Kjrsten Holt
TCID 672: Advanced Document Design
Week 5 Assignment: User Guide: Revised

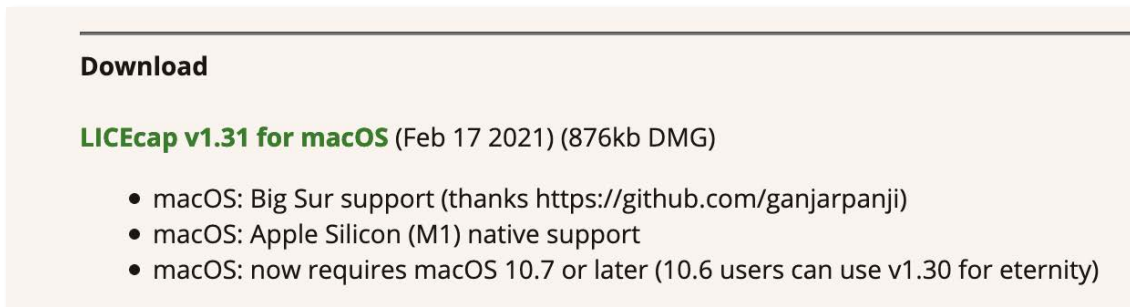# Installing and Using LICEcap to create GIFs

LICEcap is a small, free application available for Mac and Windows that lets users record desktop activity & save it as an animated GIF. (The "LICE" in LICEcap stands for "Lightweight Image Composition Engine.")

This is great for recording very short video clips or recording your on-screen actions for demonstration or instruction purposes.
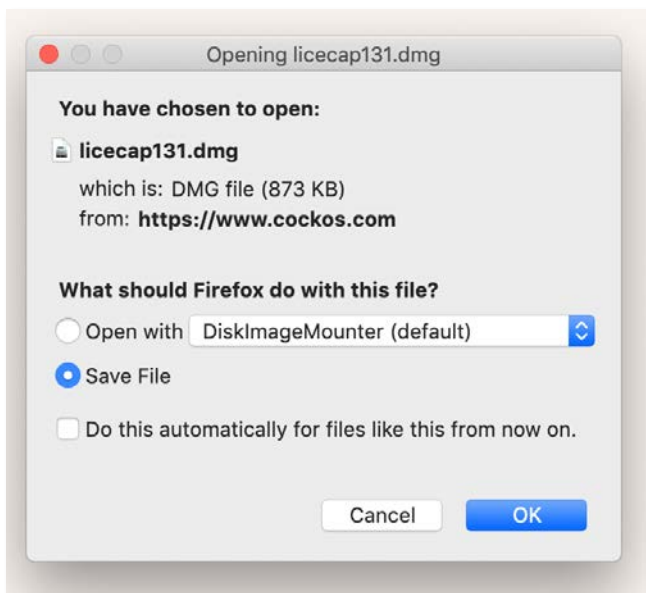
GIF animations have no sound, and generally work best if they are less than 30 seconds long. Once you have the GIF file, you can place it anywhere you would place a regular image (on a webpage or in a learning management system) or share it via social media or email.
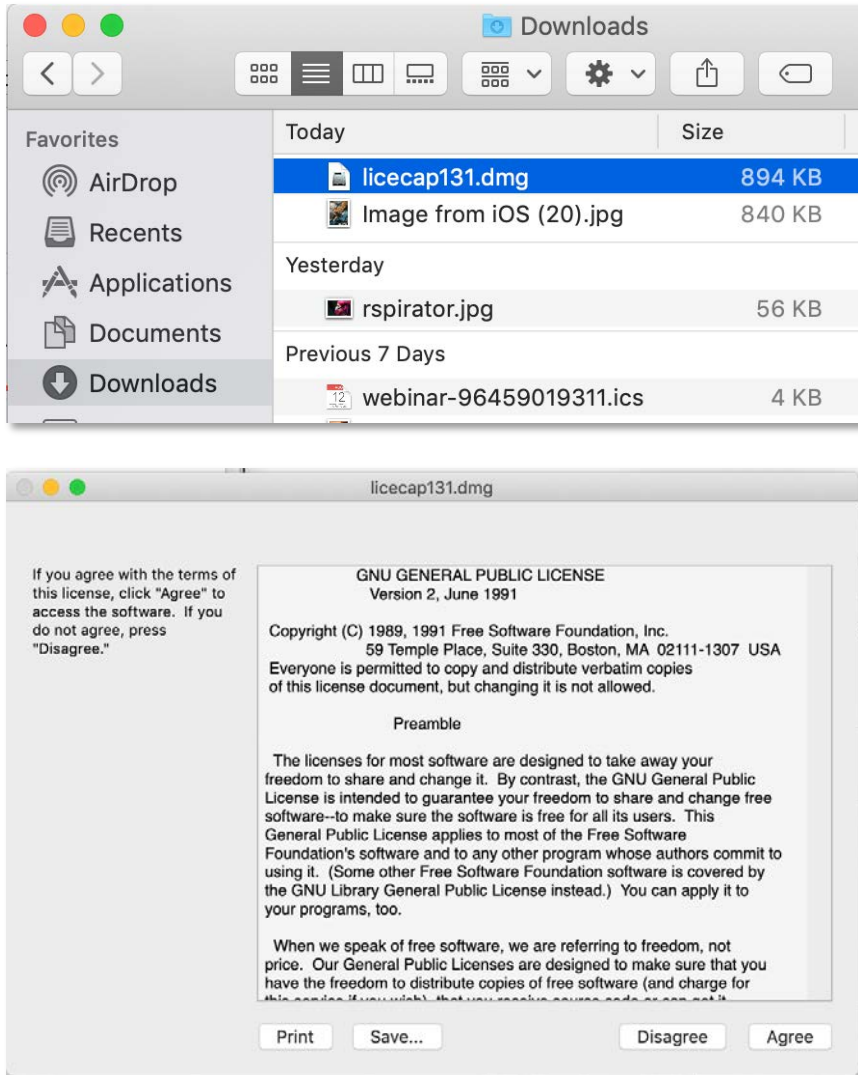
Obtaining and installing LICEcap

