

**Bird
Photography**

By Paul Simmons



For a copy of this presentation follow this link:

<http://nvps.org/main/docs/BirdPhotography2012.pdf>

Planning



1. Favorite
2. How I find Birds

Favorite Local Places



- 1. Occoquan National Wildlife Refuge**
- 2. McKee-Beshers Wildlife Management Area**
- 3. Huntley Meadows**
- 4. Riverbend Park**
- 5. Great Falls National Park**
- 6. Monticello Park, Alexandria (April/May Warblers)**



- 1. Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge**
- 2. Port Mahon, DE**
- 3. Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge**
- 4. Horsehead Farm Wildlife Sanctuary**
- 5. Eastern Neck National Wildlife Refuge**

Florida Places



1. Orlando Wetlands Park
2. Viera Wetlands aka Ritch Grissom Memorial Wetlands
3. Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge
4. Circle B Bar Ranch – Lakeland, FL

Magee Marsh Warblers

**The Biggest Week in
American Birding
May 4 - May 13, 2012**

**Magee Marsh Wildlife Area
13551 W. State Route 2
Oak Harbor, Ohio 43449
419 898-4070**

www.biggestweekinamericanbirding.com/



Finding Birds

1. BirdsEye
2. eBird
3. iBird

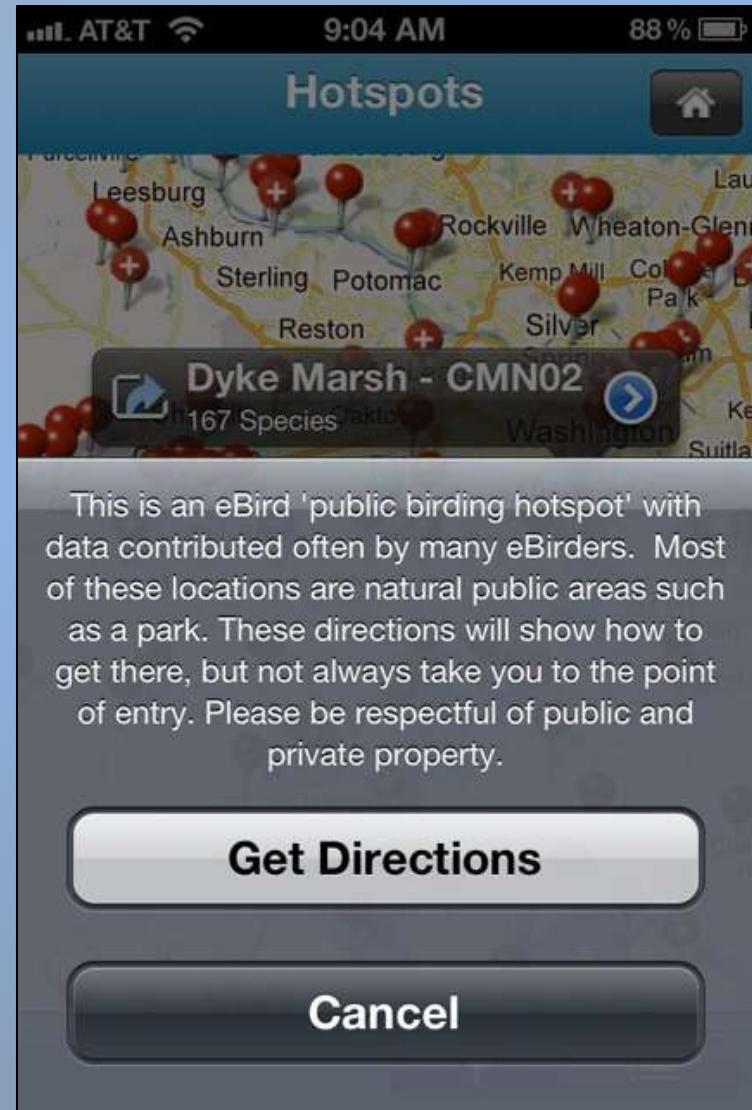
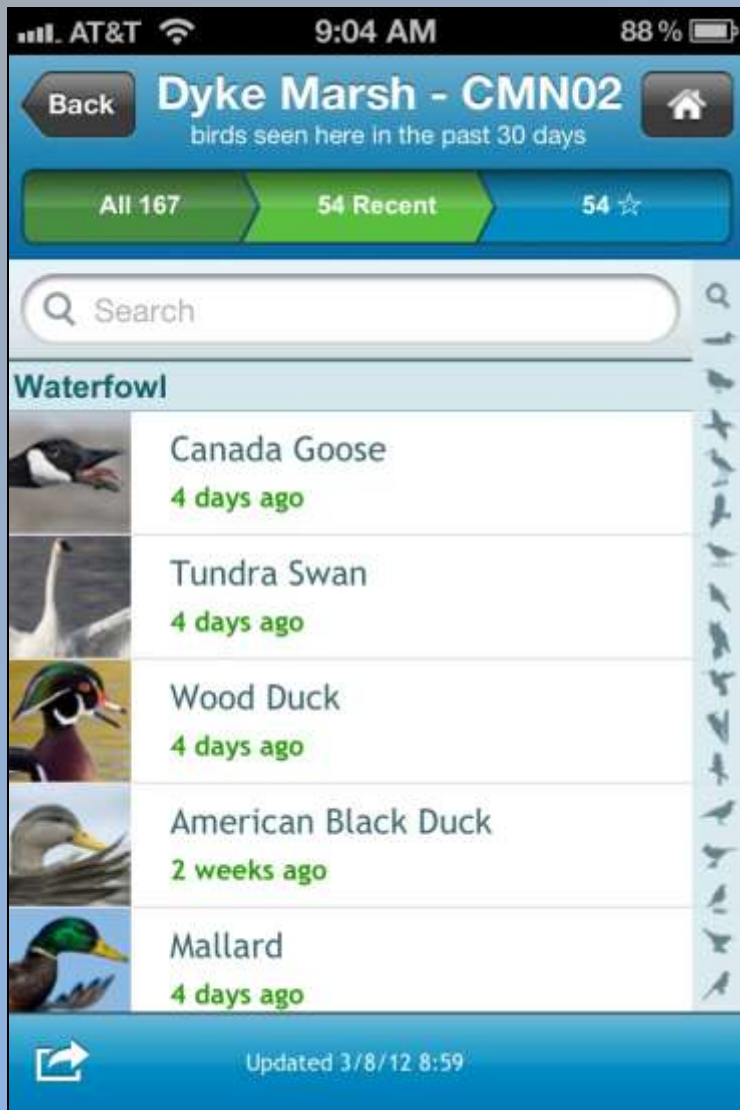


