



BirdLasser

Quick Guide

BirdLasser - iOS

January 2020



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 as a specialist survey tool 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).

Lastly, have a look at our *frequently asked questions* page on our website for help when you get stuck: <https://www.birdlasser.com/about/faq>.

Basically, the app works as follows...

Create a **Trip Card**. **Log** your bird observations. **Share** with conservation and research entities.

But let's start at the beginning

When you launch the app for the first time, you're presented with three options – select **Register** if you are a first-time user. Select **Log in** if you have registered before.

Register: Enter an email address as a username and choose any password. Once done, tap the red button to register your new account.

Note: An email will now be sent from BirdLasser to this email address. Check you Spam / Junk mail folders if at first you don't see it in your Inbox. This email has a link in – click on it to complete the registration process.

Log in: If you've registered before, then just log in with your existing username (email address) and the password you choose during registration. If you can't remember your password, select **Reset password**. If, however you can't remember what email address you used, send us an email at support@birdlasser.com.

Logged in, now what?

A (blank) **Trip cards** screen is the first screen displayed after logging on. The on-screen text explains your next move: Tap on the big plus icon in the top right corner to create your first trip card.

*Note: When you create a Trip Card, you can set a protocol mode, e.g. **BirdMAP Atlas**. Ignore this configuration if you just want to use the app for general bird logging.*



Give your first trip card a name, e.g. *My first card*. Tap on **Done** when done.

Your newly created trip card is created and opened – the next screen has your trip card name at the top indicating that you are now in it.

You can now log your first record by tapping on the big **Log** button at the bottom of the screen, or... you can configure the app to your liking. You can always return to this trip card to continue logging.

Configure the app

Tap on the **Settings** icon (bottom of the screen) – this will bring up the **Settings** screen.

Here's what all these settings are about.

PROFILE

User Info: The email you used to register with is displayed here. If you so wish, you can store your first and last name here as well.

Force sync: Indicates when last your data was backed up to our cloud servers. Don't tap on the **Sync now** option unless instructed to do so by a trained professional (that's us).

REGION, TAXON & DISPLAY LANGUAGE

Region: Tap to bring up a list with geographical locations. Select the one that best suits your location. By selecting this location, the species list you can select from, will be for this location.

Taxonomy: Three options, select the one you prefer.

Language: Three language display options – choose those you prefer.

GPS

Improved GPS: Keep switched off unless you experience GPS accuracy issues.

THEME

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

ATLASSING

To find out more about atlassing, the BirdMAP/SABAP2 project, see here: <http://sabap2.adu.org.za/>

By default, atlassing is switched off. Toggle switch (**On by default**) on if you'll use BirdLasser as an atlassing app. All trip cards will now have atlassing enabled.

Pentad notification: If switched on, you will receive a notification each time you cross into a new pentad.



Observer Number: Enter your BirdMAP/SABAP2 observer number. This can be obtained from their website.

Observer Name: Enter your name and surname.

Show location name: Toggle on if you prefer to give pentads names rather than show the pentad code.

LOGGING

Quick capture Count: Switch on if you want to capture the count for each record you log. If you share your data with eBird, make sure this is switched on.

CUSTOM AREAS

You can configure up to three circular areas. These will be displayed on the map so that your position relative to the boundary is always visible.

LIFELIST MANAGEMENT

The only configurable setting here is to opt to have records logged as 'heard', i.e. you only heard the bird calling (did not see it), not counted towards your lifelist. If you don't know what is meant by this, just keep this set to **No**.

ABOUT

Useful information about us and the app. Hope you give us a good rating....

Now, let's start logging

You can now return to your trip card by tapping on the **Trips** icon at the bottom of the screen.

Now, assuming you are in the trip card, tap the big **Log** button at the bottom of the screen. A list with species is displayed for the location you configured earlier under **Settings**. The list is 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", or swipe from right to left over the species name to reveal the **Heard** button – tap to select. You have now logged your first record (note the **1** to the right of the record).

Repeat the above steps to log more records. For more details on the search functionality, see below.

Also note that a record's entry in the list is in yellow font – this indicates the first time a species is logged, i.e. a lifer! You may now think, 'But this is not a lifer for me, just the first time I've logged it in the app – how do I add my historical data so that this does not happen again?' It is possible to add historical records to the app – have a look at our FAQ (<https://www.birdlasser.com/about/faq#historical-species>).



As time goes along, you may also get scenarios where a record's font is grey – this indicates the first time a species is logged in a specific regional area, i.e. a regional lifer. These regions are configured under Lifest.

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.

There are multiple ways of getting to the species you want to record. You can search using any of the languages you configured under **Settings**, i.e. even though English may be set as the primary language, if you have scientific as the secondary language, then you may type the scientific name. The result will however be displayed with the bird's name as per the primary language selected.

Note as you start typing, the list dynamically zooms in on matches.

A few tips:

- You don't have to complete the whole word, just type in the first two letters of each word, e.g. African Olive Pigeon, type `af ol pi` or alternative `pi af ol`.
- 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 is already displayed).
- 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.

Inside a trip card

As you log species, your trip card starts growing. A list with your records appears in reverse order, i.e. the last record at the top. You can toggle this view between this List View and Map View – tap on the icon next to the three horizontal dots.

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. Also note the colour – the first time you log a species, it will appear in yellow – this indicates a lifer, albeit a "BirdLasser lifer".

For more features linked to trip cards, tap the menu icon (three vertical dots, top right corner).

Lastly, by tapping on a record in the list, you are presented with the observation properties screen. Here you can change any of the properties, e.g. the species name, the date or even the location. This means you can log any species, anywhere in space and time.

When a record is added to the trip card, this happens in the background



- Each species logged will be added to your lifelist – you can navigate to your lifelist by tapping on the **Lifelist** icon at the bottom of the screen.
- If a logged species is linked to a conservation cause, its observation properties will be shared with the respective cause(s). To sign up for causes, navigate to **Causes**.

Conclusion

Now that you are familiar with the app's basic functionalities, go out and log all those beauties. Play your part in conservation.



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Support

For queries, questions and reporting issues, please email us at support@birdlasser.com or alternatively, post on our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/birdlasser). See online help here:

- <https://www.birdlasser.com/about/fag>
- <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQbIIJSmgzzAJtho7-PoA3A>

More about the use of BirdLasser as an atlas tool:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC9K1EheBEeXSRqJZRP04XxA>