1. First, go to: https://www.cockos.com/licecap

2. Scroll down on the page and click on the Mac download link. The precise link name will change as new versions come out, but it will look something like this:

Download

LICEcap v1.31 for macOS (Feb 17 2021) (876kb DMG)

- macOS: Big Sur support (thanks https://github.com/ganjarpanji)
- macOS: Apple Silicon (M1) native support
- macOS: now requires macOS 10.7 or later (10.6 users can use v1.30 for eternity)

3. Choose to save the *.dmg* file. (The file will probably be saved in your Downloads folder.)

Opening licecap131.dmg

You have chosen to open:

📄 **licecap131.dmg**

which is: DMG file (873 KB)
from: **https://www.cockos.com**

What should Firefox do with this file?

○ Open with   DiskImageMounter (default)   ⇕
🔵 Save File

☐ Do this automatically for files like this from now on.
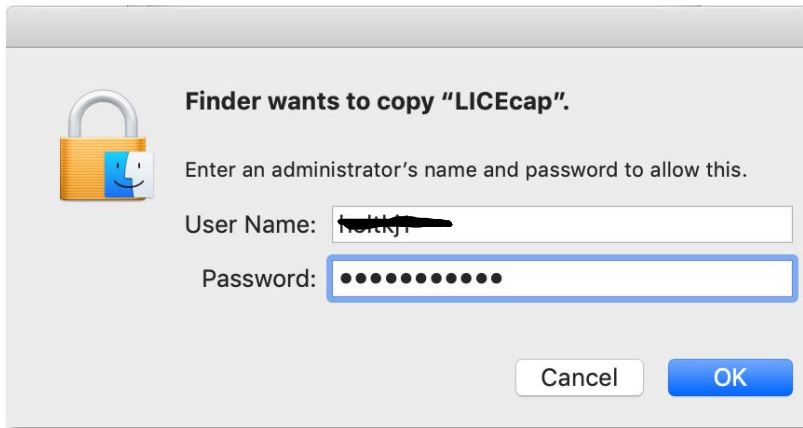
Cancel   OK

