

Data Management Guidelines

- 2025 Fall Covey Counts -

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Checklist

The data entry deadline is December 17, 2025. This is a hard deadline. By then, you should have the following completed:

- ☐ Both data entry spreadsheets in your OneDrive folder should be completely filled out. Once all data from the season has been entered, please send David (see contact above) an email notification.
 - “YourLastName_ARU.Deployment.History_DataEntry” (pg. 4)
 - “YourLastName_Covey.Count.Surveys_DataEntry” (pg. 4-5)
- ☐ All ARU audio files must be uploaded to [BirdLocale](#) (pg. 1-3). Uploads can be time consuming depending on internet connectivity. Upload the data as soon as the SD cards are collected; don’t wait until the day before the deadline.
- ☐ All covey count field datasheets should be scanned and uploaded to the “YourLastName_ScannedFieldDatasheets” folder located within your OneDrive folder. These must follow the conventions detailed below (pg. 6).

ARU Data Management

Most states will be using Song Meter Minis for monitoring. Only a few states (NY, PA, NJ, DE, MD, and WV) will use AudioMoth ARUs instead.

Song Meter Users

Before deploying your ARUs, please make sure you have read and understood the [Song Meter Deployment SOP](#). In particular, make sure the ARU is renamed according to the specified naming conventions (#6 on page 2 of the SOP). The recorder name must be updated anytime the ARU is moved to a new location.

AudioMoth Users

Before deploying your ARUs, please make sure you have read and understood the [AudioMoth Deployment SOP](#).

Unfortunately, AudioMoths do not include the unit or point ID in the filenames of the audio files. Therefore, you must manually rename the audio files upon download. [Note: never encrypt SD cards. Details below.] AudioMoths provide filenames in the following format: YYYYMMDD_HHMMSS.wav. However, we need files to be named according to these conventions:

ARUID-POINTID_YYYYMMDD_HHMMSS.wav

ARU ID: always a 5-digit number

Point ID: always a 4-digit number

YYYYMMDD: audio start date (year, month, day)

HHMMSS: audio start time (hour, minute, second)

Therefore, you must manually rename the audio files to include the ARU ID and Point ID. [Example: if we deploy ARU 54787 at point 1223 on 1/17/2024, the first file on the SD card should look something like: “20240118_050000.wav”. The file should be renamed so that the new name is “54787-1223_20240118_050000.wav”.]

Please download and update the filenames as soon as possible after ARU retrieval. It is vital to add this metadata to the filenames while the information is still fresh in your mind. If you are retrieving multiple SD cards in the same day, it is recommended that you keep the cards in the units until you can download the data. If you must swap out SD cards that day for redeployment, you must keep careful track of each SD card to avoid mix ups.

In addition to the audio files, AudioMoths will produce a “CONFIG.TXT” document. You will *not* upload this document to BirdLocale; however, you *should* retain this document with all backup copies of your data.

Everyone

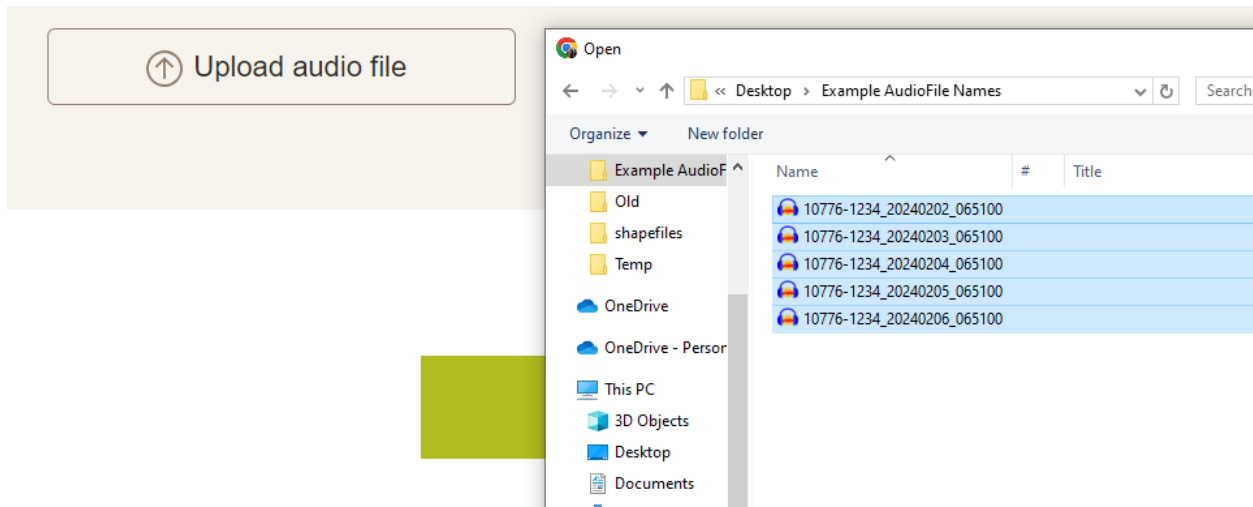
Once an ARU has been retrieved, files should be copied onto the surveyor’s computer. If you are using a government computer, **never** encrypt SD cards. If files from the SD card require modification (e.g., renaming), you must first transfer the files to the computer (this doesn’t require encryption); only then may you modify files.

