

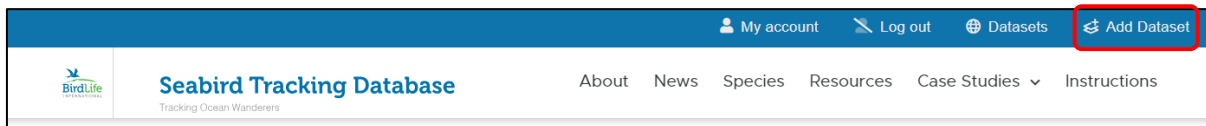
Instructions to submit data to the Seabird Tracking Database (STDB)

Data standardisation is crucial to building and maintaining a useful database. The STDB has automated methods that facilitate standardisation of data inputs and outputs, reducing the time required for analysis and maximising our conservation impact.

Information stored in our database is organized into two levels – “Dataset” level and “Data points” level. The “dataset” level metadata are provided by filling an online form, and the “data points” level of information is submitted by uploading a csv file.

Dataset submission

1. Log in to your account. If you don't have an account, fill in the form at data.seabirdtracking.org/user/register and we will review your request.
2. Read the terms of use at seabirdtracking.org/terms-of-use.
3. Go to data.seabirdtracking.org and click “Add Dataset” (top right on the page) to get to the submission form:



4. Check and decide whether your data should be submitted as one dataset or multiple datasets.
 - Datasets must contain data from only 1 species, 1 colony (specified by a latitude and longitude point), 1 device type (GLS, GPS or PTT), and must be owned by the same data owner or group of owners.
 - Datasets can contain multiple trips and/or individuals (of different ages or sexes), during different breed stages, and can include tracks from different years.
 - Data owners can choose to split data in multiple datasets however it is most useful. The maximum file size is currently **70 MB**, but we recommend splitting datasets above 40 MB if you have trouble with uploads (E.g. due to an unstable internet connection). If needed/wanted, split your data into multiple “datasets”. You will need to fill in a form for each dataset.
 - Please **do not** upload multiple copies of the same data – each dataset should contain unique tracks.
5. Fill in the details – see the following for a full explanation of each section.

The “**dataset level**” provides the info associated with each dataset:

- **Owners:** name all the people who own the data and can **all** approve. or decline requests for the data. Only one owner is need to approve or decline a request.

- You will be the first owner by default, but you can change this to upload data on behalf of someone else. To add more owners, click “Add another item”. You can then start typing the name and if the person has an account, it will appear in the drop-down list below.

The screenshot shows a web form titled "Data provider / contact information". It has a tab labeled "Owners". Below the tab, there are two rows of input fields. The first row contains "BethanyClark (1646)" and a "Remove" button. The second row contains "birdlife s" and a "Remove" button. A dropdown menu is open under "birdlife s", showing "BirdLife Seabirds". At the bottom of the form, there is a button labeled "Add another item". In the top right corner, there is a link that says "Show row weights".

- **Important note:** all data owners should be registered in our website before submitting the data, otherwise it will not be possible to associate their names to the dataset. Data owners who register after the data submission can be added to the dataset by clicking edit under “My Datasets” in the “My Account” page.

- Backup Email Contacts

- Please enter an email address (or multiple) for us to use in case we cannot contact any of the dataset owners. This might be your department or university contact. It will not be publicly visible.
- These email addresses do not have to be registered.

- **Dataset name:** the title that will be associated to the dataset on the website (example: *Arctic Tern from Greenland, GLS, migration 2007-08*)

- **Species:** Chose from a dropdown menu with a list of seabird species (following BirdLife taxonomy <http://www.birdlife.org/datazone/info/taxonomy>). You can navigate by order then family or start typing the species name (English or Scientific) and the species will appear in the list below and you can then tick the box.

The screenshot shows a dropdown menu for selecting a species. The search term "gann" is entered. The results show 4 matches: Suliformes, Gannets and boobies (Sulidae), Northern Gannet (Morus bassanus), Cape Gannet (Morus capensis), and Australasian Gannet (Morus serrator). The "Northern Gannet" is selected with a checked box.

- Please email seabirds@birdlife.org for any questions about taxonomy.

- **Deployment Location (Country/Site/Colony):** A list of colonies already registered before in our database will be available. From the drop-down list. You can browse by country then site, or you can start to type the name in the search box and it will show all the colonies that match the search names.

Location

bird isla

(14 matches)

- ☐ Ascension Island
 - ☒ Boatswainbird Island (Ascension Island)
- ☐ Seychelles
 - ☐ Bird Island (Seychelles)
- ☐ South Africa
 - ☐ Bird Island (SA) (South Africa)
- ☐ South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands
 -

- When you tick a box to select a colony, the details below will be filled in and a map will show the location.

