



Quick Guide

BirdLasser - Android

June 2015; Version 1.0



Thanks for choosing BirdLasser, thanks for playing a part

BirdLasser is a **real-time logging** app: YOU see/hear a bird, YOU identify it, then use BirdLasser to log the observation.

Our main objective is to share your observation data with conservationists and researchers to better understand bird behaviour and distribution. This in turn can help protect their habitat or identify species under threat.

Oh yes, the app can also be used to atlas and manage your lifelist.

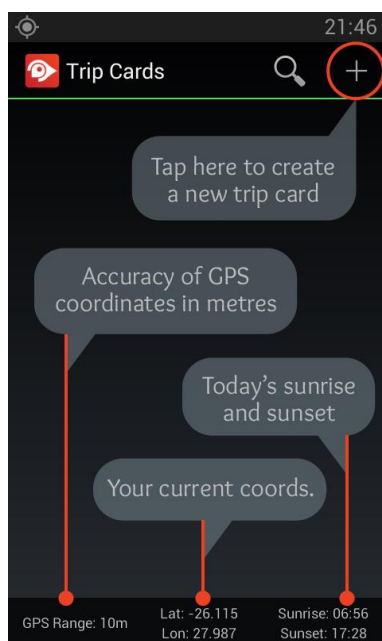
Btw, make sure you often check for new versions of the app – there will be regular updates with fixes and new features (maybe something you suggested).

Basically, the app works as follows...

It has three basic states: **Recording**, view **LifeList** and configure **Settings**. The app will always default to the Recording state where the user will either be in a ‘just record’ or atlassing mode. The basis for all recordings is a **Trip Card**, i.e. all recordings must be linked to a trip card, whether ‘just recording’ or atlassing. Once a species is logged, a **record** is created.

Logged in, now what?

A (blank) **Trip Cards** screen is the first screen displayed after logging on, using the **outdoor theme** (“green-on-black”).

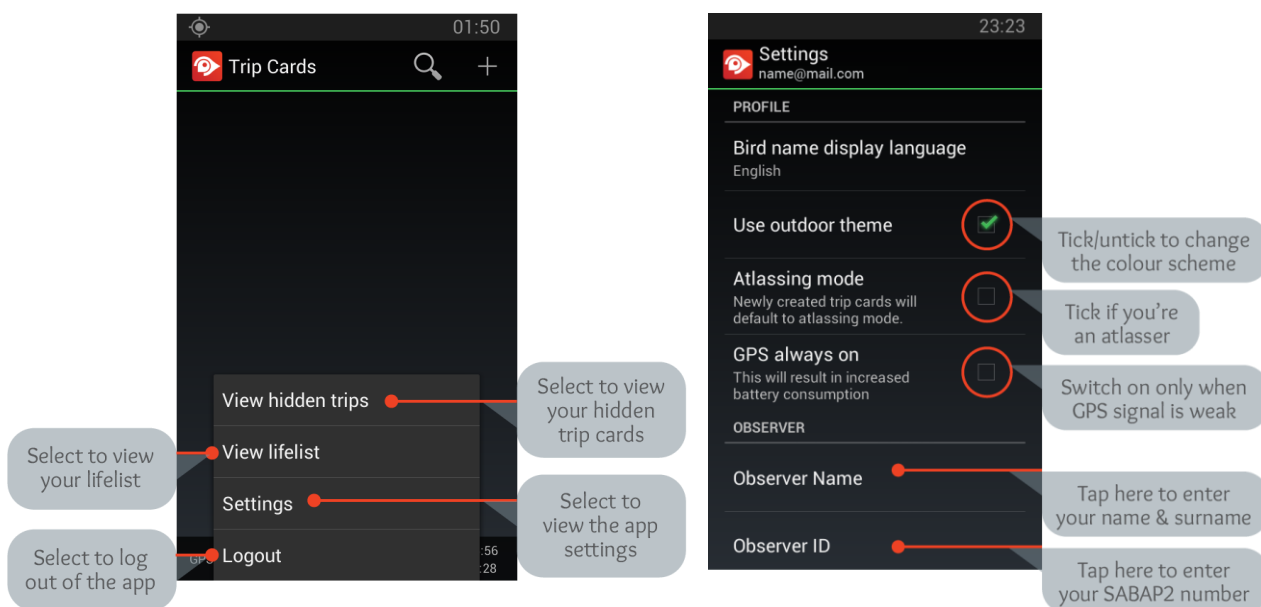


Before you start logging, let's first set you up.



