



## EARTH CARE @LEWINSVILLE

### EARTH CARE OPPORTUNITY: THE CITY NATURE CHALLENGE APRIL 30-MAY 3

*We cannot protect something we do not love, we cannot love what we do not know,  
and we cannot know what we do not see. And touch. And hear. – Richard Louv*

What better way to appreciate God's creation than through observation and learning about the plants and animals in our backyards, neighborhoods and local parks. The City Nature Challenge provides an opportunity to do just that, while helping scientists collect valuable information on urban biodiversity.

The City Nature Challenge is an international citizen science bioblitz with the goal of observing and documenting as many species



*Figure 1- Photo by Sean Stratton, Unsplash*

of plants and animals as possible in urban communities in a 4-day period. Begun in 2016 as a friendly competition between Los Angeles and San Francisco, the event quickly grew to include several hundred urban areas around the world, including the Washington DC Metro Area. It is a fun way to connect with the natural world around us and makes for a great family educational activity.

To participate, follow these steps:

1. Download the free iNaturalist mobile app for iOS (from the AppStore) or Android (from Google Play). Then create an iNaturalist account as instructed: (<https://www.inaturalist.org/>)
2. Take photos during the project period of as many wild living things as you can find (rather than garden plants or pets) including plants, animals, fungi, or evidence of life, such as fur, tracks, shells, carcasses, scat. Take two or more photos of each thing you find to help experts who may later assist in identifying pictures.
3. Post your pictures to iNaturalist on your smartphone or by uploading photos through your home computer. The app will offer suggestions for identifying the photos you upload, but if you are uncertain, you need only specify to the level at which you are confident (e.g., "plant" or "insect"). Be sure to note the location of your finding; privacy options are available to locate your photo within a general rather than a specific area.

You can enjoy using iNaturalist anytime, but only observations made during the period April 30-May 4 will count for the City Nature Challenge.

For more information about the City Nature Challenge Washington DC Metro Area, including videos and other resources to get you started: <https://citynaturechallengedc.org/>

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