BirdsEye



www.birdseyebirding.com/

BirdsEye



BirdsEye

AT&T 6:08 AM 84%

Hotspots

0-5 miles away

- Burke Lake Park - CBR05
105 Species
- Lake Accotink Park
105 Species

5-10 miles away

- Eakin Community Park
67 Species
- Difficult Run Stream Valley Park
106 Species
- Occoquan Sewage Plant
56 Species
- Occoquan Bay NWR--CPW02
189 Species

10-20 miles away

- Huntley Meadows Park - CMN04
193 Species

Updated 3/8/12 6:09

AT&T 6:09 AM 84%

Dickcissel

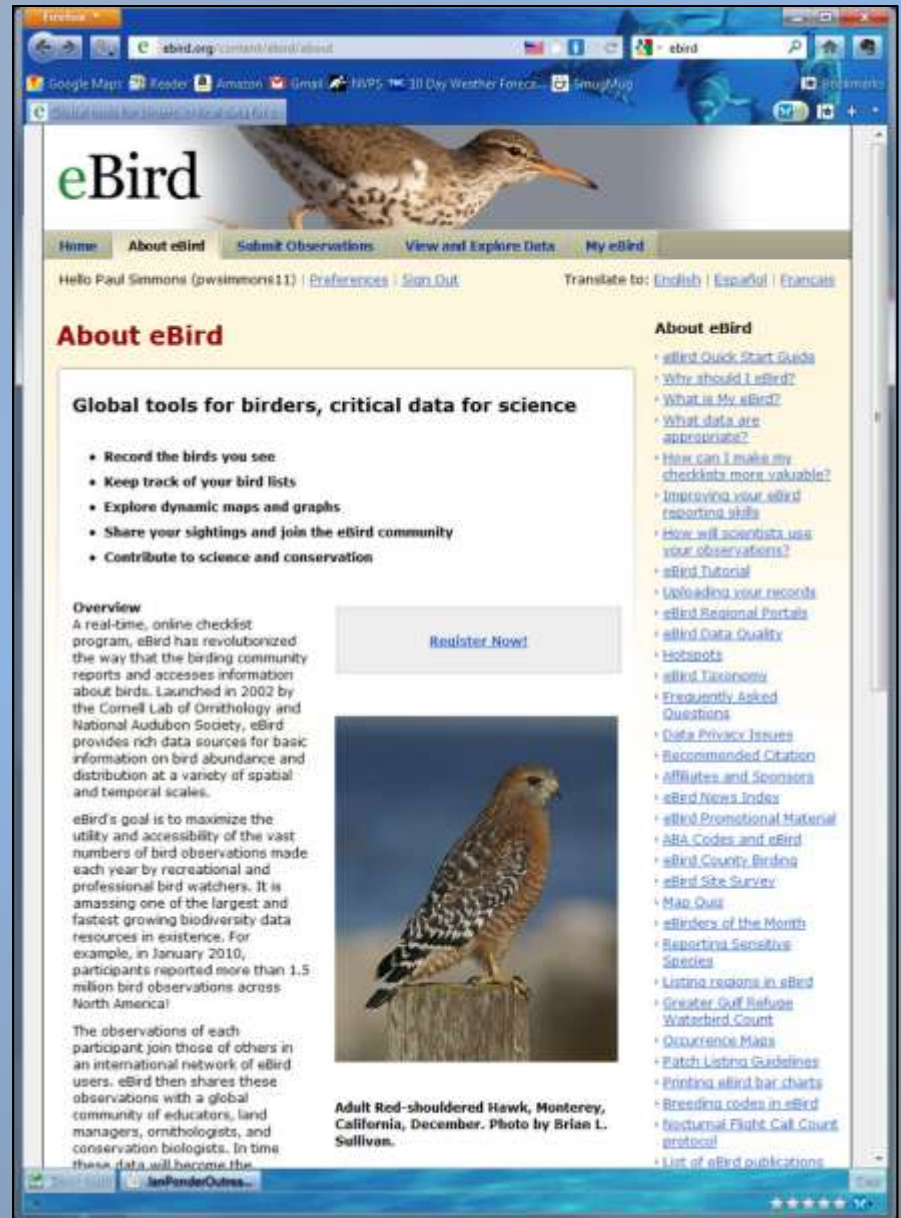
Nearest Locations with Recent Reports

Updated 3/8/12 6:09

eBird

www.eBird.org

1. Cornell Lab of Ornithology
2. Explore dynamic maps and graphs
3. Share your sightings
4. Record the birds you see
5. Birdcast – Migration Forecast Alert



The screenshot shows the eBird website in a browser window. The address bar displays "ebird.org/content/ebird/about". The page features a navigation menu with links for Home, About eBird, Submit Observations, View and Explore Data, and My eBird. A user greeting reads "Hello Paul Simmons (pwsimmons11) | Preferences | Sign Out". A "Translate to:" dropdown is set to "English".

About eBird

Global tools for birders, critical data for science


- Record the birds you see
- Keep track of your bird lists
- Explore dynamic maps and graphs
- Share your sightings and join the eBird community
- Contribute to science and conservation

Overview
A real-time, online checklist program, eBird has revolutionized the way that the birding community reports and accesses information about birds. Launched in 2002 by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society, eBird provides rich data sources for basic information on bird abundance and distribution at a variety of spatial and temporal scales.

eBird's goal is to maximize the utility and accessibility of the vast numbers of bird observations made each year by recreational and professional bird watchers. It is amassing one of the largest and fastest growing biodiversity data resources in existence. For example, in January 2010, participants reported more than 1.5 million bird observations across North America!

