

Appendix B—Protocol Descriptions

Traveling Count--Observations made over a known period of time while traveling a known distance are classified as a Traveling Count. You should be able to estimate the distance that you traveled during your outing, which can be walking, driving, or even by boat. If you do have a reliable estimate of the area you covered while you recorded the species, consider entering your observations as an Exhaustive Area Count. If you aren't sure of the distance or area you covered, please enter your observation as a Casual Observation. Examples of Traveling Counts are: walking a trail at a local park, driving an auto loop at a National Wildlife Refuge, participating on a pelagic (boat) trip, or even birding while jogging through your neighborhood. Required Date/Effort fields: Date, Start Time, Duration, and Distance Covered.

Stationary Count--Observations made over a known period of time, but without any distance/area components, are classified as a Stationary Count. This does not mean you must stand completely still as you record the birds, but you should remain in an area approximately 30 meters (30 yards) in diameter while you are recording birds. If you move much farther than that, you should consider entering your observations as a Traveling Count or an Exhaustive Area Count. Examples of Stationary Counts are: a hawk watch, lake watch, or sea watch, or even sitting in your backyard for a period of time identifying birds. Required Date/Effort fields: Date, Start Time, and Duration.

Area Count--Area Counts are made while thoroughly searching a given location or area. These types of counts are sometimes used by biologists when monitoring a specific site, however, they can be appropriate for casual birding if you are able to estimate the size (acres or hectares) of the area you searched. The key measure of effort is the size of your area. Secondary measures of effort are time (duration) and distance traveled. If you are unsure of the size of your search area, but have a reliable estimate of the distance you traveled, consider submitting your observations as Travel Counts. If you are unsure of the area you covered, but have a reliable estimate of distance, consider entering your observations as a Traveling Count. Examples of Area Counts include: actively searching a local park or woodlot for breeding birds or canoeing back and forth through a marsh to count wading birds. A birding trek around your neighborhood or privately owned property can be an Area Count if you are able to estimate the size of the area you searched. Required Date/Effort fields: Date, Start Time, Duration, and Area Covered.

eBird Random Count--Observations made at a randomly selected location over period *of at least five minutes*. This protocol relates to how the location was selected. For other eBird protocols, the birder selects the location, but the eBird Random Count is different in that the birder randomly selects the location, thus eliminating the bias inherent when birders select areas that they deem to be 'good for birds'. To find a random location travel 3 or 5 miles from the last location you selected in any direction. Choose 3 or 5 miles depending on how much ground you intend to cover for the day, and try to avoid double-counting birds from a previous birding location (i.e., travel farther in open habitats than in forested ones). Stop at the first available, safe, location and conduct your count for at least five minutes, keeping track of

duration and distance. Required Date/Effort fields: Date, Start Time, Duration, and Distance Covered. Distance can be zero (i.e., a 'stationary count').

Casual Observation--Observations that involve no time or distance/area components are classified as Incidental Sightings. Examples of an Incidental Sighting are: an oriole that flies by while you are checking your mail, a hummingbird feeding in your backyard while you wash dishes, a grouse just off the side of the road while you drive to work, or a flock of waxwings that move through your yard while you are weeding your garden. Required Date/Effort fields: Date.