4. Double-click on the *.dmg* file to open the installer, then agree to the Terms of Service:
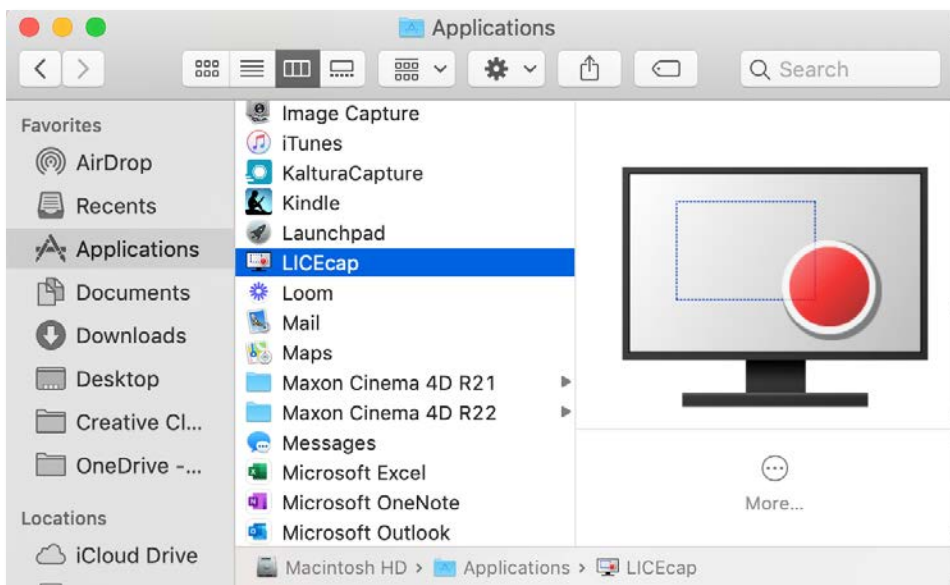

5. In the window that appears after that, drag the LICEcap icon onto the "Applications" alias:

6. If you are prompted for an admin name and password, fill that in and click "OK." (You might not need to do this step.)
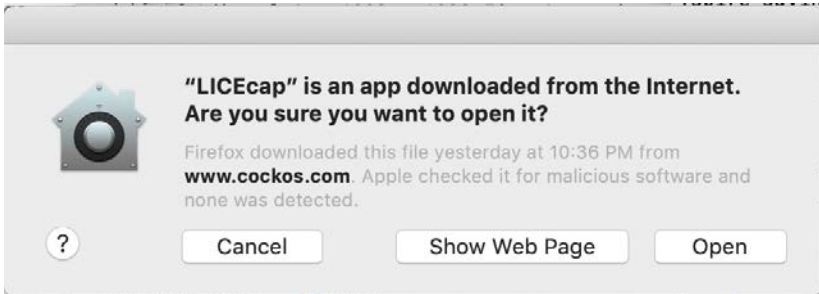

7. The application will be placed into your Applications folder.
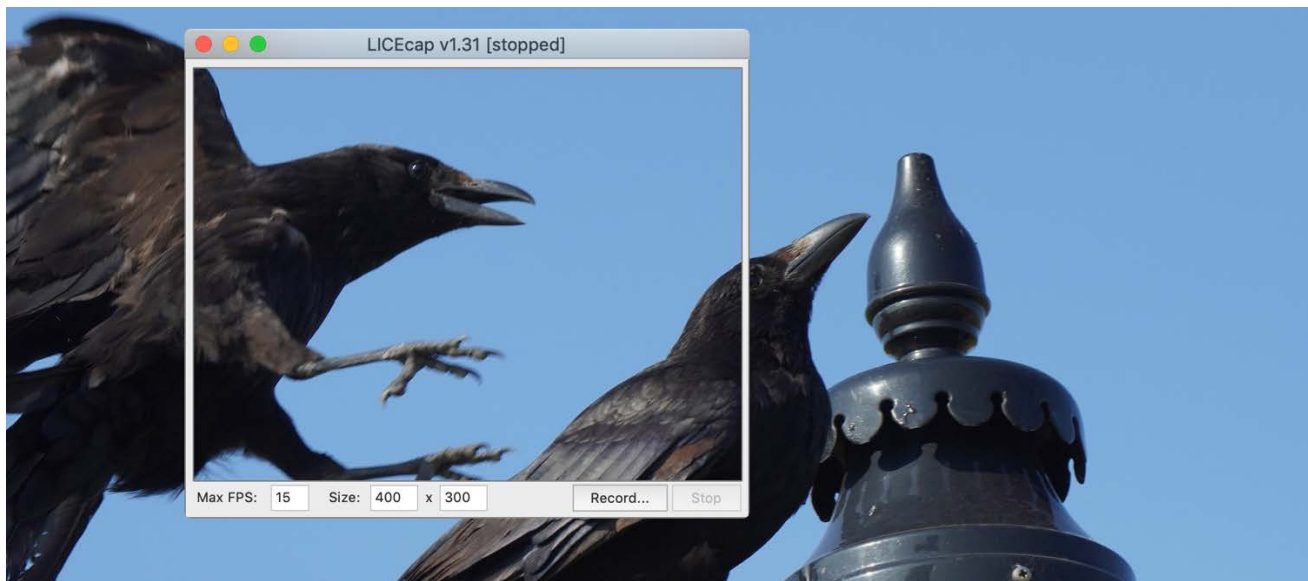
Capturing a GIF of desktop activity

