
eBird Surveys on Cottonwood Creek

A Citizen-Science Restoration Monitoring Effort

OVERVIEW

Cottonwood Creek is currently buried in a flume under Julia Davis Park ending in a concrete and stone outlet at the Boise River. The goal of the [Cottonwood Creek Daylighting Project](#) is to bring the stream back to the surface, or “daylight” the creek. This will restore the natural function of the last 440 feet of Cottonwood Creek where it enters the Boise River in Julia Davis Park in downtown Boise. Once ‘daylighted,’ Cottonwood Creek will provide bird and fish habitat and help filter stormwater. The Boise River Enhancement Network (BREN), Trout Unlimited (TU), Intermountain Bird Observatory (IBO), Land Trust for the Treasure Valley (LTTV), Boise Parks and Recreation, and Ada County Highway District (ACHD) are working together to complete this project thanks to grants from the City of Boise, Idaho Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program.



Cottonwood Creek is currently completely underground in eastern Julia Davis Park

SURVEY GOALS

The Intermountain Bird Observatory, Idaho Bird Conservation Partnership, and Golden Eagle Audubon are partnering with BREN to measure how this restoration project benefits birds.

Our goals are to:

1. Survey the bird community in the Cottonwood Creek area of Julia Davis Park *before* the creek daylighting restoration project
2. Survey birds *after* the project is complete
3. Evaluate the impact of the restoration project by studying changes in the bird community along the restored creek channel and new riparian habitat



Cottonwood Creek exits into the Boise River through a cement culvert

Using eBird and Citizen Science

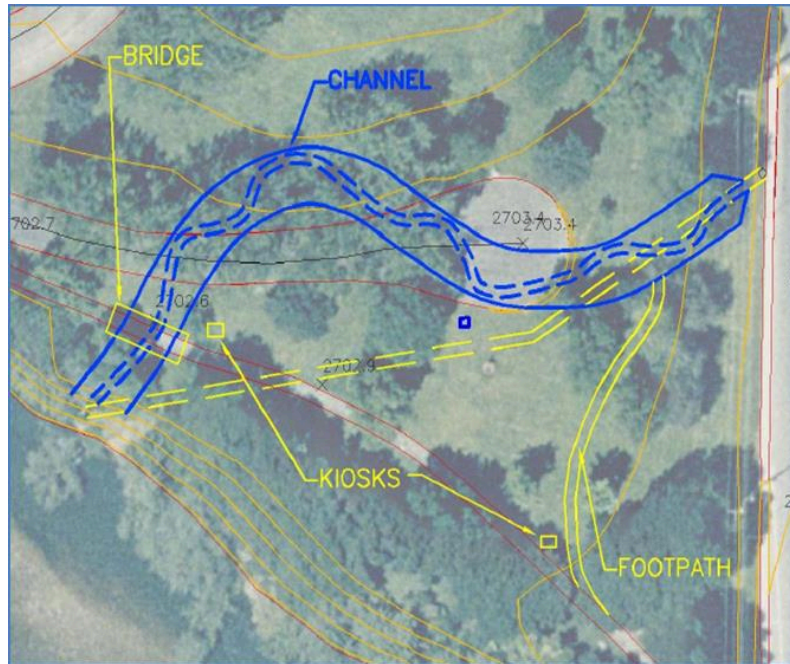
We need you! In order to monitor this restoration project, we are recruiting citizen scientists (that's you!) to record bird sightings and submit their observations to eBird.

Submitting your data

Never used eBird before? Visit <https://ebird.org/home> and click the “learn more” button to get started. eBird will guide you through the process of signing up for an account, downloading the eBird app, and submitting your first checklist.

Once you have an eBird account, it's time to get outside!

1. Go to the east end of Julia Davis Park, near Broadway Ave (see maps). Use the eBird app in the field (or your computer after you get home) to find the **Julia Davis Park--Cottonwood Creek Daylighting Project [ebird Hotspot](#)**. Create your checklist.

