



# ILYB Code of Conduct

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The safety of minors attending events sponsored by Illinois Young Birders (ILYB) is the highest priority at all times. All ILYB partner organizations, members, and field trip participants must abide by the Code of Conduct at all times.

## Basic Rules to Ensure the Safety of Minors at ILYB Events

1. No one age 18 or older is allowed to be in a one-on-one situation with a minor who is not that person's own child without written permission from the child's parent/guardian.
2. Adult Members and other guests may not publish any photos/images of people taken at any ILYB event without written permission from each person in the image and, for those under 18 years of age, his or her parent or legal guardian.
3. If car travel is required during any ILYB event, all cars will depart and travel together and drivers must make every effort to stay with the group until its destination is reached. Cell phone numbers will be exchanged prior to departure along with any rendezvous information.
4. All drivers of minors must be at least 25 years old. By state law, drivers assume liability.
5. ILYB will require a criminal background check for all adults participating in any ILYB event, other than a parent/guardian attending with his/her own child. Anyone who does not pass the background check will be disqualified from any further involvement in ILYB events or activities.
6. No one under age 18 may participate in any event unless ILYB has received, prior to the trip, an official ILYB permission form signed by his or her parent/guardian, including liability waiver and detailing contact information and plans for transportation to and from the event.
7. Parents are responsible for transportation of their children under the age of 18 to and from all ILYB events. If they do not transport their own children under the age of 18, they must specify on the permission form who will do so, and how that person is related to the child.
8. In preparation for each event, the sponsoring Partner Organization (if applicable) will work with an ILYB Adult Coordinator to identify at least 14 days prior to the event any and all adult or youth members who will serve in a leadership role during the event.

## Other Rules

1. ILYB is a club for young people. To this end, the only adults allowed to attend ILYB events are:
  - a. Youth Members aged 18.
  - b. Adult Members aged 19-24 who were previously Youth Members and have been Adult Members continuously since that time.
  - c. Other Adult Members, only if approved in advance for each specific event.
  - d. Special guests, only if approved in advance for each specific event.
  - e. Parents of minors attending (parents are encouraged to attend; children under 12 must be accompanied by parent or legal guardian throughout the field trip).
  - f. Designated Birding Leader(s) and/or Chaperone(s) (see #5 and #8 above).
2. All attendees must bring and carry their own equipment, food, and water.
3. ILYB seeks to provide a safe and welcoming environment for all and does not tolerate bullying. To that end, ILYB endorses the Anti-Bullying Statute of the Illinois State Board of Education, which requires schools to maintain and regularly communicate an anti-bullying policy.



## Code of Birding Ethics

ILYB subscribes to the following Code of Birding Ethics developed by the American Birding Association (ABA). Everyone who enjoys birds and birding must always respect wildlife, its environment, and the rights of others. In any conflict of interest between birds and birders, the welfare of the birds and their environment comes first.

### 1. Promote the welfare of birds and their environment.

1(a) Support the protection of important bird habitat.

1(b) To avoid stressing birds or exposing them to danger, exercise restraint and caution during observation, photography, sound recording, or filming.

Limit the use of recordings and other methods of attracting birds, and never use such methods in heavily birded areas, or for attracting any species that is Threatened, Endangered, or of Special Concern, or is rare in your local area;

Keep well back from nests and nesting colonies, roosts, display areas, and important feeding sites. In such sensitive areas, if there is a need for extended observation, photography, filming, or recording, try to use a blind or hide, and take advantage of natural cover.

Use artificial light sparingly for filming or photography, especially for close-ups.

1(c) Before advertising the presence of a rare bird, evaluate the potential for disturbance to the bird, its surroundings, and other people in the area, and proceed only if access can be controlled, disturbance minimized, and permission has been obtained from private land-owners. The sites of rare nesting birds should be divulged only to the proper conservation authorities.

1(d) Stay on roads, trails, and paths where they exist; otherwise keep habitat disturbance to a minimum.

### 2. Respect the law, and the rights of others.

2(a) Do not enter private property without the owner's explicit permission.

2(b) Follow all laws, rules, and regulations governing use of roads and public areas, both at home and abroad.

2(c) Practice common courtesy in contacts with other people. Your exemplary behavior will generate goodwill with birders and non-birders alike.

### 3. Ensure that feeders, nest structures, and other artificial bird environments are safe.

3(a) Keep dispensers, water, and food clean, and free of decay or disease. It is important to feed birds continually during harsh weather.

3(b) Maintain and clean nest structures regularly.

3(c) If you are attracting birds to an area, ensure the birds are not exposed to predation from cats and other domestic animals, or dangers posed by artificial hazards.



#### **4. Group birding, whether organized or impromptu, requires special care.**

Each individual in the group, in addition to the obligations spelled out in Items #1 and #2, has responsibilities as a Group Member.

4(a) Respect the interests, rights, and skills of fellow birders, as well as people participating in other legitimate outdoor activities. Freely share your knowledge and experience, except where code 1(c) applies. Be especially helpful to beginning birders.

4(b) If you witness unethical birding behavior, assess the situation, and intervene if you think it prudent. When interceding, inform the person(s) of the inappropriate action, and attempt, within reason, to have it stopped. If the behavior continues, document it, and notify appropriate individuals or organizations.

##### **Group Leader Responsibilities [amateur and professional trips and tours].**

4(c) Be an exemplary ethical role model for the group. Teach through word and example.

4(d) Keep groups to a size that limits impact on the environment, and does not interfere with others using the same area.

4(e) Ensure everyone in the group knows of and practices this code.

4(f) Learn and inform the group of any special circumstances applicable to the areas being visited (e.g. no tape recorders allowed).

4(g) Acknowledge that professional tour companies bear a special responsibility to place the welfare of birds and the benefits of public knowledge ahead of the company's commercial interests. Ideally, leaders should keep track of tour sightings, document unusual occurrences, and submit records to appropriate organizations.

Please Follow this Code and Distribute and Teach it to Others.

The American Birding Association's Code of Birding Ethics may be freely reproduced for distribution/dissemination. Please acknowledge the role of ABA in developing and promoting this code with a link to the ABA website using the url <http://www.aba.org>. Thank you.

*These rules are subject to change. Updates will be posted on the ILYB Website.*