Part A: Setting up the app to record

1. Open the LICEcap application by double-clicking on its icon. (If it's not in your dock yet, look for it in the Applications folder.) If you see the warning below, you can ignore it and click "Open."
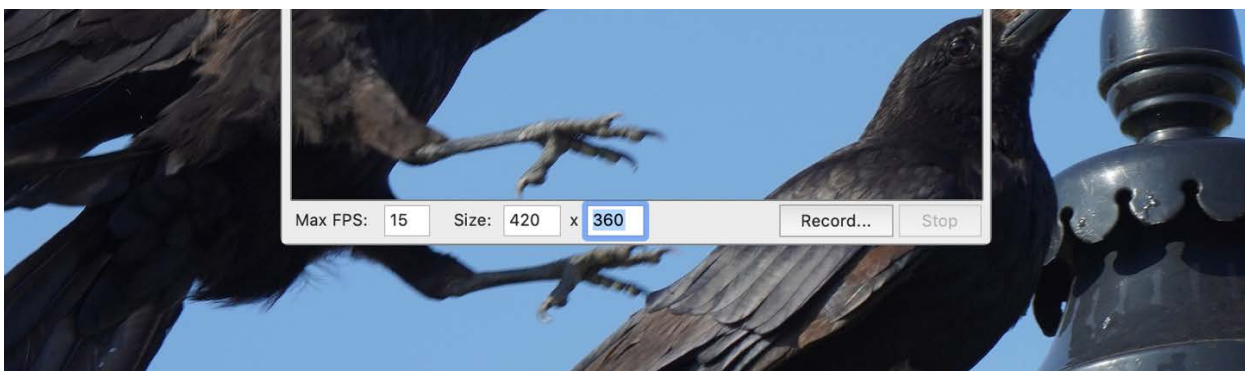

NOTE: You might also be prompted to give permission to record your screen.

2. The LICEcap recording window will launch. It looks like a transparent picture frame, revealing the content underneath:

3. You can drag the window's bottom right corner to resize the area that will be recorded. The current size in pixels is shown in the bottom of the frame. You can also change the frame size by typing dimensions into the boxes:
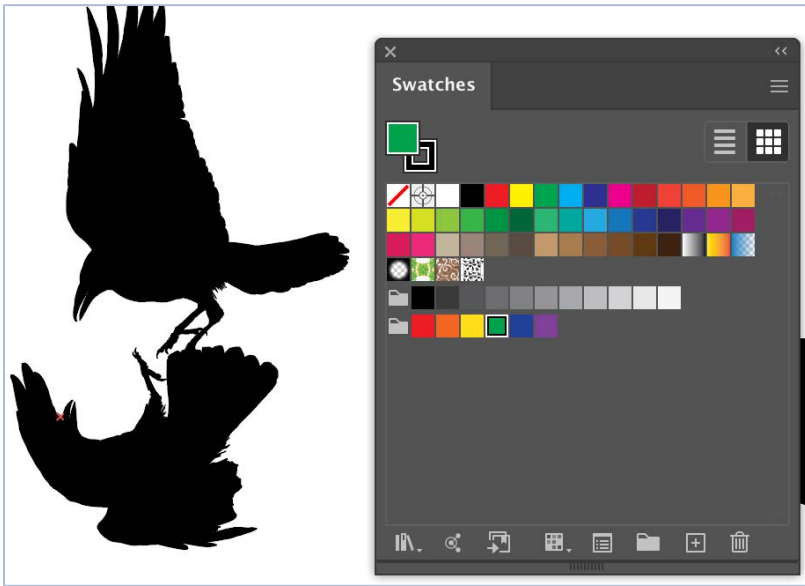