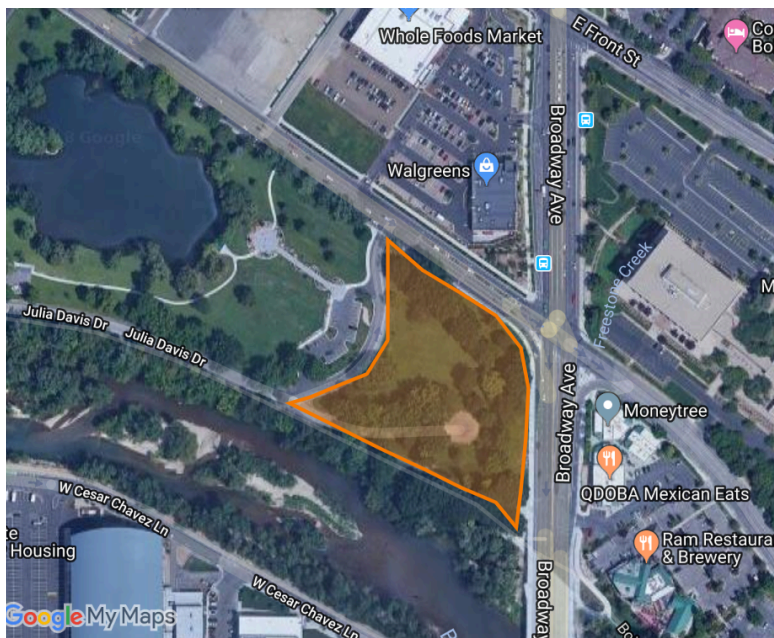


Map 1--proposed Cottonwood Creek channel

2. You can stand in one spot (a 'Stationary Count') or walk the area ('Traveling Count') to search out birds in the area. A checklist of 10 minutes or longer within the outlined project area will give us the best data for this project.
3. Record all the birds you see or hear in the project area. Submit your checklist. That's it, you're done!

What happens if you don't detect any birds during your count? That's great data too! You can submit an eBird checklist with 0 bird sightings to provide valuable information for comparison between pre-restoration and post-restoration.

To enter the contest, you must send contact information to Heidi at HeidiWare@boisestate.edu. Let her know your name as it will appear on ebird, as well as a good phone number to reach you.



Map 2--Cottonwood Creek Project area

Contest and Prizes

Along with the satisfaction gained by helping collect important data on this habitat restoration project, eBirders will have the chance to win various **awards and prizes** for their checklists! Any data submitted to eBird will be useful for this project, but eBirders interested in winning prizes should be sure to submit **eligible checklists** for the eBird hotspot in order to enroll in the contest. More information about what makes an eligible checklist can be found at this link:

<https://help.ebird.org/customer/portal/articles/2556063>

To participate in the contest, you must submit your checklist to the Cottonwood Creek eBird Hotspot, *not* a personal location.

We are still working on a final list of prizes and awards for the length of the project, so be sure to check back as more prizes are added!

Timeline

Fall 2018: migration

Goal: begin bird surveys during fall migration.

ANY eBirder who submits a checklist to the Cottonwood Creek Project eBird hotspot from **October to November** is invited to attend the [Boise River Enhancement Network Membership](#)

[Appreciation Party](#) on Nov. 28 at the Riverside Hotel at 5:30. One lucky eBirder will also be selected to win a gift certificate to a local Boise restaurant!

Winter: the non-breeding season

Goal: gather important data on what bird species use the area during this critical time period.

Birds need good habitat during the winter in order to survive in harsh conditions, and must keep themselves in peak condition in preparation for the start of the breeding season.

We will randomly draw a winner from eBirders who submitted [eligible](#) checklists to the Cottonwood Creek Project eBird hotspot between **December 1 and March 31**. Winners will get their choice of either: free tickets to one of the Intermountain Bird Observatory's Hummingbird Banding events in Idaho City or an IBO hat.

Summer 2019: nesting season

Goal: measure the breeding bird community before riparian habitat restoration begins.

This will be a key period to monitor birds, since we predict the nesting community *before* restoration is complete will be very different from the nesting community along the restored creek channel. eBirders who submit *complete* checklists to the Cottonwood Creek Project eBird hotspot between **April 1 and July 15** will win a chance to get a great prize, TBD.

Fall 2019: Migration

Goal: measure the bird community during autumn migration and post-breeding dispersal before riparian habitat restoration begins.

We need to gain an understanding of which species are using the park during migration. We predict that this number of species will greatly increase post-restoration. Your data from this area before restoration begins will give us a valuable comparison moving forward.

Grand Finale!

The eBirder who submits the most [eligible](#) checklists to the Cottonwood Creek Project eBird hotspot **overall for the entire the project** will win: something big! (we're still working on what exactly...)

Grand finale deadline: June 2020

Questions

Have questions? Contact Heidi Ware Carlisle HeidiWare@boisestate.edu