



Guide to Column Headers in the bulk upload tool

The spreadsheet design in the BirdTrack bulk upload tool is based around entering data in rows under defined column headers. Besides four compulsory column headers, there are a number of optional column headers. A full list of these can be seen below. This guide will detail how data should be entered within each column header.

Formatting

Certain columns, such as 'Breeding evidence' require the cells to be formatted for 'Text' entry. In Microsoft Excel, you can do this by right clicking on the cell, and then clicking on 'Format cell(s)'. Next, click on the 'Number' tab and select the 'Text' option. Click on 'OK' to finish.

The spreadsheet does not need to include all column headers, only those for which you are intending to enter data.

Table 1: List of all column headers that can be used in the bulk upload spreadsheet

Column Header	Category
Species	Required
Date	Required
Place	Required
Grid Reference	Required
Latitude / Longitude	Required
Count	Optional
Start / End Time	Optional
Complete list	Optional
Visit comment	Optional
Weather comment	Optional
Count type	Optional
Observation comment	Optional
Remarkable	Optional
Sensitive	Optional
Habitat	Optional
Breeding evidence	Optional
Breeding details	Optional
Flight	Optional
Pinpoint	Optional
Activity	Optional
Age and plumage	Optional
Source	Optional
Observer	Optional

Place

The 'Place' column should contain a relevant site name where observations were made. Please avoid overly general site names (e.g. 'Yorkshire', 'North Norfolk'), those giving no location information (e.g. 'Home', 'Garden') or those revealing sensitive information such as your actual address (e.g. '123 Fake Street, IP24 2QQ' or 'Golden Eagle nest'). If you are recording sightings from your garden, using the local suburban district or village name are sufficient.

Location

To identify where you observed the species, you need to enter location information. This can be entered as latitude and longitude, or as a grid reference for sites in Britain and Ireland. Note that these columns can be left blank if the site already exists in your BirdTrack account.

Latitude and Longitude

The latitude and longitude information need to be entered in the decimal degrees (DD) format, with a minimum of one decimal fraction required (i.e. 50.1, 50.2). It is possible to use up to five decimal fractions as location information. The Latitude and Longitude information need to be entered in separate columns.

Grid reference

In Britain and Ireland, there is the additional option of using grid references in the Ordnance Survey format. Note: If using grid references, the upload tool will recognise only two (e.g. TL88) and four figure (e.g. TL88 66) grid references.

Date

The exact observation date is required for each sighting you are uploading. There are several different date format options that you can use:

- DD/MM/YYYY
- DD-MM-YYYY
- DD-MM-YY
- DD-MON-YYYY
- DD-MON-YY

Species

The final essential piece of information in the upload spreadsheet is the species you observed. To save you time, the species name should conform to the taxonomic baselist you are uploading sightings with. However, the upload tool will present a page with any species names that are not recognised and will allow you to select the correct species. The upload tool will also recognise scientific (or Latin) names. This column has a text limit of 60 characters.

Count

Counts for each species entered in the spreadsheet are optional, but any you can enter will be very much appreciated. The counts can contain approximation characters ('c' for circa and '+' for more than), as well as 'Present' or 'x' if no count was made for that species (i.e. present only). If no count is entered, the record will be registered as 'present only'.

Start and End Time

In the spreadsheet it is possible to add Start and End times to your visits for a particular site, which add significant value to any list-based observations. These can be entered in the following format:

- HH:MM
- H:MM

Note that Start and End times must be entered in separate columns and be in the standard five minute blocks (e.g. 00:05, 00:10).

Complete list

The most useful data that can be submitted to BirdTrack is in the form of 'complete lists'. These are lists where you recorded all the species you were able to identify by sight or sound. If your records match these criteria, then you can add this header to your spreadsheet. Adding a 'Y' or '1' in this column in the same row as the first record in the list means the upload tool will recognise all subsequent records matching the location, date, start and end time as being part of that list.

Visit comment

This column allows you to enter any comments you may have for a particular visit. There is a 1,000 character limit for this field. Text in excess of this may be cut off or cause the upload to fail entirely. Only one visit comment needs to be entered per visit.

