



## **Birdathon Instructions and Answers to Your Questions**

### What is a birdathon?

A birdathon is a competitive birdwatching event and fundraiser. It is intended to be fun for everyone and friendly to beginners. Funds raised are used to provide environmental education for children, young people and adults in West Michigan.

### What if I'm new to birdwatching?

If you are new to birdwatching we would be happy to help you participate. If you need help getting started please contact Scott Hutchings at 616.340.9071 or Jill Goodell at 616.204.3316. We would be happy to find a team for you to participate with and learn from.

### How do I participate?

1. Form or join a team of two or more people. Fun team names are encouraged! Teammates must be within sight of each other during the bird counting period of up to 6 hours. Choose a time between April 15, 2018 and May 31, 2018, (between 12:01 a.m. on Sunday, April 15, and 12:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 31) to get out together and birdwatch.
2. Collect pledges. Ask friends and family to fill out pledge forms\* and return them to you. (Pledge checks should be written to GRAC or Grand Rapids Audubon Club, Inc.) The team that raises the most pledge money will win a special trophy – so include your team name on the check.
3. Participate on as many teams as you can. Choose separate names for each team and birdwatch at different times. Also keep separate bird lists\* and pledges\* for each team. (Teams have been formed “in the field” when participants did not want to stop after 6 hours or saw a rarer bird!)
4. Birdwatch!!! Record the team's bird sightings on our Official Birding Report Sheet\*. Spend up to 6 continuous hours with your team anywhere in Kent, Muskegon, Ottawa and/or [new this year!!] Barry Counties. Each recorded bird must be positively identified by at least two members of the team.

5. Have great fun!!
6. For each team submit a completed Official Birding Report Sheet (OBRS)\*, team registration\*, and pledges\*.
- Mail your completed OBRS\*, and
  - your team registration form\* and fee of at least \$25.00 (for each team)\*, and
  - your pledge forms\* and pledge funds to:  
Jill Goodell, 55 Lawndale Ave NE, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503.
- Must be delivered or postmarked by June 15, 2018, to be eligible for awards and bragging rights!!

\* Forms can be downloaded from [www.graud.org](http://www.graud.org).

\* All checks should be written to “GRAC” or “Grand Rapids Audubon Club”

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Award categories:

- Most money raised by a team
- Most money raised by an individual
- Most species observed by a team
- Rarest birds on a single team’s list
- Wild-card bird. This year the **Baltimore Oriole** – the most seen by a team
- Youth team competition – Most species observed by a team with at least half of the members under age 18 years.
- Possibly others to be determined