

Rusty Blackbird Spring Migration Blitz – Please join!



Male Rusty Blackbird (non-breeding plumage)

Have you heard a squeaky-hinge song lately, or seen a flash of rust-tipped feathers under a bright yellow eye? Although occasionally overlooked as “just another blackbird,” Rusty Blackbirds face an unfortunate and remarkable notoriety: this species has endured a decline more severe than that of any other once-common landbird – 85-95% in the past 40 years.

In March of 2014, the International Rusty Blackbird Working Group, in partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Vermont Center for Ecostudies, eBird, and many other state, federal, and local partners, launched a **Rusty Blackbird Spring Migration Blitz** that challenges birders to scour the landscape for Rusty Blackbirds during this species’ northward migration.

Thirty-eight states, nine provinces, and three territories will participate in this international effort to find Rusty Blackbirds; each region is assigned a set of target dates during which local birders will seek this elusive species. It’s easy to participate – bird as you normally do during your province’s target dates and submit your data to eBird using the “Rusty Blackbird Spring Migration Blitz” Observation Type (from the drop down menu under Other).

For Nova Scotia the target dates are mid-April through mid-May. If you see Rusty Blackbirds outside those dates, please report them as well, of course! It is also important to record data if you look for Rusty Blackbirds and do not see any. For more details on collecting and reporting data relating to this species, please see: <http://rustyblackbird.org/outreach/migration-blitz/collecting-and-reporting-data/>

Interested in learning more about Rusty Blackbirds, or want to learn more about your province’s Blitz efforts? Use our Migration Blitz website (<http://rustyblackbird.org/outreach/migration-blitz/>) to learn more about Rusty Blackbird identification, the factors in this species’ population decline, or get more details about Blitz data collection and submission.

Also, follow us on Facebook for the most up-to-date information about the Blitz:
<https://www.facebook.com/rustyblackbirdspringblitz>

If you have any questions about Rusty Blackbirds, this program, or how to submit your data through eBird.org, I would be more than happy to help. Thanks!

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Provincial Coordinator for NS – Rusty Blackbird Spring Migration Blitz



Male Rusty Blackbird (breeding plumage)

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