



BirdPlus

For birds, for people!

User Guide

version 1.0

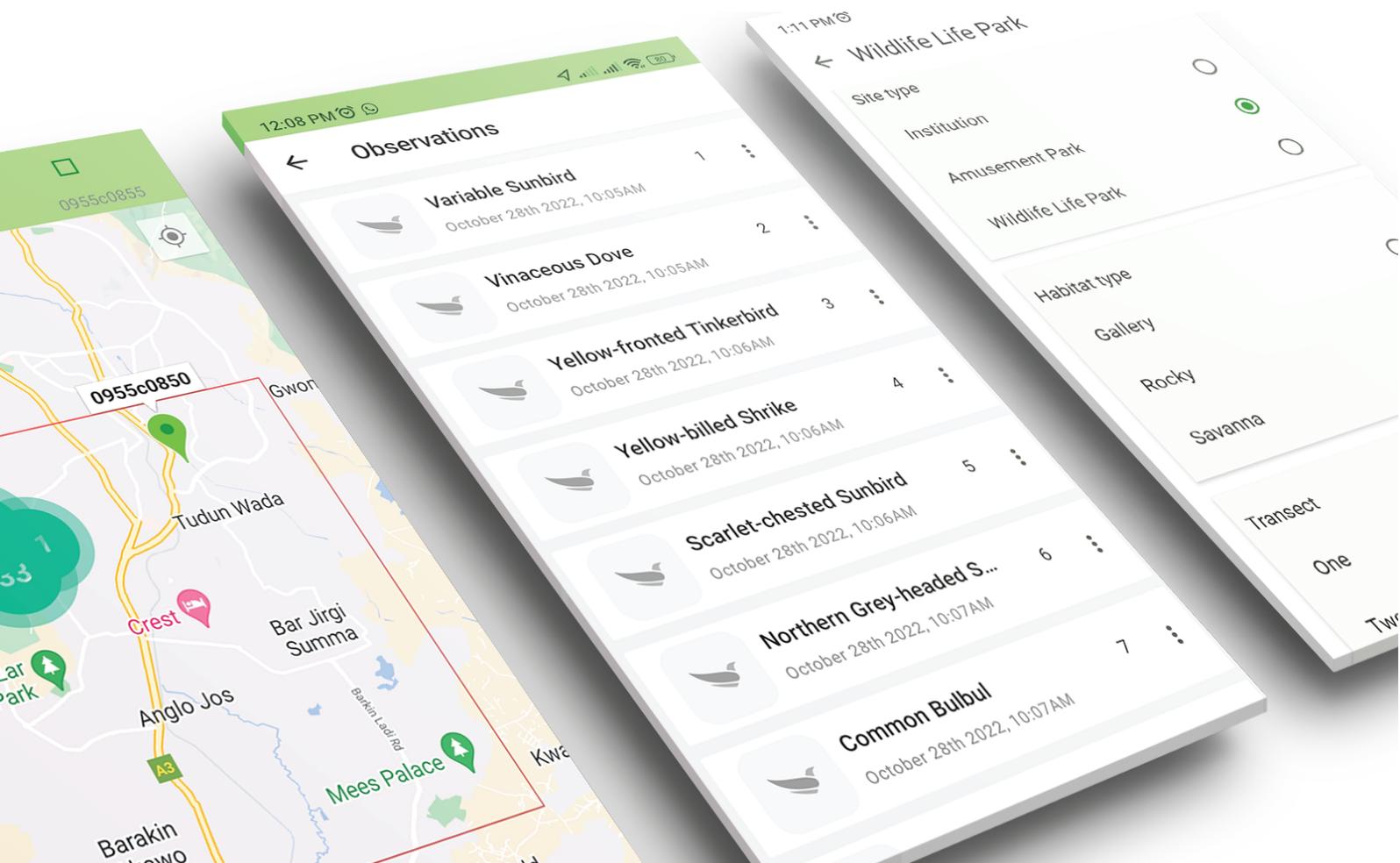
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Introduction

Birding is a popular hobby and a critical component of ornithological research, as it provides valuable data on bird populations, distribution, and migration patterns. This information is essential for biodiversity conservation efforts and the identification of species at risk. Historically, bird data collection was done by hand using pen and paper, which was time-consuming and often prone to errors. In recent years, technological advancements have made it possible to collect bird data using digital tools.

