

Denver Field Ornithologists Field Trip Leader Manual



DFO Field Trip Leader Development Committee

Karen von Saltza

Paul Slingsby

Chuck Hundertmark

Kay Niyo, Editor

© 2015 Denver Field Ornithologists All Rights Reserved

Revised August 2016

Table of Contents

Introduction	2
Part I: Before the Trip	4
Part II: Leading Your Field Trip	8
Part III: After the Trip	16
Part IV: Field Trip Leader Certification	19
Appendix A: How to Obtain First Aid Training	20
Appendix B: Accident Report Form	21
Appendix C: Items You Might Include in an Equipment List	22
Appendix D: American Birding Association Code of Birding Ethics	23
Appendix E: Park Passes and Other Fees	25
Appendix F: Trip Briefing Checklist	26
Appendix G: Colorado Birds That Are Endangered, Threatened, or of Special Concern	27
Appendix H: Standards and Best Practices	28

Introduction

An active field trip program offering over 100 field trips each year is the hallmark of the Denver Field Ornithologists (DFO). We strive to schedule at least one field trip each weekend day throughout most of the year. Exceptions are the Christmas holiday season. Trips are not scheduled during the Audubon Christmas Bird Count period to allow members to participate in these important counts.

As a trip leader you help to make DFO one of the most active birding organizations in the country. Our trip schedule and member participation is impressive to many. Thank you in advance for your involvement.

Leading a field trip entails skills beyond knowledge of birds and habitats. Trip leaders should also be good planners, organizers, communicators, teachers, and administrators. They must also be conscious of group safety and ready to handle emergencies. The best leaders also inspire others to appreciate the amazing lives of birds and to become better birders.

We hope these guidelines will help you plan a successful and enjoyable trip, become more comfortable as a leader, and expand your leadership skills. Your efforts will allow DFO to offer great experiences to skilled and novice participants alike.

Purpose of DFO and the Field Trip Program

DFO's purpose is to promote interest in the study and preservation of birds and their habitats and to support local and national movements for bird and habitat protection.

DFO field trips are offered to help birders of all experience levels enjoy and learn about birds through a program of regular organized field trips in the Greater Denver Metropolitan Area and throughout Colorado. DFO provides an engaging group environment where one can participate among friends; develop birding skills; and share knowledge about habitat, bird behavior, and topical conservation issues.

DFO Leadership Development Program

The DFO Leadership Development Program exists to train qualified DFO members how to best organize and lead birding field trips. The manual describes how trips are planned and scheduled, how the trip waiver is administered, and what reports are submitted at the end of a trip. It also offers guidelines for conducting a successful field trip, suggestions for conducting a safe trip, and guidelines for handling an emergency.

How the Manual is Organized

DFO has set certain *Standards* required of its field trips. These Standards or requirements appear in bold face type in the manual and are marked with an exclamation point !.

In addition, DFO has recognized *Best Practices* for conduct of a field trip. Best Practices also appear in bold face type and are indicated by BP.

The manual is organized into four parts. The first three parts describe actions taken in preparation for the trip (Part I), during the trip (Part II), and following the trip (Part III). The fourth part describes DFO trip leader certification and record keeping process (Part IV). In addition to these parts, there are several appendices with useful tools and information to support preparation for and conduct of a field trip.

Trip leader standards and best practices appear in the manual at the beginning of sections that provide supporting information. Supporting information is provided to help leaders implement standards and best practices. For easy reference, the standards and best practices are also presented in a single list in Appendix H.

General Requirements for DFO Field Trip Leaders

! DFO trip leaders must be certified before they are eligible to lead published DFO trips.

! When a guest leader is invited to lead a DFO trip, a certified DFO leader will co-lead the trip to ensure adherence to DFO standards.

- ❖ Be a current DFO member.
- ❖ Be at least 18 years of age.
- ❖ Have knowledge of birds appropriate to the level of trip being led.
- ❖ Be comfortable working with people.
- ❖ Be familiar with the Trip Leader Manual and accept its principles.
- ❖ Complete the DFO Leadership Training Program to become a certified DFO trip leader.

Roles of DFO Trip Leader

- ❖ Planner: Plan the trip location, routes, and logistics.
- ❖ Inspirational leader: Convey excitement and passion about birds.
- ❖ Teacher: Provide a role model and help with birding skills.
- ❖ Administrator:
 - Follow the standards of this manual with regard to leading a field trip.
 - Post bird lists and counts according to suggested formats.
- ❖ Crisis manager: Follow the standards of this manual for handling an emergency.

Part I: Before the Trip

Scheduling the Trip

! The leader will submit on the DFO website trip details to the scheduler for publication on the website and in *The Lark Bunting*. The details will be submitted by the date requested by the scheduler.

How Trips Are Scheduled

DFO field trips are scheduled two months ahead of trip dates. For example, a December field trip will be scheduled in October and published in the December *Lark Bunting*. The December *Lark Bunting* will be received by members in November. Each month, a volunteer scheduler enters the trip details on the DFO website so it is available to the public and *The Lark Bunting* editor. Schedulers for each month are listed in *The Lark Bunting*. If you want to lead a field trip, contact the scheduler for the appropriate month. Alternatively, you may be contacted by a scheduler to lead a trip.

Deciding on Location

Trip location suggestions are available at <http://dfobirds.org/FieldTrips/Leaders/Locations.aspx>. You can also check Past Trip Reports on the website. New places with which you may be familiar are welcome.

For some trips, participants will meet at the trailhead. For others, you may want to meet at a location for carpooling.

! Meeting places for carpooling must be either public parking places or locations at which the leader or DFO have permission to use and are listed in Trip Locations on the DFO website.

Some trip destinations have fees, permit requirements, or require notification in advance (see Appendix E). Identify special requirements before you write the trip description.

Deciding a Trip Focus

Selecting a focus for your trip may help determine a location. Successful trips in the past have focused on bird or habitat conservation, general birding, photography, raptors, fledglings, bird song identification, gull species identification, or shorebird migration. It's your choice. A trip focus adds learning opportunities for participants. The focus can be an aspect of birding for which you have some expertise or simply something you would like to understand better yourself. Seasons provide good opportunities for focus: shorebirds in spring or fall, gulls in winter, or breeding birds in June or July. Location can also provide a focus such as high altitude birding any time of year, heronries in spring, or Dinosaur Ridge during spring hawk migration.

Limiting Participation

Some times and places are very popular and you may want to limit the numbers of participants. For instance, parking may be limited, locations may not accommodate large numbers, or too many people may decrease your ability to provide a quality experience. It is difficult to have a successful field trip with

more than 10–12 participants. When large groups are expected, it is best to appoint a second, and sometimes a third leader to assist.