The observations of each participant join those of others in an international network of eBird users. eBird then shares these observations with a global community of educators, land managers, ornithologists, and conservation biologists. In time these data will become the

[Register Now!](#)

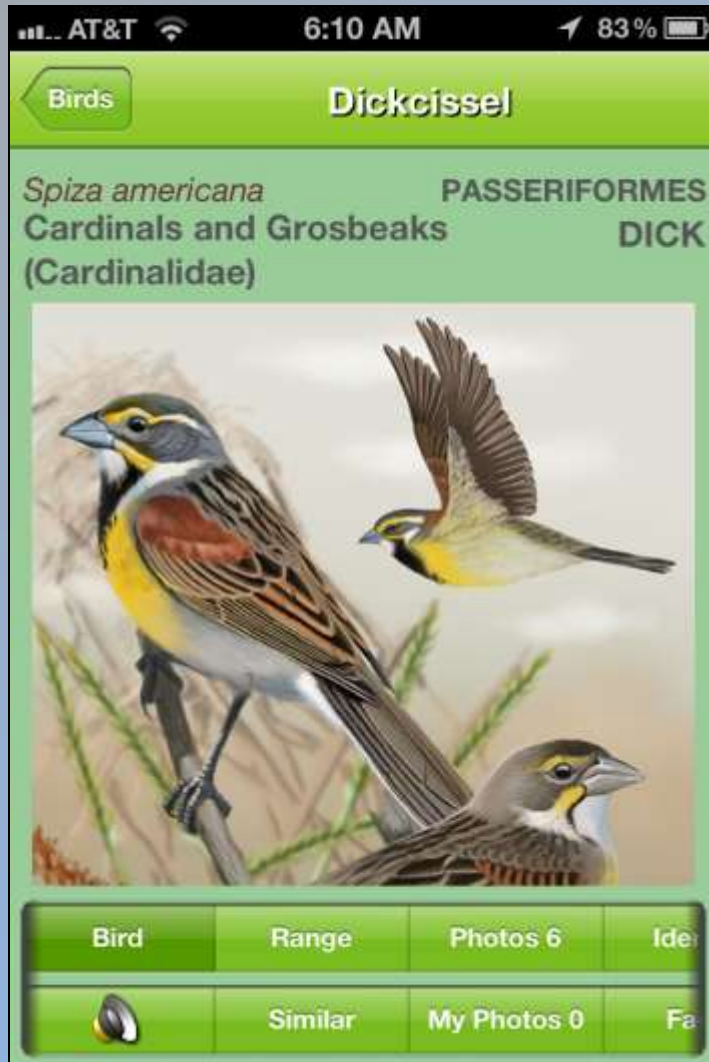


Adult Red-shouldered Hawk, Monterey, California, December. Photo by Brian L. Sullivan.

