

**Title of Session:** BirdSleuth Inquiry - Student Inquiry through eBird

**Moderator:** Jennifer Fee

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Room: BirdSleuth Inquiry Group

**DianeC** joined the room.

**BJB2:** Hi, Diane!

**JenniferMF:** Hey Diane!

**DianeC:** Hey Jennifer! I'm glad I can make this one!

**JenniferMF:** Yep, but sadly it might just be us!

**DianeC:** That's okay . . . I have questions!

**JenniferMF:** There's another similar discussion going on in another room... so we have competition!

**DianeC:** Another discussion about Bird Sleuth?

**JenniferMF:** I ran into Phil here earlier... but he had to run off-- parent teacher conferences.

**JenniferMF:** No, but about integrating math and science.

**BJB2:** and inquiry

**JenniferMF:** With one of my colleagues. should be a good discussion there, too.

**DianeC:** Hi BJ! Have we ever met? I'm in Oregon.

**BJB2** waves hi to Diane. I'm in Pennsylvania

**BJB2** . o O ( I'm on Tapped In helpdesk )

**JenniferMF:** Diane, I can't recall, you came to another discussion on here once, didn't you?

**JenniferMF:** Usually BJ helps me out with the discussions.

**DianeC:** No. The 5 pm time doesn't work for me, because its 2 here, and I'm still in the

middle of my teaching day. I'm excited about this one.

**JenniferMF:** Well, Diane, since it is just us, you can have me all to yourself =)

**BJB2:** a reminder, Diane, to go to the Actions menu in the top right of your chat and select DETACH

**JenniferMF:** You can ask me anything and maybe we'll even get out of class early!?!?

**MarshalGst4** joined the room.

**JenniferMF:** Hello Marshall.

**MarshalGst4:** Hi Jennifer...still figuring this out.

**JenniferMF:** Oh-- it's you!!!

**JenniferMF:** I didn't know you could stop in!

**JenniferMF:** Marshall works at the Lab with me. He's one of the Leaders of eBird!

**MarshalGst4:** Brian and Chris couldn't...you didn't get my email?

**BJB2** cheers for Marshal.

**DianeC:** My birding elective class, with 20 kids, is one of the most awesome things I've ever done as a teacher. These kids are just taking off. They are really into ebird, and discovered the top 100 list before I did! Several of them are in the top 10 for our county, which they printed and carried around the school, showing anyone who would look!

**JenniferMF:** I didn't check email the last hour or two.

**DianeC:** Hi Marshall!

**MarshalGst4:** What county Diane?

**DianeC:** Curry County, Oregon

**JenniferMF:** I'd asked any of the project leads for eBird to stop in, so in case anyone had any technical questions, they could help.

**JenniferMF:** I wish Phil were here. He had some questions.

**MarshalGst4:** I'll try!

**JenniferMF:** But he had to go to parent teacher conferences.

**JenniferMF:** =(

**DianeC:** I do. Sometimes when we access the species maps, we get a point map on GoogleMaps, and sometimes we get a grid map. I can't see how to choose the grid map, which is more specific.

**JenniferMF:** Way to jump in Diane! We have to make use of the eBird expert =)

**MarshalGst4:** The grid map shows up for the national scale and the point map is restricted to states/provinces and smaller countries (i.e., not USA, Mex, Canada)

**MarshalGst4:** You should get grid maps first when you go to 'View and Explore' and then 'maps'. You will get point maps when you click 'Change location' and refine to a smaller location (state or county)

**DianeC:** Oh, I see. It's difficult in many ways to get detailed data for a small county like ours. My kids are seeing far fewer robins now than they did about a month ago, but there's so little data that they can't really see if that's a trend.

**SusanR** joined the room.

**MarshalGst4:** The big downside of the point maps are that they don't show NEGATIVE data (i.e., where species does not occur), but the upside is that you can get specific information on any record (including your kid's name)

**JenniferMF:** Hi Susan, welcome.

**SusanR:** Hi Jennifer

**SusanR** listens intently

**MarshalGst4:** Sample size, sample size, sample size...

**DianeC:** I know! But that may take years...

**JenniferMF:** Susan, here we have Marshall, who I work with at the Lab. He's one of the leads on the eBird project.

**SusanR:** excuse me

**JenniferMF:** Diane is a BirdSleuth teacher who has used eBird.

**MarshalGst4:** Where?

**DianeC:** southern Oregon coast

**JenniferMF:** So they might be having a chat that beginners may not "get" => Susan, have you used eBird?

**JenniferMF:** Susan, you've been here, to BirdSleuth Inquiry before, right?

**SusanR:** yes

**JenniferMF:** and have you used eBird?

**DianeC:** The thing is, robins come to the coast in huge numbers in the winter, and they go inland about now, so we are seeing fewer. I'd like the kids to figure out for themselves where they might have gone. Any suggestions?