Sending Trip Details to Scheduler

The leader sends the trip scheduler the trip details for publication online and in *The Lark Bunting* using the online form <http://dfobirds.org/FieldTrips/Leaders/CreateTrip.aspx>.

Trip Details

Information needed to send scheduler the trip details include:

- ❖ Field trip scheduler
- ❖ Leader name
- ❖ Leader email
- ❖ Second leader (optional)
- ❖ Trip location on dropdown menu (new location to add if needed)
- ❖ Directions (choose one from predetermined list)
- ❖ Trip date
- ❖ Meeting time and approximate end time
- ❖ Trip difficulty (easy, moderate, difficult)
- ❖ Maximum number of participants (optional)
- ❖ Additional details (include birds expected, park pass required, what to bring [lunch, water, etc.]

Field Trip Description Example

Chatfield State Park

Sunday, March 29

7:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Ira Sanders & Tammy Sanders (Email: zroadrunner14@gmail.com Phone: 303-278-7172)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Directions: Meet at the swim beach.

Join the leaders for this 3/4 day trip to explore the park for early migrants, waterfowl, resident birds, and any raptors zooming by. Bring lunch, water, scopes, and dress for the predicted weather. A State Parks pass is required for entrance. **Please register online or contact leader to register.**

Tips on Style

Time: Use this AP style – 7 a.m. (no military time).

Phone numbers: 303-555-2222 (include area code; use hyphens).

Remove hyperlinks.

Keep statements brief.

Meeting Time

Set a meeting time 15 minutes before the time you plan to start the trip. This allows time for participants to sign the trip waiver, if needed, and for you to provide a briefing.

Trip Difficulty

DFO uses simple descriptors to let prospective participants know how difficult the trip will be physically. This will allow them to judge their suitability to participate in the trip. For instance, a 2-mile walk along the

South Platte may be considered EASY whereas a 2-mile hike up Gregory Canyon in July may be considered MODERATE or even DIFFICULT depending on the conditions. The Trip Leader will indicate the trip difficulty level in the published trip details.

It should also be noted that an all-day driving trip covering many miles and requiring participants to get in and out of cars frequently is not an EASY trip. Trip leaders, using common sense, will indicate the car trip difficulty level in their written trip description.

Physical Effort Descriptors

EASY: 1–3 miles walking; no significant elevation gain. Leisurely pace. Well maintained trails. Easy trips should not include difficult walking such as an icy trail in winter.

MODERATE: Walking distances up to 5 miles. Trails may not be well maintained. Some elevation change is to be expected. Trip often lasts all day.

DIFFICULT: Participants must be in good physical condition. Walking distance exceeds 5 miles. Trails may be in poor condition with possibly some exposure; expect elevation changes. Special equipment may be required: snow shoes, lanterns for owling, winter and/or rain gear. May need to carry equipment long distances. Participants tend to move rapidly.

Request That Participants Pre-register Online

Participants must pre-register for the trip online or contact the leader to register. This is very important if you want to limit the number of participants and have them sign the waiver online and provide emergency contact information. It can also make it easier for you to notify participants of trip cancellations or last minute changes. If the trip is physically difficult, it will also allow you to screen participants to be sure they are good candidates for the trip.

Other Things to Include

If you plan to carpool, provide clear directions to the carpool meeting place and if necessary, clarify where participants should look for the group. State the planned return time. If you want to use 2-way radios (Channel 11–22), request that participants to bring their own.

Preparing for the Trip

! The leader will review the trip description online and in *The Lark Bunting* for accuracy before the trip date.

! The leader will make an appropriate effort to notify potential participants of any errors, changes, or cancellations.

Review Your Trip Online and in *The Lark Bunting*

Despite best efforts of everyone involved, errors occasionally occur in the trip notice that appears online and in *The Lark Bunting*. Review the trip description in these places. If an error occurs, follow the instructions below for getting word out about the correction.

What if You Can't Lead the Trip or Need to Cancel?

If you are unable to lead a field trip after it has been announced, first, attempt to find a leader to replace you. If you are unable to do so, notify your scheduler or another scheduler. Suggest possible replacements if you can. If no substitute leader can be found, follow the instructions below.

If there is a correction to the published trip notice, a change in trip leader, or a trip cancellation, you can notify registered participants by email at <<http://dfobirds.org/FieldTrips/UpcomingTrips.aspx>>. To cancel a trip online, click on <<http://dfobirds.org/FieldTrips/Leaders/CancelTrip.aspx>> and also post the cancellation on COBirds at COBirds-at-googlegroups.com. (You must be a Google group member of the "Colorado Birds" group and follow COBirds posting rules.)

Scout the Trip

If you do not know the planned area well, try to make a scouting trip prior to your trip date. Even if you know the area well, scouting will make you aware of changes in access or other factors. It will also alert you to current bird activity levels. If you are unable to scout a remote destination before the trip, you can check DFO, American Birding Association (ABA), and Colorado Field Ornithologist (CFO) rosters for local birders to consult.

Consider scouting the planned carpool meeting place to be sure it is convenient to most participants, safe, and open to public parking. If your trip will include carpooling, it is a good idea to check cell phone coverage over the area where you will be driving. Cell phones will often be the best way to maintain communication between vehicles. If the trip is primarily a driving trip, you should also identify convenient restroom stops.

Pre-Trip Communication: Screening Participants

While we want to be as inclusive as possible, field trip leaders have the right to advise and/or insist that an individual not participate on a particular field trip. The key areas to consider when talking to participants are:

Fitness: Participants should have the agility and stamina and be medically fit to enjoy the trip and not compromise the trip goals.

Equipment: This is when to advise the participant to have the necessary equipment to participate in the trip, such as binoculars, scope, camera, food and water, or sturdy footwear.

Expectations: Determine that the participant's expectations are in line with the goals of the trip.

Prepare the Sign-in Sheet

If your online trip participant list includes someone who has not signed a waiver, they must sign your paper waiver at the beginning of the trip.

Prepare the Trip Briefing

Prepare an outline of the briefing you will give at the beginning of the trip so that you remember all of the points you want to cover and can make the briefing short. The briefing generally includes signing the liability waiver (if not signed online), quick introductions of participants, a description of the trip plan including bathroom breaks, carpool arrangements, and safety reminders (sunscreen, hydration). A suggested briefing outline is included in Appendix F.

Part II: Leading Your Field Trip

! At the trailhead the leader will make sure that all participants, including the leader, have signed the DFO trip waiver.