About eBird

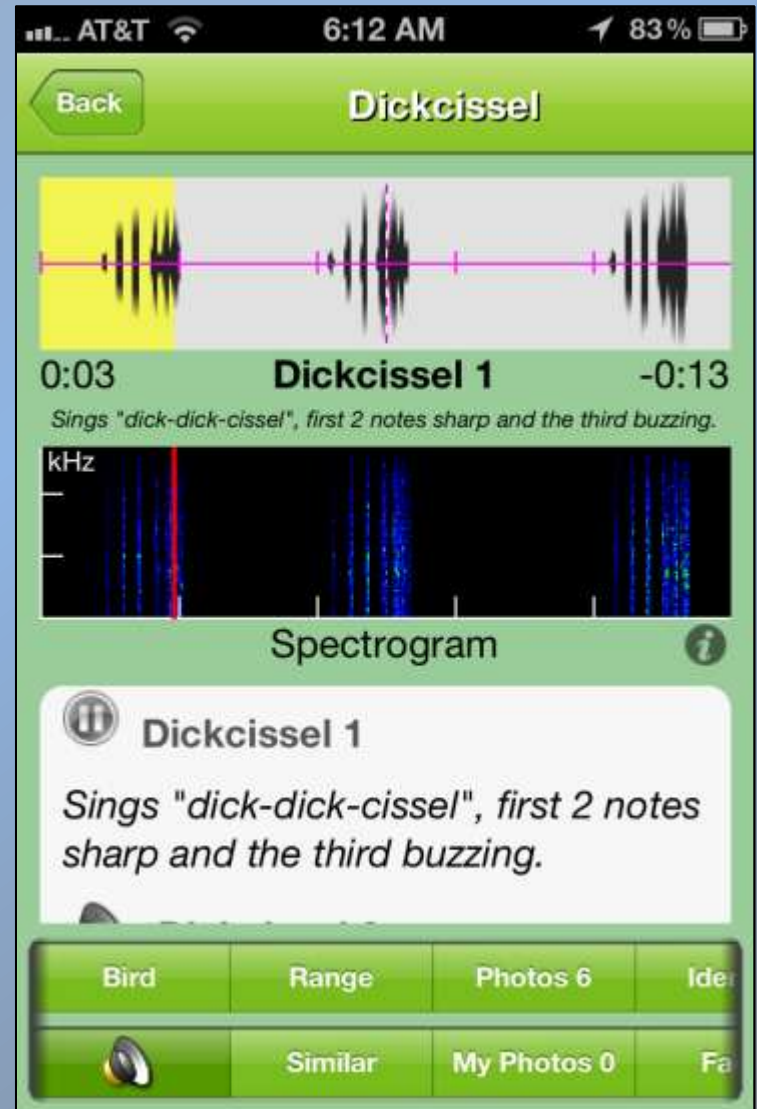
- eBird Quick Start Guide
- Why should I eBird?
- What is My eBird?
- What data are appropriate?
- How can I make my checklist more valuable?
- Improving your eBird reporting skills
- How will scientists use your observations?
- eBird Tutorial
- Uploading your records
- eBird Regional Portals
- eBird Data Quality Hotspots
- eBird Taxonomy
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Data Privacy Issues
- Recommended Citation
- Affiliates and Sponsors
- eBird News Index
- eBird Promotional Material
- ABA Codes and eBird
- eBird County Birding
- eBird Site Survey
- Map Quiz
- eBirders of the Month
- Reporting Sensitive Species
- Listing regions in eBird
- Greater Gulf Refuge Watchbird Count
- Occurrence Maps
- Patch Listing Guidelines
- Printing eBird bar charts
- Breeding codes in eBird
- Nocturnal Flight Call Count protocol