BirdPlus is a comprehensive birding and ornithological research app that takes data collection to the next level. It is not just a birding app, but a scientific tool designed to help ornithologists and bird enthusiasts collect bird data and other relevant information with ease. Whether you are an amateur birder or a seasoned ornithologist, BirdPlus makes it easy to track your observations, share your birding experiences, and compete in birding challenges.





Key features

BirdPlus is an innovative mobile application that empowers birders and researchers to effortlessly collect and manage bird data and relevant information. Whether you are a beginner or an expert in birding, BirdPlus streamlines the process of recording your bird sightings, sharing your birdwatching experiences with other enthusiasts, and engaging in exciting birding challenges. The app is comprised of various components, each designed to enhance your birding experience and help you make the most of your birdwatching activities.

Checklist

Birders can use the BirdMAP protocol to create a checklist of bird species they observe. This allows for standardization in the data collected, making it easier for researchers to use the data for conservation efforts.

Data form

Data form allows you to add custom fields to collect any other relevant information, such as habitat, morphometric or anthropogenic variables. This feature is particularly useful for researchers who want to collect specific information in order to answer specific research questions.

Challenges

Birders can join birding challenges, where they can compete in observing the most species. This feature adds a fun and interactive element to birding, making it more enjoyable and encouraging greater participation. Additionally, users can create birding challenges and invite others to join, creating a vibrant community of birding enthusiasts who can share their experiences, knowledge, and passion for birdwatching.

Newsfeed

Users can share their birding experiences with others and keep up-to-date with the latest birding news and sightings. The newsfeed is a great platform for birders to connect, share their observations, and learn from each other.

Data Export

All data collected using the app can be exported as a csv file for easy data analysis. This feature is particularly useful for researchers and conservation organizations who can use the data for their work.



Getting Started.

To get started, please follow the steps below:

- 01** Go to the Google Play Store on your Android device and search for "**BirdPlus**" in the search bar or simply click on this link:
<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.birdplus>
- 02** Click on the "Install" button to download and install the app on your device. Once the app is installed, click on the "Open" button to launch the app.
- 03** You will be asked to create an account or sign in if you already have one. If you are a new user, please click on "Create account" and follow the prompts to sign up.
- 04** Once you are signed in, navigate to the settings menu by clicking on the menu button on the top left of the app's home screen.
- 05** In the settings menu, you can configure your language preferences by selecting the "Language" option and choosing your preferred language for the app and the the species names display.

BirdPlus currently support English, French and Portuguese (more languages coming soon).

The app currently support only Android devices but support for iOS is coming soon.





Checklist

The checklist feature in BirdPlus allows you to group your birding observations by time and space. Whether you are traveling to a new location or recording your observations for a specific period, you can create a checklist to keep track of the species you have seen and any other relevant information.

With the checklist, you can record observations using the BirdMAP protocol, which groups your observations in pentads (9.2x9.2 km grid cells), add species observations, including the number of individuals seen, and any notes you would like to add and submit your checklist to BirdMap to contribute to the understanding of bird populations and their distribution.

How to create a checklist

Open the app and tap on the plus (+) icon at the bottom right of your screen.