Configure the app

Depending on your phone and Android OS version, either tap on the phone's menu button (bottom left corner below the screen) or the menu icon (three vertical dots, top right corner) – this will bring up the **Settings** screen.



Bird name display language

Tap to select in which language bird names are displayed

Use outdoor theme

By default, the **outdoor theme** (green-on-black) is selected. Untick to switch off (theme changes to red-on-white).

Atlassing mode

By default, atlassing is switched off. Tick to switch on if you'll use BirdLasser as an atlassing app. All trip cards will now have atlassing enabled.

GPS always on

Switch on only when the app struggles to get an accurate satellite signal, typically when in remote areas or when overcast. Note that this will increase battery usage. Remember to switch off when back in civilisation.

Observer name

Enter your ADU/SABAP2 observer name and surname

Observer ID

Enter your ADU/SABAP2 observer number

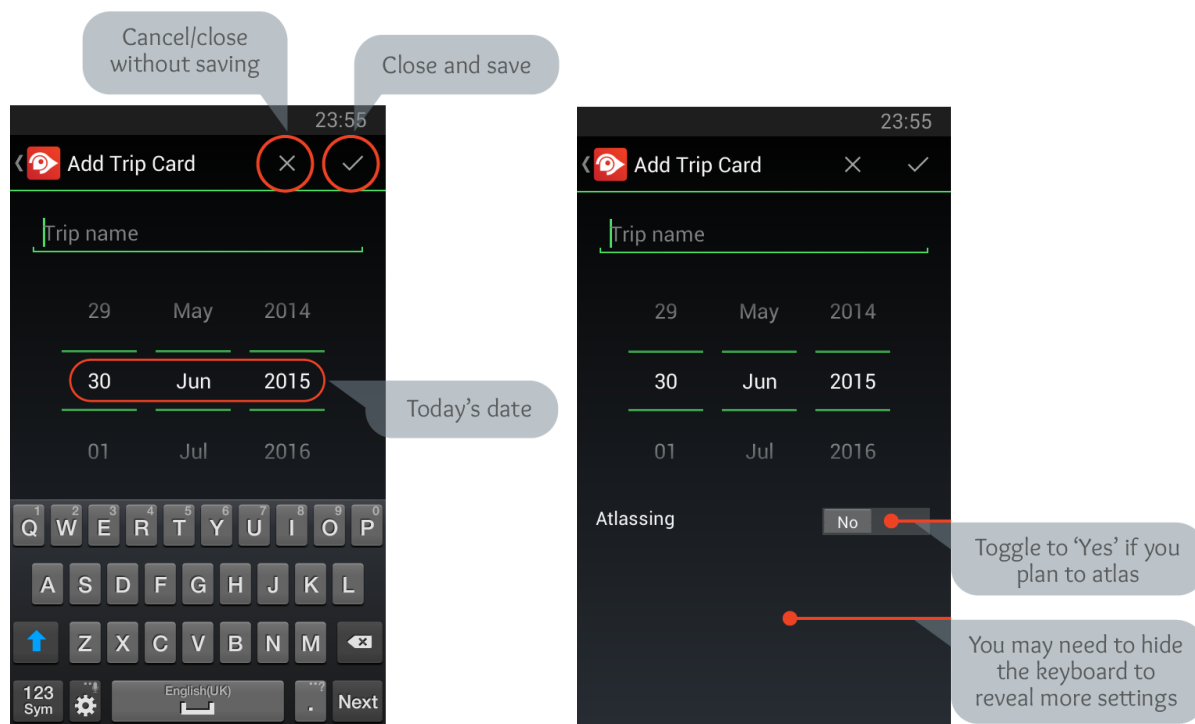
The rest of the settings can stay as is, but don't be afraid to click around.