- List of eBird publications

iBird



Field Guide to the Birds for the iPhone and Android
www.ibird.com/

iBird



Trip Preparations



- 1. Search BirdsEye and eBird for Locations & Recently Seen Birds**
- 2. Select Sites to Photograph**
- 3. Study all Unfamiliar Birds
Noting: Appearance, Habitat
and Behavior.**

Curious Webs Links

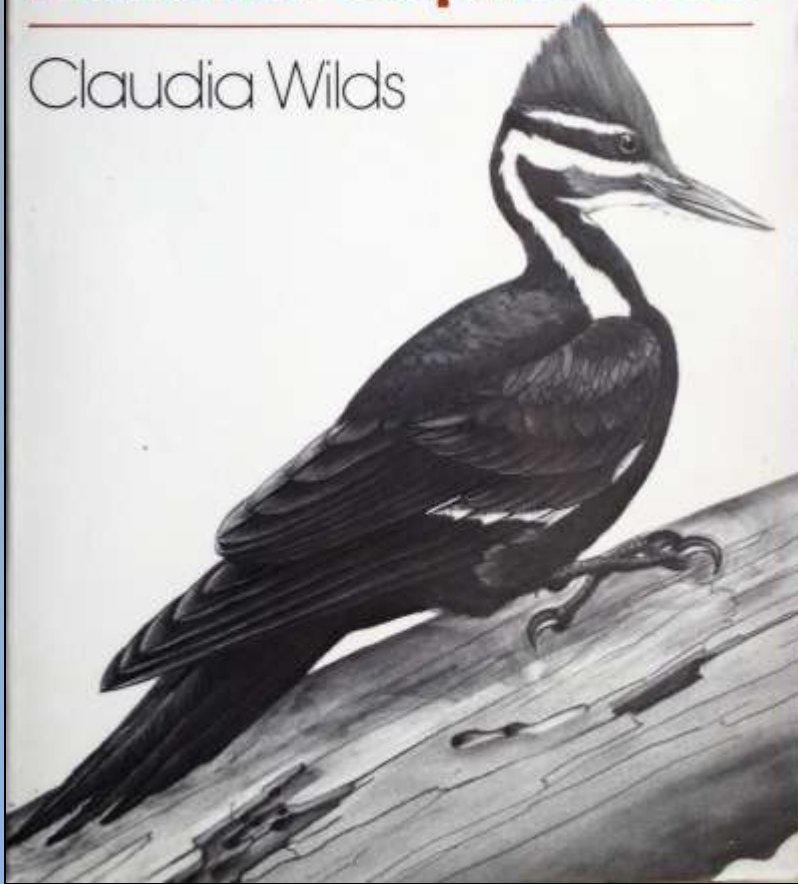
1. Virginia Birding Reports
www.birdingonthe.net/maillinglists/VABD.html
2. Maryland Birding reports
<http://birdingonthe.net/maillinglists/MDOS.html>
3. Mark DiLallo – Nature Photography Basecamp
www.MarkDiLallo.com/
4. Northern Virginia Bird Club
<http://www.nvabc.org/>
5. Paul's Smugmug Site
www.psimmons.smugmug.com/
6. Arthur Morris's Birds As Art Blog
www.birdsasart-blog.com/
7. Sam and Marilyn's Presentation from 2010
<http://nvps.org/main/docs/BirdPhotography2010.pdf>



