

**MD-DC Breeding Bird Atlas
Photo Contest – Second Round
File Naming Protocol**

1. Naming Bird Photo Files

The handling of large numbers of bird photo files on a single CD ROM by the Atlas Committee will necessitate a systematic way of naming them. The following system is required for initial photo submittals. No additional information is required until the photo becomes the winner for a particular MD bird species.

1.1. Information Needed in the Filename:

- > Bird species
- > Confidential code for the photographer
- > State in the US in which bird was photographed

To keep filenames manageable, the information needs to be abbreviated to the greatest extent practicable. How this should be accomplished is described in the following four sections.

1.2. Bird Species Name

The four-letter bird banding codes widely used by birders have the advantage of consistency in use, brevity, and being of fixed length. The latter allows species names to be extracted easily from file name strings, for sorting. Many codes are exceptions to the usual rules, so a link to the codes is needed. The codes are available here:

<http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/bbl/MANUAL/sname.htm>

1.3. Confidential Code for Photographer

A simple convention for identifying the photographer in each photo filename will use a 3-digit code, assigned upon request to Bill Ellis by the photographer via e-mail (billellis at (@) ellislist dot (.) com). The judges/reviewers selecting the best photos will not know who the photographer is; only the photo handlers will know, and will assign the codes.

1.4. State in Which Photographed

State will be the standard two-capital-letter abbreviation.

1.5. Filename – required format

An initial submittal filename, for Northern Mockingbird, submitted by photographer #5, photographed in Maryland, will look like this: NOMO 005 MD.jpg

Note that the 11 characters (species code, photographer code, state, plus 2 intervening spaces) are fixed-length “fields.” This facilitates computer sorting of a list of all photos received based on any of these 3 pieces of info, or a combination, in a spreadsheet or database. It also facilitates sorting in taxonomic order, using a lookup of taxonomic code based on the species code.

1.6. Filename – optional information

These types of info can be appended to the filename (after the state 2-letter code), but are not required:

- > Date of photo
- > Location of bird (county, town, name of park, or water body, etc.)
- > Supplemental information (gender, plumage, breeding activity depicted, etc.)

Date of Photo - Dates are easy: 2007_1106 – always the same length, and can be sorted in order by year, then month, then day (yyy_mmdd). The year and month are separated by an underscore, not a period nor a space. This format facilitates extracting the date from filename strings, for sorting by date, or more usefully, by time of year.

Location of Bird - Location names should be brief, with initial caps and no spaces between words, for maximum brevity. (State has already been included.)

Supplemental Information - As with location data, using initial caps and no spaces will keep the filename brief.

Filename with Optional Information

A full-featured filename for a photo will look something like this: NOMO 005 MD 2005_1225 PineyRunCoPk FemaleEnteringNestWithGrasshopper.jpg

Note that the first 21 characters (species code, photographer code, state, and date photo was taken, plus an intervening space in 3 places) comprises four fixed-length “fields.” This facilitates computer sorting of a list of all photos received based on any of these four pieces of information, or a combination, in a spreadsheet or database. The two variable length entries (location, supplemental information) are intentionally at the end of the file name.

Camera Equipment

The camera equipment used for photos is not required, but can be provided in hard copy or by e-mail, and the photographer will need to provide a list of which species were taken with each combination of equipment.