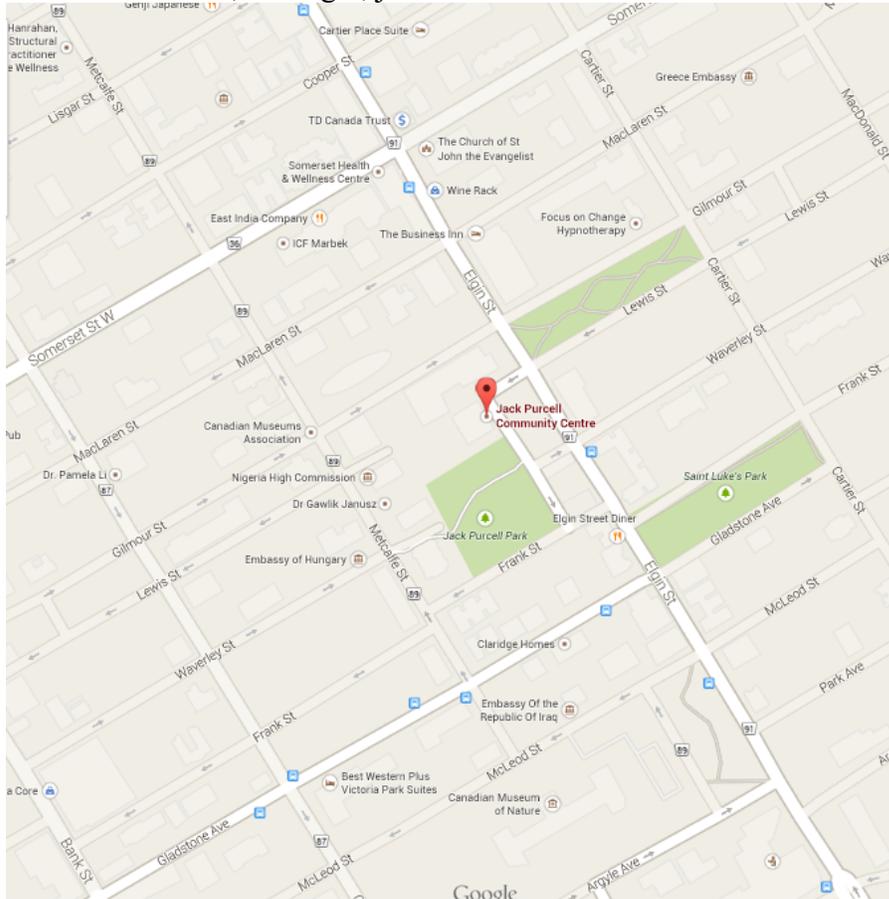




Outline for the 2019 Chirps Tweets and Trills: Learn your local bird songs, with the Ottawa Bird Count

Where? - The course is taking place at the Jack Purcell Community Centre. 320 Jack Purcell Lane, off Elgin, just south of Somerset: **ROOM 203A**



When? – Every Saturday morning from 9:00 – 11:00, March 23th – April 27th. The doors open at 9:00 am sharp, so please try and arrive on time (and we can use a little help setting up chairs 😊).

As the weather warms and the birds return, we will meet before the class some mornings to do some extra field practise; we will decide on those times and locations as the course progresses.

Note: with the [construction on Elgin](#), parking will be a bit tricky this year. You can cross Elgin on Lewis St (the street that leads to the community centre), so if you approach along Cartier, you should be able to get close. The parking garage at City hall is free parking all weekend (because of the construction); it's a bit of a walk but is guaranteed parking. Also, I've heard that the parking lot for Elgin Street Public School (off Gilmour, so approach from the West, e.g. Metcalfe) can be used by users of the Community Centre.

Things to do before course:

Have a look at the lists below and brush-up on your visual identification of these species (don't worry about identifying flycatchers by sight, they're easier by sound ☺).

If you're not already familiar with playing mp3 files on your phone, computer, ipod, or player, ask the nearest member of the under-20 set. They can almost certainly help. I'm not a techno-geek myself so I'm afraid I'm not likely to be much help.

The [sound files are available on the website](#), so you can start to practise.

Things to bring:

Pen/Pencil

Something on which to take notes

Bird Guide (I find it useful to write notes in mine)

Coffee mug (There's a coffee shop, just outside the community centre)

What I hope you'll get out of this? - By the end of the course, **if you practice**, you should be able to instantly recognize the songs of at least the 70 most common species that you will encounter within the Ottawa area. With these skills you will be qualified to adopt an OBBC point count route. If the point count routes are not your speed, you can adopt a census plot. These surveys take a bit more time (5 visits per year) but have a more relaxed pace and the observer has a bit more time to double-check their identifications. The survey protocols are on our website (www.ottawabirds.ca).