Now, let's start logging

Now that you're done configuring the app, go back to the **Trip Cards** screen by either clicking on the phone's back button (bottom right corner below the screen, or tap on the BirdLasser icon in the top left corner).

Tap on the "+" to add a new trip card. The **Add Trip Card** screen will be displayed.

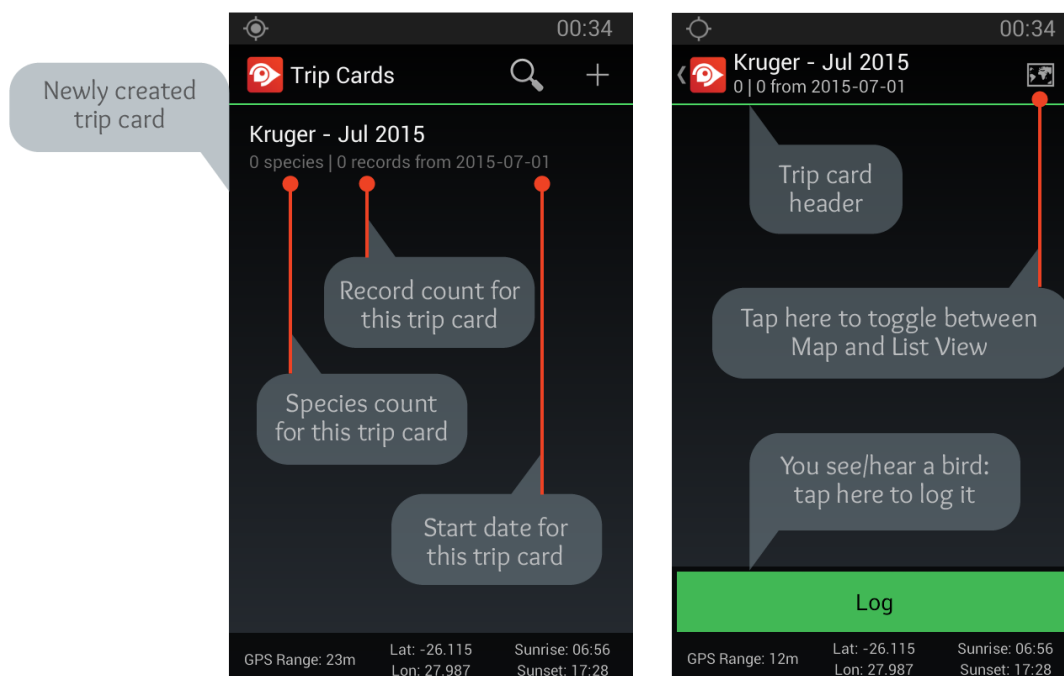


Name it accordingly, e.g. **At Home, Kruger - Jul 2015** or **Garden Route roadtrip**. Please note that trip cards should have an end, i.e. don't keep a trip card going indefinitely – the more records in a trip card, the slower the app gets. Anything less than 700 records will do no harm.

As an example, create **Kruger - Jul 2015** and keep atlassing switched off, i.e. in 'just record' mode. Tap on "✓" to save and close. You are returned to the **Trip Cards** screen with the newly added trip card displayed. Note that the synopsis for the trip card shows zero records and zero species, which makes sense – you haven't logged anything yet.