Weather comment

As with visit comments column, this optional field allows you to enter comments regarding the weather encountered during your visit. This field has a 500 character limit and only needs to be entered once per visit.

Count type

This column can be used to highlight visits where species were recorded in a particular way. The field can only contain numbers, with each number representing a certain count type:

Code	Type	Comment
0	General	For all general records
1	Seawatch	For records logged during seawatches
2	Visible migration	For records logged during visible migration counts
3	Roost count (tidal)	For records logged during tidal roost counts
4	Roost count (other)	For records during all other roost counts
5	Atlas	For records logged during Atlas surveying

You only need to enter one value per list you are submitting and if the field is left blank, all records will automatically be recorded as the 'general' count type.

Observation comment

This optional column can be used for any comments relating to species observation, for example behaviour notes. This field has a 1,000 character text limit and should not be confused with the visit comment.

Remarkable

For sightings that you feel are particularly noteworthy, you can use this column to have them appear in the Notable Observations feed. Entering 'Y' or '1' designates the particular observation as remarkable.

It is advisable to not designate a sighting as remarkable if the observation was of a sensitive species or in a location that is not accessible to the general public.

Sensitive

For sightings of sensitive species or those involving a more unusual species at a sensitive location, this column can be used to mark and hide it from public outputs in BirdTrack. Entering either a 'Y' or a '1' marks a sighting as 'Sensitive' on the spreadsheet.

Species included in the rare species list are automatically hidden from public outputs during the breeding (and/or during the non-breeding season, for some species). Records of such species do not need to be manually set to 'sensitive'.

Habitat

Any particular notes on the habitat for a species sighting can be entered in this column. There is a limit of 200 characters for this field.

Breeding evidence

Although only an optional field, adding breeding evidence for any of your sightings during spring and summer will significantly increase the value of your data in BirdTrack. The breeding evidence needs to be entered as a number with the cells formatted for 'Text':

Code	Summary	Old Category
00	Migration, Flying or Summering	M, F or U
01	Nesting habitat	H
02	Singing male	S
03	Pair in suitable habitat	P
04	Permanent territory	T
05	Courtship and display	D
06	Visiting probable nest site	N
07	Agitated behaviour	A
08	Brood patch on incubating adult	I
09	Nest building	B
10	Distraction display	DD
11	Used nest or eggshells	UN
12	Recently fledged	FL
13	Occupied nest	ON
14	Faecal sac or food	FF
15	Nest with eggs	NE
16	Nest with young	NY

Breeding details

It is possible to add counts for recorded breeding evidence, with two options available. Note that in all cases, the breeding evidence count must not exceed the total count entered for that sighting, or the upload will be rejected. Any breeding evidence must be entered in the following format:

```
[{"BREEDING_DETAILS": "1", "COUNT": "4"}]
```

The '1' represents the breeding evidence code which should be changed depending on the breeding evidence category being entered. For multiple breeding evidence records, the section can be copied and separated by a comma:

```
[{"BREEDING_DETAILS": "1", "COUNT": "4"}, {"BREEDING_DETAILS": "5", "COUNT": "1"}]
```

Flight

These columns are best used for records where flight direction was noted, such as during a seawatch or stationary migration watch. There are a total of 8 fields that correspond to the compass rose, with a further two categories for unknown direction and resting seabirds. The list corresponds to the headers which can be used and which must be entered in separate columns:

Code	Direction	Code	Direction
FLIGHT_N	North	FLIGHT_SW	South-west
FLIGHT_NE	North-east	FLIGHT_W	West
FLIGHT_E	East	FLIGHT_NW	North-west
FLIGHT_SE	South-east	FLIGHT_UNKNOWN	Unknown
FLIGHT_S	South	FLIGHT_ON_SEA	Resting on sea

Only numbers can be entered in the fields below these column headers. Note that the estimated count options ('c' and '+') will not be recognised by the upload tool and the spreadsheet may be rejected if these are entered. Also, the sum of all counts must not exceed that of the 'Count' column for that species.

