

birding.wiki

The screenshot shows the homepage of birding.wiki. At the top, there is a dark navigation bar with the site logo, a search bar, and links for 'Shelves', 'Books', 'Settings', and a user profile for 'Jeff Mann'. The main content area is white and features a large 'Welcome to birding.wiki' heading, a smaller logo with a bird icon, and an 'Introduction' section. Below the introduction is a 'Getting started' section with several quick links: 'View all birds', 'View all birding locations', 'Recording equipment setup', 'Photography equipment setup', and 'Bird technology projects'. On the left side, there is a sidebar with 'My Recently Viewed' and 'Recently Updated Pages' sections. On the right side, there is an 'Actions' sidebar with 'Toggle Details' and 'Dark Mode' options.

The birding.wiki homepage. This wiki uses the open source BookStack App platform.

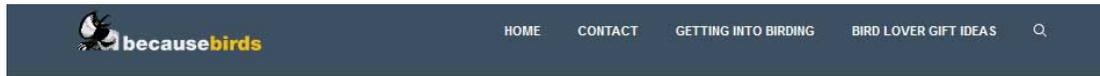
Description

[birding.wiki](#) is a self-hosted birdwatching wiki launched in 2022. It's a place to document my birding observations, media, projects, and equipment setups. This wiki is run using a self-hosted instance of [BookStack App](#).

History

In 2022, I toyed with the idea of creating a wiki-like experience to organize and document anything related to birds and my hobby of birdwatching.

Initial concept



BirdDex

I've created the *BirdDex* to be a personal log of various bird species I've encountered. Each species includes personal anecdotes with captured photos, videos, and audio.

Lesser Goldfinch



Painted Bunting



Carolina Wren



Loggerhead Shrike



Summer Tanager



White-eyed Vireo



Laughing Gull



Yellow-billed Cuckoo



Scissor-tailed Flycatcher



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The *BirdDex* main page with search feature. Handmade in WordPress.

BirdDex

[← view all Birds](#)

Painted Bunting

Passerina ciris

First Seen

05/12/2019

San Antonio, TX

Captured media details

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Notes & Observations

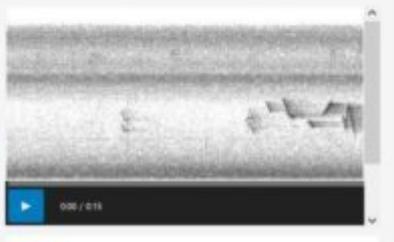
5/25/22 – My first solo experience of the Painted Bunting was at Pearsall Park in July 2021. At the park there is a disc golf course and birds of all kinds like to perch on the goal. That day, I spotted a small bird on a distant goal. Getting a closer look I could see the dull yellow color of the female Painted Bunting. It was exciting but not as thrilling as seeing the brilliant colors of the male. It wouldn't be for almost another year that I'd see this bird. On my regular weekend visit to the park in May of 2022, it was finally my moment.

I was walking down the trail toward the creek and shortly before arriving, I saw the flash of a red bird. Thinking it was a Cardinal, but always checking, I held up my binoculars and a rush of colors. The male Painted Bunting had finally revealed itself. I struggled with my camera and it flew only to land on a branch even closer. It managed to stay put for a moment or two and allowed me to capture its photo. I've seen it a few times since at Cibola Nature Center bringing friends along with me to share in the spectacle.

Captured



Recorded



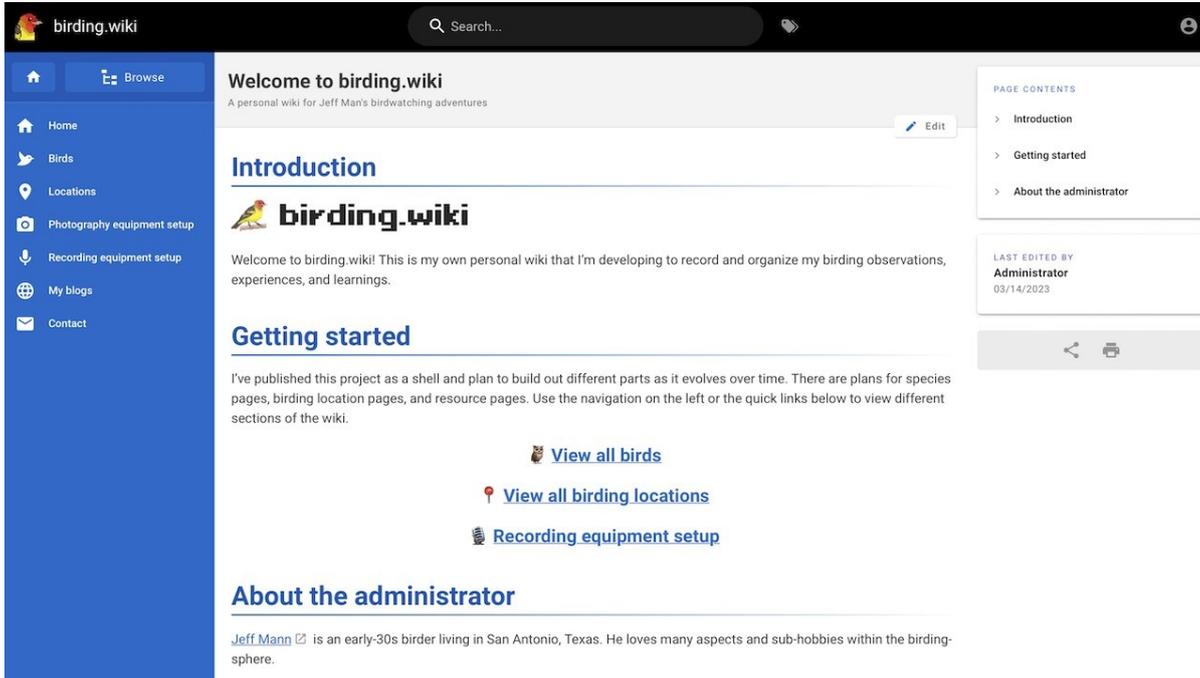
A BirdDex entry of the Painted Bunting.