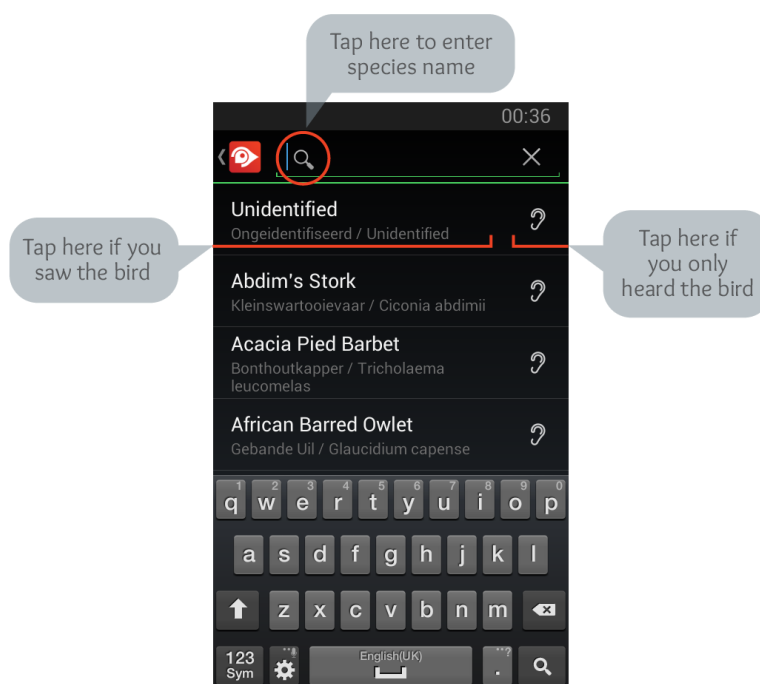


Now tap on your trip card to open it. At last, you can start logging now! Tap the big **Log** button at the bottom of the screen.



The species database for Southern Africa is loaded, sorted alphabetically, with the only exception that **Unidentified*** is at the top of the list.

*Log **Unidentified** if you couldn't identify the species you saw/heard. This is a great way of creating a placeholder that can be changed to the actual species once you've identified it from photos at a later stage.





Tap on the species name to log a species as “seen”; tap on the ear icon to log the species as “heard”.

Log multiple species in one go by tap-and-hold on a species, then tap-and-hold on another (or tick the tick-box). Once you’ve selected all the desired species, tap on “+” to add them all to the trip card.

The Search

Our Search engine is quite powerful and unconventional. Instead of going with the usual alphabetical search methodology, which, although accurate, can take some time to zone in on the desired species. We decided that we needed something revolutionary, something that will require the least amount of effort by the user. After all, you’re supposed to have your eyes on the skies, and not on your phone.

Just a note: The species database is for the whole of Southern Africa, we don’t filter the data based on a sub-region, e.g. Western Cape. If we did that, how would you be able to record a rarity?!

There are multiple ways of getting to the species you want to record. As an example, let’s say you want to log **African Olive Pigeon** (*Afrikaans = Geelbekbosduif*; *Scientific = Columba arquatrix*). The logical approach would be to type in the complete name: african olive pigeon (you don’t have to use capital letters).

Note as you start typing, the list dynamically zooms in on matches. By the time you’ve type african oli, African Olive Pigeon is already top of the list.

BirdLasser also allows you to search using other supported languages, i.e. Afrikaans and Scientific, as well as old/alternative English and Afrikaans names. For the example at hand, type rameron and geelbekbosduif - again, note how quickly the list zooms in on African Olive Pigeon.

If searching by species group suits you better, start off by typing pigeon. All the pigeon species will be displayed (note that by the time you’ve entered pig the list of pigeons are already displayed).

The quickest way to zoom in on the desired species, is to use the first 2 letters of each word, separated by a space. For African Olive Pigeon, type af ol pi or alternative pi af ol.

A few other tips:

- Mix your languages, e.g. pi ge (pigeon geelbekbosduif)
- Start anywhere within the word, e.g. geo (pigeon)

The experienced BirdLasser user hardly ever enters more than 3 characters to have the desired species appear on screen. It’s fun finding that unique combination – play around till you find it and share with others.

