

Nature Calgary is promoting a friendly “big year” birding challenge within Calgary city limits in 2020.

Setting Up Patch Lists

For the BirdYYC2020 eBird challenge, here is how you set up your patch list. I recommend you review the eBird help pages. They define Patch List:

***Patch list:** a series of locations for a specific area that you can summarize in a patch list.*

You can have any number of patch lists. For example; Fish Creek Provincial Park patch, which will include every location that you have birded within the Park. As you know, there are several hotspots in Fish Creek and creating a patch is a way to collect your checklists in one place and look at all the data together. For the BirdYYC2020 eBird challenge we will use the current Calgary limits. (For those of you who participated in the 2010 competition, the City boundaries have not changed, so any information you have from then is still relevant.)

You only need to set up the patch list once, and all your past and future sightings will be included in the totals, broken down by month, year, and life. The patch name is “BirdYYC2020”. If you already have a city limits patch, you merely need to rename your existing patch. (Remember to re-name it back to its original name when the 2020 challenge is over. Also, if you submit an eBird list from a new (to you) location, you will have to remember to add that location to your patch list. Both established hotspots and personal locations are eligible.

If this is all new to you, here is a step-by-step guide:

1. Open eBird.
 - a. By this time, we assume you have an account and have signed in.
 - b. It will also be more meaningful if you have already submitted a few checklists from locations within the City.
2. Click on “Explore”.
 - a. Near the bottom you will find “Patch Totals”.
 - b. You will also see “Yard Totals”. You can also keep a yard list with this tool. You should remember to include your personal location for your home (your “yard”) in the BirdYYC2020 patch: **but only if you live in the City.**
3. Click on Patch Totals.
 - a. Click on “Add a Patch”. (If you have previously set up your BirdYYC2020 patch, go to Step 4.)
 - b. Name the patch BirdYYC2020.
 - c. Scroll down through all your locations and tick the ones within the City limits. The designated hotspots all start with Calgary or Fish Creek PP. All your personal locations are also eligible – **if they are inside the City limits.**
 - d. Don’t worry, when you submit a list in the future from a location not yet on this list, you can add it later; usually when you get home that evening.
 - e. Click on “Save Patch”.
4. Go back to Patch Totals.
 - a. You will now see all the patch lists for the region. It will likely first open for all of Canada, so you will want to change the region to Alberta, and to Calgary.

How to set up a Patch List in eBird

- b. This page shows all your patch lists within Calgary County. You can see your data in a variety of ways. Notice that anything that is **blue** and underscored is a link. Have good look around to get familiar with all the ways you can summarize your data. It's fun!
- c. You will also see all the patches by other eBirders within Calgary County. Some will be BirdYYC2020, but there will be others too.
- d. This is why we ask all participants to NOT hide their data. (Take a look at the guide, <https://naturecalgary.b-cdn.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/eBird-Beginners-guide.pdf> to see how to set your preferences.)
- e. You will see who has reported the highest number of species in the BirdYYC2020 patch and how you compare. You can look by month, year or life.
- f. Next year, 2020, this is where the fun begins. Who is leading? Where do you stand? What species have been recently reported?

That's it. You are now in the BirdYYC2020 birding challenge!

We ask that you send an email to Howard Heffler (hheffler*@shaw.ca) with your name, email address and eBird name. Some people use a pseudonym in eBird, which is fine, but we would like to know who you are when we see your eBird checklists.

During the year anyone can look on eBird and see the all the participants with a BirdYYC2020 patch. It will show how many species (and how many checklists) have been reported by each. Your totals will show as well. It is not possible to see an individual's complete list of species, just a few of their most recent sightings.

Enjoy.

Any questions or suggestions contact:

- Howard Heffler: hheffler*@shaw.ca
- Andrew Hart: andrewhart*@shaw.ca
- Bob Lefebvre: wbird7*@gmail.com
- Gavin McKinnon: gmckinnonbird*@gmail.com