

Golden-cheeked Warbler (GCWA) Observation Data Reporting Instructions

USFWS Austin ESFO
Updated July 2025



GCWA observation data must be submitted either as a GIS feature class/shapefile (preferred) or in an Excel spreadsheet. Data must be submitted in accordance with the instructions below. All survey data for a given survey year should be submitted as one file per permit (e.g., all surveyors, all locations, and all dates must be included in a single file). Failure to submit data in accordance with these instructions will be considered an incomplete annual report submission.

GIS feature class/shapefile:

1. **Prop_Name** (Type = Text; Length = 50): Name of property surveyed. This should correspond to a property boundary polygon (or map) provided with the property/survey polygon data.
2. **Surv_Name** (Type = Text; Length = 50): Name of area surveyed if not the entire property. This should correspond to a survey area polygon (or map) provided with the property/survey polygon data.
3. **Surveyor** (Type = Text; Length = 50): Name of individual who conducted the bird survey.
4. **Survey_Comp** (Type = Text; Length = 50): Name of company/organization or individual responsible for conducting the surveys.
5. **Obs_Date** (Type = Double): Date bird was observed. Entries should be formatted as YYYYMMDD.
6. **Obs_Time** (Type = Double): Report the time the bird was observed using military time.
7. **Bird_Lat** (Type = Double): Latitude of bird location in decimal degrees (NAD 83) with at least six decimal places. When a bird is detected, this cell should not be left blank. If precise location is not known, enter the closest known location (e.g., observer location).
8. **Bird_Long** (Type = Double): Longitude of bird location in decimal degrees (NAD 83) with at least six decimal places. When a bird is detected, this cell should not be left blank. If precise location is not known, enter the closest known location (e.g., observer location).
9. **Obs_Type** (Type = Text; Length = 10): Type of observation made. Entries should be limited to [Auditory, Visual]. If bird was both seen and heard, use "Visual."
10. **Loc_Type** (Type = Text; Length = 10): How the location information for the bird was derived. Entries should be limited to [Estimated, Actual, Digitized+]. If the bird's location was estimated from a GPS observer location, use "Estimated" in this field and then fill out fields 10 through 13. If the GPS reading was taken at the actual location of a bird or nest, use "Actual" in this field and skip 10 through 13. If no GPS was used and the bird locations were drawn on a map and later digitized, use "Digitized" in this field.

11. **Obs_Lat** (Type = Double): Latitude of observer in decimal degrees (NAD 83) if the bird was not at the observer's location when the GPS reading was taken. This may be the same as Bird_Lat.
12. **Obs_Long** (Type = Double): Longitude of observer in decimal degrees (NAD 83) if the bird was not at the observer's location when the GPS reading was taken. This may be the same as Bird_Long.
13. **Distance** (Type = Double): Estimated distance (in feet) to bird's location from GPS observer location.
14. **Direction** (Type = Double): Estimated direction (in degrees) to bird's location from GPS observer location.
15. **Species** (Type = Text; Length 5): Bird species observed. Entries should be limited to [GCWA].
16. **Sex** (Type = Text; Length = 10): Sex of observed bird. Entries should be limited to [Male, Female, Both]. Use "Both" if the observation represents a male and female observed at the same time.
17. **Age** (Type = Text; Length = 10): Age class of observed bird. Use HY (Hatch Year), SY (Second Year), or ASY (After Second Year) if the surveyor can determine age more accurately than adult or juvenile. Entries should be limited to [Juvenile, HY, SY, ASY, Adult, Adult/HY]. Use "Adult/HY" if an adult(s) was observed with young.
18. **Nest** (Type = Text, Length = 3): Report whether this observation is at a nest. Entries should be limited to [Yes, No]. If birds were on the nest, the appropriate information should be filled out in the species, sex and age columns. If no birds were on the nest, use the species column to report the type of nest (i.e., BCVI or GCWA).
19. **Band** (Type = Text, Length = 10): Report whether the observed bird was banded. Entries should be limited to *UNB, BND, UNK+. Use "UNB" if you can clearly see the bird is not banded, "BND" if you can clearly see the bird was banded, and "UNK" if you didn't see the bird or couldn't clearly see its legs.

