

Minimum Experience Requirements for Conducting Golden-cheeked Warbler Presence/Absence Surveys

USFWS Austin ESFO
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Background Information

The purpose of this document is to provide information on the minimum experience requirements necessary to obtain a section 10(a)(1)(A) recovery permit to conduct presence/absence surveys for the federally endangered Golden-cheeked Warbler (GCWA) from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service).

A GCWA Experience Form is attached to this document and must accompany a Federal Fish and Wildlife section 10(a)(1)(A) recovery permit application (for both new permits and permit renewals) in the Service's online [ePermits portal](#). The GCWA Experience Form does not fulfill all permit application requirements, nor is it a substitute for submission of resumes, curriculum vitae, or other required documentation to complete the section 10(a)(1)(A) application process. Please be advised that submitting a completed GCWA Experience Form or Federal Fish and Wildlife Application Form does not guarantee permit approval. Please review the following information prior to completing the GCWA Experience Form.

Experience Categories

Category 1 – Applicants with substantial experience detecting passerine species by song.

This category includes applicants with a strong background in passerine surveys or bird song identification. Please include this background information separately in a resume or curriculum vitae with every new permit application. Category 1 applications would have previous experience in breeding bird surveys, point-count surveys, or other similar experience.

Minimum Requirements for Category 1 Applicants:

- 25 hours of active field survey time (from sunrise to 1:00 pm under appropriate weather conditions; 10 days minimum) searching for GCWA with a permitted GCWA biologist.
- A minimum of 10 detections made over 4 of the field survey days.
- Multiple, positive GCWA detections made by song.
- 60 percent (15 hours; 6 detections) of the 25 hours required for each species conducted during the 2 most recent survey seasons.

Category 2 – Applicants with little or no specific experience in detecting passerine species by song.

This category includes general biologists and ecologists with specialized training in other animal or bird groups (e.g., mammals, reptiles, shorebirds), but with little or no experience in passerine surveys or bird song identification.

Minimum Requirements for Category 2 Applicants:

- 50 hours of active field survey time (from sunrise to 1:00 pm under appropriate weather conditions; 10 days minimum) searching for GCWA with a permitted GCWA biologist.
- A minimum of 20 detections made over 8 of the field survey days.
- Multiple, positive GCWA detections made by song.
- 60 percent (30 hours; 12 detections) of the 50 hours required for each species conducted during the 2 most recent survey seasons.

Category 3 – Current permit holders

This category includes current recovery permit holders authorized for GCWA presence/absence surveys requesting a renewal of their current permit.

Minimum Requirements for Category 3 Applicants:

- 10 hours of active field survey time (from sunrise to 1:00 pm under appropriate weather conditions; 2 days minimum) searching for GCWA.
- Positive GCWA detections made by song within the three most recent survey seasons.

GCWA Survey Experience Form

Surveyor/Applicant Name: _____

Applicant Category (1, 2, or 3): _____

Location: _____

Date	Supervising Biologist/Current Permit Holder	Permit Number	Start Time	End Time	Total GCWA Survey Hours	Number of GCWA Detections

Additional Notes: For the "Location" line item, please be as specific as possible by including name of park, nearest town, major roads, and County name(s). The "Supervising Biologist/Current Permit Holder" column should name the federally permitted biologists supervising survey effort (with associated permit number in next column). Category 3 applicants and applicants with experience obtained while permitted under another permit may write "N/A" and provide previous or current permit number in the next column. For the "Number of [Golden-cheeked warbler or] GCWA Detections" column, fill in the number of detections of a golden-cheeked warbler male singing (may not necessarily be different individuals)