

2026



YOUTH BIRDING CHALLENGE (Level III) DIVISIONS

All participants must be familiar with the **Rules of Competition**. Reminder, all Level III teams in Divisions A, B and D must have a registered adult mentor. The mentor is responsible for keeping the checklist, checking accuracy and ensuring the list is submitted by the end of the time limit for the Division.

1. All Level III teams must have a registered designated driver. The designated driver can also be the mentor.
2. All teams must utilize eBird Trip Reports to tally and submit their sightings on the day of the event.
3. Youth teams, including school groups doing the WSB as part of their school curriculum, may conduct their WSB Big Day on any day within the week immediately preceding the official WSB date (including the prior Saturday). All checklists must be received by midnight on the day the WSB is conducted and in accordance with WSB rules.
4. Teams must compete within the school grade division, defined below. The school group category is defined by the most advanced school grade of the team members. Teammates may attend different schools or be part of different programs outside of school.
5. Friends, family and teachers may accompany the team but may not aid or contribute to the location or identification of birds in any manner.

Youth Birding Challenge Divisions

Youth divisions are organized by grade (not age), and limitations to hours and geographic coverage apply to Divisions A and B.

1. Division A: Elementary School – Grades 1 thru 5 (or equivalent)

No team member shall be past 5th grade on the day of the event.

- **Hours of Competition:** 5:00am to 8:00pm
- **Geographic Coverage:** Teams may bird in one location, such as a local park or on school grounds, or can expand their geographic coverage up to any **two** adjacent counties in New Jersey.
- The mentor may also be the designated driver.

2. **Division B: Middle School – Grades 6 thru 8 (or equivalent)**

No team member shall be past 8th grade on the day of the event.

- **Hours of Competition:** 3:00am to 10:00pm
- **Geographic Coverage:** Teams may bird in one location, such as a local park or on school grounds, or can expand their geographic coverage up to any **four** adjacent counties in New Jersey.
- The mentor may also be the designated driver.

3. **Division C: High School – Grades 9 thru 12 (or equivalent)**

No team member shall be past 12th grade, or over the age of 18 years, on the day of the event.

- **Hours of Competition:** midnight to midnight
- **Geographic Coverage:** Teams can bird anywhere in the state
- The mentor, if one is present, can also be the designated
- No team member can be the designated

4. **Division D: Carbon Free Kids (CFK) Challenge – Grades 6 thru 12**

Team members must be in grades 6 through 12 grade and no older than age 18 on the day of the event. Carbon Free Kids teams abide by the same rules as the adult teams participating in the Carbon Footprint Cup.

- **Hours of Competition:** 5:00am to 9:00pm
- **Geographic Coverage:** Teams can bird anywhere in the state
- **Teams must have a mentor and/or an adult support person or small group to ensure health and safety throughout the day.**

Rules Specific to the Carbon Free Kids (All other competition rules and ethics apply)

1. Once team members are in place and have begun birding, no mode of motorized transportation may be used while Team members may walk, run, bike, skate, use any type of non-motorized boat (canoe, kayak, etc.) or any combination throughout the event. Motorized transportation, if any, may be used only up to the point when the team begins birding and after they have stopped birding for the event.
2. Any species seen or heard while using motorized transportation may not be counted.
3. Any CFC team member counting species while operating or riding in any motorized transportation during the competition will disqualify the entire team.