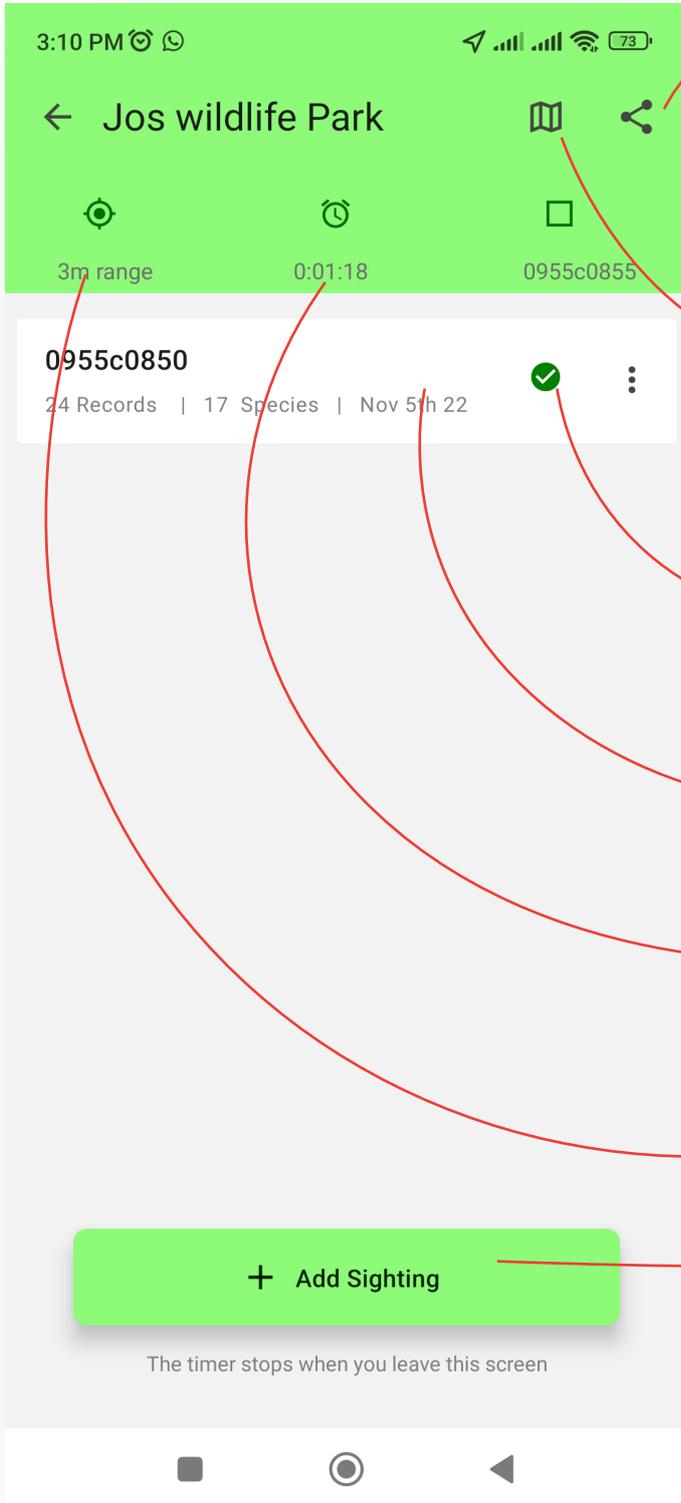
Choose Checklist in the next screen

Name your checklist and then click save and continue

Start recording your observations by tapping on the species you have seen or heard.

The app will automatically group your observations into pentads based on your location . You can view each pentad by clicking on the pentad card.

When you have finished collecting data, you can submit your card to BirdMap by clicking on the "More" icon, and then selecting "Submit to BirdMAP" then follow the remaining instruction.



Share your records in the newsfeed to get feedback from the community

Display your current location and current pentdad on the map

Indicator for knowing if a card has already been submitted to BirdMAP

View species in the card

Atlas time for the current card

GPS accuracy

Tap here to add your sighting



Data form

Data form allows you to collect bird data along with any other variables using the protocol of your choice. This feature works by allowing you to create a custom form with fields for the variables you want to collect. To create a data form, follow these steps:

How to create a data form

- 01 Open the app and tap on the plus (+) icon at the bottom right of your screen.
- 02 Choose Dataform in the next screen.
- 03 Name your data form and optionally add a description of your study.
- 04 Choose the desired protocol from the available options, such as Line Transect, Point Count, Point Transect, and Capture-Recapture.
- 05 Add custom fields by clicking on the orange button and selecting the variable type, continuous, categorical, date, note etc. Give a name to each variable. Repeat the process for all variables you want to add.
- 06 Once all variables have been added, click save and continue to start collecting data.

With the data form feature, you have the flexibility to collect exactly the variable you want, in a format that makes sense for your specific needs. Whether you are conducting a scientific study or simply keeping track of your birding observations, the data form feature provides the tools you need to collect and analyze your data effectively.



