MOBILE Eastern Canadian Seabirds at Sea (ECSAS) Database

USER GUIDE

DRAFT – (November 2018)

Objective – To help users (i.e., at sea wildlife observers) enter survey data into the ECSAS database. These data can then be easily imported into the Master ECSAS database.

- The database is designed to look the same as the ECSAS record sheets, so data entry is easiest when the ECSAS record sheets are used during surveys. These can be found at the end of the ECSAS protocol.
- Although it takes some time to enter the watch data (weather variables, ship speed, observer name, etc.), once entered, those fields can be copied over to the next watch by using the **New With Copy** button.
- This database can also be used for live entry during surveys, however the instructions below assume data were collected on datasheets and are being entered into the database after surveys are completed. For this reason, some of the options in the *switchboard* are not needed and can be ignored.

Step-by-step Instructions

1. In Microsoft Access, open MOBILE ECSAS v.3.xx.MDB. This will bring you to the main *Switchboard*.
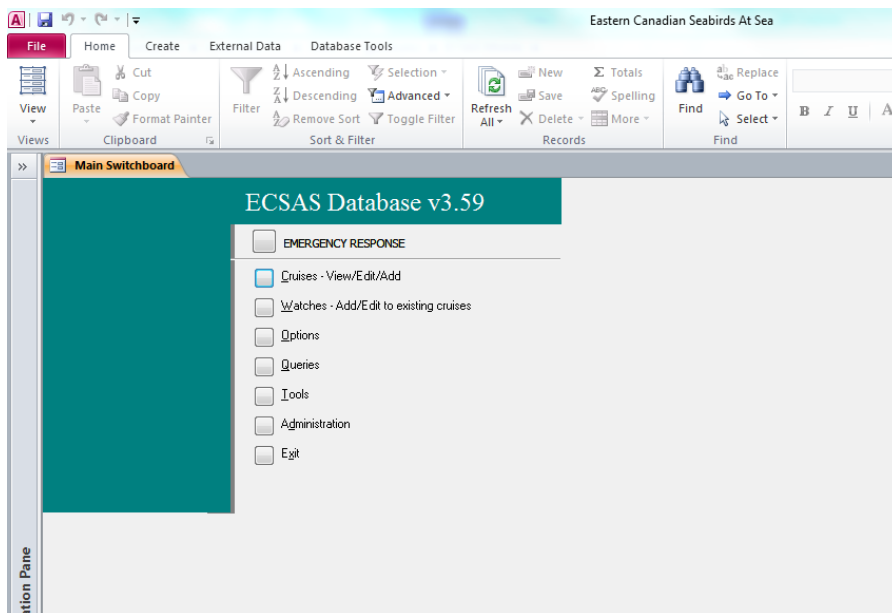
2. Click on **Cruises – View/Edit/Add** to add the new cruise to the database. This will open a blank form (**ECSAS – Cruise Details**).

3. Click **ADD** at the top of the form. You will only have to enter the cruise one time, unless changes need to be made.

4. Fill in the fields using options from the drop-down menus, when available. **Cruise ID will be automatically filled in.** If the platform name, name of observer, or another field is not in the

database, type it directly into the space and you will be asked whether you want to add it. Reply "yes". Add it once and then it will be available in the drop-down menus in the future.

Explanations of each field in the **ECSAS – Cruise Details form**:

CruiseID – a unique identifier for the survey cruise (auto-generated)
Company – Indicate the company, agency or organisation that has requested the surveys
Platform Name – The name of the vessel or platform from which the surveys are conducted
Platform Type – Platform type may include seismic ship, offshore supply vessel, fishing boat, research ship, ferry, etc.
Observer (Observer 2) – Indicate the individual(s) conducting the survey. Most times, there will only be one observer, so Observer 2 field will be blank. Format should be LastName, Firstname
Start Date – Record the first day of the survey DD-MMM-YYYY (e.g., 12-Apr-2008)
End Date – Record the last day of the survey DD-MMM-YYYY (e.g., 12-Apr-2008)
Start Port – If a vessel-based survey, indicate the name of the port where the vessel originated. If survey is from a stationary survey, leave blank.
End Port – If a vessel-based survey, indicate the name of the port where the survey terminated. If survey is from a stationary survey, leave blank.
Program – Indicate the program under which the surveys are taking place (i.e., ECSAS – Eastern Canada Seabirds at Sea, Hydrocarbon Industry, etc.)
SubProgram – **can leave blank**
Notes – can add if relevant

5. Click **Close** at the top of the form. This will bring you back to the *switchboard.*

6. Now click **Watches – Add/Edit to existing cruises**

7. If surveys were conducted from a **moving vessel**, click **Add Watch: Moving Platform, Experienced Observer**. This will open the main Data Entry form (if you are doing a stationary observation, click **Add Watch: Stationary Platform, Experienced Observer,** or if you have an incidental sighting, click **Add Incidental Observations**).

8. Confirm that you are in the correct Cruise – i.e., at the top of the form, select cruise under the Cruise Selector drop-down menu at the top right of screen. The default should be the last cruise entered in the Cruise form. Note that the Cruise Data fields are imported from the cruise data you just entered, and do not need to be edited here (i.e., the top part of screen).

9. Now you will need to fill in the fields associated with the Watch Data. Fill in the fields using options from the drop-down menus, when available. Some of these will be the same as the Cruise fields you just entered.