Two copies of the data should be kept at all times. At first, this will be one copy kept on the SD card and one kept on the computer. Once a copy has been uploaded to BirdLocale and on your computer, the copy on the SD card can be cleared. At the end of each monitoring year (December), Brittany will mail you a hard drive to copy your Spring and Fall data onto and send back to her for additional backup.

BirdLocale: Most NRCS offices have poor internet, so it is recommended that surveyors schedule work-from-home days and use home internet when uploading to [BirdLocale](#). Please contact Brittany if you do not have access to home internet to discuss other options.

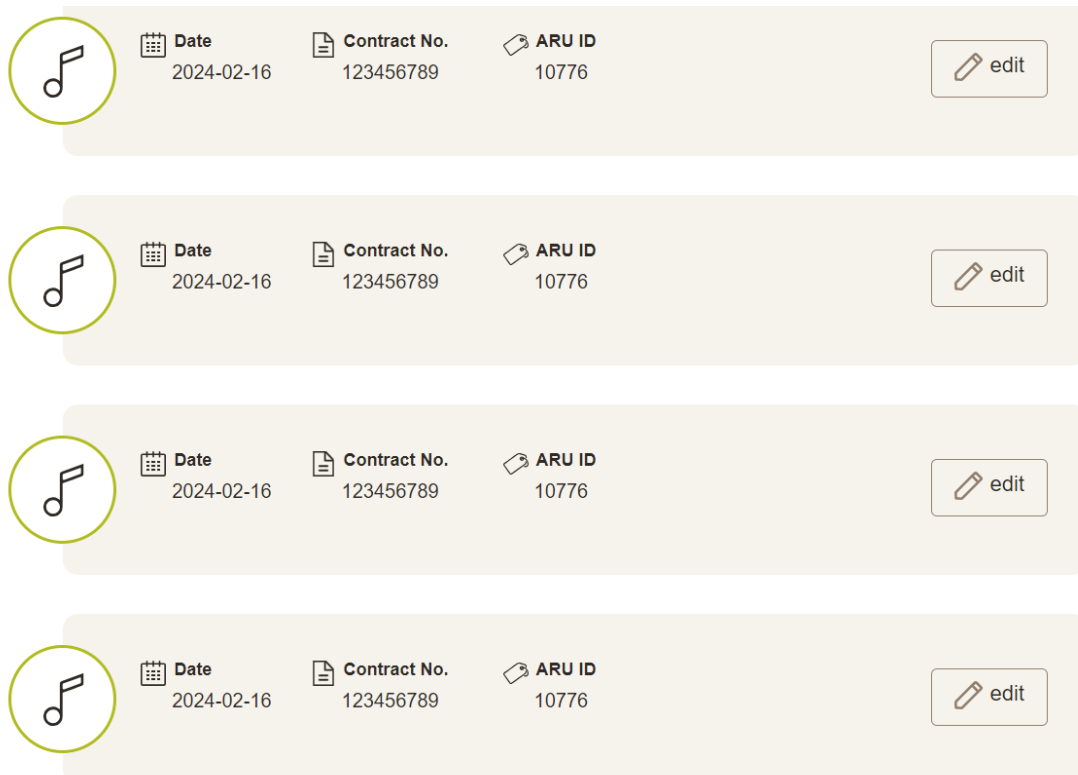
There is a video tutorial on the new BirdLocale system here:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1wwJe02g4llx2tjzjMjyIHK0Ztp-JO7HR/view?usp=sharing>



You should never upload files from different deployments in a single submission. All files in a multfile upload should be from the same deployment period (same ARU, at the same point, over the same 5-day window). The website helps validate this by ensuring the ARU ID and Point ID in the file names match with your entries on the “create entry” page. The website will only accept files named according to the expected conventions.

When you make a multfile entry, each audio file will show up as a separate entry on your “My Entries” page. See screenshot below using the same files as the previous screenshot above. This will be relevant if you ever need to edit an entry. If you make an error on the “create entry” page, you will need to correct *each* associated record after submission.



A log should be continuously updated on the “*YourLastName_ARU.Deployment.History_DataEntry*” spreadsheet located in your OneDrive folder. Surveyors should periodically download the spreadsheet to their computer and change the file name to include the date of download. This will prevent the need for reentering all the data if it is accidentally overwritten or deleted. Do not rename, reorder, or change the validation parameters on any of the fields within the spreadsheet. This includes adding new columns/fields; don’t do it.

