Attachment 1, "BioBlitz 3: Using iNaturalist"

Note: Students under the age of 13 require parental approval to use, due to the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act of 1998. Please read more information specific to schools in the Teacher's Guide on the iNaturalist website: http://www.inaturalist.org/pages/teacher%27s+guide.

Setting up a project on iNaturalist

The iNaturalist site is fairly easy to use, but the instructor will need to spend some time exploring the site to see all available tools and requirements prior to teaching the students how to properly document biological organisms. Practice adding several observations with students prior to the BioBlitz.

Create or join a project

1. Go to www.inaturalist.org . Across the top of this home page are tabs for OBSERVATIONS, SPECIES, PROJECTS, PLACES, GUIDES, and PEOPLE. Clicking on these tabs helps a user navigate around the website. To create an account, click on the "SIGN UP!" button. Users will fill in basic information (username, password, email) and select their time zones. Once a user clicks the "SIGN UP" button, they are ready to use the site.

2. To create a project, go to the "PROJECTS" tab at the top of the home page. Click on "START A NEW PROJECT." Users do not have to fill out every box to create a project. Look at the choices for project types and pick the option appropriate for a specific project. If a BioBlitz will be conducted during a restricted time frame, an instructor can choose this option or select a different option for collecting observations over a longer time frame. Students can be put into small groups for observation entries, rather than making individual observations.

3. When a user has entered the project information, he/she must click the "CREATE" button at the bottom of the page. If some of the information or pictures are missing, a user can go back and edit at a later date.

4. The person who creates the project is considered an "Administrator" and will see the new project listed under the PROJECTS tab at the top of the page.

5. If a user wants to join another project, he/she must click on the PROJECTS tab, browse through different choices, and pick one. The front page shows recently active and recently created projects that a user may select or the user may scroll to the bottom and click on "BROWSE ALL PROJECTS." If working with students in a particular area, it is probably best to create a unique project.

6. If a user chooses to join an existing project, he/she must click on this project and then click on the “JOIN THIS PROJECT” button in the upper right hand corner of the screen. The user can read through the information on the project and then scroll down and click on “YES, I WANT TO JOIN.” New users will then be able to add observations to that project.

Adding Observations

1. In order to add observations, users must first join a project and then will immediately be able to add observations for that project. Rather than having individual students create accounts, instructors may want to create group accounts, with each account used by 5-6 students. Making the user name and password very similar for different groups is convenient for students (Example: School Name 1, School Name 2, School Name 3, etc…)

2. After logging into the project, users should click on the “ADD OBSERVATIONS TO THIS PROJECT” button in the upper right hand corner. All observations should be natural, rather than ornamental species.

3. Observations may be used by professional scientists in their research. Users should take pride in their work and be as accurate and complete as possible. All documented organisms should include a photo and, if possible, GPS coordinates. To request help with an ID, include 2-3 photographs and a few sentences describing behavior or physical features unclear in the photograph.

4. The more information users add, the better, but users can still add observations with a minimum of information. On the right hand side of the screen, users are given the option of uploading a picture. Observations can be saved by clicking the “SAVE OBSERVATION” button on the bottom of the page.

5. User observations should now show up on the home page of the project, along with the contributor.

Using the Data

1. On the home page of the project, data will be compiled for further use. A user can click on any of the tabs on the right hand side to see the data: “OBSERVATIONS/MAP,” “ CHECKLIST,” “ TOP CONTRIBUTORS,” and “STATS” buttons.