A Smithsonian Nature Guide

Finding Birds in the National Capital Area

Claudia Wilds



Published 1983 – available from Amazon for \$3.99

Approaching Birds



Walking



1. Walk quietly.
2. I don't wear wild colors or white.
3. I don't make sudden movements or loud noise.
4. Once I find a bird, I stay with it until it leaves.
5. When they're accustomed to your presencs, they may come much closer.

Mobile Blind

If possible, shoot from your car. The beanbag is a BLUBB - sold by Arthur Morris.



My Approach to Photographing Birds

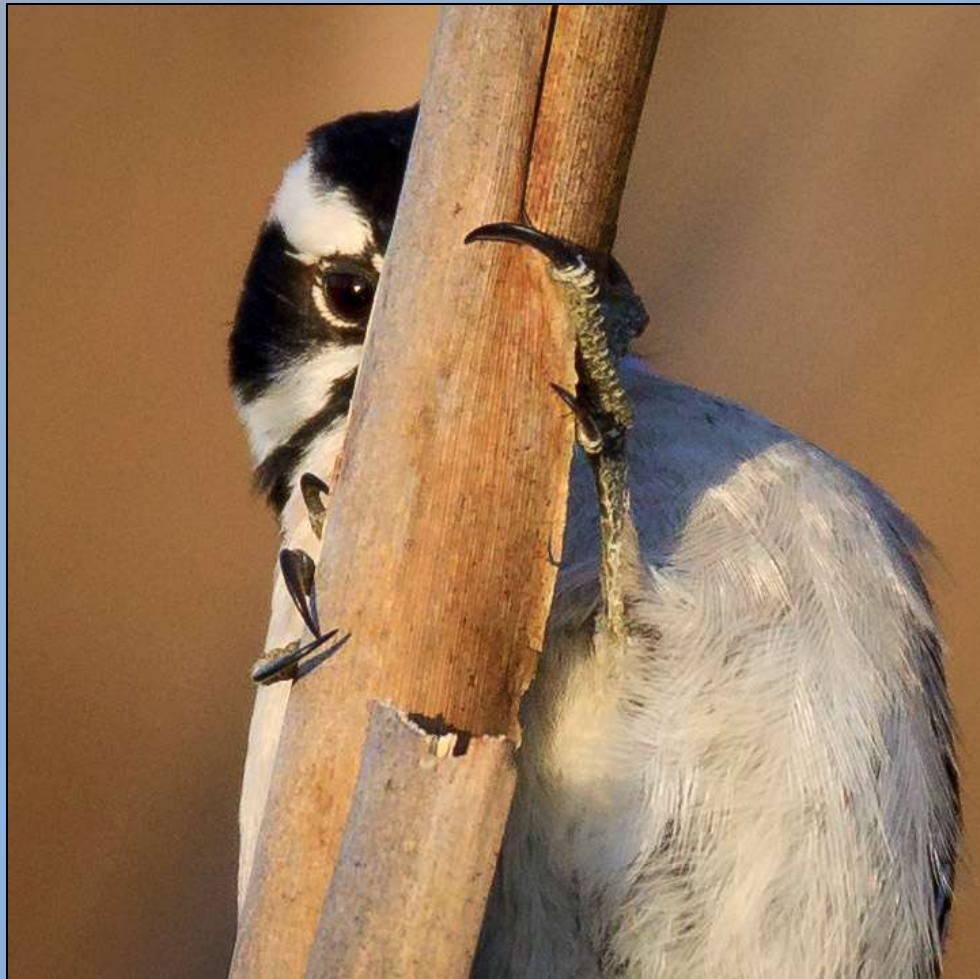


Key to Success Shoot Frequently

- 1. Practice Makes Perfect**
- 2. More Opportunity to Find a Cooperative Bird**



Shoot with Other Bird Photographers



It's All About the Background!



More Backgrounds



The Sky Makes a Difference



The Sky Makes a Difference



Sunrise & Sunset Light

Warm Tinted Birds



Midday



Evening

Sunrise & Sunset Light

Cool Tinted Birds



For white or cool tinted birds, I prefer the light after the sun has been up for at least 30 minutes.

Camera Settings

1. Aperture Priority
2. f/5.6 or f/8 up to f/16
3. 1/1000 at rest & 1/2000 flying
4. ISO 400 – range from 200 to 2500
5. Auto White Balance
6. Center Focus Point with Linked Exposure
7. AI Servo – Continuous Focus
8. Fill Flash for Small Birds
9. Overexpose most images by +2/3 stop
10. Frame Rate set to 10 Frames per Second





In the Field I Try to get:

- 1. Exposure Right**
- 2. Focus Right**

Exposure



I'm continually checking the histogram.

Focusing

1. Center Point Focusing
2. Focus on the Eye