**SusanR:** I have not used ebird

**JenniferMF:** let me give you a link to check out... to help introduce you to it =>

**JenniferMF:** "eBird Advice for Educators" <http://www.birds.cornell.edu/birdsleuth/ebird>

**MarshalGst4:** Diane, I'm sure you know you can refine the grid maps or point maps by month, and by looking at March compared to say June, you can see the shift in robin populations.

**JenniferMF:** Diane and Marshall, would this work... to look at moving Robins... can't you specify dates as part of the map ("change dates" tab)

**JenniferMF:** oh... Marshal you took my answer!!!

**DianeC:** Yes, that should show up on the state grid map.

**SusanR** peruses ebird

**JenniferMF:** Yes, I'd consider looking at February/March versus May/June.

**MarshalGst4:** From the bar chart for Oregon as a whole, you can refine the query to just birds reported in April, but clicking on the hyperlinked Apr at the top of the bar chart. Then the point map will show only April reports. You can then click your back button on your browser to click 'Jun' and look at just June reports.

**JenniferMF:** Maybe looking at 2 months at a time would give a larger sample size?

**MarshalGst4:** a point map approach vs. a grid map approach, however, and while it might show the pattern you do miss the 'where the birds weren't' element

**JenniferMF:** good point Marshall. I did not think of that.

**DianeC:** I'm going to give my birders this challenge the next time it rains . . . I can't keep them inside when its nice out!

**DianeC:** How can I save and print out this discussion?

**JenniferMF:** You will have a transcript sent to you (unless you marked that you did not want to get it when you registered)

**JenniferMF:** it will come via email as soon as you log out.

**BJB2:** the script is automatically emailed, Diane

**DianeC:** Oh...I hope I didn't mark that.

**DianeC:** Is there a technical reason why the local maps can't be grid maps?

**MarshalGst4:** Sort of...we aren't able to do it yet. It is DEFINITELY one of our long term goals.

**DianeC:** On a completely different track, do you ever delete accounts? I know there are some past students whose lists were not serious or accurate, and I kind of hate still seeing them there.

**MarshalGst4:** The technical reason I guess is that we are in a transition period for how we display map information. Our old system caused a lot of problems and we are about halfway done with conversion to a new system. Hopefully over the next year we will complete the conversion.

**DianeC:** I'll look forward to it, Marshal!

**MarshalGst4:** We recognize the value of the grid maps and want to see them at finer and finer scales, but they also require more data to show anything meaningful. But trust that we are working on it!

**MarshalGst4:** We actually don't delete accounts, but we do have the capability to invalidate all the data for an account

**JenniferMF:** Diane, I've forgotten, do your kids usually submit their research for Classroom BirdScope?

**MarshalGst4:** If there were students that should have their data completely invalidated, send me their username and I can make sure that is taken care of

**DianeC:** So could I email you the ones that I know are not accurate, with the reasons how

I know they are not?

**DianeC:** Jennifer, they haven't yet, but this year WE WILL!!

**DianeC:** Marshal, where should I send them?

**MarshalGst4:** [mji26@cornell.edu](mailto:mji26@cornell.edu)

**JenniferMF:** Would be great to get some more student reports on what they are discovering via eBird-- like the "robin mystery"

**JenniferMF:** We get very few kids querying the database... I'd really love to show other teachers how do-able it is!

**MarshalGst4:** Although I'm here mostly to help with questions, I'm certainly interested to hear how eBird is being used in the classroom.

**DianeC:** Absolutely! I didn't realize how much fun it is. We can be in the computer lab, and one kid announces that he discovered something cool, and the kids pick up on it go find it, too. If only it would rain some more, they'd be finding all sorts of things!

