

Gloucester County Bird Quest 2023

RULES OF COMPETITION

The following set of rules establish the standards and practices under which all Gloucester County Bird Quest participants must comply. All participants should be familiar with the rules in order to participate in the Bird Quest. Failure in this regard may result in the disqualification of the team.

I. Participants

- a. Teams normally consist of 4-6 individuals but teams of any size can be formed.
- b. Participants of all ages may form teams. Teams can be all adults or a mix of adults and young people. One team member should be a reasonably knowledgeable birder ... someone who can identify by sight and/or calls, a reasonable number of birds that frequent Gloucester County.

A series of free pre-Quest trainings are available for any/all team members. Go to birdquest.gcnatureclub.org to see the list of Pre-Quest trainings.

II. Time

All counting should begin by 7 am on the day of the Quest, and end no later than 12 noon. Teams can start earlier than 7 am but no team may start earlier than 4:30 am (the early bird gets the worm, but only to a point). Each team leader should submit an official tally of their team's results at the birdquest.gcnatureclub.org website by 12:30 pm.

III. Geographic Area

- a. Teams can look for birds at one site, or multiple sites, inside Gloucester County.
- b. Teams may use private land sites if they obtain permission from the owner(s).

IV. Counting

- a. Count only full species as indicated by the current check list. The goal is to find as many different species as possible during the five-hour period.
- b. Birds must be conclusively identified by sight or sound.
- c. Introduced species may be counted providing they appear on the current checklist.
- d. Birds counted must be alive, wild, and unrestrained. Sick, injured or oiled birds may be counted. Birds in cages or eggs do not count as birds.
- e. Electronic or recorded bird calls may not be used to attract birds or entice them to vocalize during Bird Quest but may be used to help in the identification of birds.

- f. Any bird tallies must be seen and/or heard by at least half of the team members. So if you have 6 members on your team, at least one person needs to identify a tallied bird and at least 3 people (total) have to hear and/or see the bird. It is not necessary for all team members to record the same individual bird. If two members of the team hear a Downy Woodpecker and a third person does not BUT manages to record another Downy Woodpecker later on in the day, then Downy Woodpecker has been recorded successfully.

V. Safety

- a. All vehicles except aircraft may be used.
- b. Team members must remain within voice contact at all times. Voice contact is defined as *shouting distance* without the use of any device.
- c. All teams **MUST** comply with New Jersey applicable laws. Failure to do so can result in fines.

VI. Conduct

- a. Team members must count only birds personally and unquestionably identified.
- b. Team members must be familiar with the rules of the competition.
- c. No team may intentionally flush or drive into hiding any bird to prevent another team from finding it.
- d. All teams must enjoy themselves!
- e. The purpose of the Bird Quest is to learn more about the birds and natural areas of Gloucester County. This is meant to be an educational, fun event for everyone. Competition is a very minor part of the event. Act accordingly. Help your teammates learn more about birds. Enjoy their company and enjoy the day.