

The “What’s In My Backyard?” Challenge

For the 15th anniversary of Endangered Species Day, the Endangered Species Coalition is inviting everyone we know to participate in a challenge: get outdoors and identify as many species as you can in your own backyard, balcony, courtyard, or neighborhood park! Here are just a few reasons to join this exciting event celebrating the biodiversity all around us:

- Spend time outside and connect with nature.
- Learn more about species in your local area and how to identify them.
- Collect data that helps scientists and researchers.
- Engage in ES Day in a way that’s fun and safe during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Step 1

Create an account with iNaturalist, if you don’t already have one.

1. Go to [iNaturalist.org/signup](https://www.inaturalist.org/signup)
2. Fill out your information to create a new account.
3. Please note that you must be 13 years or older to create your own iNaturalist account. Children under 13 can participate in this event by partnering with a parent, guardian, or other adult; or parents can create accounts for minors using [this process](#).

Step 2

Download the iNaturalist app on your phone or tablet.

You can find the iNaturalist app for Android products through Google Play, and iNaturalist app for Apple products through the App Store. Once you’ve downloaded the app, log in to your iNaturalist account.

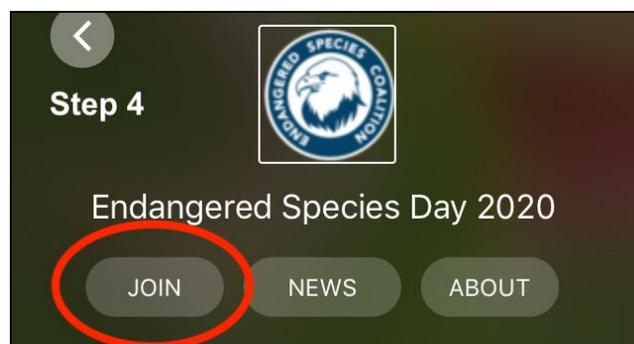
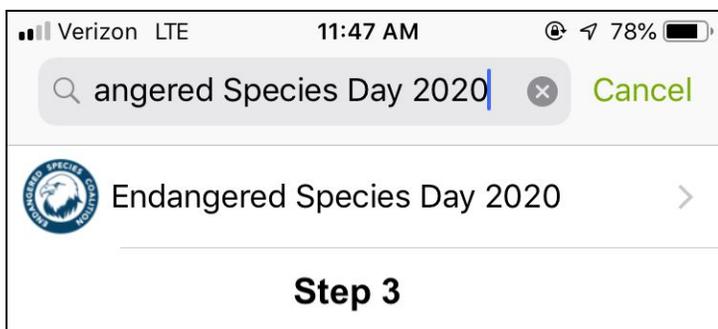
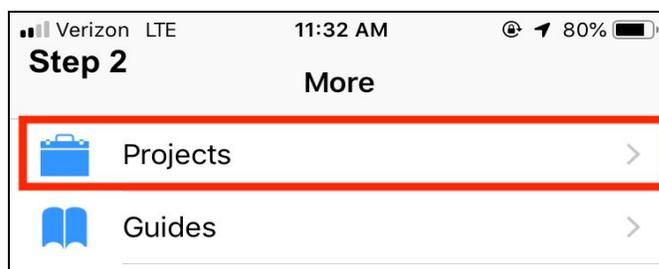
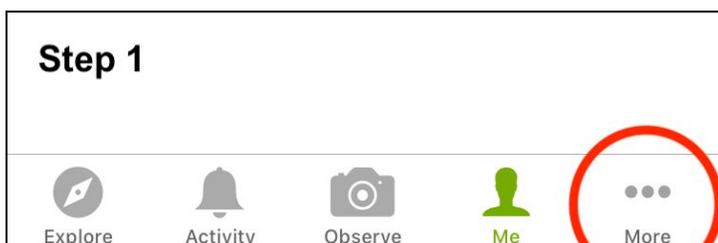


Questions? Contact Sarah Starman at ssarman@endangered.org.