Colony
Boatswainbird Island (Ascension Island) (6764) Q
Site
Ascension Island (6136) Q
Country
Saint Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha ∨
Colony Longitude
-14.31
Colony Latitude
-7.94


- If your colony is not already in the database, you can choose a country from the drop-down list. Choose an existing site or type a new name into the box. Then type the new colony name, latitude and longitude. This will register the colony and it can be selected for future uploads.
- **Device:** GPS, PTT or GLS (Any GLS data must be processed into locations – STDB cannot accept raw light data)
- **Interpolation:** if the data submitted have been interpolated (e.g. to obtain regular fixes)
- **Permissions:**
 - **Requestable:** by default, data submitted to the STDB can be requested by a third party (i.e., by another researcher in a collaborative study), although no data will be provided without the consent of the contributor. Contributors will be always contacted by e-mail when their data is being requested. Nevertheless, contributors may choose to have their data as “non-requestable” by others than BirdLife.

- You can also set your data to become pre-approved after a specified number of years since publication. This option was introduced to reduce the chance that a dataset becomes permanently unavailable.

	On dataset publication	After 1 year	After 3 years	After 5 years	After 10 years	After 50 years	Never
All requests pre-approved	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Non-commercial only	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Conservation only	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BirdLife only	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

- ✓

Auxiliary files to upload

You can upload up to three auxiliary files including an image, video or file with Time Depth Record data.

Add a new file

Choose files

No file chosen

Maximum 3 files.
400 MB limit.
Allowed types: jpeg jpg mp4 csv xls xlsx doc docx ppt pptx pdf gif json.

6. Format the dataset file in a table/spreadsheet to be uploaded.

The **data points level** is where the actual data (birds' positions at a date-time) are stored – one data point per row. See the template .xlsx file for examples of data from each type of device (screenshots below).

Advice and **code** for using to format data using **R** is available here:

https://www.seabirdtracking.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/STDB_format_tips.html



GPS:

bird_id	sex	age	breed_stage	track_id	date_gmt	time_gmt	latitude	longitude	equinox	argos_quality
Bird1	male	adult	brood-guard	Bird1_1	04/08/2007	23:00:38	40.055	3.8697	NA	NA
Bird1	male	adult	brood-guard	Bird1_1	05/08/2007	00:00:38	40.055	3.87014	NA	NA
Bird1	male	adult	brood-guard	Bird1_1	05/08/2007	01:00:38	40.05535	3.87029	NA	NA

PTT:

bird_id	sex	age	breed_stage	track_id	date_gmt	time_gmt	latitude	longitude	equinox	argos_quality
L20002	unknown	juvenile	non-breeding	1	09/09/1994	06:11:03	-34.499	151.412	NA	0
L20002	unknown	juvenile	non-breeding	1	09/09/1994	07:51:03	-34.488	151.373	NA	2
L20002	unknown	juvenile	non-breeding	1	09/09/1994	22:26:03	-34.562	151.443	NA	0

GLS:

bird_id	sex	age	breed_stage	track_id	date_gmt	time_gmt	latitude	longitude	equinox	argos_quality
4053	female	adult	breeding	4053	28/08/2008	01:10:00	33.47	-15.91	no	NA
4053	female	adult	breeding	4053	28/08/2008	13:06:00	32.65	-14.94	no	NA
4053	female	adult	breeding	4053	29/08/2008	01:09:00	31.4	-15.7	no	NA

Categorical information for Sex, Age, Breed stage, Equinox and Argos Quality, must match the preset options.

Field name	Type	Data format	Options														
bird_id	user defined	String															
sex	limited choice	String	female	male	unknown												
age	limited choice	String	adult	immature	juvenile	fledgling	unknown										
breed_stage	limited choice	String	pre-egg	incubation	brood-guard	post-guard	chick-rearing	creche	breeding	fail (breeding season)	migration	winter	sabbatical	pre-moult	non-breeding	unknown	
track_id	user defined	String															
date_gmt	user defined	dd/mm/yyyy															
time_gmt	user defined	hh:mm:ss															
latitude	user defined	Decimal Degrees															
longitude	user defined	Decimal Degrees															
equinox	limited choice	Yes/No	yes	no	NA												
argos_quality	user defined	String	3	2	1	0	A	B	Z	G	NA						

- **bird_id:** unique identification of each individual bird (e.g. ring number, or simply bird1, bird2)
- **sex:** sex of the individual bird specified in the previous column; one of the following options are accepted – *male; female; unknown*
- **age:** age of the individual bird specified in the first field; one of the following options are accepted – *adult; immature; juvenile; fledgling; unknown*
- **breed_stage:** the breeding stage of the bird; options are *pre-egg; incubation, brood-guard; post-guard; chick-rearing; creche; breeding; fail (breeding season); migration; winter; sabbatical; pre-moult; non-breeding; unknown*
- Please provide the most detailed level possible (example: if known, specify which positions were collected during *incubation, brood-guard* and *post-guard*; alternatively split only between *incubation* and *chick-rearing*; if not even this is known, tag all as *breeding*). Ideally, the classification should be based on the knowledge of actual breeding stage of each individual tracked at each time (e.g. a non-breeding adult

tracked during incubation period should be included as *sabbatical*, *fail (breeding)* or simply as *non-breeding*). Nevertheless, we acknowledge that such information is often missing, so if that is the case the classification can also be based on mean life history schedules of the population (e.g. all positions gathered during incubation would be tagged as so).

