

Guidelines for Mecklenburg Audubon Bird Walk & Field Trip Participants



Contact the leader

- **You MUST preregister.**
- This will ensure that you receive any notifications about changes to the outing.
- Some field trips may need to be limited due to habitat constraints. We would hate to turn you away after you got up early.

Be on time

- Try to be at the meeting place a little early.
- If you are going to be a little late, let the leader know.
- If you need directions, ask the leader or check the MAS web site for a map.

Silence is golden

- The keen senses of birds alert them to our presence long before we have a chance to see them. Whether alone or in a group, walk as quietly as possible and whisper. Take cues from the leader who might signal for quiet as the group approaches a bird.
- Quiet walking also makes it easier to hear the birds when they are not easily being seen.
- Save the chit-chat for mealtime or when we're in the car.

Stay behind the leader

- This way when a bird is spotted, everyone can stop and get a chance to see the bird.
- If you spot a bird the leader has missed, let him or her know so everyone can see it.

Stay with the group

- Don't wander off. You will see more birds when there are more eyes to look and ears to hear.
- Also, if you are lagging behind you may spook the bird everyone is trying to see as you reunite with the group.
- It can also be frustrating for the group to have to constantly wait for folks to catch up.
- If the group leader is moving too quickly, ask him or her to slow the pace a little.

Cell phones

- Use them sparingly for identification purposes. **If you are looking at your phone, you will miss seeing birds.**
- Turn them off or to vibrate.
- If you must take a call, please move away from the group and talk quietly.
- Keep the conversation short.

Photography

- You are welcome to take photos as long as you are not disrupting the flow of the walk.
- Be considerate of the other participants by not stepping in front to get a better shot.

Help the leader

- Make sure everyone who wants to see a bird gets an opportunity, especially new birders.

When using someone else's field scope

- Take a quick look at the bird, then move aside until everyone has taken a look, then go back for a longer look.
- Offer to carry the scope, if it's a long hike.

Car pool whenever possible

- This is a great way to make new friends and swap birding tips.
- Don't forget to offer to chip in to cover the cost of the trip.

Wear muted colors

- Avoid wearing white (a danger signal to birds), red or other bright colors.