Step 3

Join our Endangered Species Day 2020 project!

1. Open the app and click **More** in the bottom right-hand corner of your screen.
2. Click **Projects**.
3. Search for “Endangered Species Day 2020.”
4. Click **Join**.



Step 4

Learn to use iNaturalist.

Use these videos and written instructions to learn all about how to use iNaturalist.

Tutorial Video: <https://vimeo.com/162581545>

Additional Tips Video: <https://vimeo.com/167341998>

Written Guide: <https://www.inaturalist.org/pages/getting+started>

Important note: iNaturalist focuses on wild species, so please be careful to mark any captive or cultivated species, like pets or cultivated garden plants, as “Captive / Cultivated” in the app.

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Step 5

Get out and observe!

There are creatures to be found everywhere, from your own backyard, balcony, or courtyard, to a neighborhood park. On Saturday, May 16th, 2020, we're challenging you to go out and find as many creatures as you can! Just be sure to pick a place where you can maintain social distancing and stay safe in accordance with the [guidelines of the CDC](#) and your home state.

Some of the easiest creatures to find and photograph are bugs, mushrooms, and plants, but depending on where you live, you may also be able get photos of birds, amphibians and reptiles, fish, and small mammals like squirrels. Let's see how many species we can identify around the world in one day!

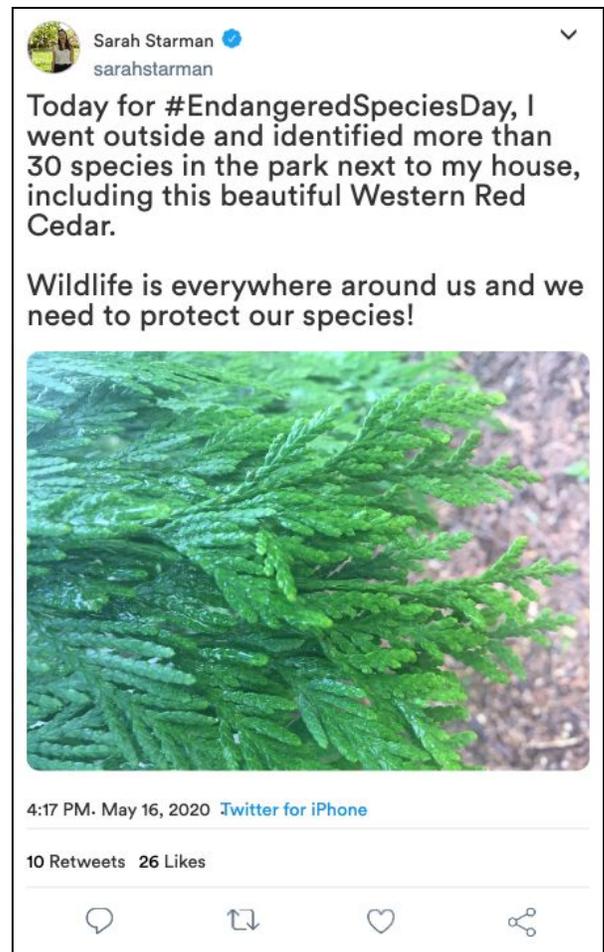
Step 6

Share your observations to make an impact

With the growing threat of the extinction crisis, it is more important than ever that we protect wildlife species and their habitat. Help us raise awareness of this issue and advocate for strong wildlife protections using your observations!

Post a photo of one species you identified on Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter, and be sure to use the hashtag #EndangeredSpeciesDay in your post. This helps raise awareness about the importance of biodiversity and the need to protect it. See a sample Tweet to the right.

Increase habitat for wildlife species by planting a pollinator garden. A pollinator garden has native flowers and grasses that provide critical food and habitat for bees, butterflies, and other species. You can learn more about pollinator gardens from the Xerces Society by clicking [here](#), and more about native plants in your region by clicking [here](#). Maybe if you plant a pollinator garden this year, you'll see more species in your yard by next year!



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