Covey Count Data Management

All covey count data should be continuously updated on the “*YourLastName_Covey.Count.Surveys_DataEntry*” spreadsheet located in your OneDrive folder. As with the ARU Deployment History, surveyors should periodically download the spreadsheet to their computer and change the file name to include the date of download. This will prevent the need for reentering all the data if it is accidentally overwritten or deleted. Do not rename, reorder, or change the validation parameters on any of the fields within the spreadsheet. This includes adding new columns/fields; don’t do it.


Please be consistent with your data entries. Typos or inconsistencies can cause the computer to misread data during analysis and with 60+ surveyors, it is not feasible for David to hand review each record.



Observer Name
David Tilson
David Tilson
Dave Tilson
david tilson
David
David T
dave


Each line is its own record as far as the computer is concerned, so please make sure the “Site/ARU Information” and “Covey Count Information” is complete on every line of your entries. This may seem tedious, but you can easily copy and paste once you’ve entered the first line from a survey.

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Point ID	Site/ARU Information					Covey Count Information						Covey Information				
	ARU Unit ID	ARU Recording			Date of Covey Count	Observer Name	Start Time	Temperature (F)	Cloud Cover %	Beaufort Code	Noise Code	Bird ID	Species Code	Seen/Heard	Distance (m)	Time of First Detection
		Start Date	Latitude	Longitude												
1233	14346	6/15/2023	39.83313	-93.5786	6/20/2023	David Tilson	6:01	64	0	0	1	1 NOBO	Heard	165	6:06	
1233	14346	6/15/2023	39.83313	-93.5786	6/20/2023	David Tilson	6:01	64	0	0	1	2 NOBO	Heard	75	6:01	
1233	14346	6/15/2023	39.83313	-93.5786	6/20/2023	David Tilson	6:01	64	0	0	1	3 NOBO	Heard	35	6:05	
1235	15235	6/16/2023	40.83313	-93.5786	6/21/2023	David Tilson	7:04	74	0	3	1	1 NOBO	Heard	35	6:05	
1236	14346	6/23/2023	38.83313	-93.5786	6/30/2023	David Tilson	5:59	62	5	1	2	1 NOBO	Seen	65	6:06	
1236	14346	6/23/2023	38.83313	-93.5786	6/30/2023	David Tilson	5:59	62	5	1	2	2 NOBO	Heard	90	6:01	
1236	14346	6/23/2023	38.83313	-93.5786	6/30/2023	David Tilson	5:59	62	5	1	2	3 NOBO	Heard	85	6:01	

Feel free to insert a completely blank line between surveys so that each can be easily separated visually. This is not required, but it may make it easier for you to review submissions if you ever need to make edits.



Site/ARU Information						Covey Count Information						Covey Information				
Point ID	ARU Unit ID	ARU Recording Start Date	Latitude	Longitude	Date of Covey Count	Observer Name	Start Time	Temperature (F)	Cloud Cover %	Beaufort Code	Noise Code	Bird ID	Species Code	Seen/Heard	Distance (m)	Time of First Detection
1233	14346	6/15/2023	39.83313	-93.5786	6/20/2023	David Tilson	6:01	64	0	0	1	1	NOBO	Heard	165	6:06
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1236	14346	6/23/2023	38.83313	-93.5786	6/30/2023	David Tilson	5:59	62	5	1	2	2	NOBO	Heard	90	6:01
1236	14346	6/23/2023	38.83313	-93.5786	6/30/2023	David Tilson	5:59	62	5	1	2	3	NOBO	Heard	85	6:01

Only create entries for surveys actually conducted (i.e., do not create a line for an anticipated survey that was never conducted; for example, one that was cancelled by rain). Entries *should* be made for surveys where no focal birds are detected. Please record all the site and environmental information and write “no focal species detected” in the survey notes.

Scanned Datasheets:

Your complete field datasheets should be scanned and uploaded as a PDF to the “*YourLastName_ScannedFieldDatasheets*” folder located within your OneDrive folder. Label the scanned datasheets according to these conventions: *PointID_MM.DD.YY.pdf*, where *Point ID* is a 4-digit number and *MM.DD.YY* represents the date (month, day, year) of the point count.

Important: It is not enough to include the point ID and date anywhere in the file name; it must be *exactly* as specified. See examples below for a hypothetical survey conducted at point 1223 on Oct. 16, 2023:

✓	1223_10.16.23.pdf
✗	1223 10.16.23.pdf
✗	1223_10.16.2023.pdf
✗	1223_10.16.23.jpeg

Each covey-count survey should be a separate file (e.g., do *not* submit all covey counts from the whole season as a single PDF). Please do not create any subfolders within the “Scanned Datasheets” folder.