



BEAUTIFICATION COMMISSION AGENDA

CITY OF NOVI

May 08, 2024 | 6:00 PM

Mayor's Conference Room

Novi Civic Center | 45175 Ten Mile Road

(248) 347-0460

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL - Jan Lach, Christen Pietraz, Laura Williams, Mary Angela Winter, Torry Yu

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

[May](#) 8, 2024 Agenda

MINUTES

[February](#) 21, 2024 Minutes

NEW BUSINESS

[Parks](#) for Pollinators BioBlitz

Budget Update

Election of Commission Chairperson

OLD BUSINESS

Bee City USA

[Pollinator](#) Library Display – July/August 2024

Website Pollinator information

PUBLIC COMMENT

ADJOURNMENT

NOTICE: People with disabilities needing accommodations for effective participation in this meeting should contact the City Clerk (248) 347-0456 at least two working days in advance of the meeting. An attempt will be made to make reasonable accommodations.



CITY OF NOVI
Beautification Commission
Wednesday, May 8, 2024 6:00 pm
Mayor's Conference Room
Novi Civic Center | 45175 Ten Mile Road

Roll Call – Jan Lach, Christen Pietraz, Laura Williams, Mary Angela Winter, Torry Yu

Approval of Agenda

Approval of Minutes – February 21, 2024

Chair – Vacant

Secretary – Jan Lach

City Liaison – Kate Oppermann

New Business

- Parks for Pollinators BioBlitz
- Budget Update
- Election of Commission Chairperson

Old Business

- Bee City USA
- Pollinator Library Display – July/August 2024
- Website Pollinator information

Public Comment

Adjournment

Upcoming Meetings – 6/12, 7/10, 8/14, 9/11, 10/9, 11/13, 12/11

Beautification Commission Minutes
Wednesday, February 21, 2024
6:00 pm
Novi Civic Center
45175 10 Mile Rd.
Mayor's Conference Room

Call to Order: 6:06 pm

Roll Call: Jan Lach, Cindy Lang, Christen Pietraz, Laura Williams, Torry Yu

Present: Jan Lach, Cindy Lang, Christen Pietraz, Laura Williams, Torry Yu

Absent Excused: none

Approval of Minutes – January 10, 2024: Moved: Lach, Seconded: Yu, Approved 5:0

Approval of Agenda:

An amendment to the agenda to add “Gardening Program for an Elementary School” by Commissioner Pietraz was made.

Moved: Lach, Seconded: Yu, Approved 5:0

New Business:

City Manager Check-In

City Manager Victor Cardenas explained that the Rules Committee and Mayor Pro Tem Casey wanted input from the Beautification Commission regarding their current role and if the group had any input to add regarding the current verbiage in the City Code of Ordinances regarding the functions of the Commission.

The Commission responded that they think the fairly wide interpretation of the Ordinance covered most of the activities the group takes part in. They spoke about how the group currently is very interested in natives, pollinators, and supporting educational efforts in the community on those and related gardening topics. The group also mentioned wanting to work in greater collaboration with Community Relations to increase the public engagement with the group as well as social media presence. An interest in potentially working with the Novi Community School District was also noted.

Mr. Cardenas thanked the group for the discussion and insight.

2024 Neighborhood Entryway Enhancement Matching Grant Program

The Commission reviewed the two applications submitted for the 2024 cycle of the program, as well as comments from staff regarding the applications. Following this, the Commission determined to make the following recommendations to City Council:

To recommend approval for Village Oaks to be granted the requested \$5,000.00 with the explicit condition that all required permits be issued, and work approved by the appropriate City inspectors.

To recommend approval for Walden Woods to be granted the requested \$2,526.50 with the suggestion that they consider adding additional native plants to their plan, particularly ground cover (to reduce need for mulch) and for added drought tolerance.

Motion: Williams, Seconded: Pietraz, Approved 5:0

Gardening Book Display

The Commission will be reviewing the Novi Public Library's current books available on plants/gardening/etc. and making any recommendations they might have for the Library to purchase for their collection. There will also be a planned display in July or August to feature pollinators and Bee City USA information. The Commission also wants to consider having a presentation to tie into the display.

Gardening Program for an Elementary School

Commissioner Pietraz explained that she wished for this topic to be added to the agenda because she wanted to ask the Beautification Commissioners for advice regarding the existing garden at Deerfield Elementary School. She was previously a teacher who oversaw the garden as well as programming but they have since retired so the PTA is looking for resources. It was suggested that contacting Tollgate Farm & Education Center and the affiliated Master Gardeners would be an excellent first step. They also made recommendations for the garden to focus on pollinator plants, herbs, and either early or late blooming crops to ensure the exciting parts of gardening are occurring within the school years instead of over summer break.