4. Leave the "Max FPS" (seen above) at 15, or whatever number your computer defaults to.
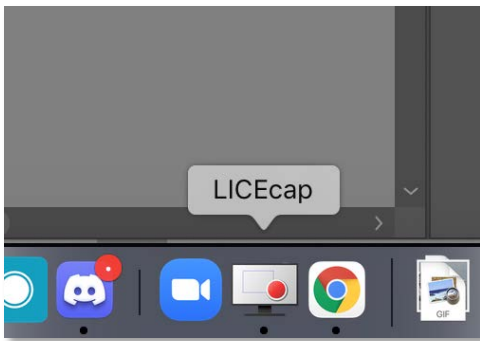
Part B: Recording Content

LICEcap will record anything happening on your screen inside the frame. You can use it to record a short piece of video, or an interaction (like the action of clicking on a menu) that you want to demonstrate. The following example shows the process of recording an action in Adobe Illustrator.
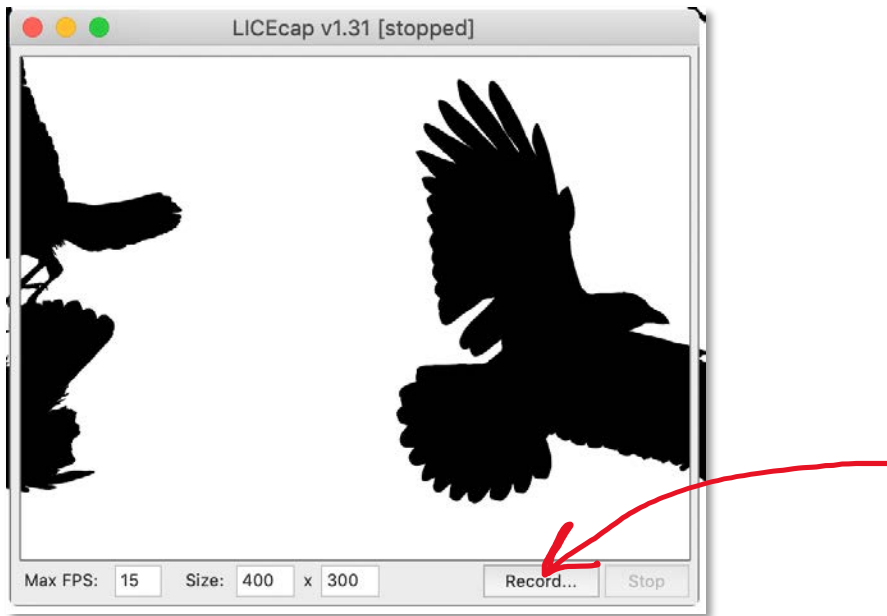
1. Set up the content that you want to record first. In this example, I want to demonstrate choosing a color, so I've opened the color picker in Illustrator:
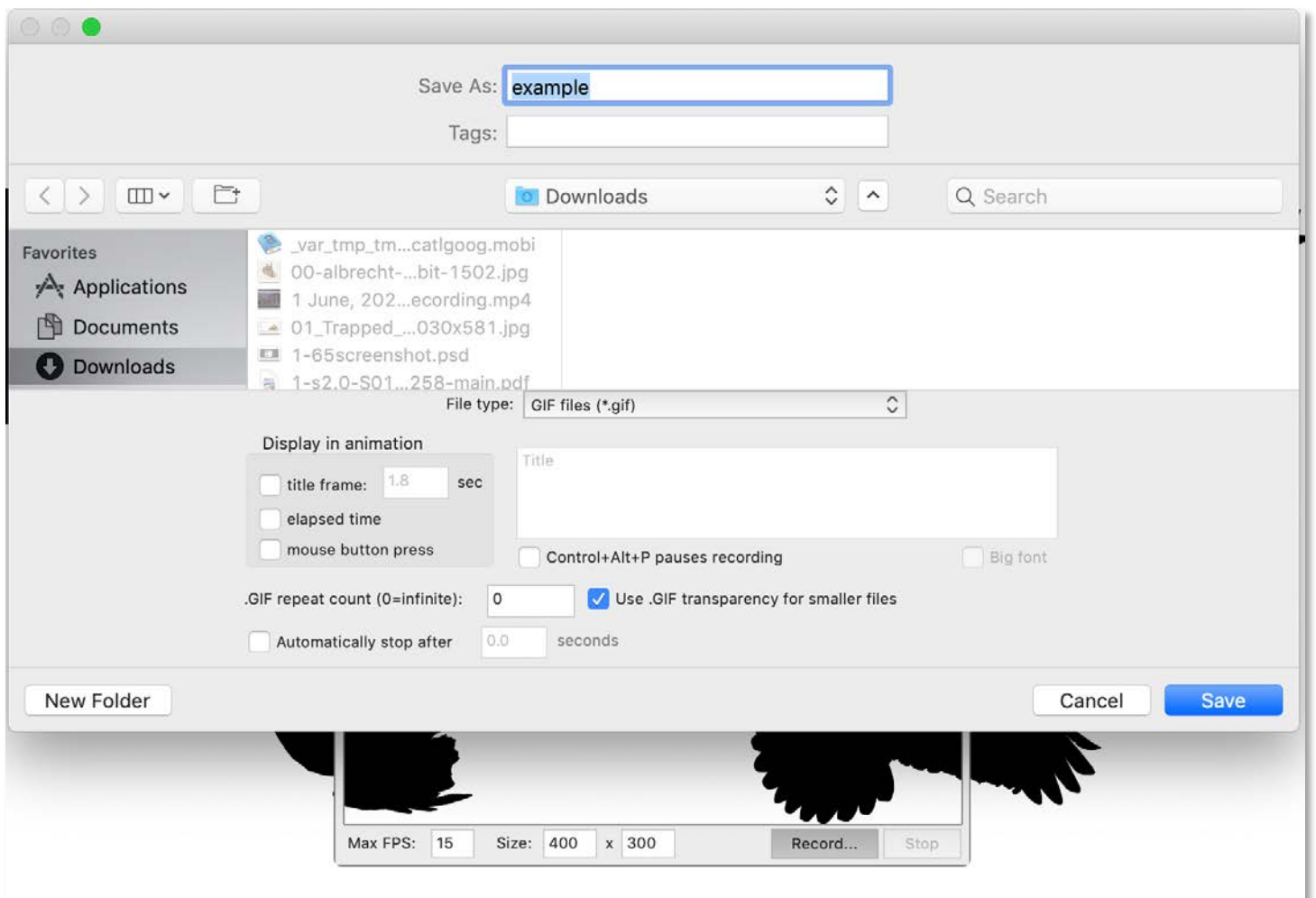

