

Writing bird outing event descriptions

You're planning to hold an accessible, inclusive bird outing — fantastic! Simply describing a bird outing as “accessible” does not provide nearly the amount of detail that most people with disabilities and other health concerns need to know before feeling comfortable they can attend. Providing an appropriate level of detail upfront allows people to opt *in*.

It's important to remember that different people with accessibility challenges have different kinds of needs; not everybody will need the trail to be flat and paved, for example. We would love to see the information below provided in every bird outing event description (whether it's an accessible outing or not), inviting folks to attend whenever possible!



Photo: Rhianyon Larson.

Day, date, time, meeting point

Quite important to know for any birding outing!

State that the outing is accessible and inclusive

This explicit statement is so welcoming and may help folks know they are definitely invited.

If this outing is specifically open to beginner birders, or families with small children

Some folks may be hesitant to join a group of perceived experts, so letting them know they're welcome as beginners may encourage them to attend.

Provide detailed information about the physical accessibility of the birding location

The easiest way to provide this information is to submit a Birdability Site Review to the Birdability Map, and link directly to it from your event description. This helps you cover all potentially significant information, and helps this resource grow to be more helpful for more people.

State key information in your event description too:

- Distance covered, and any turnaround points along the way. (Some folks may have limited time/capacity to attend for the entire event.)
- Types of trail surface/s, and approximate distances of each surface type. (Some folks have a harder time navigating some surfaces than others.)

- Maximum gradient/slope. Include frequency of steep sections (if any).
- Rest areas or benches, and their locations along the route. (So folks know when and where they can take a load off.)
- Bathroom availability at the location, including if there are accessible stalls/cubicles or not. (Please don't forget this crucial detail!)
- Transportation options to the site, including parking information. State the number of 'regular' accessible parking spaces, and the number of van accessible parking spaces (they have an 8' aisle/side space with diagonal lines).
- The maximum number of participants. (Some people have different comfort levels with group sizes.)

Provide information about the outing leader/s

Share if they experience an accessibility challenge as a result of a disability or other health concern, or if they have prior experience leading accessible outings.

State the availability of loaner binoculars or other adaptive birding equipment

This statement immediately welcomes beginners, and shows those who don't own their own optics that they are included. For some ideas about available adaptive birding equipment, check out our [Adaptive Birding Equipment](#) webpage. Include how many, and what kind, will be available.

Provide phone number or email address of the outing leader/s

Inviting potential participants to call or email with any questions about the outing feels very welcoming. Some folks may need more information to decide if they can attend safely.

Using subheadings or bold type to highlight key information, simple language, and shorter sentences help make event descriptions easy to understand.

For examples of bird outing event descriptions to borrow from, check out the *Examples of accessible, inclusive bird outing event descriptions* Birdability Blog post via birdability.org/blog

Thank you for your work to ensure that birding and the outdoors truly is for everybody!