

# Using the Birdata app

**Birdata is a citizen science tool to record the bird species living at or visiting your location. It uses mobile phone technology to allow you to submit data to a national repository as you make observations. Afterwards, you are able to see the species you and other participants have recorded.**

Landholders and community groups will be using this app to collect data as part of the project run by EMRC and Murdoch University “Farm dams as refuges for freshwater plants and animals in a drying climate”.

- **Birdata** is a project of BirdLife Australia.
- **Birdata** uses a database of common and taxonomic names for bird species of Australia.
- Install **Birdata** on your device, directly from your app store, or from the link at <https://birdata.birdlife.org.au/>
- You will be using the brochure “*Waterbirds of the East Metropolitan Region*” that we have supplied to identify the birds that you see on dams and wetlands.

Go to <https://birdata.birdlife.org.au/> to learn more about **Birdata**.

You collect the data on your phone or tablet by recording sightings on-site; records are submitted directly from the device. Identifications are then included in BirdLife Australia’s national records. Murdoch University scientists can access the data for analyses of biodiversity

Once installed, you will use the login details for this research project: Farm Dams Project WA. Every observer will use the same login (note the difference with FrogID), but individual participants will be identifiable by location, as entered while using the app.

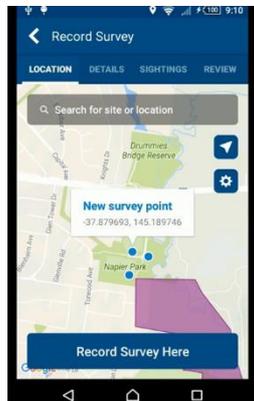
Instructional videos for using Birdata are also on the website: <https://birdata.birdlife.org.au/help> and there is a good FAQ section.

## USING THE APP....

- 1) Log into the Birdata app on your phone or mobile device. IT IS IMPORTANT TO DO THIS WHILE ACCESSING THE INTERNET (WIFI or 3G/4G).

Use the login details for our group that will be sent to you via email.

The first screen summarizes data so far...

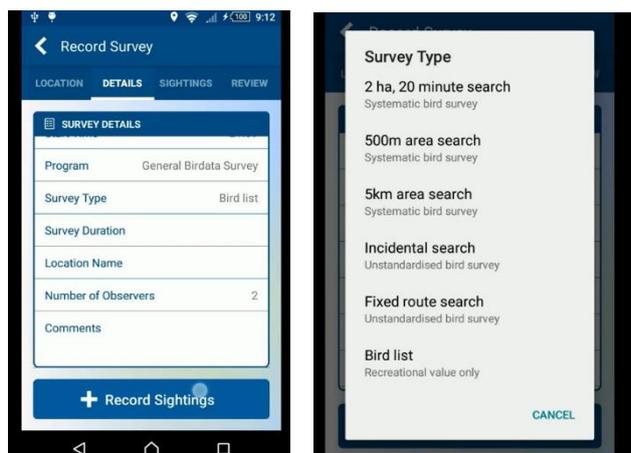


Touching the “Record Survey” button begins each survey. Select “General Birdata Survey” when requested.

GPS is used to determine your location. Zoom in if necessary, then touch the screen at your survey point (should be where you are standing!). Touch “Record Survey Here”.

- 2) Fill in the background information: “Survey Type” will always be “Incidental”. Survey time should normally be 20 mins – but can be more, and if you have other observations outside times you’ve planned to observe you can enter those intervals as well. In any case, you can update the time after you record a sighting.

“Location Name” should be your **Dam Identifier Number**. If you intend to survey multiple dams on your property, you will be given multiple Dam Identifier Numbers.

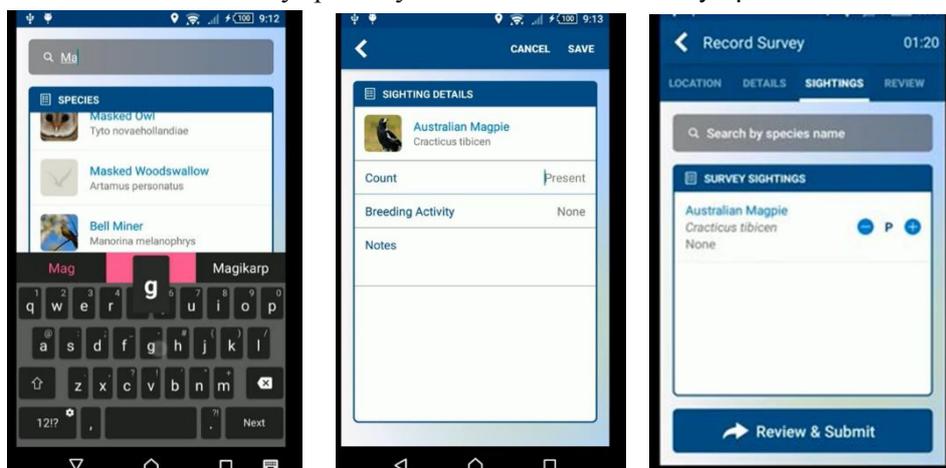


Select “Water Level” from the options provided.

“Location Accuracy” should be automatically filled.

In the “Comments” section, enter the name of the person recording the data. You can also enter anything else that might be unusual about that set of observations – but we don’t need too many details here.

- 3) **Collecting data:** Press the “Record Sightings” tab.....You will have the ID sheet handy, so you can enter the common names of any species you see in the “Search by species name” box. You need to fill in a few



details: counts of individuals are useful, but this can be a rough estimate if it’s too hard. There are a number of options for breeding activity – only enter these if you are sure, otherwise leave as “none” (see the data sheet we have supplied for simplified version of the criteria in Birddata).

