

Breeding Codes

Observed: Use during Safe Dates for species known to breed in Massachusetts, but only seen “passing through” your block. Record date in column. Examples; vultures seen in transit through block, late migrants out of habitat, or colonial nesting birds without a colony.

Possible: Use during Safe Dates for male or female seen or heard in suitable nesting habitat but no further evidence of breeding was uncovered. Record date in column.

Probable: With the exception of the “C” code, only use during Safe Dates. Record date and code.

- P** A pair (male and female, together, not fighting) seen in suitable nesting habitat.
- S** Permanent territory presumed through song (or drumming), heard at same location on at least two occasions, 7 days (or more) apart.
- T** Permanent territory presumed through defense. Most birds will not tolerate another bird of the same species, other than their mate or young, near them while nesting. Birds are quite aggressive when breeding, and some territory squabbles are intense.
- A** Agitated behavior or anxiety calls from adult.
- C** Courtship and/or reproductive behavior seen or heard. (OK to use out of Safe Dates, but not out of Safe Dates for ducks).
- N** Visiting probable nest site (e.g. the tops of trees, chimneys).
- B** Building a nest by a wren, or excavation of holes by single woodpeckers.

Confirmed: (can be used outside of Safe Dates) Record date and code.

- ON** Occupied nest: adult seen sitting on nest and likely incubating eggs or brooding.
- CN** Carrying nesting material, such as hair, sticks, grass, bark, etc.
- NB** Nest building at the actual nest-site.
- PE** Physiologic evidence of breeding (e.g. brood patch or egg in oviduct.).
- DD** Distraction display or injury feigning.
- UN** Used nest or eggshells found.
- PY** Precocial young (downy, capable of walking – think duck hatchling) .
- FL** Recently fledged young (either precocial or altricial) incapable of sustained flight.
- CF** Carrying food: adult carrying food for the young.
- FY** Adult feeding recently fledged young.
- FS** Adult carrying fecal sac.
- NE** Nest with egg(s).
- NY** Nest with young seen or heard.