! The leader will not allow participation in the trip without a participant signature.

DFO has established a waiver form that is required to be signed by each trip participant including the leader. The reasons for this are to inform participants about the existence of risks, to clarify to participants that they assume those risks themselves, to minimize DFO and leaders liability, and to provide a record of voluntary assumption of risk.

! At the carpool meeting place and/or trailhead, the leader will provide participants with a clear briefing on how the trip will proceed including route of travel, break times, restroom stops, and trip-end time.

Trip Briefing

Each field trip should begin with a briefing by the field trip leader. Appendix F provides a checklist of suggested topics for the briefing. If you would like help in the field, you may want to use the briefing to ask for a volunteer to keep the trip list and enter the report on eBird.

Count Participants

! The leader will count the number of participants, or cars if carpooling, and confirm at the end of the trip that all participants are accounted for. Ask participants to notify the leader or another member of the group if they are going to leave the trip early.

Be sure to count the number of participants before leaving the starting point for comparison with periodic counts during the trip and upon completing the trip. Make certain that everyone has signed the waiver and provided emergency contact information.

Organizing the Carpool

BP: If travel by car is planned, carpooling is the DFO preferred practice. Leaders must organize a communication system between cars and designate a rear car with instructions to communicate if cars lag behind or other difficulties occur.

- ❖ Let the group organize itself into carpools but be sure each car has instruction on how to get to each planned stop.
- ❖ If the drive is long, let people know where restroom stops and lunch are planned.
- ❖ Discuss the planned return time so that if persons are planning to return early you will be aware of it and they can arrange to be in the same car. Don't change the time without discussing it with the group.
- ❖ Remind the group that drivers and passengers are subject to laws of Colorado and that DFO cannot assume liability.
- ❖ Have a driver/communicator-only meeting to discuss the route and communication arrangements.

Driver/Communicator-Only Meeting

- ❖ Determine a method of communication while traveling. Cell phones are most helpful for independent travel; radios work better for caravanning.
- ❖ A handout map will be helpful.
- ❖ Use the driver meeting to collect cell phone numbers of drivers and communication persons. Have communicators record the numbers. Alternatively, do a 2-way radio check (Channel 11–22).
- ❖ Decide with the drivers whether to caravan or to travel independently to the destinations. Independent travel eliminates the problem of missed stop lights or unexpected, urgent lane changes.
- ❖ Advise drivers to adhere to speed limits and rules of the road.

Decide whether to drive or be the navigator/communicator. The trip leader's car will most often lead a caravan, but you as leader may find it most convenient to let someone else drive so you can act as navigator and be the communicator with the rest of the group. To avoid radioing or talking on a cell phone while driving, it is best to have a communication person in each car.

On the Trip

! On the field trip, whether on foot or by car, the safety of the participants will be primary. All trip leaders must have automobile insurance with limits of liability not less than the minimum required by state law and a valid driver's license.

Driving Portion of the Trip

Carpooling is encouraged to make field trips more environmentally responsible. Cars are also excellent blinds for observing birds without disturbing them. However, for trip leaders and participants, travel by car can offer the most challenging organizational problems. Confusion, lost participants, accidents, and injury are possible. Field trips often involve one of two types of travel by auto: carpooling to the birding destination or birding from the car. These guidelines are provided to help leaders avoid problems.

On the Road

BP: Leaders cannot be responsible for actions of the drivers of cars in the carpool; however, leaders should take corrective action to assure that irresponsible driving, once observed, does not continue.

- ❖ Make stops only as planned or as announced by phone or radio.
- ❖ Announce all stops and caution against following too closely (in the dust), avoiding rear end collisions.
- ❖ If there is not adequate room for trucks to pass safely, don't stop.
- ❖ Pick safe places for U-turns keeping in mind that you have vehicles following you who will also be turning.
- ❖ When you stop for a bird, pull over adequately and safely.
- ❖ Be aware of where the other drivers are parking and ask them to park more safely if needed.
- ❖ Enlist group help to keep tripods and people out of the roadway.
- ❖ Carry a tow strap in case a vehicle becomes stuck.
- ❖ Minimize traffic dangers by scouting safe stops.
- ❖ Trips to observe raptors should avoid roads with heavy traffic.

Bird Spotting While Driving

- ❖ The designated driver should not be the designated bird spotter.

Troubleshooting

- ❖ Once the trip has more than three full cars signed up, consider recruiting one of the participants in advance to lead a separate second contingent.
- ❖ To avoid losing cars, assign the communicator of the last car to report delayed or missing cars or to let the lead car know that others are not keeping up.
- ❖ When stopping to bird, be sure participants aren't blocking the roadway with spotting scopes.
- ❖ In situations where birders may be intruding on local residents, speak to the residents before bringing a large group.

On the Trail

Many trips involve hiking on a trail or path. Following these tips may help make the trip run more smoothly.

- ❖ Regroup at trail junctions and in areas of difficult terrain.
- ❖ Step to the side or off the trail when stopping for breaks or observing birds.
- ❖ Appoint a co-leader to bring up the rear of the group and to help keep the group organized.
- ❖ Ask participants to inform a leader if a bathroom break is needed. The rear leader can also help assure that no one is left behind.
- ❖ Observe and talk to participants to see if they are having problems with the pace or need more frequent breaks.
- ❖ Expect the unexpected, monitor the time, and be aware of changing group dynamics, group stamina, and weather.
- ❖ Birding groups on green belt trails will have many runner and bicycle encounters. Because they approach rapidly, ask members to alert the group.
- ❖ If the group needs to walk some distance on the edge of a busy road, they must walk facing the oncoming traffic.
- ❖ Arrange for rest stops at comfortable, convenient intervals, when possible.

Field Trip Etiquette (Discuss with Participants Before or During Trip)

! Leaders will observe the ABA Code of Birding Ethics and remind participants of the code when necessary.

! Trips must not enter private property without permission of the landowner.

- ❖ When a birder stops to look at a bird, also stop. Don't spook the other person's bird.
- ❖ Avoid walking in front of a person who is viewing a bird.
- ❖ Make room for persons behind.
- ❖ Before approaching further, let the group observe the bird, then approach closer for better observation. Avoid spooking the bird before people get a look.
- ❖ Discourage rapid movement, including pointing.
- ❖ Make room for scopes and cameras. Share the scopes.
- ❖ Quietness is paramount to avoid scaring birds.
- ❖ Ask before playing bird songs (playing recordings to attract birds is generally discouraged).
- ❖ Notify others before playing bird songs.
- ❖ Do not bird on private property without permission. If you have permission, make sure participants know that this is only for your group and only on this day. They are not to return on their own without obtaining permission.

