

## The Rules: Amherst BBS Instructions 2018

1. Visit your sites on 2 mornings between June 1 and June 17, starting between 6 AM and 7AM. When possible do the second trip in the reverse order. Do not count in high winds or rain.
2. Collect starting time, temperature, wind, and % cloud cover **at each site**.
3. Divide observation time between the first 3 minutes (count all bird detected) and the final 2 minutes (count new birds only).
4. In each of the time slots, birds will be divided between (1) those **first** detected (i.e. heard or seen) in the area near you (0 to 50 meters) and (2) those **first** detected at a distance greater than 50 meters.

Note: think of the 50 meters as a 50-meter radius cylinder (you are standing in the center of a silo that extends into the stratosphere). Count birds flying over (no matter how high) as being inside or outside the 50-meter radius circle when you first detect them. A bird is not counted twice if it moves in, then out, then returns to the 50-meter circle.

5. How can I figure out how far 50 meters is?
  - a. The website **Help** page has links to information about each route. It includes a topographic map and aerial photo showing the 50 meter circles around each of your sites. Many observers print this out and carry with them. There are also links to the more elegant Town of Amherst website maps on the **Help** page "Additional maps."
  - b. Pacing: Pace out 50m so you know how to pace that distance. When you visit your site before the survey, pace a few key locations and extrapolate the rest of the 50m. If a question comes up during the survey, either pace the distance after the 5 minutes is over, or come back and do it.
  - c. Measuring Tape: Use a 50 meter tape.
6. Make sure you are collecting all the data you need at each site.
  - a. Bring along enough copies of one of the Site Information Forms (both site conditions and species list) for each site on your route, or
  - b. Set up your Field Notebook to remind you of what data you need at each site (temperature, wind speed, % cloud cover, time) and a series of columns for the species with the 4 categories of time and distance - use a Site Form to make sure your columns include space for each category of data.
7. Enter your data as soon as you can (by the end of June please). Website is: <https://gis.amherstma.gov/bbs/>  
There you will find the **Log In** (top right), and the **Data Entry** and **Help** (left-hand side).
8. If you have questions, use the **Contact** link on the left-hand side of the website screen to contact the volunteer BBS Coordinator or the Town of Amherst BBS Support Coordinator.