If using the single column option, it is also possible to use the JSON format, with each flight direction in quotation marks, and the entire group enclosed in brackets:

```
[{"E": "3", "ON_SEA": "1"}]
```

Pinpoint

This column header can be used if you want to add pinpoint location information to a record. As with the requirements for the 'Location' column, either latitude/longitude or grid references (Britain and Ireland only) can be used. For the latter, a six figure grid reference (e.g. TL888222) can be entered. For latitude and longitude, decimal degree (DD) fractions must be used. The two values for latitude and longitude must be separated by a comma.

Additionally, it is possible to enter counts and comments to pinpoint sightings in the spreadsheet within this column. These need to be entered within the spreadsheet cell specific to the observation in the following format:

```
[{"GRIDREF":"TL123123","COUNT":"4"}]
```

For multiple pinpoint sightings, the section can be copied and separated by a comma:

```
[{"GRIDREF":"TL123123","COUNT":"4"},{"GRIDREF":"2","COUNT":"2"}]
```

Activity

The 'Activity' column header can be used to record notable activity in birds seen during your visit. There are a total of 12 categories that can be entered:

Code	Activity
1	Feeding
2	Flying
3	Migrant
4	Roosting
5	Sick/Injured
6	Summering
7	Brood
8	Crèche
9	Dead
10	Escaped/released
11	ID Uncertain

Besides the activity state, a count and comment can be entered. Note that the count cannot exceed that entered in the 'Count' column. These must be entered in the following format:

```
[{"ACTIVITY":"1","COUNT":"2","COMMENT":"Feeding"}]
```

For multiple pinpoint sightings, the section can be copied and separated by a comma:

```
[{"ACTIVITY":"1","COUNT":"2","COMMENT":"Feeding"}, {"ACTIVITY":"4","COUNT":"1","COMMENT":"Roosting"}]
```

Age and Plumage

In the Age and Plumage column, it is possible to specify what plumages and ages of birds were encountered on the visit. If counts are entered in this column, these must not exceed that entered in the 'Count' column. There are a total of 30 categories that can be used, and the initial number corresponds to the plumage or phase that is entered in the spreadsheet field:

Code	Age and Plumage	Code	Phase
1	Adult	22	Breeding plumage
2	6 th -calendar year	23	Non-breeding plumage
3	5 th -calendar year	24	Eclipse
4	4 th -calendar year	25	Light phase
5	3 rd -calendar year	26	Intermediate phase
6	2 nd -calendar year	27	Dark phase
7	1 st -calendar year	28	Bridled
8	4 th -summer	29	Unbridled
9	4 th -winter	30	Rufous/hepatic
10	3 rd -summer		
11	3 rd -winter		
12	2 nd -summer		
13	2 nd -winter		
14	1 st -summer		
15	1 st -winter		
16	Subadult		
17	Female/immature		
18	Female/1 st -winter		
19	Immature		
20	Juvenile		
21	Chick		

The field containing this information needs to be laid out in the following format

```
[{"AGE_PLUMAGE": "7", "SEX": "M", "COUNT": "3"}]
```

The 'Age_Plumage' element can contain any of the 'Age and Plumage' numbers (1-21), while the 'Sex' can contain 'M' (Male), 'F' (Female) or be left blank. The 'Phase' element can contain any of the 'Phase' numbers (22-30) listed above. The 'Count' element can have any numerical value. For multiple pinpoint sightings, the section can be copied and separated by a comma:

```
[{"AGE_PLUMAGE": "7", "SEX": "M", "COUNT": "3"}, {"SEX": "F", "PHASE": "22", "COUNT": "1"}]
```


Source

The Source column can be used for uploads where sightings from different sources are being uploaded. This column is only available to suitably enabled users. Please contact the BirdTrack team for more information.

Observer

The Observer name column is only available to suitably enabled users, usually group accounts where sightings may originate from multiple observers. There is a text limit 200 characters for this field. Please contact the BirdTrack team for more information.

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