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Join the birdwatching event of the year!

XOC CH'ICH BIRD MARATHON 2025

Competition rules





What is the Bird Marathon?

The Xoc ch'ich' **bird marathon** (from the Mayan xoc = count, ch'ich' = bird, or bird count), since its origins in 2002 offers an opportunity for birdwatchers, both professional and amateur, local or foreign, who seek to have a pleasant time, full of colors, nature's sounds and images, in addition to being able to immerse themselves in an exquisite cultural exchange in which everyone learns!

The objective of Xoc ch'ich' is to identify the largest number of bird species in a given time.

Set up your team

Set up your team of 3 to 7 people (friends, family, co-workers, etc.) **PLUS** a specialist bird guide. You can also contact the Organizing Committee to be integrated into a team. All teams **WITHOUT EXCEPTION** must incorporate a **local guide specialized in bird watching**, who will guarantee that the species observed are correctly identified, taking the role as **team captain**.

Important

On the website www.festivalavesyucatan.com/copia-de-aves-de-yucat%C3%A1n you will find a **list of specialized guides**, willing to share their knowledge and experience.

The team captain will be responsible for:

- **Review** and integrate the list of registered birds.



- **A**ssist the team in the observation and identification of species.
- **E**nsure that as many team members as possible observe and identify the birds that are found.
- **V**erify that your team **complies with all the rules** described in this document.
- **F**ill out the team's list in accordance with the rules described in this document.
- **S**ubmit the bird list to the competition judges' table **BEFORE 10:00 AM** on November **23rd** at **U Najil Ek Balam** in the town of **Ek Balam, Temozón, Yucatán, Mexico**.

Select your category:

- **Classic:** suitable for those who have already participated previously or practice the activity regularly. It is recommended for those who want to visit different habitats and take longer tours.
- **Beginners:** suitable for first-time participants and those who want to take shorter tours. It is recommended for those who observe birds sporadically (or have never done so) and want to gain experience.

GENERAL RULES

Timetable

- The marathon will officially start at 5:00 am on Saturday, November **22nd** and will end at **10:00 am** on Sunday, November **23rd**.
- Teams will observe birds only during this period. Species observed or heard outside these hours **should not be counted**.



Listing

- Each participant must have a copy of the official bird list and use it during the competition. The guide specialized in birds who serves as the checklist checker will be responsible for integrating your team's official list.
- It is **ESSENTIAL** to note the place of observation of each species in an ethical and professional manner. Otherwise, the qualifying judges are free not to **count it**.
- In addition, participants are advised to write down the date, number, and sex of interesting species if possible, they may be interesting to report.
- If the list is **NOT DELIVERED** to the judges' table **before 10:00 am**, the team will be automatically disqualified.

Species identification

- The teams must design their observation route within the geographical limits of the State of Yucatan.
- In order to be registered in the team list, the species must be observed or heard **by at least three members of the team**, one of them being the guide specialized in birds, otherwise **they should NOT be included in the final list**.
- The birds observed must be found in the wild, those in captivity must NOT be counted.
- All team members must travel together, even if their transportation is done in separate vehicles. **It is not valid to divide and cover different routes**.
- The **use of tapes or recordings** of calls at any time during the competition is **PROHIBITED**.
- **Low-brightness lamps** can be used at night.



- If the participants wish to do so, it is possible to record nocturnal birds by means of their calls and sounds during the stillness of the night, (only in the case of being heard by three or more participants of the team). **THE USE OF FLASH to photograph nocturnal birds is STRICTLY PROHIBITED.**
- The subtotal of species seen must appear at the end of each section of the list and the total of birds at the end of it.

Species documentation

In the official list of birds of Yucatan 2024, some **species marked in gray** are included. These must be recorded in a **PHOTOGRAPHIC MANNER OR SOME RELIABLE EVIDENCE** in order to be validated by the judges, otherwise they will not be counted.

Below are criteria that the qualifying jury will consider when requiring more documentation on the species observed.

❖ Species that **do NOT** require documentation:

- 1) Resident species of the State of Yucatan.
- 2) Migratory species expected in the State during Winter.
- 3) Species found within their specific known range.

❖ Species that **DO** require (photographic) documentation:

- 1) Species not expected to be found in Yucatan during Winter.
- 2) Species found outside their known range.
- 3) **Species** with status of accidental (**A**) or occasional (**O**) of the State; or species not reported in recent years.



- 4) Species that are easy to confuse in the field due to similarities to other potential and common species. Frequently these include female warblers with winter plumage and birds of passage very similar to resident species.
- 5) Species that do not appear in the list of birds of Yucatan, because they may be a new registry for the State.

Review and awards

- The review of the documentation of some of the species will sometimes require more time than the established time for the ruling. We apologize in advance if such species are removed due to the time restriction we have for this event.
- **First, Second and Third** place will be awarded in each category.
- Due to the limited number of prizes, in the event of a tie, the judges reserve the right to implement measures for the tiebreaker. These may include criteria such as the observation of a rare species or species of special interest (with photography), among others.

Ethics and professionalism

All participants are encouraged to be ethical in recording their observations, abiding by the rules in a strict and professional manner.

The information generated in the lists helps to provide information on the distribution and presence/absence of the species, which serves to reinforce strategies for their conservation.



**Ready, tune your senses and let's get ready
to see birds!**

