

# American Woodcock Singing-ground Survey (SGS) Route Runner Checklist and Worksheet

*This checklist was compiled to assist you in completing your American Singing-ground Survey route. This checklist is meant to supplement, but not replace, the Survey Background and Instructions. The checklist is for your use and records only and it is not required; there is no need to return this to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.*

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## STEPS TO PERFORM WELL BEFORE THE SURVEY DATE

\_\_\_\_\_ 1) **Review the training presentation online (<https://migbirdapps.fws.gov/woodcock/trainingtooldocs.htm>), the document “Survey Background and Instructions,” and your survey form.** If you are uncertain about survey protocol, be sure to contact your State Coordinator for clarification. You may also feel free to contact the North American Coordinator at [WeblessSurveyCoordinator@fws.gov](mailto:WeblessSurveyCoordinator@fws.gov).

\_\_\_\_\_ 2) **Are you a new observer, or is this the last year you will complete this survey route?** If so, plan to complete your survey route **with** the previous observer or the new observer **if at all possible**. You should complete the survey together and at the same time, but you should record and submit your data independently. Read the document “New Observer Guidance” for details.

\_\_\_\_\_ 3) **Drive the entire survey route before completing the survey.** Familiarize yourself with stop locations and identify any problems. Only if requested, collect GPS Coordinates for each stop along the route. For coordinate collection and reporting instructions, see the GPS standards document within your survey packet. **Be aware that routes must be completed in the direction indicated on the route map in order for data to qualify for analysis.**

\_\_\_\_\_ 4) **Calculate your survey date window, and choose a survey date.** Look at the map provided on the “Survey Background and Instructions” document. Identify the appropriate date window for your survey location. We encourage cooperators to run survey routes early within their survey date window, as foul weather and additional complications can interfere with last minute route completions. Write your chosen survey date in the survey form box “Date of Survey.”

*Example: If your survey route is in Virginia, your survey date window is April 10 – April 30. However, if your survey route is in Pennsylvania, your survey date window is April 15 – May 5.*

\_\_\_\_\_ 5) **Calculate your local official sunset time.** On the bottom third of your survey form, locate “Sunset times for this route.” Using the provided local sunset times, identify the local sunset time for your chosen survey date. If you are running your survey on a date that falls between the listed sunset times; interpolate the sunset time for that date. Do not round up or down. **If sunset times are not provided on your survey form, consult (<https://www.esrl.noaa.gov/gmd/grad/solcalc/>).** If you consult the local news media for the sunset time, please clearly write the source on your survey form as your start time calculations will be verified accordingly.

*Examples: If your survey date will be May 5, and the sunset time listed for that date is 8:30, write “8:30” in the survey form box “Official Sunset.” If the reported sunset time for May 5 is 8:30, and for May 10 is 8:35, and you are completing your route on May 7, the sunset time would be 8:32.*

\_\_\_\_\_ 6) **Calculate potential survey start times using the local sunset time and the sky conditions.** Correct timing is the key to valid data! **Be prepared by calculating your potential survey start times in advance and verify once you arrive at the starting location.** If the sky is clear or up to and including 3/4 overcast, add 22 minutes to the sunset time to determine the starting time. Or, add 15 minutes if the sky is more than 3/4 overcast. Plan to arrive at stop 1 (the start) of your route at or shortly after local sunset.

*Example: If sunset = 8:30, and if it is more than ¾ overcast, start at 8:45. If it is less than or equal to ¾ overcast, start at 8:52.*

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## STEPS TO PERFORM UPON COMPLETION OF THE SURVEY

\_\_\_\_\_ 7) **Fill out the form in its entirety.** Leave no blanks where information is requested. Print your name and email address clearly on the form. This information will be used to identify survey observers for 2025 and assist in data validation checks.

\_\_\_\_\_ 8) **Did you encounter any hazards or obstacles that interfered with the survey?** Please clearly report this on your survey form.

\_\_\_\_\_ 9) **Check with your State Coordinator to determine whether you should personally enter your data via the Internet.** Some State Coordinators enter all of the data for the routes in their state. Data should be submitted **no later than the day following your state’s survey date window** via the Internet at <https://naturecounts.ca/nc/amwo/main.jsp>. Please make you are registered for the survey via NatureCounts before the survey season begins to make sure you can access it properly.

\_\_\_\_\_ 10) **Follow your State Coordinator’s instructions for survey form submission. If no instructions are given, perform the following:**

1. Submit 1 copy of the original pre-filled survey form to your State Coordinator
2. Keep 1 copy of the original pre-filled survey form for your records

(You no longer have to submit a copy of the survey form to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Laurel, MD.)

*Contact your State Coordinator with questions or concerns, or the North American Coordinator at <[WeblessSurveyCoordinator@fws.gov](mailto:WeblessSurveyCoordinator@fws.gov)>.*