Old Business

Public Comment: none

Adjournment: 7:16 pm

Upcoming Meetings: 3/13, 4/10, 5/8, 6/12, 7/10, 8/14, 9/11, 10/9, 11/13, 12/11

Parks for Pollinators **BIOBLITZ**

2024 BIOBLITZ TOOLKIT

This toolkit is designed to help you develop and run a BioBlitz in your community.

For help promoting your bioblitz, please check out our marketing toolkit!



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Introduction

This guide has been designed to help you develop and run a BioBlitz in your community. We'll walk through creating your project and share ideas to help market your event to the community. While this guide focuses on using the iNaturalist platform to host your project and to record findings, there are many other platforms or ways to conduct one.

What is a BioBlitz?

'Bio' means 'life' and 'Blitz' means 'to do something quickly and intensively'. Together they make 'BioBlitz' — a collaborative race against the clock to discover as many species as possible within a set location during a defined time period.

A BioBlitz usually comprises a group of scientists, naturalists, parks staff and other members of the public working together. If you have wildlife experts or a master naturalist who can get involved, that's great! If not, no need to worry, you and your park staff can handle the task. As an informal and fun way to create a snapshot of the variety of life found in an area, these events provide an opportunity for participants to learn together and share their expertise and enthusiasm for nature. BioBlitzes make engaging with science easy and fun while raising awareness about the role of biological recording. It also gives the public an opportunity to contribute to a genuine scientific survey. A BioBlitz can be carried out anywhere there is wildlife, including urban and rural areas, or inland and coastal locations.

The concept is flexible: it's up to you to decide how many people to invite, how big an area to explore and what activities to include.

What is the Parks for Pollinators BioBlitz?

The [Parks for Pollinators BioBlitz](#) is a national effort for people to find and document pollinator friendly plants and pollinators across the country in partnership with their local park and recreation agency. It's a national campaign to see who can make the most observations, engage the most people and promote pollinator awareness and education. The results not only make an impact for awareness of pollinators nationally and for those that participate, but they also help agencies know what pollinator and plant species are in their parks and helps them plan for how to protect them and promote biodiversity.

Creating Your Project on iNaturalist

The Parks for Pollinators BioBlitz utilizes the [iNaturalist](#) platform. This platform allows every agency's results to be shared and calculated on a national page within the platform and will show the collective impact for this event.

Instructions below describe how to create your project page. Pay close attention to the details under **"Key Steps to Create Your Project Page"** on page six that explains the criteria for your iNaturalist page as part of the NRPA Parks for Pollinators BioBlitz.

For visual learners, we [created a video](#) located at the bottom of our [BioBlitz webpage](#) to walk you through the process of creating your project in iNaturalist.

Sign up for iNaturalist and use the App

- You will need to sign up for [iNaturalist](#) as a user. To ensure you understand how to use the site and can successfully set up your page, iNaturalist requires you to use the app before setting up your page. **You will have to make at least 50 verifiable observations before you can create a new project.** If you are new to the platform, give yourself some time to familiarize yourself with it. This will help you and those whom you will be leading and educating about the tool!

Create your project page on [iNaturalist](#)

- As for the type of project you will create on iNaturalist, we suggest creating a **collection project**, which will allow you to count any observation within your selected area and timeframe towards your project and doesn't require users to find and sign up for your specific project. This will prevent any barriers for participants. [Learn how to set up your project](#) (and scroll down to **"Getting Started"** on page eight for steps to create a BioBlitz project). This information will help you create your page, upload graphics, create spatial boundaries, set observation rules and identify the species you will accept.
1. **Project Title:** To ensure all our projects represent the overarching campaign, your project title must be formatted as follows:
 - **Parks for Pollinators 2024: City or Agency Name** (i.e., Parks for Pollinators: Loudoun County Parks and Recreation)

2. **Project Summary:** Please feel free to use and edit the following text as needed:

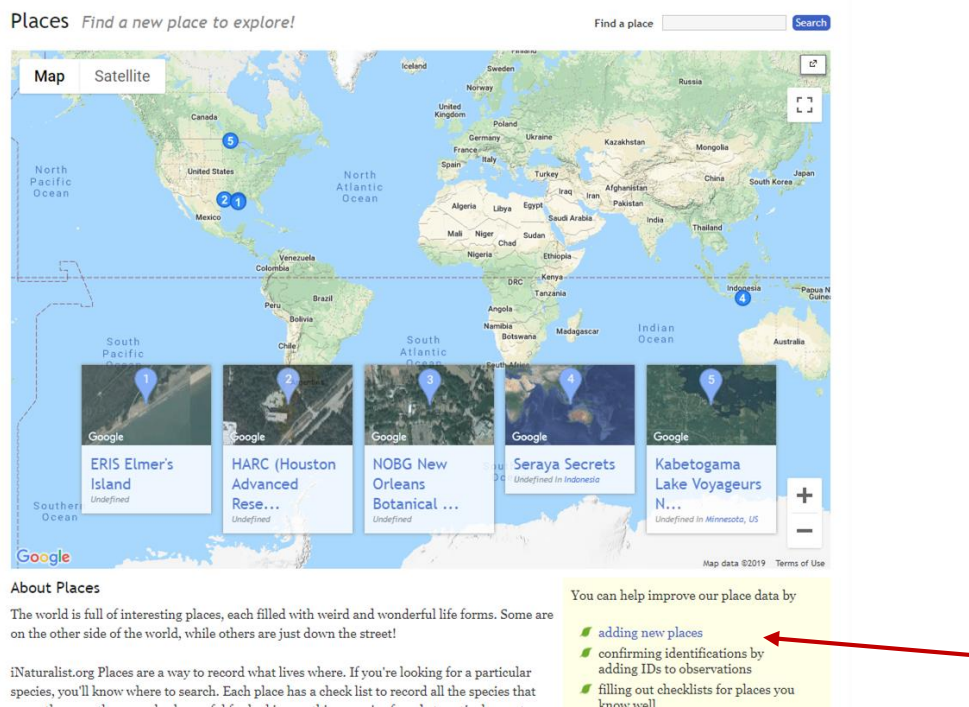
Join [Agency Name] and parks throughout the country in a fun challenge to see how many pollinator species can be documented this September. It is easy to participate by joining an event or making observations on your own using the iNaturalist app. With the iNaturalist app, you simply take a picture of a pollinator (e.g., bee, butterfly, bat, etc.) or plant, and the online community will help identify the species. You can participate by exploring the nature and wildlife in [area in which your BioBlitz will be held]. Any observation you make will count during our event.

Park and recreation agencies from across the country will be hosting Parks for Pollinators BioBlitz events throughout the month. You can learn more about the Parks for Pollinators initiative and see which agencies are participating by visiting nrrpa.org/BioBlitz.

The Parks for Pollinators BioBlitz is organized by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA).

3. **Project Icon and Banner:** Please use the graphic from the NRPA Marketing Toolkit or use your own pollinator-themed graphic to brand your project. You can easily drag and drop the images into the file upload for each section.
4. **Project Members Only Button:** Please DO NOT select this. This will limit your project to only those that have joined your project and will exclude other community members. To ensure your project is open to everyone, make sure this button is NOT selected.
5. **With Annotation:** Leave this at none; it will allow for an easier experience for your participants.
6. **Data Quality:** Please select all the options offered — “Research,” “Needs ID” and “Casual” — to ensure everyone’s observations are included.
7. **Media Type and Establishment Means:** Please select “Any” for both these areas.
8. **Date Observed:** Please select range and add the specific month of the campaign (ex. September 1, 2024, through September 30, 2024). When you add the dates, time will populate after them. To prevent any issues with time zone and your location, delete the time from the information.
Example: 2024-03-19 15:47 – 04:00.

- To define the spatial boundaries of your event, you will need to create an [‘iNaturalist place’](#). iNaturalist already has a lot of political boundaries like counties, municipalities and parks. If you want to use one of these, skip to the next bullet. If the boundary you need isn’t already an iNaturalist place, you’ll need to create the place first. Go to the **“Places”** page and click on **“add a new place”** and it will walk you through the process. You will only be able to add a place if you have at least 50 observations with your account. If you aren’t able to add a place, NRPA can help! Please mark this on the survey you fill out to sign up. If you have trouble, please contact resilience@nrpa.org



- There are options to show the attendee list or not in iNaturalist. Generally, people want to go to an event that is popular or that someone they know is attending, which argues for showing the list. Other groups may have more concern about privacy and will prefer not to show the list. This is up to you!

