

ZOOM Recorder Point Count Instructions



WHEN to make recordings

- **Date:** May 28—July 7 (Regions 1-15) or June 7—July 7 (Region 16)
- **Time:** Between 30 minutes before sunrise to 4.5 hours after sunrise
- **Conditions:** In good weather: no rain, and little to no wind (see table)

Beaufort Wind Scale. Point count recordings should not be made when conditions fall in the shaded area.

Force		Km/h	Characteristics
0	Calm	<2	Smoke rises vertically
1	Light Air	2 – 6	Wind direction shown by smoke drift
2	Light Breeze	7 – 12	Wind felt on face, leaves rustle
3	Gentle Breeze	13 – 19	Small branches move (make decision whether to point count or not)
4	Moderate Breeze	20 – 30	Small trees sway (do not conduct point counts)
5	Strong	31 – 40	Large branches move (do not conduct point count)

WHERE to make recordings

- **Choose a square:** Visit the atlas coverage map to see what squares have not been completed in the region you are interested in, or get in contact with the Regional Coordinator, and they will be happy to help you pick a square. <https://www.birdscanada.org/birdmon/skatlasatlaseffortmap.jsp>
- **Maps:** Each atlas square has a detailed square map showing roadside point count locations and information on what habitats might need off-road points counts, if any. Google Earth overlays can be downloaded here and used to load square maps as well: <https://sk.birdatlas.ca/jsp/pdfdownload.jsp>
- **Waypoints:** Download the .GPX file containing waypoints for your square using the same tool described above, and then simply transfer them to your GPS device.
- **Point Count Goal:** One 5-minute recording at point count locations 1 through 15. Locations can be visited in any order (you may go to points 2, 6, 8, 12 etc. until all 15 are complete) that is convenient – no need to visit them in order or even on the same day.
- **Road-side:** If a point count location is unsafe or impossible to reach, drop it and select the next in chronological order (e.g., if point 3 is unsafe, do not make the recording there and instead make a recording at point 16, and so on).
- **Off-road:** If the square requires off-road point counts, please make recordings in the habitat described on the atlas square map. Do your best to be completely surrounded by the habitat by 100m (but not possible for wetlands!). These off-road counts should be counted in the 15 total recordings (e.g., if a square calls for 2 off-road point counts, make 13 road-side point counts).

HOW to make recordings

1. Park safely, turn off your vehicle, and walk as close to the GPS waypoint as possible.
2. Attach the Zoom to a tripod with the recorder at breast height, and use a microphone windscreen to reduce wind noise on the recording.
3. Double check the gain is set at 10; turn on the Zoom, and press the RED button to start the recording. The light above the screen will glow red when recording.
4. At the beginning of the recording verbally state: the atlas square, the point count station number, the date and time, and your name. Example:
“Zoom recording from 12UXH32 at point count location number 11, on May 30th 2018 at 5:21am, made by Geddy Lee.”
5. Start a 5-minute timer on your phone or other device.
6. Stand quietly a few metres away from the recorder to reduce noise on the recording caused by chaffing fabric, shuffling feet, or other noises.
7. Stop the recording 10-15 seconds beyond 5 minutes by pressing the RED button.
8. Note the zoom file name on the data sheet or your notebook, as well as the square name and point count station number.



SUBMIT the recordings

1. **Copy** the files from the SD card on to your computer
2. **Rename** the files using the Atlas square number and point count location. Example:
ZOOM0001.WAV → 12UXH32-11.WAV
3. **Send** files using www.wetransfer.com/ to skatlas@birdscanada.org or get in touch to discuss an alternate file transfer with your Regional Coordinator or the Atlas Office.

If you are interested in listening to your recordings and viewing the spectrogram of the recording, download the free program [Audacity](#). A spectrogram is a visual representation that shows the frequencies which make up sound and how they change over time, allowing you to “see” the bird calls on your recording. To set up Audacity for viewing spectrograms, follow the instructions in the [Audacity Settings](#) document.

Questions

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