**JenniferMF:** Oh, Marshall, you may not have seen it (and you neither, Diane)-- it's brand new and I've been working with Chris. BirdSleuth is offering a free resource called "eBird Advice for Educators" <http://www.birds.cornell.edu/birdsleuth/ebird>

**DianeC:** I'll be checking that out for sure!

**JenniferMF:** We plan to link it from the eBird site, so educators who find eBird will get some "how to" advice.

**DianeC:** My principal is impressed with he sees my kids doing on ebird, and I think that led to him finding us grant money for field trips this spring!

**JenniferMF:** HOORAY!

**JenniferMF:** . o O ( is Susan still pursuing that lesson???)

**DianeC:** My birding class will be camping in the Klamath Basin (one of the nation's birding hotspots) for two nights next month. There should be much more ebird data from that site for them to compare to their own sightings.

**JenniferMF:** Here's a scary question for you Diane, How accurate do you think your kid's counts are? I've always believed that kids were doing just as good as "average adults" (maybe better since they have the support of the teacher and other kids saying "you didn't see that!!!")

**JenniferMF:** that trip sounds wonderful!!

**MarshalGst4:** Was birding around Klamath Lake for an eBird meeting in July 2 years ago. I'm jealous!

**DianeC:** I really stress the "ethics" of scientific data. We have to be brutally honest, we record only we personally saw, and its okay to be unsure but we don't upload that data. For these reasons, I'm pretty sure they're as accurate as average adults!

**MarshalGst4:** Do you practice counting birds? How do the kids do with large numbers?

**JenniferMF:** That's good to know, Diane! The BirdSleuth materials really stress that, too.

**DianeC:** I've also gotten better at saying things like "what else could it have been?" and "What makes you certain that's what it was?"

**DianeC:** Large numbers are hard. I think we need to practice some sampling methods before we go to Klamath, where we may see thousands of some species.

**DianeC:** Large numbers are for ME! not just the kids

**JenniferMF:** I'd love to do a video of a teacher leading a group and saying things like that. I think some teachers who are new to birding might be intimidated to question counts-- or just not know how to. A "how to lead a student birding group" might help.

**DianeC:** I'd like to help you with that, Jennifer. I think the hardest thing is finding the balance between encouraging the kids' excitement, and encouraging accuracy. I hate doubting them, but sometimes I need to.

**JenniferMF:** Marshall, I checked and don't seem to have gotten your email. We are repeating this session on Wednesday from 5-6pm EST if you care to join.

**JenniferMF:** Diane, I wish budgets were not so bad so I could come out and film your Klamath trip!!!!!! I bet Marshall would volunteer too =)

**MarshalGst4:** Hard for everyone, I was going to mention that the eBird home page has an "eBird index". If you click on that, the Bird Counting 101 and Bird Counting 201 stories are available there.

**JenniferMF:** Does your school have any media specialist or teach podcasting? Wondering if it would be a cool project for a student?

**DianeC:** Oh, I wish you could!!!

**MarshalGst4:** Jennifer I just realized the email didn't send and resent it...sorry!

**JenniferMF:** If you created the video, I can pretty much guarantee we'd use it.

**DianeC:** I know we have a digital video recorder. I'll look into it.

**JenniferMF:** Oh, cool Marshall, I'll check them. The Counting 101 and 201 are just text, not video?

**MarshalGst4:** no video

**JenniferMF:** Diane, you could be a movie star =)

**DianeC:** That's scary.

**JenniferMF:** Diane, the class only lasts for 15 more minutes... any other questions for Marshall? I'm learning a lot!!!!

**JenniferMF .** o O ( any questions from Susan? )

**DianeC:** As another aside, I filled out the ambassador form a few weeks back. Our local Audubon Society wants to get teachers in two other small Curry towns involved in Bird Sleuth. Can you send me 20 or so brochures? I may be doing some workshops.

**JenniferMF:** Yep-- actually, they went out Friday! You will be getting them soon!

**DianeC:** Fantastic!!

**JenniferMF:** (or at least the were packed on Friday... not sure if they made it down for Friday mail or if they went out today)

**JenniferMF:** Thanks, Diane, for passing the word! I can surely use the help!!!

**DianeC:** Another ebird question . . . Eurasian Collared-Doves are becoming very common in western Oregon. My kids are concerned that every time we enter them, we get the conformation dialog. I tell them that they are helping the scientists to see a new distribution. Any thoughts on that?