Making Birding Fun

BP: Field trips should be interesting to and inclusive of all levels of birders; they should be informative and FUN!

- ❖ Ask participants to help communicate what to look for and indicate when they spot a bird.
- ❖ Encourage observers to indicate the height of a bird being watched.
- ❖ Explain how to tell people where in the tree the bird can be seen by using the clock system, e.g., “look at 10 o’clock in the cottonwood, 3 feet from the outer edge of leaves.”
- ❖ Make an attempt to ensure that all observers see the birds sighted.

Helping People Enjoy the Trip and Learn about Birds

BP: DFO leaders should share their knowledge of birds with participants and within the scope of their own experience offer information on related subjects including bird behavior, habitat identification, and local conservation issues.

Resources: Birding gets more interesting when we get beyond the “What bird is it?” question. Discuss with the group the reasons for the location and time of the trip. Describe the habitat and what birds are likely to inhabit the area at the time of the visit. The ABA/Lane *A Birder’s Guide to Colorado* by Harold R. Holt has graphs showing what species can be found in each month. Types of habitats used by species are also shown on the graphs. The Falcon Guide *Birding Colorado* by Hugh Kingery contains similar information and is more recently published. Both guides will help with lists of birds that can be observed at popular destinations on a seasonal basis. If your planned destination is an eBird hotspot, you can access data about species presence and seasonality on the eBird website. Use the guide books and internet map services to help prepare maps to birding destinations. Copy the maps for participants or carpool drivers.

Season: Discuss the season. Will birds be in breeding or nonbreeding plumage and can first-year birds be expected? Are they resident or migrating?

Food Sources: If you are able, point out the resources the birds are using. Others in the group will usually help with this. Is the bird gleaning insects from bark, flycatching, or probing the forest floor? Is it in the shallow water, or in the mud?

Habitat: It is helpful to name the type of each habitat visited. Is it grassland, tundra, shrubland, woodland, forest, wetland, riparian, or urban? If you can discuss species of trees or shrubs, it is good to point them out when a bird is using them.

Identification: When a bird is seen or heard, engage the members of the group in helping anyone who is unable to find the bird or identify it. It may be helpful to direct the group’s attention to field marks that are visible or heard instead of immediately naming the species. Let others participate in the identification and be open to differences of opinion. When a bird is seen, don’t always be the first to call out its species name. Let others have time to think through what the bird may be. Encourage the members of the group to also allow this time. Use questions to draw attention to characteristics that will help narrow the identification. “Did anyone catch the color of the crown?” “How long is the bill in relation to the head?” “Anyone see wing bars?”

Field Guide Use: After the bird is gone, if members of the group are having difficulty, or if the identification proves difficult, refer to a field guide. Discuss with the group the features that various members of the group are using to identify the species. A consensus of the best identification may emerge. Or a reason to be more cautious about the identification may become apparent.

Feather Tracts: Discuss feather tracts when they are being used to identify the species. When possible, use size ratios. With flycatchers for instance, instead of saying long primary extension, say the

extension appears to be 1/x the length of the tertials. If necessary, refer to a sketch or to a field guide so that the description of the feather tracts being discussed is clear. Also, if you refer to the learning section at the front of a field guide, it may come into frequent use thereafter.

Photography: As leader, don't devote excessive time to being a photographer. If group members have been able to photograph the bird, this may be the most positive record. The group can discuss features seen in the camera's display. Encourage the photographer to share the photo by email. Use the contact information from the website participants list to aid in sharing this identification information.

Documentation: If the sighting is unusual for the season or location, the documentation and the photo should both be submitted online at <<http://coloradobirdrecords.org/>> to the Colorado Bird Records Committee. In addition to submitting the usual trip report to DFO <<http://eBird.org>> (**share with dfobirders**) and <wddriscoll-at-gmail.com>. It is good also to share with COBirds. Add these addresses to your address book in eBird.

Citizen Science: Keeping the Trip Record

! Leaders will record all species observed, including the number of individuals of each species, or have a participant do this for the group.

- ❖ Record birds by species and numbers. Numerical data are more valuable to researchers than a simple checkmark.
- ❖ For each location birded, record the distance covered birding, length of time birding, weather highlights, and habitat types.
- ❖ You may find it helpful if a trip participant will volunteer to record the bird list. This will free you to lead the group.

DFO practice is to report field trip data to <<http://eBird.org>>; **share with dfobirders**. These field reports will become part of DFO's database and will contribute to the personal eBird data records of the trip participants with whom leaders share the data. To enhance the scientific value of data in the eBird national database, Cornell Lab of Ornithology utilizes local volunteers to review data of unusual observations. The reviewers are hoping to be able to add your data to the national eBird database. eBird reviewers may also add your data to the "News from the Field" articles in the quarterly CFO journal, *Colorado Birds*. Adequately documented reports of rare bird sightings may gain acceptance by the Colorado Bird Records Committee. With the help of the reviewers, DFO field trip reports to eBird contribute to each of these processes. The reviewers are not being critical; you will find them helpful.

DFO field trip leaders can greatly improve the usefulness of the data they report by recognizing when an observation is unusual, making detailed notes in the field, and adding those field notes to the species entry for the field trip in eBird.

When only one person sees and reports the bird, be sure to use the eBird comments line to attribute the species entry to the person. Also, if the sighting is possibly rare or unusual, collect confirming notes from the observer or ask if the observer will enter the confirming notes in eBird.

Recognizing Unusual Observations

- ❖ If the bird is a "first of season" sighting for your group it might be an unusual observation.
- ❖ The CFO website <<http://cobirds.org/>> has a Rare Bird Report and daily notes from local birders. Subscribe to GoogleGroups "Colorado Birds" group; it's free. Select an option describing the detail of reporting you wish to receive. You can unsubscribe at any time. Following COBirds will help you be aware of early arrivals or other out-of-season observations of common species.
- ❖ At the website of CFO <<http://cobirds.org/>>, check the "State Review List" <<http://coloradobirdrecords.org/ReviewList.aspx>>. Species on this list are rare in Colorado and therefore require additional documentation. There are also county review lists.

What Notes to Make in the Field (When the Observation is Unusual or Rare)

- ❖ Time and location of the observation
- ❖ Duration of the observation
- ❖ Habitat
- ❖ What the bird was doing
- ❖ Size as compared to other birds or some other thing
- ❖ Field markings observed
- ❖ Age or sex of the bird
- ❖ Field markings not observable
- ❖ Similar species considered/rejected
- ❖ Photograph (optional)
- ❖ How far away was the bird, how clear the view?