The trip card’s List View

As you log species, seen or heard, your trip cards starts growing. In the example below, the following scenarios were logged, in order of observed:

1st: African Olive Pigeon – seen

2nd: Bateleur – seen

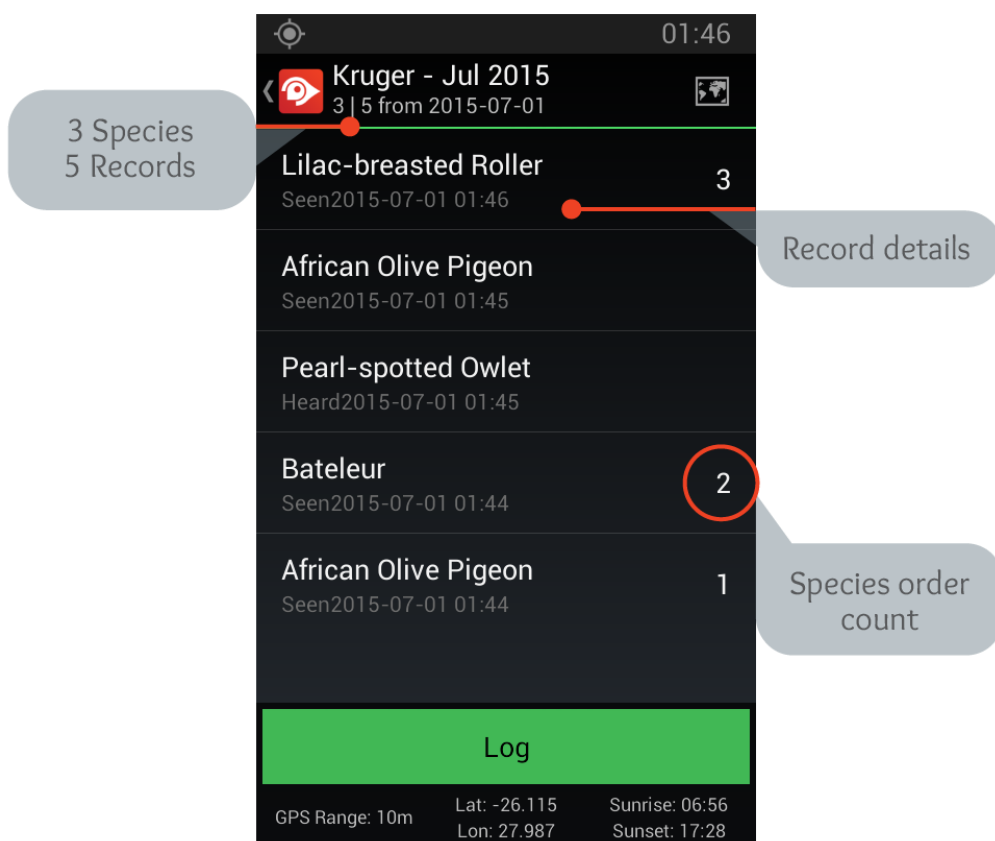


3rd: Pearl-spotted Owlet – heard*

4th: African Olive Pigeon – seen

5th: Lilac-breasted Roller – seen

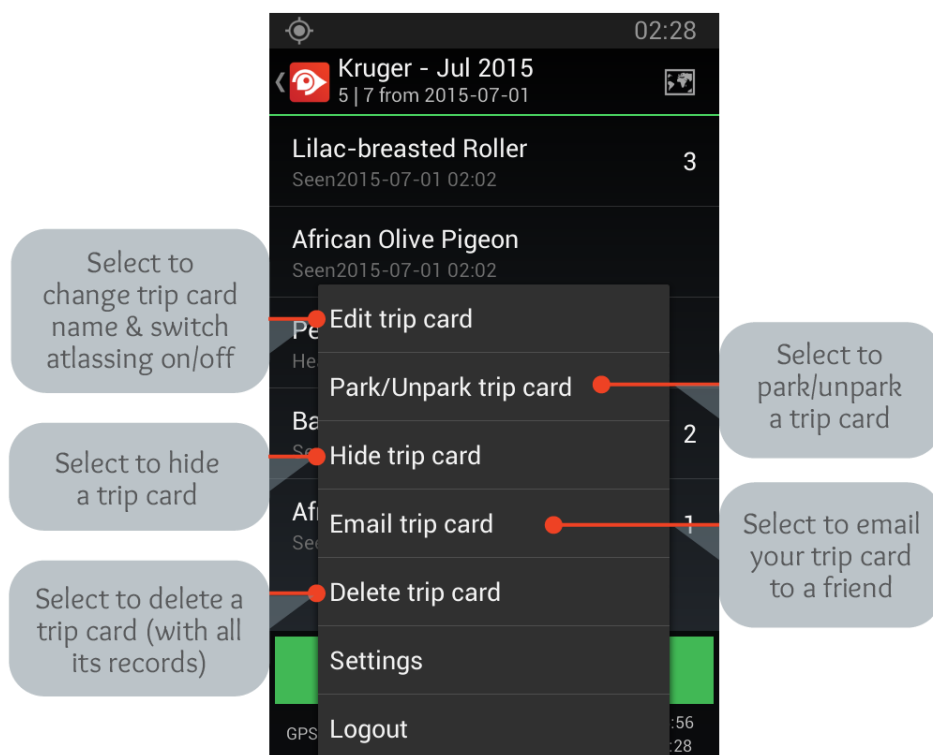
*You can have *heard* species count towards the species count (and your lifelist) by ticking “**Include heard species**” under **Settings**.