Key Steps to Create Your Project Page

1. To ensure your project is collecting the correct data, limit your taxa for the project to pollinator species. You can do this under the “**Observation Requirements**” section when you are creating your page. You can either identify the species you wish to include and/or you can exclude those that you don’t. For the Parks for Pollinator BioBlitz, please include: “Butterfly and Moths;” “Ants, Bees, Wasps and Sawflies;” “Flies;” “Bats;” “Beetles;” and “Hummingbirds and Plants.” These will be the taxa that feed up into the national Parks for Pollinators BioBlitz campaign.
2. To ensure your project is connected to the **NRPA Parks for Pollinators 2024 National BioBlitz Campaign**, please fill out the [quick survey at this link](#) to add your project to the national campaign! This ensures your data will be included in the national information and your numbers will count towards our overall impact.
3. Add **nrpaparks4pollinators** as an administrator on your page. This will be at the bottom of the set-up page and titled “Admin(s).” If you have any questions regarding this, please email resilience@nrpa.org

Admin(s)

Note: these users will be able to edit ALL project details including admins.

kueda, simon123, etc.

What are your desired outcomes?

NRPA's goals for the Parks for Pollinators BioBlitz are to engage communities across the nation in pollinator awareness and education, while also collecting national pollinator data. However, your agency, as well as your participants, may have other goals or desired outcomes from this event.

Agency outcomes could include:

- Engaging community members in a nature-based event that will bring them closer to local wildlife and habitats with a friendly competition
- Developing a baseline inventory of your park property natural resources
- Identifying invasive species
- Identifying endangered or critically threatened species
- Helping inform your conservation plans, planning or land management practices
- Raising awareness of the biodiversity within your parks
- Creating new partnerships with organizations, groups and the community
- Raising your agency's profile in the media
- Educating cross department groups of the benefits of pollinators, their habitat and sustainable practices

Participant outcomes may include:

- Having fun and being inspired to enjoy the natural world and contribute to its conservation
- Developing an understanding of local wildlife and habitats
- Gaining first-hand experience of how biological recording works
- Developing wildlife identification skills alongside communication and teaching skills
- Becoming more aware of wildlife and conservation in the local community
- Being encouraged to continue recording wildlife sightings after the event
- Becoming advocates for pollinator protection and native habitat
- Connecting with their local parks and becoming advocates for natural spaces

Community Outcomes

By hosting an event in your “backyard,” BioBlitz events can lower barriers to engagement with nature — particularly for hard-to-reach groups such as young people, older adults, people with disabilities, racially diverse and minority ethnic groups, and those living in historically underinvested areas.

If targeted well, BioBlitzes can bring together diverse groups of people, which can contribute to improved community cohesion. By encouraging people to participate in wildlife activities in their community, BioBlitzes can help foster a sense of belonging. They also can help build

support for local conservation areas and may encourage the behavior changes required for their effective protection.

Consider if your park location is easily accessible for all. If not, consider hosting the event in your entire community or in multiple locations (this can be easily done in iNaturalist) and conducting targeted events to pull participants into your parks. This allows you to open the activity to everyone, regardless of their ability to visit a specific location.

Environmental Outcomes

Data gathered during your BioBlitzes can generate biological records. These records can be used for scientific research, as well as inform conservation practices, local planning and land management on a multitude of levels. Some basic applications for this information could be:

- List of invasive species that are located in your parks that your park's team or volunteers can help to remove and reduce
- List of native plants that are located in your parks — helping you understand if there is balance to those species and if certain habitats need to be strengthened. For example, if you found Monarchs but don't have a lot of milkweed, you may need to correct that imbalance.
- Aiding in the creation of educational materials for your community (and park staff) on what can be found in their parks
- Overall biodiversity index for your parks to help inform conservation and sustainability planning for your agency

What Resources Will You Need?

A BioBlitz will require resources from your agency. Staff and volunteers will be needed to plan, promote and run the event. The amount of resources will depend on the size of your event. Expertise with nature-based events will also be important to ensure participants have a rich and immersive experience. The outline below identifies how to plan, promote and execute a BioBlitz, but not all suggested items are necessary. You can customize your event with whatever will work best for your agency and the resources available.

Physical Distancing and Your BioBlitz

While many communities have reduced restrictions around public gatherings — especially for outside events — there may still be a desire to provide additional safety measures. The suggestions below are helpful should your local health department require certain protocols around gatherings. Always follow the guidance of your local health department when making decisions around large group events.

