

Bioblitz

Plan your Biodiversity measurement event during the Let it Grow campaign

The Let it Grow campaign will allow you to organise a range of different biodiversity-related activities and events for your visitors. During the next World Biodiversity days (22 May 2016 or 2017), we encourage you to host your own biodiversity measurement event, also called Bioblitz; as a part of the Let It Grow campaign. Below you can read what a Bioblitz is, why it is a great tool to engage people with science and where to find more information.

What is a Bioblitz?

A Bioblitz gives a snapshot of the living things in a specified natural area; allowing the scientific community to learn more about the different species living together in the area: the biodiversity richness and health.

During a Bioblitz, science communicators and biodiversity specialists, such as professional and amateur biologists, ecologists and naturalists, involve people in surveying local nature and discovering more about it. Bioblitz participants can help science by searching for local plants, birds, insects, mammals, reptiles, frogs, bats, spiders, lichens, fungi and algae in a well-defined natural area.



Why run a Bioblitz?

A Bioblitz is a great tool to engage people with science and help them understand how scientists work. Running one can empower your local community by creating an enjoyable learning opportunity and raise people's awareness of local biodiversity. To run a successful Bioblitz and depending on what you want your participants to look out for, you need to collaborate with local experts who are willing to share their knowledge on biodiversity, including measuring and recording techniques. You may need an entomologist to recognize insects' species or an ornithologist to identify birds, etc. These new partnerships could lead to other projects you may run in the future. Promoting the Bioblitz through local and social media can give you visibility and improve your public reputation. A Bioblitz is also an opportunity to encourage scientific progress and collect valuable data assessing the biodiversity of the sampled area. Above all, it's great fun!

General information

When you start planning a Bioblitz, some of the things you need to consider are:

Timing - A Bioblitz usually lasts 24 hours, it could be run once in a year or even several times if your aim is to compare different seasons. Long-term projects, where you sample the same area for several consecutive years, can be even more valuable to scientists.

Participants - School children as well as the general public (adults, families, etc.) can be easily involved in a Bioblitz. We suggest groups of 5-10 participants, supervised by a biodiversity expert. The group looks out for species of a specific taxa, depending on the experts' specializations.



Survey - Within the 24 hours, you can run different survey sessions involving different groups of participants. Other parallel activities can be photo competitions or a children's nature walk. Participants take record of the species found by filling a list on a recording form. The collected data will have to be entered into an online local or national database for use by the scientific community.

Sampling area - You need to decide and define which areas you want your Bioblitz participants to work in. Good areas are public urban or peri-urban green areas, local nature reserves or private gardens.

Species identification - A Bioblitz's main goal is to identify as many species as possible directly on the site. The species identification should be validated by the experts supervising each group of participants. If the experts cannot identify rare species on site, take photos and then seek other experts' opinions. To get help for the identification of rare European species you can refer to local associations or online tools such as iSpot or others.

Bioblitz run in Europe

Have a look at Bioblitz guidelines and useful tips developed by some other institutions in Europe:

- [Natural Sciences Museum of Barcelona \(in Catalan\)](#)
- [Natural History Museum of Aarhus \(in Danish\)](#)
- [Bristol Natural History Consortium](#)
- [The Open Air Laboratories \(OPAL\) Network](#)

There is also an English Bioblitz report available from the Natural Sciences Museum of Barcelona on the Let It Grow website: <http://www.letitgrow.eu/resources/shared-resources-draft>

Make the most from their expertise and plan your own!

If you have any Bioblitz resources you may like to share with the community on the Let it Grow website or have any questions about hosting a Bioblitz, please send an email to info@letitgrow.eu

