Join in the Fun with a City Nature Challenge Near You!

 Step 1: Sign Up for iNaturalist

- Sign up. Download the free **iNaturalist** mobile app for [iOS](#) or [Android](#) from the AppStore or Google Play. You can also use the iNaturalist.org website.

- Create an **iNaturalist** account using an email address, a unique user name, and a password. (If you are working as a family, you may want to create a user name for your group, for example, TeamGarcia or NearbyNatureJones or something even more fun!)

- Note: If you check "*Yes, license my photos, sounds, and observations so scientists can use my data*" this will allow scientists to use your photos for their research.

Step 2: Join the Eugene/Springfield Project
Click on one of the links below or follow the directions to find other projects to participate in:

- [Eugene/Springfield City Nature Challenge](#)

If you can't get outside, you can still participate! Join this project, specifically designed for species you may find inside your home: Never Home Alone: The Wild Life of Homes

- Click the *More* icon at the bottom of your screen and then click *Projects*. Use the Search icon to find one of these projects near you!

- Now you are ready to post your own photo observations, as well as see what other people in the community are finding in their neighborhoods!

Step 3: Take Photos for iNaturalist:

- The easiest way to connect photos to location is to turn ON the GPS (or Location) function on your phone or other digital camera before you start taking photos (you can always turn it back off afterward).

- Go out in your yard or close neighborhood and take pictures of as many *wild* living things as you can find. Your discoveries don't have to be rare wildflowers or exotic bugs; but try to focus on wild rather than garden plants and skip taking pictures of pets. Try to take two or more photos of each thing you find to upload - this helps those who assist with ID'ing pictures or those using information for science.

- **If you take a picture of a garden plant or non-wild animal, please mark it captive/cultivated when you send it to iNaturalist.**

- If you are working as a family, have children help find different plants and animals and tutor them in how to take good pictures. Here are few tips for what makes a good iNaturalist photo:
  o Get close (but not too close if you're observing a wild animal!)

  o Try to center your subject and include just one plant/animal at a time

  o Take more than one picture of the subject. For example, a tree observation should include a closeup of the leaf and a branch photo and a picture of the whole tree. (Bonus: if it's a flowering tree add a photo of the flower!) For mushrooms show the top and the bottom of the cap.

  o Feel free to take lots of photos but share only those that are centered on the subject you are capturing and in-focus. (If you are wanting help with an ID and there is more than one plant/animal in the photo, add a note about which one you are trying to get help ID'ing).

Step 4: Post Your Photos on iNaturalist

- Open the iNaturalist app on your smartphone or device. (Do this when you have Wi-Fi and you won't use data.)

- Once you're in the app, click *Observe*. Choose a picture on your phone and upload it to iNaturalist. To add additional photos to an observation, touch the + next to your first image.

- You can also upload photos through your home computer to report observations.

- View the suggestions for what your photo might be by clicking "What did you see?" Click one if you agree, then click *Share*. It's okay if you don't know the name of what you found or if you just list "plant" or "bird" or "insect". Other iNaturalist users can now see your photo and add an identification if one has not been made yet, or additional confirmations for photos you did identify (this is why it is very important to use the captive/cultivated option for planted yards *even if those plants are native).

- Notice that you can see how many total photos you or your family group have added over time!

- By visiting the project often, you will notice when other people identify your mystery photos and also what other folks have found in your neighborhood. Fun!

- Note — If you don't want the exact location of your photo to be visible to others (for example if your photo is in your back yard), click *Edit* when your photo is open, scroll to Geoprivacy (iOS) or Location Visibility (Android) under the photo, and chose *Obscured*. This will locate your photo within a general rather than a specific area.
- If you would like to upload your photos from a laptop or desktop, see directions here.

Step 5: Beyond iNaturalist:

- Want to learn more about your natural neighbors? Do some research online or in books about the living things identified in your neighborhood. For some Northwest natural history reads and resources, check out some of our favorite books and websites.

For additional iNaturalist tips and tutorials, check out the videos listed below. There are also MANY others online!

1. Simple introduction to iNaturalist – https://vimeo.com/157341038
2. How to Make an Observation on iNaturalist using the phone app – https://vimeo.com/162581545
3. How to upload from your desktop computer – https://vimeo.com/167431843
4. How to take better photos for identification – https://vimeo.com/167341998
5. How to obscure your location – https://vimeo.com/400823245
6. How to add photos or sound to an observation already submitted – https://vimeo.com/289168727
7. How to add Facebook photos to iNaturalist – https://vimeo.com/33952573
8. How to take good mushroom photos for iNaturalist – https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LKF_pIY0Zpc&t=1s

Note: iNaturalist is open source software, it has free APPs for all smart phones, and the effort is backed by the California Academy of Sciences and National Geographic. iNaturalist is used for many national efforts, is increasingly the standard for professional biologists, and is the biggest free citizen science data repository.