By using the iNaturalist app, you are already well positioned to conduct a completely virtual event. Here are some other ideas to run your event with physical distancing in mind:

- Move away from large events or focusing on one location. Consider opening all your parks as places to host your BioBlitz! To ensure participants can follow physical distancing protocols, don't focus your BioBlitz on one specific place, but rather a larger area that encompasses many areas or a larger space.
- Schedule a month-long BioBlitz event! This provides the flexibility to allow your community to engage in this activity when it is easiest for them and when they can safely visit your parks and practice physical distancing.
- Make sure to provide guidance on how many people can gather in a group outing.
- Educate and engage with your community virtually! Provide directions and resources through your website, email and social media channels to get people engaged and ready to go out and find pollinator items in your parks!

Getting Started

Site Logistics

Pick a location

Whether it's one park or an entire county or state, here are some questions to ask when trying to decide which location is best for you:

- Is it safe?
- Is it easily accessible? Consider if it's ADA compliant, accessible via public transportation and any other potential barriers when considering if your community has access to your program. If not, consider having an alternate activity (e.g., BioBlitz around base camps, which are described on the next page) for those who can't participate due to limitations.
- Can it handle your expected audience size without any negative impacts on biodiversity?
- Does it contain the desired habitats and species?
- Does it contain appropriate facilities?
- Does it contain somewhere to host your base camp?
- Does it have good cell service in case of an emergency? If not, do you have a plan to address this?

Pick a date(s) and time(s) (if hosting an in-person event)

The NRPA Parks for Pollinators BioBlitz will be held during the entire month of September. Please make sure your event is hosted during the month to count towards the national impact and numbers we are counting.

- Pick a time that the species you are focusing on will be active. Most pollinators are active during the day (8 a.m. to 3 p.m.). Pick a time that suits them and your community.
- Not all pollinators are daytime creatures. You also can do an evening event focused around moths!

Select a Base Camp at Your Location (if hosting in-person event)

Base camps provide one central meet-up location to start and end your event. It gives your participants a place to ask questions and gather with other community members — especially if you have individuals going out on their own.

Base Camp Considerations:

- Choose an easy-to-access space in a central location near an entrance, parking lot or other facilities.
- Have tables and tents, if needed.
- Consider having staff present at all times.
- Consider requirements for powering laptops and/or charging mobile devices.
- Supply educational materials such as guidebooks, microscopes, show and tell items, pollinator-related identification materials and other items to engage participants.
- Display signs about physical distancing (if necessary).

Designate a Wrap-Up location

The wrap-up location serves as a place to end your event. Make sure all sightings are uploaded to your iNaturalist project page and celebrate with participants. To make sure your wrap-up location fits your needs, ensure it has cell reception or Wi-Fi. Refreshments are also an option. This will allow everyone to ensure their sightings are uploaded from their smart phones and those who aren't as familiar with the process can find help. You also can host a wrap-up session to answer any questions, to highlight the group's findings and to thank everyone who helped. If you can project the findings on a screen or wall, that might be good too!

How Much Wi-Fi Do We Need?

How big of a Wi-Fi pipe do you really need to pull off the wrap-up meeting? [Speedtest.net](https://www.speedtest.net) is an excellent and easy way to evaluate the bandwidth of Wi-Fi system. Based on speed test results, 1Mb/s download, 0.2 Mb/s upload per user is a good guideline.

Recruiting Volunteers and Participants

Recruit Experts and Volunteers

You will need employees and/or volunteers to lead groups of participants and be able to assist those who aren't as comfortable exploring on their own. Include those who have knowledge or experience identifying pollinators and their host plants in your leadership group. It would be good to involve partners like:

- Master naturalists
- Master gardeners
- Local universities or academic groups
- Park friends groups
- Species-specific experts or groups
- Park staff who have expertise in horticulture or biology
- School groups and other community groups
- Soil conservation district staff or other conservation-adjacent groups
- Regional, state and national conservation or park groups
- Community-based organizations

Ideas to reward and acknowledge your volunteers include:

- Allowing them to promote their group during the event
- Making t-shirts to distinguish them from the participants
- Creating a social activity for them
- Providing access to all data

Promote your Event!

Promoting your event could include using social media, working with local press, putting up posters and contacting local radio and television stations. Also, reach out to community groups, partners and others potentially interested in the event. Use the [Parks for Pollinators BioBlitz Marketing Toolkit](#) to help with design, key messaging and outreach tactics.

Organizing Participants

Are you going to let participants go solo or are you going to organize them in groups with a leader who can help them through the experience?

If you are doing the latter, then you should divide up the park and make maps (if needed). Assign a leader to each group who can help participants through the event and provide some expertise with identifying species and recording findings. Consider the age and demographics of

participants and select an engaging leader. You may want to request this information when participants register for the event, so you can be prepared ahead of time. You also can create friendly competition between the groups!