Conservation Awareness

People participate in our trips because they love to watch and learn about birds. Our behavior impacts our ability to continue watching birds in the years to come. You can help participants be more aware of the need and value of conservation.

- ❖ Set an example by leading your trips in ways that are environmentally and thus bird friendly:
 - Encourage or require carpooling (see carpool section on page 8).
 - Mention relevant points from the ABA Code of Birding Ethics (Appendix D) and abide by them. We want everyone to see as many species as possible, and it is very exciting to find rare birds, nests with young, or fledglings. While helping people have these exciting experiences, our first responsibility should be the welfare of the birds.
 - The ABA Code states that recordings and other methods of attracting birds should never be used “in heavily birded areas, or for attracting any species that is Threatened, Endangered, or of Special Concern, or is rare in your local area.” Appendix G lists the Colorado birds that fit into the Threatened, Endangered, or Special Concern categories.
- ❖ Share conservation information with your trip participants. Suggestions include:
 - Specific, currently threatened areas – At any given time, a few of our more valuable birding areas are being threatened with change that could drastically alter habitat for birds.
 - Threatened habitats – Numerous factors (fire, drought, invasive species, conversion of grasslands, to name just a few) have a major impact on bird populations.
 - Changes in species diversity and abundance – Habitat changes lead to changes in the number and variety of species we see at any given site.
 - Trends over time – DFO has years of records from bird hikes at some locations <<http://dfobirds.org/FieldTrips/BirdReports.aspx>>. Previous years' *Lark Bunting* newsletters are a paper record listing species seen, number of individuals of each species, and location visited. In recent years these records are in <<http://dfobirds.org/FieldTrips/PastTrips.aspx>> and the <<http://eBird.org>> database. When earlier years' data are entered into eBird, DFO's data will become a valuable long-term record of bird conservation.
 - Many of you have been leading the same trip for many years. You might mention the increase and/or decrease of specific species over time and possible reasons for the change.

For trip leaders looking for conservation information for their trips: *The American Bird Conservancy Guide to Bird Conservation* (Lebbin, Daniel J; M.J. Parr; G.H. Fenwick, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 2010) is a comprehensive resource for information on the current state of bird conservation. It includes species-by-species accounts of threatened North American species, discussion of major habitat types with the conservation issues and descriptions of Important Bird Areas, and the categories of threats to bird survival.

When Problems Occur

! If an accident, illness, or incident occurs, the leader will manage the group for individual and group safety.

! If an accident or incident occurs during a field trip, the leader will prepare an Accident Report Form to submit to the DFO Field Trip Director and President. They should be notified as soon as possible consistent with the safety and welfare of the group.

Illness or Accidents Involving Injury

Illness and injury can vary greatly in severity and circumstances and it is beyond the scope of this manual to cover all possible situations. Here we offer some general suggestions for managing these situations.

- ❖ Don't become part of the accident.
- ❖ Keep the group organized and safe; don't let people's anxiety overcome rules for safety.
- ❖ Establish who is in charge of the injury situation. Get medical help from a qualified participant if one is in the group.
- ❖ Assign some of the tasks below to other people; keep people busy.
- ❖ Stabilize the problem to the extent possible.
- ❖ If there is any doubt about the severity of the illness or injury, call 911.
- ❖ Consider safety of the injured person before moving him/her or assisting the person to self-evacuate.
- ❖ Help arrange transportation for stranded participants if needed.
- ❖ Don't forget the group. Be sure of a plan for the group to return to the trip starting point or other destination. Count people or designate someone to count and call you when all have arrived safely. No missing persons.
- ❖ Don't prejudge responsibility for the accident.
- ❖ Follow up by calling the injured person's emergency contact to inform them of the injured person's location, condition, and to describe what action is being taken.

After the Trip

- ❖ Fill out **DFO Accident Report Form**, available from <<http://dfobirds.org/>> and Appendix B, and send it to the Director of DFO Field Trips, Karen von Saltza (kvonsaltza-at-yahoo.com) and to the DFO President.
- ❖ Call DFO President Joe Roller (303-204-0828).

Auto Accidents

- ❖ If an accident occurs, keep the group organized and safe; don't let people's excitement overcome precautions for traffic safety. Assign this task to one of the group members if your attention is needed to attend to an injury.
- ❖ The trip leader's attention must be to the group.
- ❖ Drivers remain responsible for their driving actions and the autos they are driving.
- ❖ Drivers are required by law to report accidents and to trade insurance information.
- ❖ Do not engage in arguments or discussions involving determination of fault.
- ❖ DFO field trip leaders can assist in arranging tow truck service, and providing directions to the location.
- ❖ DFO field trip leaders should make sure that arrangements are made so that no trip participants are stranded due to a car being unavailable.

- ❖ Remember to count group participants.
- ❖ Follow through. Remain in contact with the driver of the car that had an accident to be sure they get home and have not been left without help in a difficult situation.

After the Trip

- ❖ Fill out a **DFO Accident Report Form**, available at <<http://dfobirds.org/>> and Appendix B, and send it to the Director of Field Trips, Karen von Saltza (kvonsaltza-at-yahoo.com).
- ❖ Call DFO President Joe Roller (303-204-0828).

Incidents of Concern

Improper, dangerous, or illegal behavior by a trip participant or any event that a field trip leader feels should be brought to the attention of the officers of DFO should be reported using the **DFO Accident Report Form**. The DFO Field Trip Director is required to respond in writing to the leader who reported the incident. Incident actions may further require reporting to all field trip leaders or to a regular member meeting.

Liability

DFO requires trip participants to sign the **DFO Liability Waiver Form**. DFO has general liability insurance for claims against DFO resulting from injury to other persons or property. However, no waiver or insurance can fully protect a field trip leader from liability for irresponsible or reckless endangerment. In addition to observing the procedures above, leaders must not drive after consuming alcohol.

Part III: After the Trip

Debriefing

BP: At the end of the trip, the leader should have a debriefing that includes a check that everyone is accounted for and explain how the leader will share the trip list. The leader may also ask questions like “What was most fun?” or “Is there anything that would improve this trip?”

Before everybody goes home, make sure that you:

- ❖ Count the participants, checking the trip roster if necessary, to ensure that all participants are accounted for. Make sure everyone has a ride home.
- ❖ Mention trip highlights.
- ❖ Thank everyone for coming on the trip and invite them to join another DFO trip. Invite non-members to join DFO and have membership brochures available.
- ❖ Inform participants of upcoming DFO events (e.g., next scheduled meeting, other birding opportunities, future DFO trips you may be leading, etc.).