2. Switch to the LICEcap application by clicking on its icon in the Dock:

NOTE: Depending on which application is currently active, you may see the color picker (or any pop-up control in the application you are recording) disappear when you switch to the LICEcap app. *Don't worry!* After starting to record, you will be able to interact with apps under the LICEcap frame.
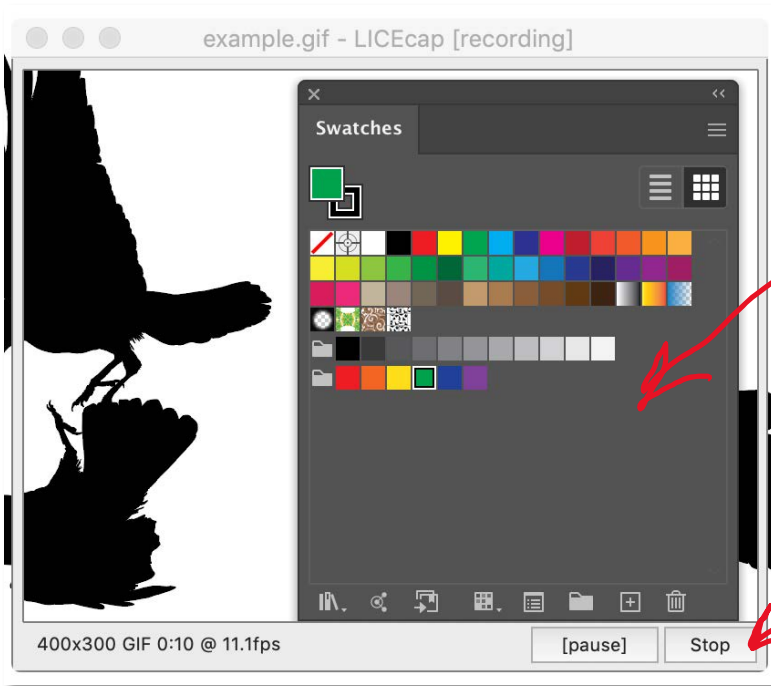
3. Click "Record" on the LICEcap frame. You will be prompted to name the file that will be created and choose where it will be saved. I am saving this file as "example" and leaving the format "GIF."
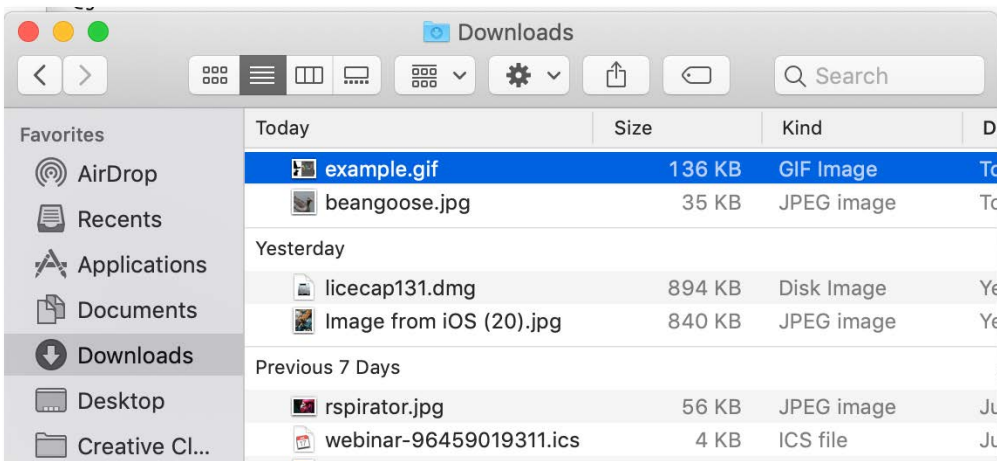