Data Collection Screen

Once you have created your custom data form, you can begin collecting data. The data collection screen for forms has three navigation buttons

Sighting

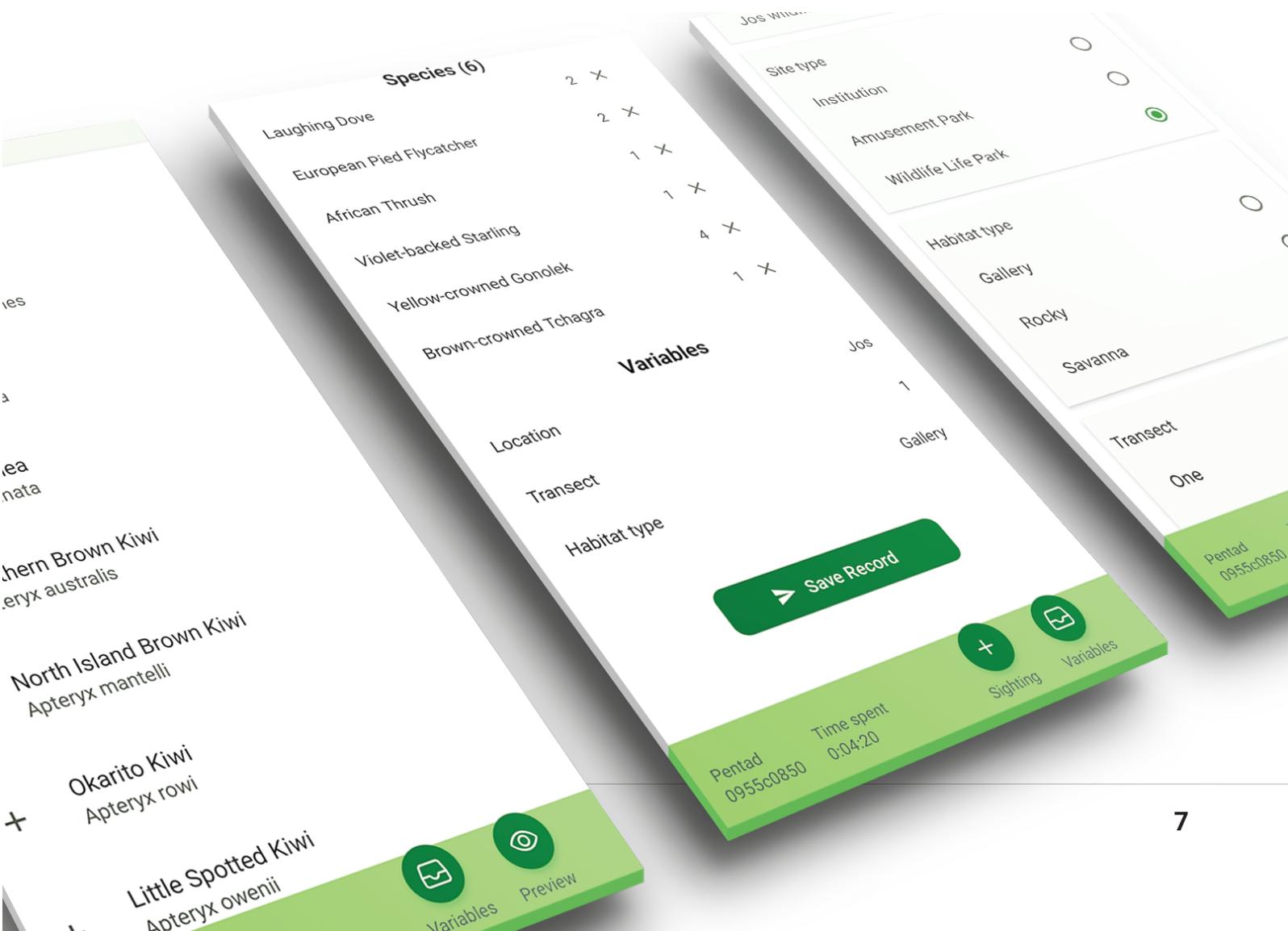
The "Sighting" button allows you to add your bird sightings. This opens a screen where you can search for any species and add it to your record.