Submit the Trip Waiver

! The leader will check the waiver box on the website for anyone who signed a paper waiver and submit the DFO Liability Waiver to the DFO Historian within 7 days of the trip.

Please mail the DFO Liability Waiver Form to the current DFO Historian:

Kristine Haglund
4815 E Alabama Pl
Denver, CO 80246-3201

You may want to make a copy for your own records first. Or scan the waiver and email it to the Historian: <kahaglund1-at-aol.com>.

Complete Your Field Trip Report

! After the field trip is concluded, the leader will submit a trip report to eBird within 7 days.

Within 7 days, please enter your report directly into eBird. A timely report can be shared with COBirds so other birders can pursue rarities you may have found.

E-Bird Report Instructions

Go to <<http://eBird.org>>

In the upper left corner, under Home, click on Sign In. Enter your username and password. *(For the first time, establish a personal account by clicking on “Register as New User.” Set up your username and password as directed.)*

Click on “Submit Observations” tab

Step 1 – Where Did You Bird?

Select the appropriate location from “**My Locations**” box if you already have established ones. If your location is not listed yet, click on “Find It On a Map”; enter the county and state. Click on the red bubbles with the ‘+’ in it until you find your location. The name shows up in the box above the map when you click a red tear drop without the ‘+’.

Step 2 – Date and Effort

Click on “**Traveling Count**” as the one likely for most DFO Saturday or Sunday trips. Fill in the Date, Start Time, Duration, Number of People, Distance (miles), and Elevation.

Step 3 – Comments

In the “**Comments**” box, write “*DFO field trip,*” and then enter your name as leader and the names of participants. Enter weather details (cloud conditions, temperature, and wind) and a brief description of habitats covered.

Step 4 – What Did You See or Hear?

Click ‘yes’ to **Are You Submitting a Complete Checklist?**

Fill in the appropriate species boxes with the number counted. If the species is not listed, go to the top and click on **Add Species**. This will bring up a broader list.

If you suspect the species may be rare or unusual, or if you had to “Add Species,” enter as much information as you can to support the observation. This is optional, but important to science.

After filling in all the species counts, click on **Submit**.

You may get an ‘Oops!’ message. You will need to either confirm the species/number or correct for the species shown. Click on **Submit**.

Step 5 – Confirmation

You will get a message noting the list has been submitted:

“Your checklist has been submitted! Please review it carefully and make any necessary changes.”

Double check the species and numbers on the list provided. Review the information entered earlier in the **Comment** box. Copy the checklist ID S Number in the upper left corner and paste it into the website slot at <<http://dfobirds.org/FieldTrips/Leaders/Checklists.aspx>>.

Step 6 – Additional Step – Share the Checklist

On this last page you will see some additional choices in the right-hand box: *print, download, email yourself, delete*. Below these instructions you will see: *Share with others in your party*. Click on this choice.

In the “To” box, **type dfobirders, <wddriscoll-at-gmail.com>**.

This will put the list into the DFO account and will send the list to DFO board member Mary Driscoll. You can also enter the email addresses of trip participants to share the list with them. This will add to the enjoyment of the trip.

To share with the broader Colorado birding community, you are encouraged to email a copy of your field trip list to COBirds-at-googlegroups.com. (You must be a Google group member of the "Colorado Birds" group and follow COBirds posting rules.)

Step 7 – Optional Report for Rare Species

If you want to be sure your rare bird, out-of-place, or out-of-season sighting will reach the Colorado Bird Records Committee, go to <<http://cobirds.org>> and choose "Report a Bird." Complete this online form. You do not have to be a member of CFO to participate but you will be required to set up an account and password. Consider that the range maps in bird books rely on data from sources like the Colorado Bird Records Committee.

You've just successfully submitted your DFO Field Trip Report and added to Colorado's records of bird species and numbers. THANK YOU!

After the Fun: Completed Tasks

Be sure that you have finished all your DFO tasks as a Field Trip Leader. Refer to page 16 for details.

In Conclusion...

This manual has been written to explain in detail the steps we ask our field trip leaders to follow and the standards and best practices we request our leaders to honor and uphold. Every effort has been made to be inclusive while remaining flexible and allowing field trip leaders to express their own personal style.

Once the information contained in this manual is absorbed and internalized, DFO field trip leaders find a clear and natural path to follow from creating a new trip to finishing up and filing waivers and eBird reports. The advent of DFO's website, which facilitates online sign up for field trips and leader reporting tasks from start to finish, brings a new level of sophistication to our program and is attracting new members to the organization.

The DFO Field Trip Program is growing rapidly. We are adding new trips every month and trying to bring variety to an already ambitious program. It is not unusual to see listed a half-day walk in an urban park on the same day as another trip, perhaps a car caravan to the eastern plains. To continue bringing fresh ideas and enthusiasm to the program we need new leaders to sign up and become certified.

Wouldn't you like to be a part of DFO's success?

Wouldn't you like to become a DFO Field Trip Leader?

And thank you to all those who have!

Part IV: Field Trip Leader Certification

The DFO Director of Field Trips will appoint a certified field trip leader to acquaint each applicant leader with the DFO leader policies and to act as mentor to the applicant. DFO Field Trip Leaders will be considered certified once they have demonstrated that they understand the precepts of the manual and agree to employ its policies when planning and leading trips. Certification requires planning and leading one trip with the mentor present. Upon successful completion of this process the mentor may recommend certified status for the applicant leader. A record of certified leaders will be kept by the DFO Director of Field Trips and is available at <<http://dfobirds.org/FieldTrips/Leaders/ContactInfo.aspx>>.

Comments and Concerns

Members of DFO may address concerns about the conduct of a field trip leader or about the general conduct of field trips to the DFO Director of Field Trips. Written concerns should be addressed to the Director of Field Trips with a copy to the DFO President. The Director of Field Trips will reply in writing to the concerned member, describing actions taken.

How to Change this Document

The current version of this document <<http://dfobirds.org/FieldTrips/Standards.aspx>> is available online. Responsibility for keeping the document up to date resides with the DFO Director of Field Trips Karen von Saltza <kvonsaltza-at-yahoo.com>. Leaders are encouraged to submit suggested changes to any part of the document to the DFO Director of Field Trips. The director will communicate in writing to the submitter of a suggested document change, and to all certified leaders, as to the acceptance or rejection of the change. Changes to Standards and Best Practices require DFO Board approval.

APPENDIX A

How to Obtain First Aid Training

Recommended training can be obtained by contacting:

AMERICAN RED CROSS

444 Sherman Street

Denver, Colorado 80203

303-722-7474, or

Search the Internet for American Red Cross or go directly to <www.redcross.org/co/denver>.