(You will see other LICEcap options in this window, but you can leave them be.)
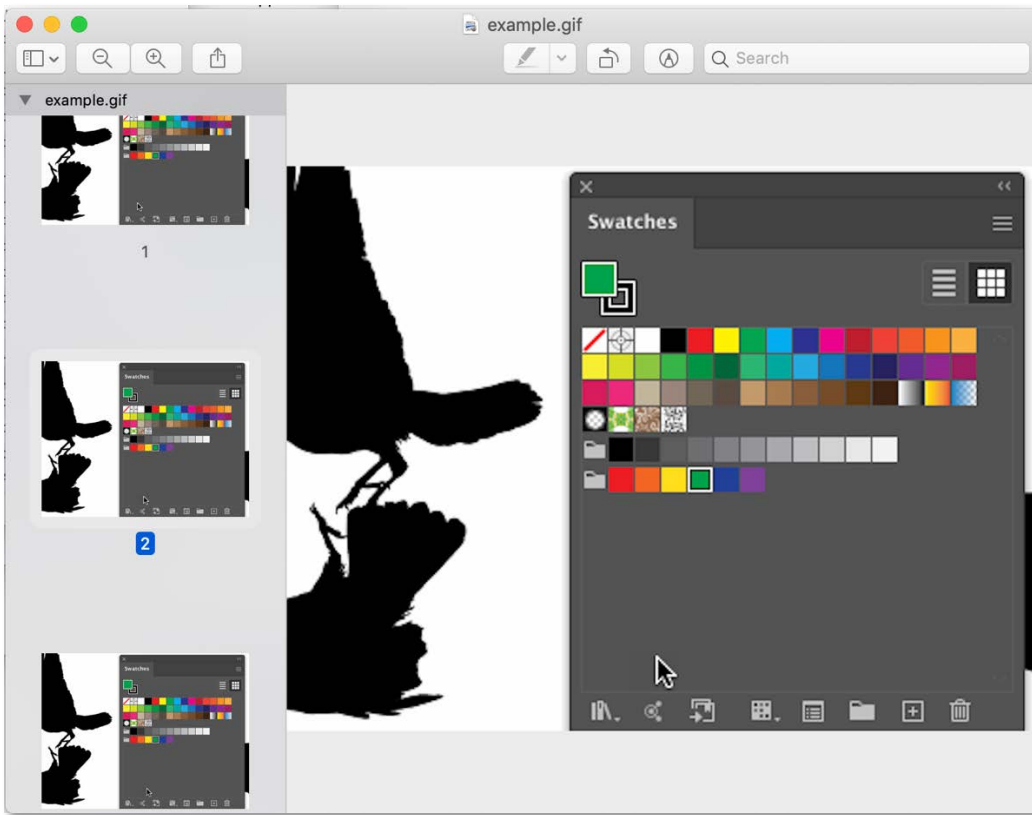
4. Click "Save" to begin recording.