Note the species order numbers. Duplicates don't get numbers (but do increment the record count in the header), neither do species that were heard. All Unidentified's will count as unique species.



For more features linked to trip cards, click the phone's menu button, or menu icon (three vertical dots, top right corner).



To view the species on a map, tap on the Map icon (top right corner).

Tap-and-hold on a record for features link to a record.

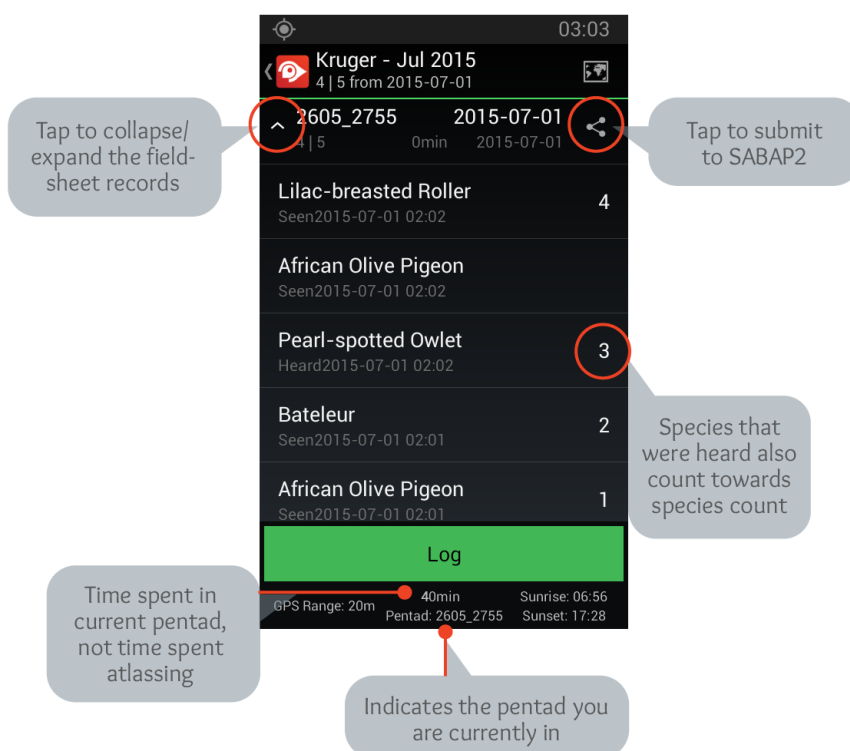
Tap on a record to load the record's details on screen.



Atlassing

You can start a trip card in atlas mode, or change an existing trip card to atlassing (the trip card will be converted into field sheets). Note: A trip card can have one or multiple field sheets.

The app has the atlas protocol built in, i.e. it will create a new field sheets when you cross into a new pentad, or exceed the 5-day period, will ignore duplicates but count species heard. What it doesn't know is how much of the time you spent in a pentad was spent atlassing, hence all field sheets with more than one record will always be regarded as Ad-hoc Protocol. You can change this when you prepare your field sheet for submission to SABAP2.