Recommended Training is Adult First Aid/CPR/AED

FIRST AID: Learn how to respond to common first aid emergencies, including burns; cuts; head, neck, and back injuries; and others.

CPR/AED: Learn how to respond to cardiac and breathing emergencies in adults, including the use of automated external defibrillators.

Classes

Classes are offered in web-based format or in a classroom downtown or at other greater Denver locations. Cost may vary. Presently either format costs \$70 per person.

The web-based format requires completing the written work online followed by a 2-hour classroom session at the downtown location.

The classroom format is a 6-hour session.

Renew Each Two Years

Training should be repeated each two years. Review is available in an abbreviated class session if the 2-year period has not lapsed.

APPENDIX B

DFO Accident Report Form For use by DFO Trip Leaders

DFO Field Trip Leaders are required to complete this form as soon as practical after a serious accident or illness has required first aid and/or urgent medical care. This PDF can be printed, filled out, and mailed by USPS to the president and field trip director. Or it can be scanned and sent by email to the president and field trip director.

Your input will be used so that any need for follow up regarding the incident or improvement in DFO practices can be determined. DFO's Leader Development program will communicate to all leaders the lessons learned through this process. You are encouraged to add additional comments at the end of the form if you feel they are necessary or will be helpful.

Person affected _____ Guardian _____
Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Home phone _____ Mobile _____ Date _____ Time of incident _____
Nature of accident/illness _____

How did the accident or illness occur _____

First aid given by _____ Phone _____
Description of first aid given _____

Person was evacuated by ambulance; drove home; taken/escorted home by _____

Name of hospital _____ Contact at hospital _____

Person's emergency contact, if possibly needed _____

Names and contact information of persons who witnessed the incident, if appropriate

Additional information:

APPENDIX C

Items You Might Include in an Equipment List

- Binocular
- Bug repellent
- Camera
- Car pooling
- Cell phone or 2-way radio
- Field guides
- Flashlights
- GPS
- Lunch
- Park or area entry fee required
- Necessary hiking attire
- RSVP
- Scope
- Snacks
- Snow/rain gear
- Sunscreen, hats, extra water
- Water
- Weather attire

APPENDIX D

American Birding Association Code of Birding Ethics

Everyone who enjoys birds and birding must always respect wildlife, its environment, and the rights of others. In any conflict of interest between birds and birders, the welfare of the birds and their environment comes first.

1. Promote the welfare of birds and their environment.

1(a) Support the protection of important bird habitat.

1(b) To avoid stressing birds or exposing them to danger, exercise restraint and caution during observation, photography, sound recording, or filming.

Limit the use of recordings and other methods of attracting birds, and never use such methods in heavily birded areas, or for attracting any species that is Threatened, Endangered, or of Special Concern, or is rare in your local area;

Keep well back from nests and nesting colonies, roosts, display areas, and important feeding sites. In such sensitive areas, if there is a need for extended observation, photography, filming, or recording, try to use a blind or hide, and take advantage of natural cover.

Use artificial light sparingly for filming or photography, especially for close-ups.

1(c) Before advertising the presence of a rare bird, evaluate the potential for disturbance to the bird, its surroundings, and other people in the area, and proceed only if access can be controlled, disturbance minimized, and permission has been obtained from private land-owners. The sites of rare nesting birds should be divulged only to the proper conservation authorities.

1(d) Stay on roads, trails, and paths where they exist; otherwise keep habitat disturbance to a minimum.

2. Respect the law, and the rights of others.

2(a) Do not enter private property without the owner's explicit permission.

2(b) Follow all laws, rules, and regulations governing use of roads and public areas, both at home and abroad.

2(c) Practice common courtesy in contacts with other people. Your exemplary behavior will generate goodwill with birders and non-birders alike.

3. Ensure that feeders, nest structures, and other artificial bird environments are safe.

3(a) Keep dispensers, water, and food clean, and free of decay or disease. It is important to feed birds continually during harsh weather.

3(b) Maintain and clean nest structures regularly.

3(c) If you are attracting birds to an area, ensure the birds are not exposed to predation from cats and other domestic animals, or dangers posed by artificial hazards.

4. Group birding, whether organized or impromptu, requires special care.

Each individual in the group, in addition to the obligations spelled out in Items #1 and #2, has responsibilities as a Group Member.

4(a) Respect the interests, rights, and skills of fellow birders, as well as people participating in other legitimate outdoor activities. Freely share your knowledge and experience, except where code 1(c) applies. Be especially helpful to beginning birders.

4(b) If you witness unethical birding behavior, assess the situation, and intervene if you think it prudent. When interceding, inform the person(s) of the inappropriate action, and attempt, within reason, to have it stopped. If the behavior continues, document it, and notify appropriate individuals or organizations.

Group Leader Responsibilities [amateur and professional trips and tours].

4(c) Be an exemplary ethical role model for the group. Teach through word and example.

4(d) Keep groups to a size that limits impact on the environment, and does not interfere with others using the same area.

4(e) Ensure everyone in the group knows of and practices this code.

4(f) Learn and inform the group of any special circumstances applicable to the areas being visited (e.g. no tape recorders allowed).

4(g) Acknowledge that professional tour companies bear a special responsibility to place the welfare of birds and the benefits of public knowledge ahead of the company's commercial interests. Ideally, leaders should keep track of tour sightings, document unusual occurrences, and submit records to appropriate organizations.

DFO acknowledges the role of ABA in developing and promoting this code with a link to the ABA website <<http://aba.org>>.

APPENDIX E

Park Passes and Other Fees

Colorado State Park Pass

All Colorado State Parks have entrance fees. All vehicles are required to have an entrance pass and some parks have walk-in fees. Leaders should be familiar with current fees when leading trips to state parks.

Cherry Creek SP: There is an additional \$3.00 fee at Cherry Creek State Park to help pay for efforts to improve water quality in Cherry Creek Reservoir. This windshield decal is required for all visitors to the park. It is referred to as the Cherry Creek Basin Water Quality Authority decal (CCBWQA) and expires on the same dates as the annual pass.

National Parks and Monuments

Most have a fee requirement. Leaders to these locations, including Rocky Mountain National Park, should be familiar with the fees.

State Wildlife Areas

As of this writing, there are no special requirements for birders to enter Colorado State Wildlife Areas, with the exception of Prewitt and Jumbo Reservoirs.

Prewitt and Jumbo Reservoirs: Anyone ages 19–64 must purchase an annual Jumbo Res./Prewitt Res. access permit to enter either property. Anyone who has a valid Colorado annual hunting or fishing license does not need to have an access permit. Permits are \$36, valid April 1–March 31, and available anywhere you can purchase CPW hunting and fishing licenses.

