

**Guidance for visitors in
Huntingdonshire's greenspaces**

SETTING UP A BIOBLITZ EVENT



www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/en/press-releases/2018/04/18/2018-04-18-issues/biodiversity-for-all/

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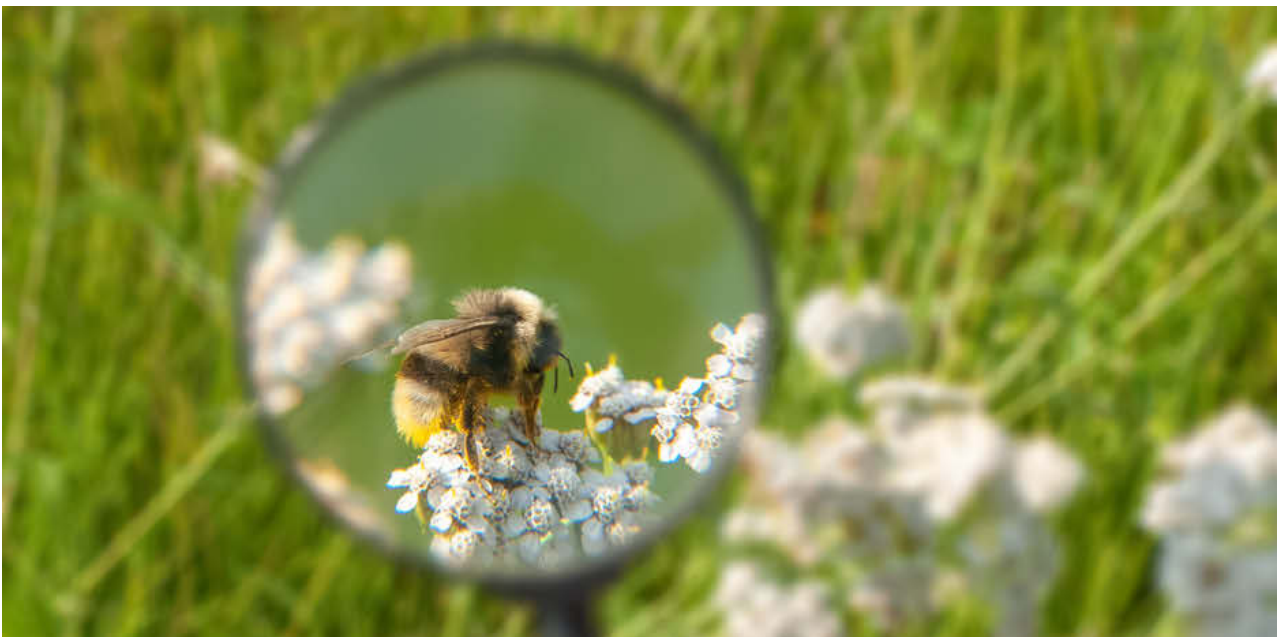
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What is a BioBlitz?

A BioBlitz is an event in which teams of volunteer scientists, families, students, teachers, and other community members work together to find and identify as many species of plants, animals, fungi, and other organisms as possible.

You can download the iNaturalist app to help identify and tally all your finds!



Become a wildlife explorer for a day and discover what's living right on your doorstep by joining in at your local BioBlitz event or create your own!

Experienced naturalists and wildlife watchers need your help to find and identify as many different species as you can before the clock runs out. Just like a real scientific expedition, everything you find will be documented and passed on to local and national databases that monitor wildlife.

With interactive activities for kids, grown-ups, beginners and experts alike there is something for everyone at a BioBlitz.

Organising a BioBlitz Check List

Step 1: Pick the location and date you would like your BioBlitz to take place

- Always ask the landowners permission to confirm you are allowed to use the land.

If you choose a location managed by Huntingdonshire District Council please fill out a 'Private Gatherings' form:

<https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/ftmbigh2/application-for-private-gatherings.docx>

or contact:

events@huntingdonshire.gov.uk to organise relevant permissions.

Step 2: Download the iNaturalist app and configure the app to tally your BioBlitz count

- You'll want to get iNaturalist set up for your BioBlitz in advance so you'll have a web address ready to send around so that its easy for participants and onlookers to find your BioBlitz on iNaturalist.
- You can create a collection project by following the instructions here:
<https://www.inaturalist.org/pages/managing-projects#collection>



Step 3: Recruit observers

- Help get observers familiar posting observations before the BioBlitz starts. The best first step is to get familiar posting observations yourself!
- Make sure attendees understand their role as observers is participatory and that their objective is to drive the BioBlitz count by recording and uploading observations that will be identifiable.

Step 4: Plan how to report back results from your BioBlitz

- Reporting back to bioblitz participants by communicating the results of a bioblitz is a great way to thank participants bring the event to conclusion.
- iNaturalist has several tools to help you write up a report and share it with participants.