Variable

The "Variable" button takes you to a screen where you can collect your other variables. This includes any custom variables you added when creating the form

Preview & Submit

The "Preview" button takes you to a screen where you can preview your records and submit them. This screen shows a summary of all the data you have collected for any specific point, transect or location (depending on which protocol you are using), allowing you to review and make any necessary changes before submitting.





Automatic Checklist creation from other protocols

BirdPlus has a unique feature that allows for the automatic creation of a BirdMap checklist while carrying out other ornithological studies. This feature enables researchers to submit their bird records to the BirdMap database, even if they are using different protocols. Here, we will explain how the automatic checklist creation feature works, highlight its benefits for the BirdMap database and provide instructions on how to use it in BirdPlus.

By default, when a user creates a data form in BirdPlus, a checklist is automatically created. This feature ensures that researchers who are collecting bird data using different protocols such as point count, transect, or capture-recapture can submit their observations to the BirdMap database as AdHoc. In some instances where the protocol looks similar to atlassing (e.g transect), researchers can submit their records as Full Protocol provided they have spent a minimum of 2 hours, as described in the BirdMap protocol. However, users have the ability to disable this feature when creating a data form if they do not want to contribute their data to the BirdMap database.

The automatic checklist creation feature in BirdPlus is a game changer for the BirdMap database and researchers. It helps researchers collect exactly the type of variables they want to collect while contributing their bird data to the BirdMap database.

How to use the automatic checklist creation

To use the automatic checklist creation feature in BirdPlus, simply create a data form and the app will keep track of your observations and add them to the checklist. The name of the checklist will be similar to that of the data form you created.

When you're ready to submit your observations to the BirdMap database, Go to the Checklist section of the app.

Locate the checklist that was created along with the data form you used to collect your bird data.

Click on the checklist to open the records, which are grouped by pentads.

Click on the three dots of the pentad card and select "Submit to BirdMap".

Follow the prompts to submit your observations to the BirdMap database.



Instructions for Point Counts

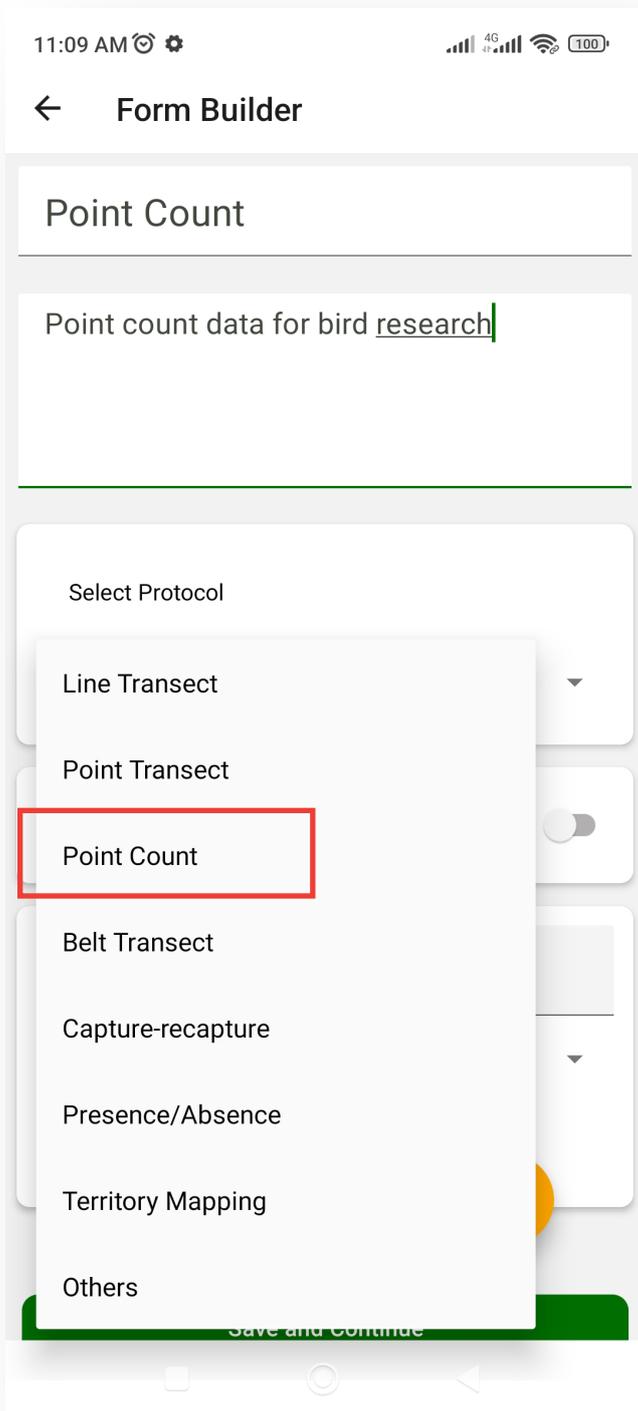
The Point Count method is a standardized survey method used by researchers to collect data on bird populations. In this method, the observer stands at a specific point and makes observations of all the birds that they can see or hear within a certain time period.