The first concept of birding.wiki was launched on [Because Birds](#) as the [BirdDex](#). This was a fun project where I learned and leveraged WordPress' [custom post types](#) to create and add "Bird" entries into the CMS. It gave me space to design a basic experience and begin to solidify what type of information I would include in these entries. Think of it as a bird Pokédex. I literally researched how to create Pokédex on WordPress to serve as a starting point in the project.

On these pages I included observation statistics, photographs, audio recordings, and personal anecdotes. But as with most of my projects, I yearned for more: more ease of use, more flexibility, more space. So, I began setting my sights on a dedicated platform for this information.

In Late 2022, I bought the domain birding.wiki and began researching self-hosted wiki software solutions. I came across many options and decided to take the plunge and set one up: [Wiki.js](https://wiki.js)

Wiki.js



For the first few months of the birding.wiki project, I learned and began building out content in the platform. This exercise in organization and content management showed me ways in which I could display different types of content and helped me clarify what I wanted out of a wiki software.

Wiki.js is a one-man show as far as development is concerned. While the software was visually appealing, it was slow and cumbersome to use and half of the features in the platform were 'coming soon.' Development on the product felt slow, with releases of new versions coming out sporadically.

Next...BookStack App

In Early 2023, as my frustration with Wiki.js grew, I began to revisit a few of the wiki platforms from my previous research. [BookStack App](https://bookstack.app) app intrigued me the most due to its passionate user base and high praises on Reddit.

BookStack's organization follows the idea of physical books: shelves, books, chapters, and pages. I wondered to myself if this type of structure would work for my use case so I decided to spin up an instance and try it out for myself.

I began by recreating all my existing Wiki.js content into a few "Books" on my new BookStack server. The ease of use and speed of the platform became apparent as soon as I started. The content organization approach started simple and I reworked it as more content was added.

Organization

Shelves

Sort ↓



Birds

A list of all birds in the wiki organized by region.

★ Created 6 days ago
✔ Updated 6 days ago



Equipment

Equipment I use for photographing and recording birds.

★ Created 5 days ago
✔ Updated 5 days ago



Locations

This is a list of locations where I enjoy birding. Each location includes details about the area, photographs, media, and perso...

★ Created 6 days ago
✔ Updated 6 days ago



Tech projects

Learn more about web projects, home projects, and workflows in my birdwatching hobbies.

★ Created 12 hours ago
✔ Updated 3 hours ago

The wiki has four main "shelves".

- [Birds](#)
- [Locations](#)
- [Equipment](#)
- [Tech projects](#)

Birds shelf

The bread & butter of the birding.wiki is the Birds shelf. In the "[World birds](#)" book there are entries about many species throughout North America and the world. Birds are organized into chapters based on geographic region and contain personal statistics, media, anecdotes, and links to related blog posts on Because Birds.

Locations shelf

The Locations shelf is home to the book of "[World places](#)" where I have started to create entries for birdwatching locations that I have enjoyed. Chapters organize these locations based on geographic region. Each page includes photographs, recordings, descriptions, and experiences I've had.

Equipment shelf

The Equipment shelf and respective book contain a detailed breakdown of the gear setups I use in my photography and audio recording endeavors. You'll find the tools I use and why I use them, as well as links to learn more about each.

Tech projects

The Tech projects shelf contains several books describing the various bird-related web and home projects I use or have created. There is a book for workflows that details the processes I follow to find, capture, and catalogue bird observations and media.

Technical details

birding.wiki is run on a virtual private server (VPS) on [Digital Ocean](#).

Wiki software	BookStack App
Domain registrar	Porkbun
Server type	Virtual Private Server (VPS)
Server host	Digital Ocean droplet
Server details	1GB memory / 25GB disk

Logo

The Western Tanager pixel art logo was designed by the talented pixel artist [alurasheans](#).



Revision #10

Created 21 March 2023 16:26:35 by Jeff Mann

Updated 22 March 2023 01:19:15 by Jeff Mann