



NSW & ACT 2024 Twitchathon 3 HOUR “Birdathon” RULES

Brought to you by BIGnet, A Loose Affiliation of NSW & ACT Birdwatching Clubs and Organisations

1. Teams must consist of two or more members.
2. All species must be unquestionably identified.
3. Each Birdathon must be confined to NSW & the ACT, with no air travel allowed.
4. All team members must remain within direct voice contact throughout the Birdathon. The use of mobile phones, walkie talkies and similar for this purpose is considered indirect voice contact and is not permitted.
5. Each team will have 3x 1 hour blocks at their disposal in which to count birds.
6. Once a team decides to begin any 1 hour block, it **cannot** be paused, restarted or prolonged.
7. A team may have their 3 blocks spaced however they choose on the nominated race day. For example.
 - a) 6 - 9am Saturday
 - b) 6 - 7am, 1 - 2pm, 4 - 5pm Saturday
 - c) 6:01 - 8:01am, 5:35 - 6:35pm Sunday
8. Teams must make every effort to avoid receiving bird-finding help from non-participants. However outside the designated 1 hour blocks, **you are encouraged to drive to, search for, and locate species** which you can re-find later during one of your timed competition blocks.
9. Before a species may be counted, an individual, pair or flock must be identified by sight or sound by **more than 50%** of team members or **by both team members if the team has only two members**.

The Twitchathon Birdathon Event relies on an honour system. You must be 100% sure of the identification of each bird. If you are not sure, don't put it on the list.

Timing: All counting must be **within the three allocated hour long blocks which must all be used on only a single day, either Saturday 26th October or Sunday 27th October.**

During registration your team will be required to nominate a race date and approximate start and end locations. Please use the species list provided. Your team's final tally must be sent, by text or e-mail only, to the Twitchathon Coordinator before **11:59pm on Sunday 27th October**. Your final list must be submitted by email to the Twitchathon coordinator by **11:59pm on Friday 1st November**.

COUNTABLE SPECIES must be alive, unrestrained and from free-living established populations of full species. You cannot count birds that are road killed, beach washed, captive, trapped or escaped. Please note, for example, that pure and wild Mallards can be counted, but domestic ducks and geese, and hybridised ducks cannot. Similar rules apply for most free-flying populations of Guineafowl, Peafowl, Pheasant and Junglefowl, which in most instances should not be counted on a species list.

NON-COMPETITORS. Any team member may retire if required, in which case the size of the team will be treated as if the person was still present. The retired member may not re-join or aid the team. Non-participating companions (retired or otherwise) may accompany the team,

record species, or drive the vehicle. Non-competitors must not assist in the identification or location of species.

ETHICS. For the birds' sake keep disturbance to a minimum. Recorded calls or the use of mechanical devices to attract birds are prohibited. Be careful not to obstruct or otherwise affect other teams. It is your responsibility to obtain permission beforehand to access areas with restricted access.

SAFETY. For safety reasons, all teams must rotate drivers at an interval of not more than two hours. Teams booked for traffic offences during the Twitchathon or failing to stop for the required breaks will be disqualified.

See below for all safety and Covid safe protocols

CHILDREN. We are not able to include teams which include one or more children unless they are accompanied by their parent or legal guardian.

Your Birdathon NSW & ACT Coordinator

Elisabeth Karplus emhodson@exemail.com.au 0421 665553 Texts only
please

TWITCHATHON SAFETY GUIDELINES

INCORPORATING ADDITIONAL COVID SAFE CRITERIA

This Covid 19 pandemic has changed how all of us interact with one another and how we behave when out in the community. For the Twitchathon we need to continue to take these precautions to protect ourselves and also others we meet and who are in our team. Below are outlined the precautions you should be taking:

- First off if you are feeling unwell, have had a Covid test but not received the all clear or are supposed to be in quarantine. Please do not come on the Twitchathon.
- If you feel unwell during the Twitchathon and have appropriate symptoms then let your team members know and stop your Twitchathon. Get home as soon as you can and have a Covid test and self-isolate. The other team members should do similarly.
- There are no mandatory regulations on wearing masks in NSW or ACT. However it is advised to use these if you are concerned. We would recommend participants have a mask with them and use them if they feel they need to.
- If you are in one of the categories of persons at greatest risk due to your age or health there are no mandatory State or Territory regulations, however there are advisory precautions. You should consider this when deciding to be involved in the Twitchathon.
- Don't share anything during the time you are together, this includes, food, drinks / drink bottles, pens, pencils, note books, sunscreen, binoculars, mobile phones. In fact anything at all. Bring your own hand sanitiser
- Social distancing, of course. Please remember to keep your distance, no hugging, kissing, shaking hands, just like everywhere.
- Please use the normal handwashing protocols and use the hand sanitiser as often as is appropriate.
- Some teams or groups of teams organise a social function at the end of the Twitchathon. We would recommend that you do not hold a function this year. However if you do decide to hold one, then by regulations you may not have more than 20 persons present. You also need to take into account the social distancing / sharing / handwashing etc. protocols from above.
- All teams should refer to the latest restrictions in NSW and the ACT before the Twitchathon weekend at <https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19> in NSW and <https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/> in the ACT."

GENERAL SAFETY GUIDELINES

The Twitchathon is a fun competitive event to raise funds for the conservation of birds, but it's also important to us that you come home safely. We are committed to the health, safety and welfare of all participants and members of the public.

This briefing acts as a common-sense reminder to ensure the safety of all participants before we get caught up in the competition. Please carry this sheet with you and brief your team on the day.

- Drive within in your limits, taking into account the weather conditions, and always obey road rules and regulations. Teams booked for traffic offences during the Twitchathon or failing to stop the vehicle for rest breaks will be disqualified.
- Alternate drivers every two hours. You must not drive if fatigued. If you feel fatigued alternate drivers or take a break.
- Sign-on to a team register and, keep it in the car.
- First aid kits including a snake bite kit should be available in each vehicle.
- Care should be taken on entering and leaving the vehicle. Never jump from any moving vehicle. Seat belts must always be worn during travel.
- Ensure all persons and equipment are well clear of the vehicle before driving off. Stow the equipment and packs carefully within the vehicle.
- When parking reversing or turning watch out for low limbs or stumps or rocks, try to park on level ground and avoid parking alongside ditches or large drop-offs.
- Travel at a safe and visible distance, particularly when dust obscures vision. When travelling in the dark especially at dawn and dusk look out for wildlife to avoid collisions. Use headlights and hazard lights when additional visibility is required.
- Wear appropriate protective clothing (long pants or gaiters, sturdy boots, hat, gloves). Bring appropriate rain weather gear and warm clothing.
- Use sunscreen, hats, eye protection (glasses or sunglasses) and insect protection.
- Drink sufficient water throughout the day according to your level of activity; notify another participant if feeling ill.
- Each vehicle should carry more than one mobile phone and charger, a torch and spare batteries
- Discuss any pre-existing medical condition(s) with the team before entering the field. Provide yourself with all required medication and personal care items.
- Observe others in your team or work group for signs of stress, fatigue or dehydration, ask how they are and let the supervisor know about the situation.
- Prioritise your health over the activity.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS: POLICE, AMBULANCE, FIRE: Dial 000