GCWA_BCVI_Observations										
Fields: GCWA_BCVI_Observations X										
Current Layer		GCWA_BCVI_Observations								
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Visible	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Only	Field Name	Alias	Data Type	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Allow NULL	<input type="checkbox"/> Highlight	Number Format	Domain	Default	Length
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Surveyor	Surveyor	Text	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				50
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Obs_Date	Obs_Date	Double	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Numeric			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Obs_Time	Obs_Time	Double	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Numeric			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bird_Lat	Bird_Lat	Double	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Numeric			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bird_Long	Bird_Long	Double	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Numeric			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Obs_Type	Obs_Type	Text	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Obs_Type		10
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Loc_Type	Loc_Type	Text	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Loc_Type		10
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Obs_Lat	Obs_Lat	Double	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Numeric			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Obs_Long	Obs_Long	Double	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Numeric			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Distance	Distance	Double	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Numeric			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Direction	Direction	Double	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Numeric			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Species	Species	Text	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Species		5
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sex	Sex	Text	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Sex		10
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Age	Age	Text	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Age		10
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Survey_Comp	Survey_Comp	Text	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				50
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nest	Nest	Text	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Yes_No		3
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Band	Band	Text	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				80

Figure 1. Required GIS Fields for GCWA observation data

Excel spreadsheet:

1. **Prop_Name** (Format cells = General): Name of property surveyed. This should correspond to a property boundary polygon (or map) provided with the property/survey polygon data.
2. **Surv_Name** (Format cells = General): Name of area surveyed if not the entire property. This should correspond to a survey area polygon (or map) provided with the property/survey polygon data.
3. **Surveyor** (Format cells = General): Name of individual who conducted the bird survey.
4. **Survey_Comp** (Format cells = General): Name of company/organization or individual responsible for conducting the surveys.
5. **Obs_Date** (Type = Number): Date bird was observed. Entries should be formatted as YYYYMMDD.
6. **Obs_Time** (Type = Number): Report the time the bird was observed using military time. Excel drops leading zeros (e.g., 0800), but please format cells as Numbers in Excel (not text).
7. **Bird_Lat** (Type = Number): Latitude of bird location in decimal degrees (NAD 83) with at least six decimal places. When a bird is detected, this cell should not be left blank. If precise location is not known, enter the closest known location (e.g., observer location).
8. **Bird_Long** (Type = Number): Longitude of bird location in decimal degrees (NAD 83) with at least six decimal places. When a bird is detected, this cell should not be left blank. If precise location is not known, enter the closest known location (e.g., observer location).
9. **Obs_Type** (Format cells = General): Type of observation made. Entries should be limited to [Auditory, Visual]. If bird was both seen and heard, use "Visual."
10. **Loc_Type** (Format cells = General): How the location information for the bird was derived. Entries should be limited to [Estimated, Actual, Digitized+]. If the bird's location was estimated from a GPS observer location, use "Estimated" in this field and then fill out fields 10 through 13. If the GPS reading was taken at the actual location of a bird or nest, use "Actual" in this field and skip 10 through 13. If no GPS was used and the bird locations were drawn on a map and later digitized, use "Digitized" in this field.
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12. **Obs_Long** (Format cells = Number): Longitude of observer in decimal degrees (NAD 83) if the bird was not at the observer's location when the GPS reading was taken. This may be the same as Bird_Long.
13. **Distance** (Format cells = Number): Estimated distance (in feet) to bird's location from GPS observer location.
14. **Direction** (Format cells = Number): Estimated direction (in degrees) to bird's location from GPS observer location.
15. **Species** (Format cells = General): Bird species observed. Entries should be limited to [GCWA].

16. **Sex** (Format cells = General): Sex of observed bird. Entries should be limited to [Male, Female, Both]. Use "Both" if the observation represents a male and female observed at the same time.
17. **Age** (Format cells = General): Age class of observed bird. Use HY (Hatch Year), SY (Second Year), or ASY (After Second Year) if the surveyor can determine age more accurately than adult or juvenile. Entries should be limited to [Juvenile, HY, SY, ASY, Adult, Adult/HY]. Use "Adult/HY" if an adult(s) was observed with young.
18. **Nest** (Format cells = General): Report whether this observation is at a nest. Entries should be limited to [Yes, No]. If birds were on the nest, the appropriate information should be filled out in the species, sex and age columns. If no birds were on the nest, use the species column to report the type of nest (i.e., BCVI or GCWA).
19. **Band** (Format cells = General): Report whether the observed bird was banded. Entries should be limited to *UNB, BND, UNK+. Use "UNB" if you can clearly see the bird is not banded, "BND" if you can clearly see the bird was banded, and "UNK" if you didn't see the bird or couldn't clearly see its legs.