



2023 Birdathon Q & A

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 Ed Bolt at (616) 885-6307, Jill Goodell at 616.204.3316, or Tom Legget at (616) 634-3102. 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!
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 prize – so include your team name on the check
3. Choose a date or dates between April 15, 2023 and May 31, 2023, (between 12:01 a.m. on Saturday, April 15, and 12:00 p.m. on Sunday, May 31) to get out together and birdwatch. Or join a person or group participating in a Big Sit / Feeder or Big Sit / No Feeder category, watching someone's feeders or in a wilder (non-feeder) setting, counting the birds seen, and enjoying each other's company. (Bring a snack!)
4. 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!)

5. Birdwatch! Record the team’s bird sightings on your Official Birding Report Sheet*. Each recorded bird must be positively identified by at least two members of your team. Spend up to 6 hours with your team anywhere in Kent, Muskegon, Ottawa and/or Barry Counties. *If your team is unable to do a solid block of 6 hours, it is permissible to do 2 blocks of 3 hours or 3 blocks of 2 hours, etc. on different dates. It is important that each team bird for not more than 6 hours total!* If you want to bird more than 6 hours total, you are welcome to join or form another team.

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 \$35.00 (for each team)*, and
 - your pledge forms* and funds collected to:
 - Ed Bolt, 233 Glenhaven NW, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49504.
 - Must be delivered or postmarked by June 15, 2023, to be eligible for awards and bragging rights!!
 - * Forms can be downloaded from www.graud.org.
 - * All checks should be written to “GRAC” or “Grand Rapids Audubon Club”

Award categories:

Rock Dove - Most species in 6 hours

Wild Card - Most sightings of Target Bird

(for 2023, this is the Ruby-throated Hummingbird)

Charity’s Rarities - Rarest bird spotted

Fledgling - Longest average age team

Big Fun Funders - Most team \$ raised

Big Fun Funder Individual - Most \$ plead by an individual

Big Sit / Feeder - Most species sitting near a feeder.

Big Sit / No Feeder - Most species sitting without a feeder nearby