



# Climate Watch

**Audubon's Climate Watch is a new community science program that explores how North American birds are responding to climate change.**

In 2014, Audubon released the Audubon Birds and Climate Change Report highlighting the risks that climate change poses to birds across North America. In response, thousands of people asked how they could help make the world a better place for birds. Now, you can help by observing birds in your area, using a specific protocol, to help us learn about how birds are responding to the changing climate.

## TARGET SPECIES



Eastern Bluebird



American Goldfinch



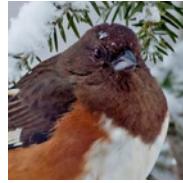
Mountain Bluebird



Lesser Goldfinch



Western Bluebird



Eastern Towhee



White-breasted Nuthatch



Spotted Towhee



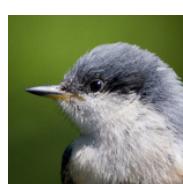
Red-breasted Nuthatch



Painted Bunting



Brown-headed Nuthatch



Pygmy Nuthatch

Cover: Camilla Cerea/Audubon.

This page, clockwise from left: Eric Nie; Brian Kushner; Brad Fields; Bob Howdeshell/Great Backyard Bird Count; Judith Roan; David Morgan; Ron Racine; Denise Massie; Megumi Aita; Joseph Mahoney; Rick Lewis; Timothy Lenahan. All from Audubon Photography Awards unless specified.

## QUICK FACTS

### DATES

January 15 – February 15 and May 15 – June 15

### TIME

2-4+ hours

## TARGET SPECIES GROUPS

Bluebirds, nuthatches, towhees, goldfinches, and Painted Bunting

## LOCATION

Specific 10 km x 10 km squares; see inset map example

## HOW TO GET INVOLVED

If you would like to find out more about being a volunteer or coordinating in your area, please contact the Audubon Climate Watch Team at [climatewatch@audubon.org](mailto:climatewatch@audubon.org)

### When does Climate Watch take place?

Climate Watch takes place during two distinct seasons in winter (January 15 – February 15) and summer (May 15 – June 15) each year. Participants are free to conduct their surveys at any time during these time windows.

### How does it work?

Climate Watch focuses on bluebirds, nuthatches, towhees, goldfinches, and buntings: Eastern, Mountain, and Western Bluebird; White-breasted, Red-breasted, Brown-headed, and Pygmy Nuthatch; American and Lesser Goldfinch; Eastern and Spotted Towhee, and Painted Bunting. These birds are easy to identify, have an enthusiastic constituency, and Audubon's climate models for these species offer strong predictions for range shifts for us to test.

### Where will Climate Watch take place?

Climate Watch focuses on areas of predicted change for these 12 species at each location. These areas of change include areas of potential range expansion and contraction based on Audubon's climate models (predictions). Audubon provides volunteers with maps of each location, overlaid with a grid of 10 km x 10 km squares showing species-specific predictions for each square based on the climate models.

### What is the field activity?

Using the maps provided, volunteers survey appropriate habitat within a square and

conduct 12 point counts of five minutes each, then record the number and species of all birds seen or heard within 100 meters. Point counts within a given square should be separated by at least 200 meters. The 12 point counts in each square can be done by the same person or different people but all in the same morning.



Atlanta Audubon Society territory with sample survey squares provided

### What will be provided?

Audubon provides printable and digital mapping resources, instructional materials, and training to coordinators. Each location will determine how best to convey these resources to their volunteers to conduct the surveys.

### How much time do I spend?

Volunteers generally are able to complete one survey square in two to four hours (12 five-minute point counts per square). Surveys should be started in the morning and completed before noon, but can be conducted in the afternoon only if weather precludes the morning. It is up to each participant how much time to spend on the overall activity, but make sure to talk with your Climate Watch

coordinator about your level of interest. Some advance scouting and planning may be required to choose survey point locations. Your Climate Watch coordinator will communicate with you if this will be required.

### How do I submit my survey data?

If you use eBird, each of your checklist IDs should then be submitted through Audubon's portal. If you use Audubon's mobile app we automatically have the data.

### How is this different than just reporting birds when I go birding?

Audubon is using general bird data, such as reported through eBird, to help inform this program. However, data reported using the Climate Watch protocol measure detectability in a way that general birding data do not. This protocol is being implemented in areas where the birds do not yet have climatic range, or may be abandoning their range. That focus is a very important part of measuring how the birds will respond to climate change.

### Why get involved?

Audubon would like your help to learn how birds are responding to climate change. Your participation will be a valuable part of refining our climate science and protecting birds.