

GUIDING PROTOCOL FOR SUBMISSION OF MOUNTAIN PLOVER OBSERVATION RECORDS TO THE WYOMING NATURAL DIVERSITY DATABASE (WYNDD) - 21 JULY 2010

WYNDD strives to present the state of scientific knowledge on Wyoming's rare plants and animals to all persons, agencies, and organizations that are interested in such information. To accomplish that goal we are constantly seeking documented field observations of target species from a variety of professionals in the state.

WYNDD accepts wildlife observation data in a variety of formats. Large datasets are increasingly submitted as ESRI Shapefiles or similar GIS formats, but basic spreadsheets are always acceptable as well. Cooperators with only a few observations to submit often use the on-line Observation Forms available on our web site: www.uwyo.edu/wyndd. Click on the "Submit Data" link under "Species of Concern" in the blue banner to the right of the home page.

It is more important for data submitters to clearly outline the content of their dataset than it is for them to modify or tailor the technical format. The typical dataset contains a collection of records in which each record corresponds to a discreet observation of a target taxon. In that context, below we provide a list of fields that should be attributed for each record in a submitted dataset.

Species name: The full common name or full Latin name of the taxon observed. If a project-specific abbreviation is used (e.g., "MOPL" for "mountain plover"), the submitter should define the abbreviations or codes in a cover sheet or separate table accompanying the observation dataset.

Observation coordinates: The geographic coordinates of the location at which the taxon was observed.
Coordinate projection: Necessary in tandem with coordinates for accurate mapping.
Coordinate datum: Necessary in tandem with coordinates for accurate mapping.

Observation date: The date on which the taxon was observed.

Observer name: Name of the person(s) making the observation.

Observer affiliation: Professional affiliation of the person making the observation. "Personal observation", "independent", or similar entries are acceptable, as are the usual organizational entries.

Observation details: AKA, "what exactly was observed". We will assume that each record corresponds to 1 individual of the species named unless information in this field says otherwise. Common entries are "4 adults seen"; "1 nest w/ 3 eggs observed"; "3 juveniles trailing 1 adult female". This information may be parsed over several fields in the submitted dataset, in which case the field names should be intuitive (or, alternatively, explained in a cover sheet or separate table accompanying the observation dataset).

Misc. other fields: More information accompanying each record is better than less! If the above fields are included and clear, then data submitters should feel free to pass along all other fields without modification.

We realize that field names in cooperator datasets may not exactly match those in the list above. For example, <Observer name > is often represented as <Name>, <Personnel>, or some similar title. Please provide us with definitions of fields if their names differ substantially from those in the list above. Furthermore, we realize that some datasets may not correspond to the assumption of one record = one observation. In these cases, we may have to discuss the structure of the data with the data submitter prior to incorporating it into our database.

Contacts:

Submit observation datasets to:
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Direct other questions or comments to:
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