

## Volunteer Bird Survey Protocol

Thank-you for your willingness to contribute to the data set being developed for the avian populations in the EcoLab! As we are making vegetation changes (such as removing exotics and replanting natives) we are interested in understanding the effect of those changes on bird populations. Your help is of immense importance in this endeavor and is greatly appreciated. Please take care to follow the directions below:

1. Fill out the Volunteer bird survey data sheet while walking the trails of the EcoLab following the map provided in the designated direction.
2. Keep a steady pace for the walk. Try not to spend more than 5 minutes stopped in one “hot” location, but do your best to spot everything.
3. Record all birds seen or heard, not just interesting birds.
4. Estimate the perpendicular distance to the bird from the trail. E.g. if the bird is 30 feet ahead of you, about 5 feet off the trail, go ahead and write “5 ft.” Practice estimating distance both at home and in the field. It is often harder than you think, so bring a tape measure or rangefinder a few times until you feel comfortable estimating.
5. Use species 4-letter codes as follows:
  - a. 1 word name: use first four letters (e.g. Mallard = MALL)
  - b. 2 word name: use first two letters of each (e.g. American Robin = AMRO)
  - c. 3 word or hyphenated name: use first letter of each first two words and first two letters of third (e.g. Yellow Rumped Warbler = YRWA)
6. Location codes are on the map. Basically, we are surveying the study area along three N-S transects and three E-W transects. There are 7 trail segments denoted on the map, so be sure to keep track of where you are.
7. Watch out for birds that keep moving in front of you as you walk. Do not count the same bird twice.
8. The comments section on the spreadsheet is for anything unusual (e.g. bird on nest, odd looking bird, etc.)
9. Send the data in the excel spreadsheet via email to David Benson:  
[dbenson@marian.edu](mailto:dbenson@marian.edu)

Description of Route (see map):

**Start:** If space is available, park in the large lot North of Marian Hall, the biggest hall on campus that says “Marian College” across the front. Walk down the stairs behind Allison Mansion to the main pond.

**Segment 1:** Take a left at the bottom of those stairs and begin walking west along the Jensen South Shore Trail (this is the beginning of segment 1). Continue walking this trail until it intersects with the Jensen North Shore trail at a large bridge. This is the end of trail segment 1 and beginning of segment 2.

**Segment 2:** Follow the Jensen North shore trail East until you get to the end of the main pond. This is the end of segment 2 and beginning of segment 3.

**Segment 3:** Follow Crooked Creek North to the wrought iron fence. The fence is the end of segment 3 and the beginning of segment 4.

**Segment 4:** Follow the fence west until it turns North. Follow the fence north by going along the East barkchip trail about 20 feet. Then take a left onto the West Jensen trail. Walk this trail until it intersects with an access road then take an immediate right onto the West barkchip trail. This is the end of segment 4 and beginning of segment 5.

**Segment 5:** Follow the West barkchip trail North until it meets the North loop trail. Take a left on the North loop trail and follow it until it takes a sharp right and begins to go South (you should be able to see a fence just to the east at this point. This is the end of segment 5 and the beginning of segment 6.

**Segment 6:** Follow the North loop trail south until it intersects with the East barkchip trail. Continue South on the East barkchip trail until it intersects with the Rustic trail. Stay on the Rustic trail until it meets the Jensen North Shore trail. This is the end of segment 6. Take a right on the north shore trail and follow it to the intersection with the West Jensen Trail. This is the Beginning of Segment 7.

**Segment 7:** Take the West Jensen trail west, then north to the access road/ west barkchip trail intersection you were at earlier (on you right is a spring-fed, rock lined pool). This is the end of segment 7 and the end of the survey. Take a left and climb the access road to the trailhead to leave the EcoLab.

# Marian College Wetland EcoLab