And new for 2019: we're running a pilot project for a new field survey protocol. You may be familiar with [eBird](#). We're hoping to build on the power of eBird and the scientific rigour of the OBC to better study the birds in our city. I'll introduce this new protocol during the course.

The OBBC is a volunteer-based bird survey. Without skilled people like you to conduct the field surveys, our database would not exist.

Here is a preliminary outline of what we will be covering:

Week	Date	Topics	Homework (eek!)
1	March 23	Tips, Tricks, and Technology for song learning <p style="text-align: center;">Computer Software CDs Mnemonics - sweet, sweet... Canada, Canada, Canada</p> The Ottawa Bird Count Songs: The Usual Suspects: ~30 common Ottawa birds by sound	...practise, practise, practise... That's the key to learning to bird by ear. On the bus, in the evening, while you're cooking, walking the dog... etc. ~30 mp3 files to listen to on your computer, Mp3 player, or burn onto a CD.
2	March 30	A few more tips (what is a 4-letter code) Some practice Songs: Usual Suspects #2: More common/simple songs Woodpeckers	I'll send you an additional 10-12 songs
3	April 6	How to do point counts Songs: Early Birds: Songs that sound like robins Other thrushes	an additional 10-12 songs
4	April 13	Some results to date from the Ottawa Bird Count Songs: Look up in the sky: Regular aerial sightings Birds of Prey	an additional 10-12 songs
5	April 20	Some easy point counts Early morning - Outdoor Practice (weather dependent) Songs: Warblers and Sparrows	an additional 10-12 songs
6	April 27	Outdoor Practice (weather dependent) New, "eBird-style" field protocol Songs: Trillers/Chippers Complex Songs	A few more songs for you to practise before the breeding season starts...

Primary Species List: These are the main species that we will focus on during course

Canada Goose	Tree Swallow	Black-and-white
Mallard	Barn Swallow	Warbler
Double-crested	Chimney Swift	American Redstart
Cormorant	Purple Martin	Ovenbird
Pied-billed Grebe	Black-capped Chickadee	Northern Waterthrush
Merlin	Red-breasted Nuthatch	Common Yellowthroat
Cooper's Hawk	White-breasted	Scarlet Tanager
Killdeer	Nuthatch	Chipping Sparrow
Wilson's Snipe	Black-billed Cuckoo	Savannah Sparrow
Ring-billed Gull	House Wren	Song Sparrow
Rock Pigeon	Winter Wren	Swamp Sparrow
Mourning Dove	Veery	White-throated Sparrow
Yellow-bellied	Hermit Thrush	Dark-eyed Junco
Sapsucker	Wood Thrush	Clay-colored Sparrow
Downy Woodpecker	American Robin	Field Sparrow
Hairy Woodpecker	Gray Catbird	Northern Cardinal
Northern Flicker	Brown Thrasher	Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Pileated Woodpecker	European Starling	Indigo Bunting
Eastern Wood-Pewee	Cedar Waxwing	Bobolink
Alder Flycatcher	Nashville Warbler	Red-winged Blackbird
Least Flycatcher	Yellow Warbler	Eastern Meadowlark
Eastern Phoebe	Chestnut-sided Warbler	Common Grackle
Great Crested Flycatcher	Magnolia Warbler	Brown-headed Cowbird
Eastern Kingbird	Black-throated Blue	Baltimore Oriole
Warbling Vireo	Warbler	Purple Finch
Red-eyed Vireo	Yellow-rumped Warbler	House Finch
Blue Jay	Black-throated Green	American Goldfinch
American Crow	Warbler	House Sparrow
Common Raven	Blackburnian Warbler	
	Pine Warbler	

Additional Species: We will also touch on these species (and others of course if there is time and interest) – List is in no specific order

Eastern Bluebird	Northern Harrier	American Kestrel
Philadelphia Vireo	Red-tailed Hawk	Herring Gull
Common Nighthawk	Grasshopper Sparrow	Spotted Sandpiper
Sharp-shinned Hawk	Sedge Wren	Cliff Swallow
Peregrine Falcon	Green Heron	Northern Rough-winged
Great-horned Owl	Great Blue Heron	Swallow