- **track_id**: unique identification of each trip of each bird (ex: bird1_t1, bird1_t2, bird1_t3, bird2_t1). This could correspond to unique foraging trips (i.e. all at-sea positions collected between two successive returns to the colony – that may also apply to the entire non-breeding period). If these have not yet been identified, simply set track_id = bird_id
- **date_gmt**: date (GMT) in the following format: *dd/mm/yyyy*
- **time_gmt**: time (GMT) in the following format: *hh:mm:ss*
- **latitude**: in decimal degrees, to the maximum available precision e.g. 12.3456, min = -90, max = 90.
 - Please check for and remove erroneous points. Commonly these occur at 0, 90, -90. Another common issue is reversing the latitude and longitude.
- **longitude**: in decimal degrees, to the maximum available precision e.g. -12.3456. min = -180, max = 180.
 - Please check for and remove erroneous points. Commonly these occur at 0, 180, -180. Another common issue is reversing the latitude and longitude.
- **equinox** (only for GLS): whether the position correspond to an equinox period or not: *yes*; *no*.
 - Please include in the notes how the equinox period was defined. If this is not known or for GPS or PTT data, leave the cells blank or filled with “NA” (other forms, such as “N/A”, will not be accepted)
- **argos_quality** (only for PTT data): quality of the position; one of the following options are accepted – 3; 2; 1; 0; A; B; Z; G; NA.
 - For GPS or GLS, leave the cells blank or filled with “NA” (other forms, such as “N/A”, will not be accepted).

7. Save the dataset file to the correct format.

- You can save as a csv using a R or other coding languages. Or, you can copy-paste the appropriate template to another Microsoft Excel spreadsheet and, after replacing with your data, save the file as .csv using the “CSV (Comma Delimited) (*.csv)” [do not save as “CSV UTF-8 (Comma Delimited) (*.csv)”, “CSV (Macintosh) (*.csv)” or “CSV (MS_DOS) (*.csv)”].

Data to upload

Choose file

No file chosen

Please use the template and save it as a CSV file.

Please wait for the file to finish uploading before submitting.
The spinning circle will disappear and the uploaded file size will be visible.

One file only.
400 MB limit.
Allowed types: csv.


Notes: Please add any other relevant details related with your dataset (e.g.: if the data being upload have been processed in any special way, as using state space models for GLS data). Please include key information on methods or a reference for where methods are published. E.g. packages used to process GLS data. The names of data owners that do not have accounts could be included here.

Set to Unpublished Draft

To save the dataset as a draft in your account, click “Set to Unpublished Draft”, and you can return to it later by going to “My Account”, then “Unpublished Datasets”.


Submit For Processing

9. **Submit:** Click “Submit for Processing” and the data processing will be attempted, the dataset will be assigned a unique ID number (currently 4 digits), and you will receive the following messages:



Dataset test has been updated.


Dataset submitted for processing.[View your pending datasets here](#)




Note: This Dataset is not published. (Queued For Processing)

Note: This Dataset is not published. (Submitted)

- Check the status here: <https://data-new.seabirdtracking.org/mypendingdatasets>

Moderation State	Processing comment
 Processing ongoing, please be patient.	CSV upload started. Processing in background.
Last poll: 2025-08-31 18:54:19	

- Please refresh the page to see if the processing is complete. This can take a few minutes for large files.
- If successful, you will see the message “Processing complete. An Admin will review your dataset”.
- At this point, you can click on the dataset to view a preview of the map. Please check this map and re-upload if you it if not correct.

Dataset ID	Dataset Name	Moderation State	Processing comment
2454	<div><div>test</div><div>(Amsterdam Albatross, Dog Island, GPS, 2010 2011 2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018 2022 2024)</div></div>	 Complete	Processing complete. An Admin will re-view your dataset.

- If they are issues, please correct them in your csv and upload the new file.
- If there are errors with the format of the data, there will be an error message relating to the reason why the data was not accepted. Please check your csv against the templates provided and try to upload the dataset again. If you need help with errors, please email seabirds@birdlife.org.
- You can edit the submission after this stage if you need to correct anything.

10. The team will check the dataset and then publish it, making it available to be searched, viewed, and requested. You will receive an email when your dataset is published.

- You can then download your dataset as a csv with the dataset ID number and all the dataset level data included.
- You can edit dataset after this stage, but they will need to be checked and published again.
- If someone requests your dataset, you will receive an email notification.



Contact:

If you need any further help, please contact us by e-mail at seabirds@birdlife.org

Thank you for contributing your data to the Seabird Tracking Database!

- The BirdLife International Marine Science Team