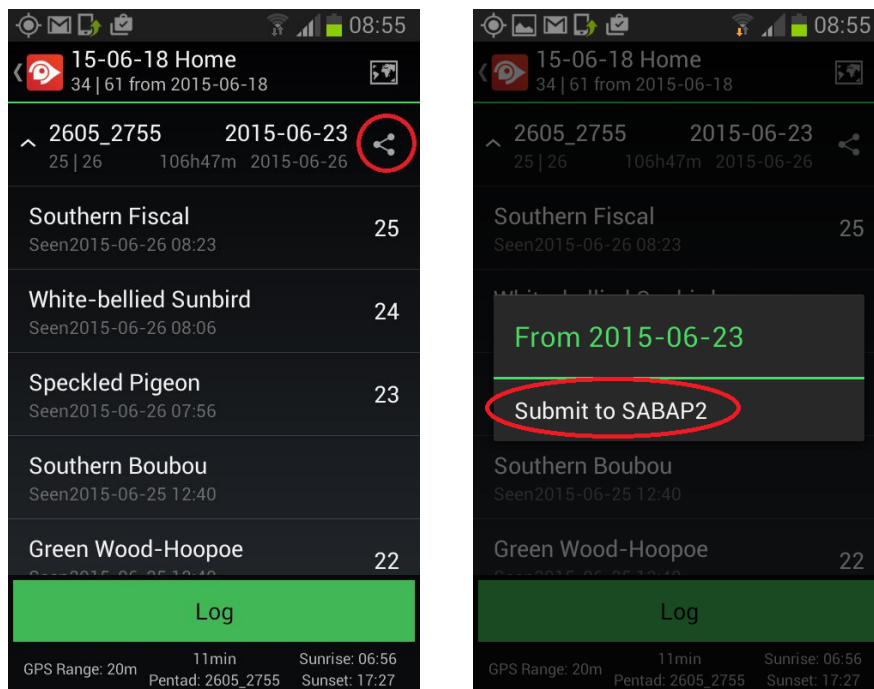
When atlassing, don't worry too much about the protocol, trust the app to do the right thing. It's simple – if it doesn't, it's a bug (bring it to your attention asap).

When parking a trip card, all the timers will stop.



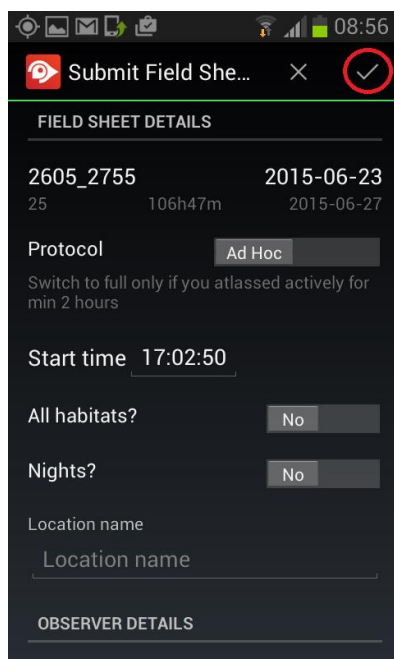
Submit to SABAP2

Open the applicable trip card, tap on the **Share** icon. A pop-up appears – select “**Submit to SABAP2**”.



The new screen that opens up is the “**Submit Field Sheet**” screen. Here you set all remaining field sheet parameters and check your records. Most importantly, you set the field sheet protocol, i.e. Ad-hoc or Full Protocol. Note that by default, all field sheets are set to Ad-hoc Protocol.

Go through all the parameters, make sure all are set accordingly. Note that you can move species between hours. Once all done, tap on the “**✓**” icon to submit the field sheet to SABAP2.





General

Don't be afraid to click/tap/tap-and-hold buttons and icons.

When atlassing, use it in Map View.

All the details below the Log button are “current” indicators, e.g. your current location or pentad.

BirdLasser works where there are no cell reception.

You can log into BirdLasser installed onto any other supported device, e.g. iPhone 5S, with your current account – all your data will sync to the new device.



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Lejint (Pty) Ltd
PO Box 2387
Pinegowrie, 2123
South Africa
www.birdlasser.com

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