a species, if no other bird from that group appears on the list. Use common sense: if in doubt about the bird’s identity, don’t count it.

8. Participants must follow the [American Birding Association \(ABA\) code of Birding Ethics](#). *Obey all access rules to public lands, and acquire permission to access private land. Follow all existing local, state and federal laws. Please use common sense to stay safe during the competition.*

9. Birds counted must be alive, wild, unrestrained and must be identified from within the area of play (see notes for Backyard Birder and CNC Count Circle categories above) to be counted.

10. Flushing birds from their nest or cavity is not allowed.

11. Electronic or recorded birdcalls may be used (within ABA code of birding ethics) - i.e. not used with rare or endangered species, or in areas where their use is prohibited (some National Wildlife Refuges).

12. Birds can only be counted during the following timeframes:

Backyard Birder—12:00am—11:59pm on April 22, 2023.

Carpenter Nature Center Count Circle— 12:00am—4:30pm on April 22, 2023.

13. During the Count, teams must make every reasonable effort to avoid receiving bird-finding help from non-participants. Phone and radio contacts and pre-arranged field encounters are not permitted. Participants may not travel with or walk any substantial distance with non-participants, except with guided field trips for lower (1.b. & 1.c.) division participants. When other birders are encountered accidentally, participants may not solicit bird-finding information and should avoid receiving any information from them, to the extent that common courtesy allows. If despite all precautions information is received during an accidental encounter, the team may use it. Any information received prior to the Count may be used during the Count.

14. The team must submit the checklist to the judges no later than:

Backyard Birder—8:00am on April 24, 2023.

Carpenter Nature Center Count Circle—4:30pm on April 22, 2023.

15. Totals are considered final once lists are submitted.

16. The decision of the judges in all rulings is final.

17. Have fun :)