To use the Point Count method in BirdPlus, you will create a custom data form and select the Point Count protocol. Next, you will need to add any additional variables you wish to collect, such as canopy cover, habitat type, and more. ***When creating your form, it is important to remember to add "POINT" as a variable, as this will serve as the identifier for each of your data collection points.*** If you wish to collect additional variables, such as habitat type, canopy cover, number of trees, etc., you will also need to add these variables using the method described earlier.

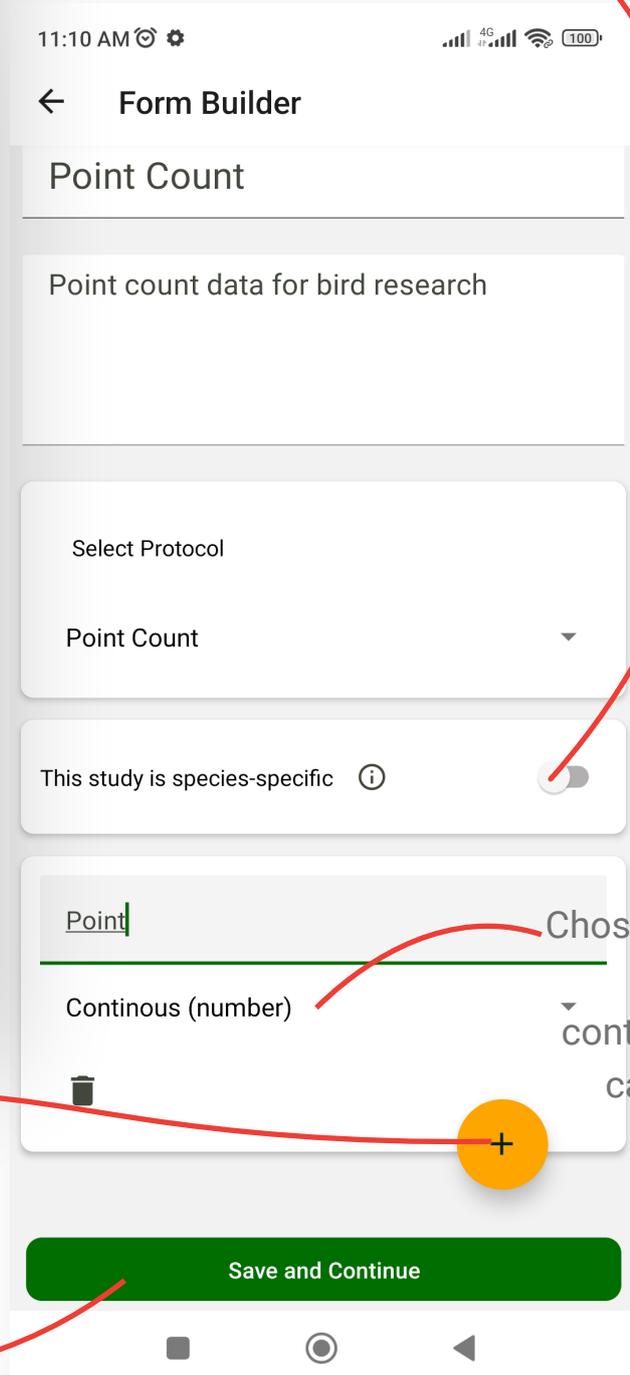
Once you have set up your form, you can start collecting data using the Point Count method. The process works as follows:

- 01 Stand at your designated point and begin making observations of all the birds you can see or hear within a specified time period.
- 02 Record your bird sightings and any other variables you wish to collect using the data collection page for forms.
- 03 When you have completed your observations at that point, preview your records and save them by clicking the "Save Record" button.
- 04 Move on to the next point and repeat the process.