If you are recording your on-screen actions, do them while recording is happening.

5. Click "Stop" on the LICEcap frame when you want to stop recording. The file will be saved in the location you chose in step 3 (in this case, it has been saved to the Downloads folder):
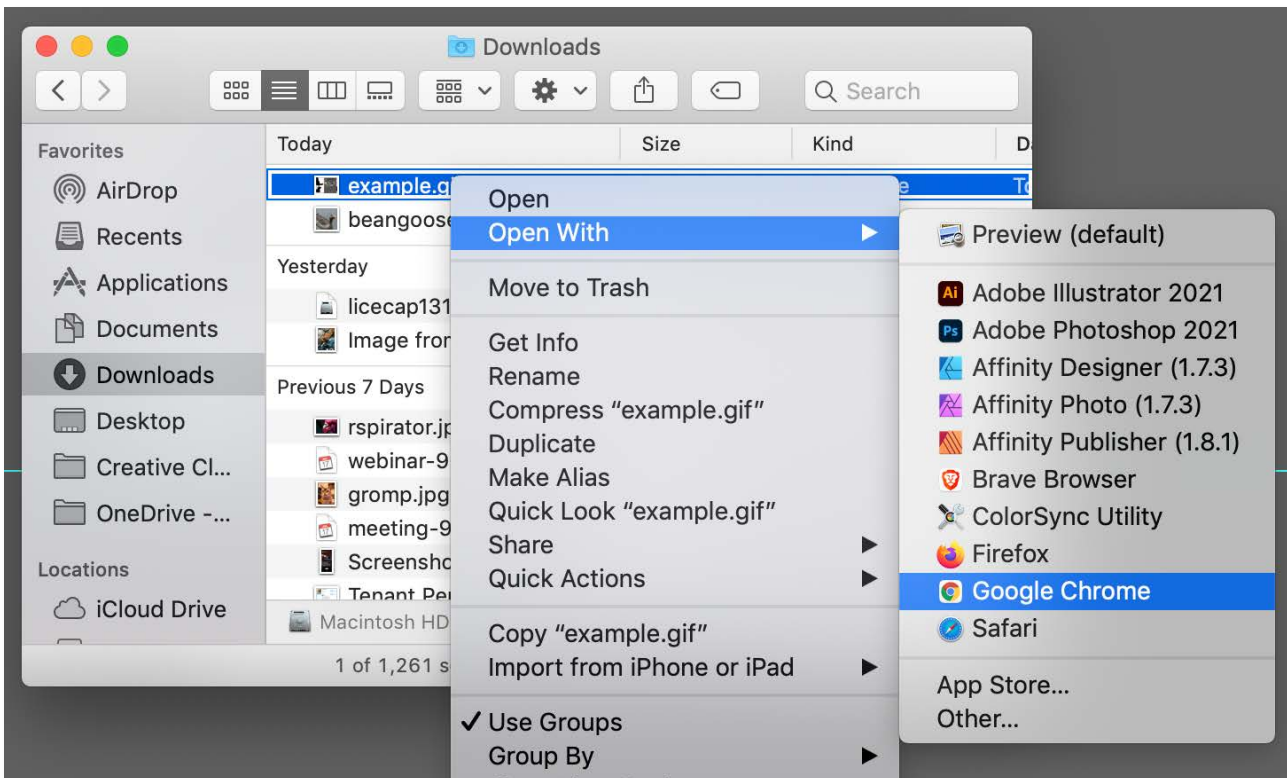

6. On Mac computers, the file will open in *Preview* when you double-click it. However, *Preview* will display a series of still images rather than an animation, as seen below:

7. To view the animation, open it in a web browser. You can do this a few ways:

    A. Drag the file's icon onto a blank browser window or tab

    B. Hold down the Control key and click on the file, and use the menus to choose to open it with a web browser such as Google Chrome or Firefox:

8. You should see your animation playing in the browser window. It will repeat over and over. (You can change that in the output settings, but it is a good idea to let it keep playing so that users don't miss seeing the animation.)