

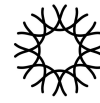


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CITY NATURE CHALLENGE IS ORGANIZED BY



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**COMMUNITY SCIENTISTS ARE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE  
GLOBAL CITY NATURE CHALLENGE, APRIL 30 – May 3, 2021**

*Sixth annual challenge to document biodiversity grows to over 400 participating cities on six continents; results announced on May 10.*

**PHILADELPHIA (04/27/2021)** – As community science initiatives—which provide a safe way to connect people with nature and each other during the pandemic—continue to grow in popularity, this year’s sixth annual [City Nature Challenge](#) is expanding to more than 400 cities across six continents. Beginning on Friday, April 30 at 12:01 am in each time zone, the Challenge runs through Monday, May 3, 11:59 pm. The global event, co-organized by San Francisco’s California Academy of Sciences and the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, calls on current and aspiring community scientists, nature and science fans, and people of all ages and education backgrounds to observe and submit pictures of wild plants, animals, and fungi using the free mobile app [iNaturalist](#). From Friday, April 30 to Monday, May 3, participants can upload their observations to the app, with identifications happening from Tuesday, May 4 to Sunday, May 9. Final results will be announced on Monday, May 10.

Philadelphia and its neighboring counties (Montgomery, Delaware, and Bucks in PA, Camden, Gloucester, and Burlington in NJ) will be participating as the Greater Philadelphia Area for the third time in the City Nature Challenge. In 2020, over 850 people in our area took part, making over 23,000 observations and finding nearly 2000 species in 4 days.

Nature is all around us; in our cities, neighborhoods, and even in our homes. One of the best ways to study nature and its biodiversity is by connecting scientists and local community members through community science. As global human populations become increasingly concentrated in cities, it’s more important than ever to document urban biodiversity and help ensure the future of plants and wildlife. Large pools of data built through [iNaturalist](#), natural history museums, and science organizations help leaders make informed conservation decisions that allow both human and natural communities to thrive.

After launching the first-ever City Nature Challenge in 2016, the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County and California Academy of Sciences are hosting their sixth—and largest—effort. That initial challenge invited participants from Los Angeles and San Francisco to observe and submit pictures of wildlife they encountered using iNaturalist. By the end of that inaugural weekend, over 1,000 participants submitted more than 20,000 observations of nature to iNaturalist.

In response to the pandemic, this year's Challenge will not be focused on competition, but rather global collaboration as more than 41,000 people around the world are estimated to participate however they can. For both budding and veteran community scientists, participating is easy:

1. Find wildlife in your home, neighborhood, backyard, or anywhere else! It can be any wild plant, animal, fungi, slime mold, or any other evidence of life, such as scat, fur, tracks, shells, or carcasses. Check out [this guide](#) for tips on finding the surprisingly abundant biodiversity in and around your own home!
2. Take pictures of what you find using [iNaturalist](#) or your city's chosen platform.
3. Learn more as your observations are identified.

With travel restrictions due to the pandemic, scientists more than ever rely on observations from community scientists for important findings. During the 2020 City Nature Challenge, despite the challenges posed by the coronavirus pandemic, participants in Miami spotted an amethyst hairstreak butterfly, a species nearly extirpated from the United States. In Panama, community scientists documented a vibrant—and critically endangered—harlequin frog. And in Washington D.C., participants recorded Arlington County's first observation of a white-spotted slimy salamander in over 40 years. Over 1,300 endangered, endemic, or data deficient species were recorded during the 2020 City Nature Challenge! This influx of information gives scientists, educators, urban planners, and policymakers insight into the biodiversity of locations throughout the world.

### **More Information and Education Toolkit**

Visit [cncphilly.org](http://cncphilly.org) and [citynaturechallenge.org](http://citynaturechallenge.org)

### **iNaturalist**

Signing up is easy and free. Visit [inaturalist.org](http://inaturalist.org) from your browser, or download iNaturalist from the [Apple App Store](#) or [Google Play](#) store.

### **Social Media**

#CityNatureChallenge, #iNatThatJawn

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