Explanations of each field in the **Add/Edit – Moving Platform, Experienced Observer form**:

Observer (Observer 2) – Indicate the individual(s) conducting the survey. Format should be LastName, Firstname

Date – date of the survey DD-MMM-YYYY (e.g., 12-Apr-2008)

Start Time – indicate the time the survey began hh:mm:ss (e.g., 08:02:00). If seconds weren't recorded, can just add zeros.

End Time - indicate the time the survey ended hh:mm:ss (e.g., 08:02:00). If survey was 5 min long (default for ECSAS), can click **Add 5** as a shortcut.

Start Latitude – Enter the latitude at the start of the watch. Can enter as decimal degrees (left side of the equals sign) or degree minutes (right side of the equal sign). The program will find the equivalent and fill in automatically. For example, if the Start Latitude is entered on the left side as 45.25 degrees, the program will fill in 45 degrees, 15 minutes.

Start Longitude - Enter the longitude at the start of the watch.

End Latitude – can leave blank unless it was recorded.

End Longitude - can leave blank unless it was recorded.

Platform Activity – use drop down menu to choose Platform Activity, or add your own if not included in list.

Visibility – Use drop down list of codes (this is considered the maximum visibility; see codes of Protocol)

Glare - Use drop down list of codes (see codes on Protocol)

Sea State – Use drop down list of codes (see codes on Protocol)

Swell – Enter swell height in metres (see Protocol)

Wind Force – Can use Beaufort Scale from drop down list, or leave the Beaufort box blank if you have a measure of the wind speed from the display on the ship

Wind Direction – Use drop down list

Weather – Use drop down list of codes (see codes on Protocol)

Ice Type and Concentration - (if any) use drop down list of codes (see codes on Protocol)

Ship Speed & Dir – indicate ship's speed in knots and direction from drop down list

Observer Side – indicate Port or Starboard (drop down list)

Observer Hgt – indicate height of eye in metres

In/Outdoors – indicate whether survey was conducted from indoors or outdoors (drop down list)

Scan Type – should be 90 degrees for ECSAS surveys (from drop down list)

Snapshot Used – this box will always be checked unless for some compelling reason you cannot do use the snapshot method to count flying birds

Transect Far should only be changed if your visibility was under the 300 m distance. For example, if you could only see to 200 m, the Transect far should read 200.

Distance Method – This refers to how you are measuring distance to water and flying birds. If using the ECSAS protocol, this should be should be **Water perp; Flying perp**

What Counted – This field refers to what was counted. More experienced observers often can count everything they observe, both in and out of transect, indicating of course which sightings were in and which were out. Less experienced observers may focus instead on just those sightings observed within the transect. Sometimes observers may switch between the methods depending on how many birds are in the area. Indicate in this field whether all birds were recorded or whether you focused the data on only those within the transect.

Note – any notes on the watch that you might have

The rest of the fields will default to their values.

Once this top portion is filled out, you are now ready to enter the sighting data. Ignore the **START button and countdown timer**. This is for those entering data live from the bridge.

10. Now you are ready to enter the birds observed on the watch.

Species - Enter the species code from the drop-down menu. See protocol for 4-letter codes.

- number of individuals in the sighting

Fly/Swim – indicate whether they were flying (F), on water (W), on ship (S) or on land (L)

In Trans (means in or out of transect) – check this box if sighting is "in transect" (do this by pressing the space bar or left clicking mouse)

Dist – choose distance category from drop down menu. If in transect but no distance, choose "3". There are a number of choices here based on a variety of past studies, but your data will likely fit into one of the following distance classes - A, B, C, D, E, T or 3

The above 5 fields are mandatory. **Assc, Beh, Flight Dir, Age, Plum, Sex,** and **Notes** are entered if appropriate. See protocol for codes.

Go to next line until all sightings are entered.

11. If you have sighted a group of birds, either mixed species or age classes, use the **Grouping Controls**. For example, if you see an adult and immature HERG together on the water. Add the adult on the one line (HERG, 1, Water, in transect, Distance B, Adult), then **click Create**. This will assign the bird with a Group ID number. On the next line, enter the information for the immature and **click Add** under the Grouping Controls. The two individuals will by default be assigned the same Fly/Swim behaviour, the same in or out of transect status, and the same distance category. You may specify, however, differences in Assc, Beh, Age, Plum, or Sex. The two lines will be given the same Group ID number to indicate that they were together.

12. After all sightings for that watch have been entered, can click **New With Copy** to continue on to the next watch.   By choosing this option, most of the <u>watch fields</u> will be copied except the start and end times and the start latitude and longitude.   **If wind or other variables are not the same as the previous watch, be sure to update.**

    If no birds are seen**, the sightings section is left blank** and you can click **New With Copy** to continue on to the next watch. This will copy the various fields you just entered.

13. When you're finished entering, click **Close on the top right of the form,** then **Exit from the main switchboard.**

Next time you are ready to add more watches, follow the same procedure. You can go back into the same cruise, or start again for another.

Using these arrows, can select to go back to a previous Watch

Some ACCESS short-cuts:

- **ESC – press if you want to clear the form you are in. Sometimes necessary to click ESC multiple times.**
- When you advance to the next 'watch', the one you just entered is automatically added to the database. In other words, you don't need to press Save at any time.
- In order to add a check mark to boxes, left click your mouse or press the space bar.
- Tab to get to adjacent fields.

Basic queries:

- In the main *Switchboard*, click on **Queries**
- Select **Mobile database summaries** – these were designed specifically for users of the Mobile database, whereas many of the other queries are for Admin and CWS reporting requirements.
- Use the dropdown menu to select the cruise into which you just entered watch data
- Using the other buttons, can summarize the cruise, individual watches, species, and also restrict to particular days/dates.