For a more in depth guide on how to use the iNaturalist app for a BioBlitz follow:

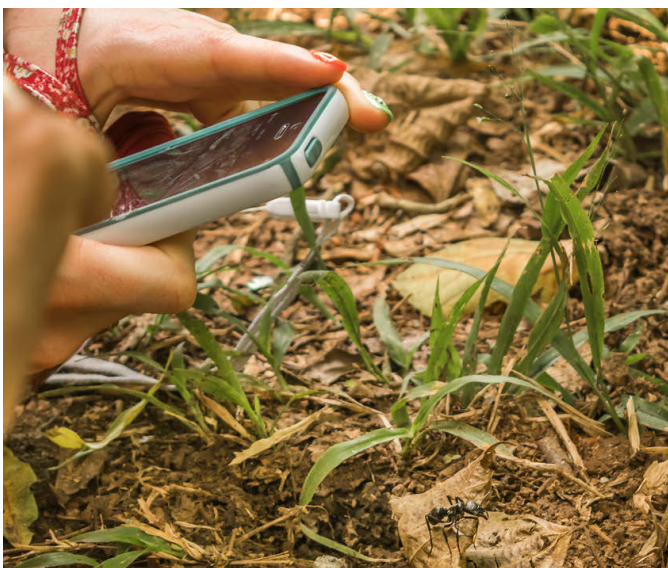
<https://www.inaturalist.org/pages/bioblitz+guide#count>

Feel free to contact HDC's Biodiversity Team if you have any further questions:
biodiversity@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

During and after the event Check List

DURING THE EVENT (AND SET UP)

- Co-ordinate delivery and set up of any hired equipment
- Set up your site, including Basecamp and activities
- Walk around the venue to check for any new risks (or exciting wildlife!)
- Brief staff and volunteers on how to use the iNaturalist app to record findings
- Update websites and social media so attendees/volunteers are kept up to date
- Be active and dynamic - if something isn't working then change it
- Evaluate the success of the day



AFTER THE EVENT

- Always clean up the site and leave it as you found it!
- Thank everyone who helped
- Collate the findings (including reminding participants to send records and photos after the event)
- Write an event report and verify the records that have been made during the BioBlitz, to make the records count
- Share any reports or feedback with volunteers/the public/whom it may concern
- Debrief participants with species totals and other achievements
- Write up your evaluation of the day and consider any lessons learned
- Carry out any other follow-up activities
- Relax and recover!

Choosing a site and timing

Choosing the right location is important as it can affect the overall feel of the event, as well as determining what is found during your BioBlitz.

Public parks, nature reserves and private land are all popular locations to hold a BioBlitz, you just need to make sure you have the relevant permissions needed to access the land on your chosen date. Remember, if you are planning to hold your event for 24-hours you may need to think about overnight accommodation or somewhere to camp.

Your Local Records Centre may be able to help suggest sites which are not as well recorded as others and they may even know which location have interesting species to find!

Your chosen site should:

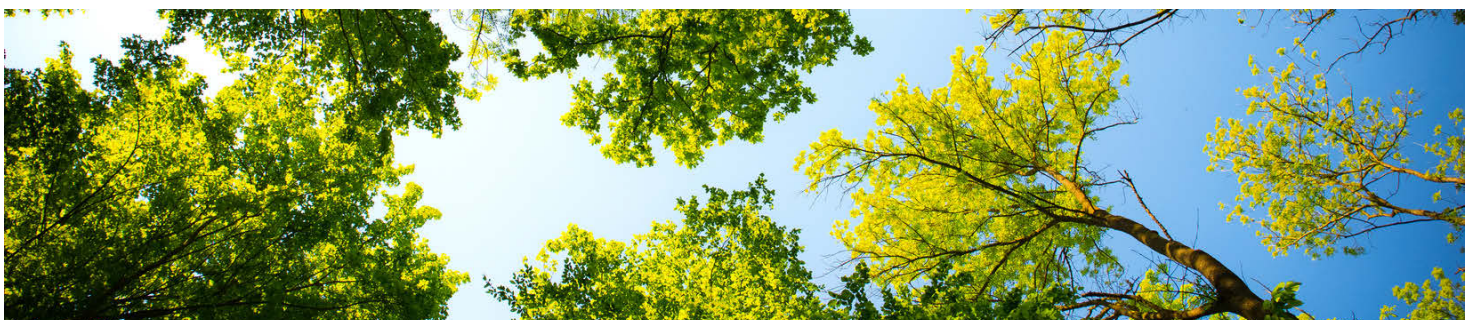
- Be safe
- Easily accessible for all with lots of parking and public transport links
- Be large enough to accommodate your expected group size without affecting the local biodiversity
- Contains required habitats and species
- Includes appropriate facilities (i.e. toilets)
- Area within the location where you can set up your basecamp
- Good phone signal to use the iNaturalist app and in case of emergency.