Provide participants with a list of species they might see in the park. That way they feel more comfortable identifying and recording sightings.

Preparing You, Your Team and Participants

In the weeks leading up to the BioBlitz:

- Continue promoting your event.
- Update staff and volunteers on their roles at the event and include information about key locations, event context and steps to take in an emergency.
- Run a training or briefing session for key staff and volunteers on how to use iNaturalist and how you will run your event.
- Consider running an [on-site solo BioBlitz rehearsal](#) to ensure you and your team are prepared.
- Share resources with your community on how to use iNaturalist. [This video](#) is great to share. The team at iNaturalist has developed several flyers, handouts and tools to help. Check them out [here](#), under the “additional resources” tab. You can also access other videos to share with your community [here](#).
- Communicate with participants. Link back to your iNaturalist project page, so participants have all the details they need to know.
- Address safety concerns. All events carry some risks. Ensuring that everyone is aware of any potential hazards is important. Make sure your team is prepared with any authorization forms, first aid kits and other important safety measures. There are a few other things you should consider:
 - How you’ll keep track of participants. If you are hosting an in-person event at a large site, consider how you will make sure that no one is left behind.
 - In order to make sure everyone has a great experience, make sure to highlight any toxic plants or dangerous animals that participants and leaders should stay away from.
 - If your area is prone to ticks, let participants know the ways they can protect themselves: light clothing, long sleeves and pants, tucking pant legs into socks and conducting tick checks occasionally.
- Send out reminder emails (three days out and one day out). Keep it short. People won’t read a long email. You could also use [Eventbrite’s handy email reminder tool](#). See example talking points for your email below.

Example Email Talking Points for Attendees

What you really need to know:

- Sign up for iNaturalist at www.inaturalist.org
- Download the free app from the app store on your smart phone or bring a camera to take digital pictures and upload them afterward.
- Be at the parking lot of [park name] [[link to directions here](#)] at [either 9 a.m. or 2 p.m./or both times] with a fully charged phone, water bottle and appropriate clothing and footwear.
- Meet back at basecamp at noon for the morning shift and 4 p.m. for the afternoon shift to see our results, get some food and celebrate what we have accomplished.
- Consider including videos so they can learn how to use iNaturalist:
 - How to make an observation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xENz1xRu0wI>

During Your Event

Bring your gear and set up!

- Tables, tents, chairs, etc.
- Printed maps
- Mark zone boundaries with flags or other obvious markers before the BioBlitz so participants don't wander (if needed)
- Sign-up forms or releases
- Name tags
- Wrap-up session materials (e.g., projector, extension cord, portable hotspot, array of field guides, food, drinks, etc.)
- Snacks
 - Ask participants to bring their own water bottles to ensure your event is conservation friendly. You may want to provide water dispensers.

Orientation for Participants

What is a BioBlitz?

An event that focuses on finding and identifying as many species as possible in a specific area over a short period of time to create a snapshot of an area's biodiversity.

How will this event be structured?

Share how you will run your event with your participants. Will they work in groups or go out on their own? What would you like them to find (pollinators)? Provide details on how long will it last and any other information that will be useful in helping them understand the event.

How does iNaturalist work?

It's an easy-to-use app where you take pictures of what you find, upload them to the iNaturalist site and be included in your agency's project.

How do I use the app?

[This video](#) is great to share. It walks you through the simple process of taking a photo, identifying species, adding detail and sharing it to the iNaturalist site.

What do I take a picture of?

- Whatever is interesting to you, and whatever you think you can get a pretty good close-up photograph of
- It is generally important to document invasive and exotic species as well as natives, so don't worry too much about how "special" or "rare" a plant or animal is. You are trying to get a representative sample of the entire place, not just the best parts.
- Diversity is important, too, so look for things you personally haven't yet photographed.
- If you can, take several photographs of one object to show different features (e.g., bark, leaves, seeds, flowers, etc.), as well as the whole plant. Sometimes this is the only way to make a definite identification.

Smartphone tips:

- Turn screen brightness up on a bright day to make sure your focus is good.
- Rest your "camera hand" on something else to steady it.
- Touch the portion of the screen where you want the camera to focus; some newer phones will do this automatically.

Activities to Do During Your BioBlitz

Depending on your participants and your resources, you could incorporate an activity during your BioBlitz. You or your partners could also host a series of events all month long!