Miscellaneous Fees and Charges

Some private properties, such as Chico Basin Ranch, are open to the public but charge admission, either by car (\$15.00 per car at Chico Basin) or by the individual. Most of these properties are listed in the *Colorado Birding Trail* manuals. Fees vary from \$5.00 per person to \$50.00 per organized group. Call ahead to verify charges.

South Platte Park: At the Carson Nature Center (South Platte Park), there is limited parking. It is best for field trip leaders to call ahead to the Nature Center (303-730-1022), office hours 12 noon to 4:30 p.m. Tues.-Fri., to confirm the proposed trip and make sure that sufficient parking is available on that date. Carson Nature Center confirms trips on a first-come, first-serve basis. There are no additional fees.

APPENDIX F

Trip Briefing Checklist

DFO Liability Waiver

- Everyone signed online
- Write down the number of people _____
- All have provided emergency contact information online
- Email for those who want the list
- Anyone want the list by USPS? _____
- Nonmembers, brochure?
- Remind all not to leave group unannounced
- Equipment reminders (sunscreen, etc.)

Discuss the plan

- Breaks
- Lunch
- Return time _____
- Terrain cautions

Introductions

- Volunteers for birding help
- Rear leader _____

Carpool

- All have a ride?
- Drivers names _____
- Car types _____
- Handout maps
- Planned restroom stops
- Planned lunch stop
- Safety discussion
- One communicator/navigator per car (not the driver)
- Leader and communicators have each other's cell numbers
- Radio check, Channel 11–22
- Rear car instructions
- Mileage cost \$0.30/mi. shared
- Zero odometer

End of Field Trip

- All accounted for
- Did we have fun?
- Critique, comments?

APPENDIX G

Colorado Birds That Are Threatened, Endangered, or of Special Concern

BIRDS		
Whooping Crane	<i>Grus americana</i>	FE, SE
Least Tern	<i>Sterna antillarum</i>	FE, SE
Southwestern Willow Flycatcher	<i>Empidonax traillii extimus</i>	FE, SE
Plains Sharp-Tailed Grouse	<i>Tympanuchus phasianellus jamesii</i>	SE
Piping Plover	<i>Charadrius melodus circumcinctus</i>	FT, ST
Bald Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	SC
Mexican Spotted Owl	<i>Strix occidentalis lucida</i>	FT, ST
Burrowing Owl	<i>Athene cunicularia</i>	ST
Lesser Prairie-Chicken	<i>Tympanuchus pallidicinctus</i>	ST
Western Yellow-Billed Cuckoo	<i>Coccyzus americanus</i>	SC
Greater Sandhill Crane	<i>Grus canadensis tabida</i>	SC
Ferruginous Hawk	<i>Buteo regalis</i>	SC
Gunnison Sage-Grouse	<i>Centrocercus minimus</i>	SC
American Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus anatum</i>	SC
Greater Sage Grouse	<i>Centrocercus urophasianus</i>	SC
Western Snowy Plover	<i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>	SC
Mountain Plover	<i>Charadrius montanus</i>	SC
Long-Billed Curlew	<i>Numenius americanus</i>	SC
Columbian Sharp-Tailed Grouse	<i>Tympanuchus phasianellus columbianus</i>	SC

*Status Codes:

FE = Federally Endangered

FT = Federally Threatened

SE = State Endangered

ST = State Threatened

SC = State Special Concern (not a statutory category)

APPENDIX H: Standards and Best Practices

! DFO trip leaders must be certified before they are eligible to lead published DFO trips.

! When a guest leader is invited to lead a DFO trip, a certified DFO leader will co-lead the trip to ensure adherence to DFO standards.

! The leader will submit on the DFO website trip details to the scheduler for publication on the website and in *The Lark Bunting*. The details will be submitted by the date requested by the scheduler.

! Meeting places for carpooling must be either public parking places or locations at which the leader or DFO have permission to use and are listed in Trip Locations on the DFO website.

! The leader will review the trip description online and in *The Lark Bunting* for accuracy before the trip date.

! The leader will make an appropriate effort to notify potential participants of any errors, changes, or cancellations.

! At the trailhead the leader will make sure that all participants, including the leader, have signed the DFO trip waiver.

! The leader will not allow participation in the trip without a participant signature.

! At the carpool meeting place and/or trailhead, the leader will provide participants with a clear briefing on how the trip will proceed including route of travel, break times, restroom stops, and trip-end time.

! The leader will count the number of participants, or cars if carpooling, and confirm at the end of the trip that all participants are accounted for. Ask participants to notify the leader or another member of the group if they are going to leave the trip early.

BP: If travel by car is planned, carpooling is the DFO preferred practice. Leaders must organize a communication system between cars and designate a rear car with instructions to communicate if cars lag behind or other difficulties occur.

! On the field trip, whether on foot or by car, the safety of the participants will be primary. All trip leaders must have automobile insurance with limits of liability not less than the minimum required by state law and a valid driver's license.

BP: Leaders cannot be responsible for actions of the drivers of cars in the carpool; however, leaders should take corrective action to assure that irresponsible driving, once observed, does not continue.

! Leaders will observe the ABA Code of Birding Ethics and remind participants of the code when necessary.

! Trips must not enter private property without permission of the landowner.

BP: Field trips should be interesting to and inclusive of all levels of birders; they should be informative and FUN!

BP: DFO leaders should share their knowledge of birds with participants and within the scope of their own experience offer information on related subjects including bird behavior, habitat identification, and local conservation issues.

! Leaders will record all species observed, including the number of individuals of each species, or have a participant do this for the group.

! If an accident, illness, or incident occurs, the leader will manage the group for individual and group safety.

! If an accident or incident occurs during a field trip, the leader will prepare an Accident Report Form to submit to the DFO Field Trip Director and President. They should be notified as soon as possible consistent with the safety and welfare of the group.

BP: At the end of the trip the leader should have a debriefing that includes a check that everyone is accounted for and explain how the leader will share the trip list. The leader may also ask questions like "What was most fun?" or "Is there anything that would improve this trip?"

! The leader will check the waiver box on the website for anyone who signed a paper waiver and submit the DFO Liability Waiver to the DFO Historian within 7 days of the trip.

! After the field trip is concluded, the leader will submit a trip report to eBird and enter the S Number on the DFO website within 7 days.

As a Certified DFO Field Trip leader, I accept and, when leading a DFO field trip, will do my best to apply the Standards and Best Practices put forth in this document.

Signature

Date