Find a list of HDC Open Spaces here:

www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/leisure/parks-nature-reserves-and-green-spaces

Choosing a date and time:

- Avoid clashing with local or national events to ensure more people are available
- Late spring/early summer are good times to spot a variety of species (temperatures are better for being outdoors as well)
- If schools are involved your event may need to be held on a weekday during term times/school hours
- Although many BioBlitzes run for 24 hours, you can create your own time period if it suits better.
- There is no fixed time you can start
 - Suggestion: Late morning gives people time to arrive.
 - We also recommend the event runs during daylight hours for safety and to make taking photographs easier.



Publicising your event

Publicising your BioBlitz event is very important in attracting potential observers, scientists and identifiers.

Spend some time deciding how to promote the event as effectively as possible and keep in mind how far you would like word to spread.

General promoting:

- Register your event with the National BioBlitz Network and get your event on their website.
- Invite known groups you think may be interested and ask them to spread the word.
- You may want to invite locally known people (such as councillors) to give your event a 'hook'.
- Advertise your event locally using flyers, posters, banners at the venue (your local library may allow you to leave flyers with them)
- Promote via social media, online communities, email, blogs and newsgroups.
- Target groups to take part such as scouts, health groups, youth groups etc.
- You may even want to recruit volunteers to help with publicising your BioBlitz event.

On the day:

- Create some leaflets that can be handed out on the day at your location - passers by may be interested.
- Continue to use social media on the day for the public to follow along.

Working with the media:

- Decide on your story before contacting anyone - keep an emphasis on getting the community involved in a positive activity.
- Try contacting local radio stations to get the word out about your event
- Local online newspapers (such as The Hunts Post) may be interested in posting a short story on their website about your BioBlitz
- Contact the National BioBlitz Network for help.
- Tweet to @BioBlitzUK to be retweeted

After the event:

- Inform your social media, and others who helped promote your event, your species totals and include photographs.
- Remember to take plenty of photos on the day so you can post them afterwards!



Health and Safety

As event organisers, you have an obligation to make sure all attendees of your event are covered when it comes to health and safety. The safety of staff, volunteers and the public should always come first. The following policies, documents and checks will help make sure you are prepared and have the correct procedures in place if something happens.

Planning ahead:

Ahead of the event you need to ensure you have the relevant plans and documents in place to cover you if something goes wrong.

Depending on where your location is/who you are working with, check if you will need the following:

- Risk assessments
- Public Liability Insurance
- Relevant filled in forms (subject to location)
- DBS check
- Consent forms for any photography
- Plan for a safety briefing ahead of the scheduled start time
- Collecting or surveying permits are required for some species and habitats so seek advice where necessary. Landowners and your local statutory agency should be aware if this is the case.
- Put together an emergency contacts list, including phone numbers for key staff, first aiders and volunteers.

If you are holding your event on a HDC open space and are unsure on what documents are required, contact:

events@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

or visit:

www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/people-communities/running-an-event-or-party/

Other things to consider:

- Have a central meeting point at basecamp to carry out safety briefings.
- Write up accident and incident procedure to ensure staff and volunteers know what to do in an emergency, including how to evacuate the site.
- Make an accident and incident form so you can log any that happen and also how they were responded to.
- If there are children attending, clearly state that children must be accompanied by an adult.
- Have a lost child procedure
- Arrange first aid cover - there are no fixed guidelines as to what is required. As a minimum, have one or more trained first aiders on duty at a time and a first aid kit at basecamp (Contact your local Red Cross or St Johns Ambulance for advice)
- Provide appropriate PPE and equipment such as torches (if working at night) and high vis jackets.
- A sign-up sheet may be required to ensure all participants return from the activity safely by a set time. Collect phone numbers for all participants in case anyone doesn't sign back in and prepare emergency plan for anyone thought to be lost.

Downloading iNaturalist

NATURE AT YOUR FINGERTIPS



Learn About Nature

Build your knowledge by talking with other naturalists and helping others

Follow this link to learn how to use iNaturalist:



Crowdsource Identifications

Connect with experts who can identify the organisms you observe.

<https://www.bnhc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/How-to-use-iNaturalist-docx.pdf>

How It Works



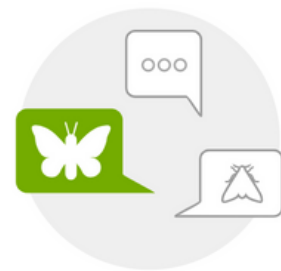
1

Record your observations



2

Share with fellow naturalists



3

Discuss your findings

**SEARCH
'iNATURALIST' IN
YOUR APP STORE
OR
SCAN QR TO
DOWNLOAD APP**