- **Guided Nature Walk:** Take participants through a nature walk and have them take pictures of what they find along the way.
- **Base Camp Mini BioBlitz:** A small event focused on the immediate area around basecamp. This might be great for people with limited abilities, very small children or those not comfortable with the exercise.
- **Moth Trapping:** Use a white sheet and a light at night to attract moths.
- **Sweep Netting:** Ask park rangers not to cut an area of grass for a month or so before the event to give you a good area to sweep net in without damaging any valuable habitats. Cordon off the area with bunting so people can't run off with sweep nets or other equipment.

- **BioBlitz Hoopla:** Throw a hula hoop, then spend time trying to find all the living things in that circle.
- **Log Piles:** Involve your participants in making a log pile six months or so before your BioBlitz event. On the day of your event, you can explore what has moved in!
- **Native Plant Sale:** Partner with local groups or host your own native plant sale to encourage your community to plant in their own backyards.
- **Art Exhibits:** This can be anything from sidewalk chalk to creative pieces your community has created that features pollinators and their importance.
- **Bee House Building Workshops:** Show your community the importance of building houses for your local bees and how much fun it can *bee*!
- **Demonstrations from Key Partners:** Have partners showcase their expertise through demonstrations on master gardeners, soil conservation districts, 4-H and other conservation groups!
- **Monarch Migration events/activities:** September is a great time to focus on the yearly migration!

Virtual Events

Virtual events are still that — events. They take planning and prep work, as well as engagement during and after. Here are some best practices you can use to strengthen your approach. Virtual events can be paired with in-person events as well. You could host a virtual event all month long and host one event in-person. This allows a variety of community members to participate according to what is convenient and accessible to them.

- Virtual events still need volunteers. They can help with virtual sessions to show how to use the app, educate on the local plants and animals they might see, or engage your community throughout the campaign. You can try Facebook live events, Zoom meetings, social posts or other methods to share content and information. Work with partners to help share your content.
- Marketing and virtual engagement will be key. See our marketing toolkit for more details and ideas.
- Consider adding signage or passive engagement elements to your parks during the month of September while your BioBlitz is ongoing.
 - Sidewalk chalk notes and tips
 - Storywalk
 - Signs with suggestions or how-to-join QR codes can be helpful
 - Bingo or Scavenger hunt themed signage
 - And so many more ideas!
- Give away toolkits, educational items or other items to those who participate or win competitions.

After Your BioBlitz

- **Set up an identification (ID) party after the event.** To help ensure all the records submitted are classified and counted, host a time where experts help identify species. Make sure to have experts in both identification of species as well as iNaturalist. Have them identify and classify as many unidentified submissions as possible to count towards your project. Make it a party! Grab some pizza, put on some music and make sure to have Wi-Fi and outlets to charge your laptops too. While you may not be able to host an event like this in person, think about hosting a virtual version.
 - **iNaturalist Identification Tool:** When you are hosting your ID party make everyone aware that the website version of iNaturalist has [a great ID tool](#) — it can make this work much easier!
- **Say thank you.** Make sure to thank all your volunteers, partners and participants who helped make the event a success.
- **Share your results.** Your participants and volunteers will want to know the impact they had, your agency will be interested to know the biological record you collected, researchers will be interested if you found a threatened species, and the media may want to share your results. Many audiences may be interested in your findings, so it's best to share with whomever you think would be interested. You can easily compile the information in iNaturalist.
- **Catalog your results.** Ensuring your results are used by your agency for conservation planning is important. If you already have a protocol for doing this, that is great! If you don't, iNaturalist organizes the information in an easy-to-digest way and you can also consider creating a [guide](#) with iNaturalist
- **Make sure to note invasive species.** Plan a way to control them.
- **Note any species that are threatened, new or troublesome.**
 - If you are doing a site smaller than a county, the endangered species won't come up in your project (this is to protect them from not-so-nice people). You can see if you have endangered or threatened species by looking at the county level and filtering for the upload date. If it was uploaded the date of your event, you can reach out to the observer to ask permission to access where they documented the species.
- **Use the findings to inform your land management plans and host annual BioBlitzes.** This will help evaluate the impact of your conservation plans.
- **Use NRPA's [Parks and Pollinators: Taking Action and Advancing Sustainability](#)** to build upon action and build plans to advance pollinator supporting initiatives and sustainability practices.
- **Plan Your Next One!**