This method allows you to collect detailed data on bird populations, along with any other variable(s) for your own specific research need. With BirdPlus, the Point Count method is quick and easy to use, making it an ideal tool for ornithological research.



Toggle this button to collect species-specific attributes such as seen or heard



Tap this button to add a new variable field

When done adding all variables, click this button to start data collection



Instructions for Transects

The Transect method works similarly to the Point Count method. However, instead of standing at a specific point to collect observations, the observer move along a transect line, recording observations as he/she go.

To use the Transect method in BirdPlus, you will need to create a data form and select the Transect protocol (Line transect or Point transect). Next, you will need to add any additional variables you wish to collect, such as conopy cover, habitat type, and more. ***When creating your form, it is important to remember to add "TRANSECT" as a variable, as this will serve as the identifier for each of your data collection points.*** If you wish to collect additional variables, such as habitat type, canopy cover, number of trees, etc at every transect, you will also need to add these variables using the method described earlier. Alternatively, if you wish to divide your transect into sections, you will need to add ***"Section"*** as a variable as well. This will enable you to collect these additional variables at each section of the transect.

Once you have set up your form, you can start collecting data and the process works as follows:

- 01** Choose a path for your transect and begin walking along it, making observations of all the birds you see or hear along the way.
- 02** Record your bird sightings and any other variables you wish to collect (at every transect or section as the case may be).
- 03** When you reach the end of your transect (or the end of each section as the case may be), preview your records and save them by clicking the "Save Record" button in the preview screen.
- 04** Move on to the next transect (or section as the case may be) and repeat the process.



Birding Challenges

Participating in birding challenges is not only a fun way to engage with other birders, but it also encourages friendly competition and helps to sharpen birding skills. BirdPlus challenge section is designed to provide users with a variety of birding challenges to participate in.

The challenge page allows birders to compete on different challenges created by the admins. Only admins can create challenges, but users can join any challenge of their choice. To join a birding challenge, the user should go to the challenge section and select any challenge that interests them. From there, they don't need to do anything else as the app will continue to keep track of their birding activities and include their observations in the challenges appropriately.

The challenge page automatically ranks participants based on their birding activities and displays the record in the leaderboard. This feature not only motivates users to participate actively but also allows them to track their progress and compare it with other birders.

Anyone who wants to create a birding challenge should contact any of the admins, (or send a message to hello@birdplus.org) and the challenge will be created for them. With BirdPlus, birding challenges are a great way to learn, engage, and compete with other birders.



Newsfeed

The newsfeed section of BirdPlus is a great way for birders to engage with others in real-time. It allows users to share their birding experiences, ask questions and get support from other birders. Whether you want to share your checklist or post bird pictures for identification, the newsfeed is the perfect place to do it.

This feature creates a community of birders who can network and connect with each other. It's a fun way to share knowledge and get help with bird identification. You can share your latest bird sightings, report rare sightings, and ask for advice from other birders.

Posting on the newsfeed is easy and accessible to all users. Simply tap on the plus (+) icon, select post, write your message, upload pictures (if available), and hit post. Once you post, your message will be visible to all members of the community, who can like, comment, and share your post.

The newsfeed also allows you to stay updated on the latest birding news and events. You can follow other users and receive notifications when they post something new. Plus, the newsfeed automatically organizes posts by most recent, so you can always stay up to date.

In summary, the newsfeed section of BirdPlus is a vibrant community where birders can share their passion, learn from others, and stay updated on the latest birding news and events. It's a fun and engaging way to connect with other birders and share your experiences.



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