3. AI Servo – Continuous Focus



Focused on Eye Between the Reeds



Thin as a Rail

Glint in the Eye

With



Without



Why 10 Frames per Second? Birds Move



Why Ten Frames per Second?



Exposure 1



Exposure 2



Exposure 2 Cropped & Cleaned

Why Ten Frames per Second? Photographers Move



Cropping

1. Crop All Images in the Computer
2. Seldom Use a Level
3. Rotate in the Computer



Cropping Cluttered Background

Original Image



Cropped Image



1.4x Extender

No Extender



With 1.4x Extender



My camera will not autofocus with a 2x extender attached.

Disadvantage of an extender



1. Loss of one stop of light
2. Possible loss of autofocus
3. Magnifies errors

Eye Problems



Fill Flash Problems



1. **White-Eye in Birds is Similar to Our Red-Eye**
2. **White-Eye is Problematic in Larger Birds**

View Angle

High



Low



A low angle adds impact

ISO Full Image Example

1/640 sec at f/14, ISO 640



1/6400 sec at f/14 ISO 6400



1 to 1 Zoom

1/640 sec at f/14, ISO 640



1/6400 sec at f/14 ISO 6400



**Red-winged Blackbird Ridding
on and
Immature Bald Eagle**



Equipment



Better Beamer



Tripod and Head



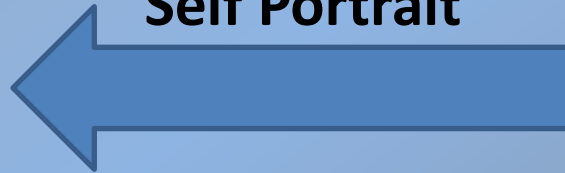
**Wimberley WH-200
Gimbal Tripod Head II
with Quick Release Base**

**Really Right Stuff tripod
TVC-33 Versa Series 3
Tripod supports 50lbs**



Black Rapid

Self Portrait



www.blackrapid.com/product/camera-strap/rs-sport-2/

Equipment

1. Canon 800mm Lens and EOS-1D Mark IV Camera
2. 32 GB 600x Compact Flash Cards
3. Canon 300mm Lens and EOS 7D Camera
4. Sturdy Tripod
5. Gimbaled Tripod Head