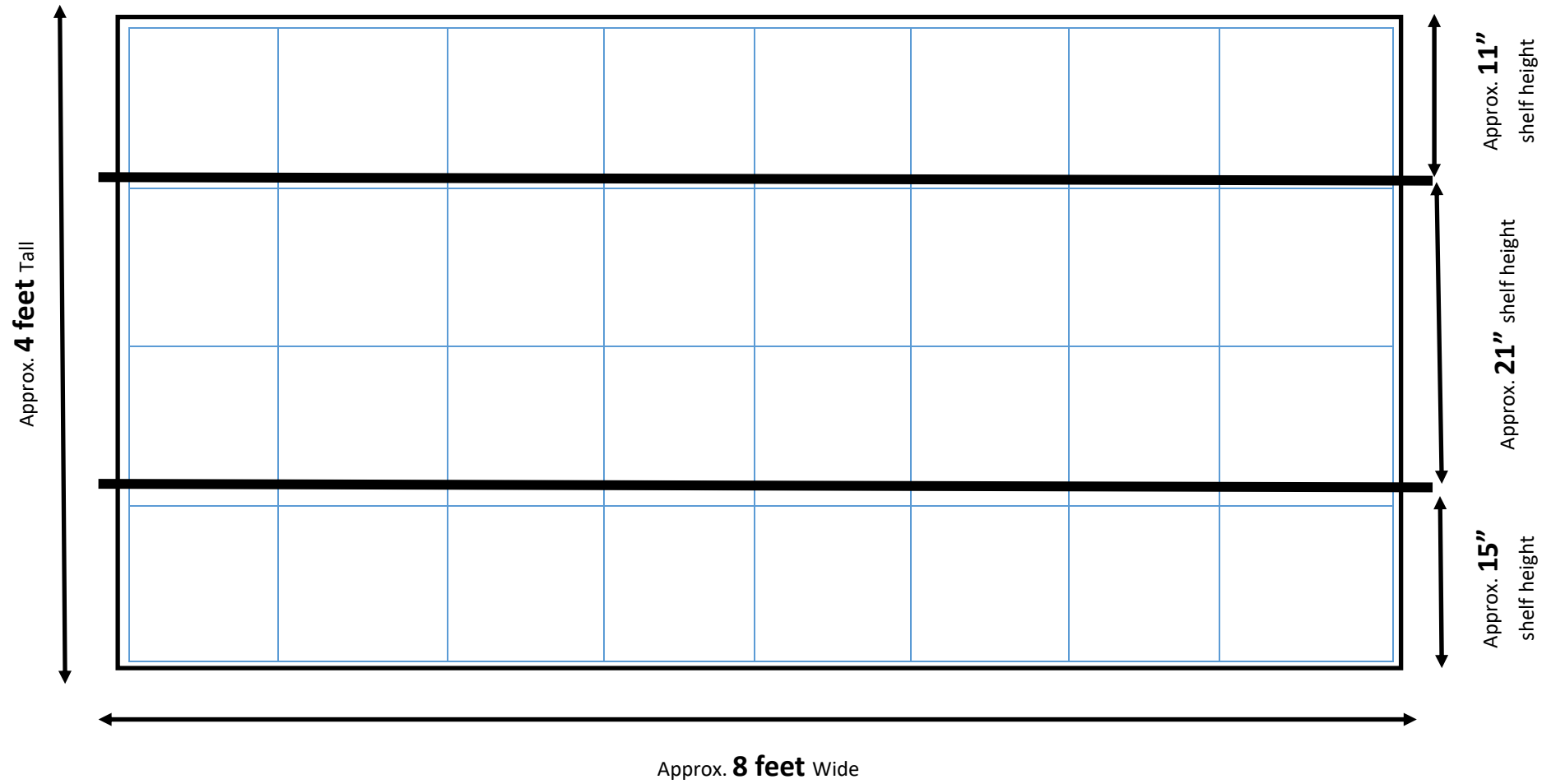
Additional Educational Resources

- **BioBlitz Bingo:** Geared towards high school grade levels; created by Lena Struwe.
- **Educational Plans:** [National Geographic](#) has educational plans designed for 4-8 graders that you can use to engage youth in the data that you found! [Xerces Kid X program is great, and they have other educational offerings](#), as well.

Acknowledgement

The Parks for Pollinators BioBlitz is organized by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) with support from [The Scotts Miracle-Gro Foundation](#) to build public awareness and support local actions to protect pollinators. The Scotts Miracle-Gro Foundation supports these efforts in communities across the country and through their business practices.





8x11 (landscape)
 Display Placard
 Actual location right center
 to Case

2nd Floor Library Display Case