**MarshalGst4:** Do you like getting the confirmation or is it a pain?

**DianeC:** It's not a pain if the kids see a reason for it. They just see a common every day bird and think they're being questioned on it.

**JenniferMF:** How long has the dove been in that area?

**JenniferMF:** That's such an interesting story!



**JenniferMF:** That would be another neat report submission for Classroom BirdScope (especially if you have long-term data from your site that documents it's arrival and population growth)

**DianeC:** I could look it up, but off the top of my head, I'd say two years ago I saw a few here and there, and they were considered rare birds. Now they are everywhere.

**MarshalGst4:** OK Diane, I just changed the filter to allow up to 25 Eur. Collared-Doves. Does that sound about right?

**JenniferMF:** Ha! Ask and ye shall receive!

**DianeC:** Perfect! Thanks. Anyone who birds in W Oregon will be entering them.

**JenniferMF:** Tell your kids they changed eBrid!

**DianeC:** And now I can tell my kids that THEIR data just influenced ebird!!!

**JenniferMF:** Absolutely! How cool!

**MarshalGst4:** Eur. Collared-Dove is a great story for the kids to research. We have an animated powerpoint slide that shows the spread across the country. I can send it when I get your email

**DianeC:** Jennifer, what's that they say about great minds?

**JenniferMF:** I'd be happy to be in the great minds group with you =)

**DianeC:** Marshal, I do want to show them that powerpoint! Do you need my email right here or do you have it elsewhere?

**MarshalGst4:** You guys are at the vanguard of the expansion. It's a super-interesting story because a) they only reached Florida in 1985; b) the first records away from FL were in ~1991; c) they spread all the way to CA in 10 years; d) they are still expanding and no one knows where they will stop

**DianeC:** That is so cool!

**JenniferMF:** Marshall, if you mail the PowPt to me, I can forward it to Diane, and another teacher I think might be interested in it!

**MarshalGst4:** e) they move NW but not NE..they are still absent from the East Coast north of NC; f) they did the exact same thing in Europe, expanding from Turkey to the British Isles and showed the same NW bias to the colonization.

**JenniferMF:** Weird!

**DianeC:** Wow! Whatever could be the reason?

**MarshalGst4:** Innate biology I guess?

**DianeC:** I have to go, but I have loved this!!! An hour flew by. Thanks for all your help and for setting up this great resource!!!

**MarshalGst4:** But if you want a great example of how your kids' data is really making a contribution, that is it. They are documenting the colonization right on their doorsteps. It would be interesting to do a survey of small towns along the coast, see which ones have doves and which ones don't, and guess as to why

**JenniferMF:** Must be... seems too odd for it to be dumb chance, and seeing it on two continents with the same pattern, it would be hard to attribute it to weather or wind or something

**MarshalGst4:** Then repeat the survey a year later and see how many MORE towns have the doves! They are expanding at an alarming rate.

**DianeC:** I have a bunch of new ideas for research!

**JenniferMF:** There you go, Diane, something to suggest in your workshops.

**BJB2** looks at the clock on the wall

**JenniferMF:** (and submit to us!!)

**MarshalGst4:** You could count Mourning Doves at the same time and see if those numbers seem to drop at all

**JenniferMF:** Oh, cool question!!

**JenniferMF:** What a very fun discussion. I am going to hate to see it end. (although it is dark here, and feeling like close to bedtime... Mondays are rough!)

**DianeC:** Thanks!!!!

**MarshalGst4:** Thanks Jennifer...I'll check my schedule for Weds, but may not be free. I might be able to join for the first 30 min or so.

**JenniferMF:** Thank you so much Marshall, for stopping in!

**JenniferMF:** Would be great to have you if you can.

**MarshalGst4:** Thanks to you Diane for using eBird!

**JenniferMF:** And great spending time with you again, Diane

**JenniferMF:** And BJ =>

**DianeC:** My great pleasure!

**SusanR:** Thanks for admitting me as a late arrival.

**BJB2:** Thanks, Jen. See you Wednesday

**JenniferMF:** you are welcome!

**JenniferMF:** Diane, let's chat about that podcast =>

**JenniferMF:** sometime soon

**DianeC:** Okay.

**JenniferMF:** good night everyone!

**DianeC:** Good night!

**BJB2** waves goodnight

**MarshalGst4:** Adios

**SusanR:** au revoir

**JenniferMF:** sayonara