

# Instructions for collecting EO data for project RareQuest

**J. Christopher Ludwig**

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Congratulations! – you just found a rare species and have marked its location with your cellular device. Now it is time to fill in the fields to tell us what you can about the occurrence. Please know that the most important information we need is presence/absence so you putting a accurate dot on the map is key, everything else is much less imperative. In other words, don't kill yourself trying to get this information exactly right. Be comfortable with approximations. Here are some examples of fine information for four fields of information that require explanation:

1. ID Confirmed?

Simply put a yes or a no in this field. I am sure this will be yes a large percentage of the time. If you need to put a no in this field, please send us pictures of the plant or animal. For a frog call, try to send us a recording.

2. EO Data (Population status)

BIRD: Two Loggerhead Shrikes observed in a 10-acre field for 1 hour. They repeatedly returned to a shrub in the field where we suspect a nest is. They were observed carrying sticks into the shrub (nesting material?), but we could not see the nest. Prey items skewered on barb-wire fence along Route 618 included a grasshopper, 2 large beetles, and a small lizard.

BUTTERFLY: Five Northern Metalmarks found within the small area we marked within the forest. Observed between 12:30 and 2:15. All but one of the butterflies appeared worn as if they had been flying for quite some time.

PLANT: At 50 blooming Smooth Coneflowers seen along about ¼ mile of roadside. The basal leaves of other sterile plants seen as well. Plants were in full bloom or starting to fruit, but a few were still in bud. Most of the blooming plants were concentrated towards the western end of the population. Some plants appeared to be grazed as leaves were torn or missing.

FROG: Frogs heard calling from two directions on opposite sides of the road from 10pm until we left at 11:15. We could not exactly discern how many individuals there were, but it was clear that there were many individuals calling on the north side of the road. Weather was 80 degrees Fahrenheit, overcast, with the sound of thunder from a distant storm.

### 3. EO Habitat (Habitat and associated species)

BIRD: Shrikes were using much of a 10-acre fallow field with scattered shrubs and small trees between 8- to 15-ft tall along with areas of saplings. Weeds included broomsedge, Queen-Anne's-lace, and chickory. Barbed-wire along road provided site to impale prey items. Shrub with nest was a 12-ft tall eastern redcedar.

BUTTERFLY: Metalmarks were found in thinner, more open portion of forest over limestone with abundant outcroppings. Other butterflies observed included Tawny Emperor, Silver-spotted Skipper, Tiger and Zebra Swallowtail, Eastern Comma, and Red-spotted Purple.

PLANT: The coneflowers were growing in a narrow distribution powerline right-of-way with other flowering plants including Black-eyed Susan, Narrow-leaved Mountain-mint, *Asclepias tuberosa*, and other native species. Mowing appears infrequent. Trees behind powerline included much ash, hickory, cedar, and white and post oak. Few heaths in the understory – soil could be somewhat basic here.

FROG: Frogs heard calling from wet flatwoods with standing water. Water from 6-15 inches deep. Other frogs heard included green frog, pickerel frog, and chorus frog.

### 4. EO Threats

BIRD: Brown-headed Cowbirds observed in area.

BUTTERFLY: No threats observed.

PLANT: A few invasive species were present and one, *Lespedeza cuneata*, was abundant and may actually be crowding out some of the other native plants that are present including the coneflower.

FROG: There are "For Sale" signs at the edge of the flatwoods where the frogs were heard and a portion of the forest had been recently logged. For sale sign was from "Century 21, realtor Jeff Jones, Sussex, 804-786-4422".

THAT'S IT – JUST KEEP IT SIMPLE!

Thanks - Chris