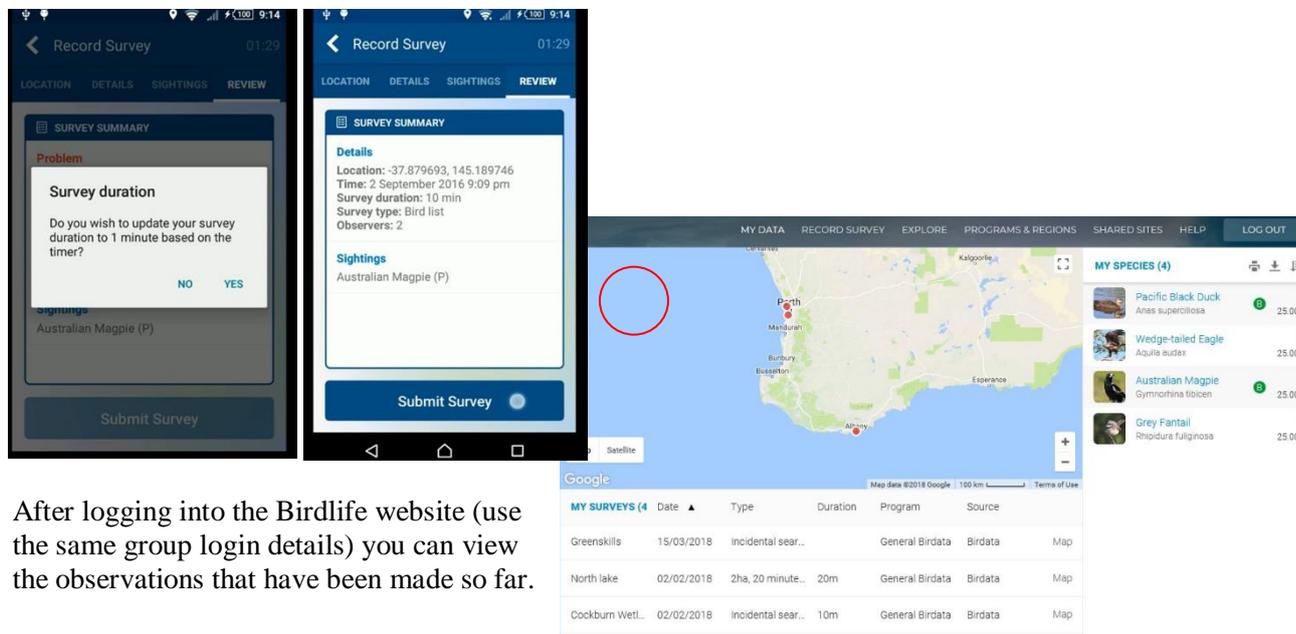
Notes are about other behaviors: feeding behavior is the most important thing so write “feeding”, “diving”, “resting”, or “roosting” here, or leave blank.

Also in the “Comments” section, add the reliability factor (RF) for your sighting, as explained on the data sheet handout: Place ‘RF1’ if not certain (e.g. just a glimpse), ‘RF2’ if some identifying features were seen on an individual, ‘RF3’ for a certain ID, ‘RF4’ for repeated clear IDs of the same individual(s).

- 4) Hit “Save” and you will return to the search screen to enter any other species you see.

If you do not see any birds during the survey timeframe, this is important information and also needs to be recorded. As there is no option to submit a survey without entering bird data, we suggest you choose any bird species, record the count as “Zero” and in the “Comments” section write “No birds observed during survey timeframe.”

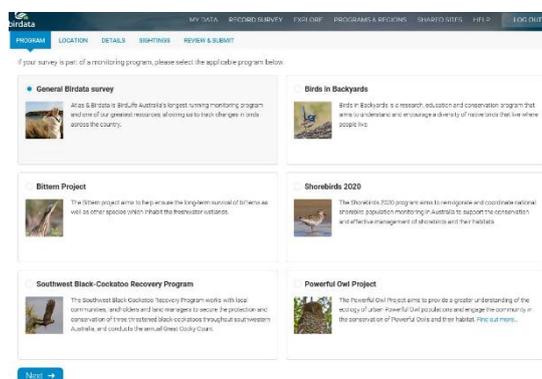
- 5) **Submitting the data:** When you have recorded all the species seen at that time, hit the “Review and Submit” tab. You will get the time update option....usually press “yes”. You get a summary screen for your current session – check it over, then hit the “Submit Survey” tab.



After logging into the Birdlife website (use the same group login details) you can view the observations that have been made so far.

### Data collection for the Farm Dams project....

- Use **Birdata** to record the bird species present in and around your dam(s) through to the end of spring 2018. The period from August to November is sampled because this is when the most water bodies are available for birds to use. We will ask you to observe over a second period, from March 2019, when water bodies that have not dried over the summer become refuges.
- We need at least four observation times, of at least 20 minutes each—these should be spread through until finishing by November 30<sup>th</sup>, to give a better chance of detecting all species. Add more and/or longer observation times if you’re keen or need to make sure that you have detected all species! You can include any other species that you see at other times (e.g. I just spotted a wedgie over the dam), as long as you fill in the details.
- We have also included a printed data sheet for those that may not wish to use Birdata (or to use as an adjunct to Birdata—see the sheet). Once the sheet is filled, data can be entered directly at the BirdLife website, using the same login details. Mail the completed sheet back in the supplied reply-paid envelope, whether or not you choose to do this. We will check it and enter the data ourselves if need be.



<https://birdata.birdlife.org.au/record-survey>