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INDIANAPOLIS ADAPTS – NONPROFITS USING CITIZEN SCIENCE TO KEEP HOOSIERS CONNECTED TO THEIR COMMUNITY, AND NATURE, DURING THE PANDEMIC

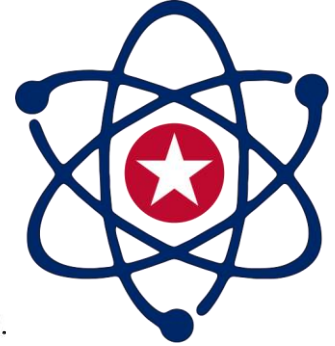
Hundreds of citizen scientists aim to make over 10,000 observations of urban wildlife, during a “Social Distancing Edition” of the 2020 City Nature Challenge

Indianapolis, IN (April 17, 2020) – Indiana Sciences and a coalition of partners including Keep Indianapolis Beautiful (KIB), Indiana Wildlife Federation (IWF), Indiana Forest Alliance (IFA), Reconnecting to Our Waterways (ROW), Indianapolis Office of Sustainability (Sustain Indy), Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and Indy Parks and Recreation are challenging Indianapolis residents and surrounding communities to stay connected with the urban wildlife around them by becoming citizen scientists and participating in the “Social Distancing Edition” of the 2020 global [City Nature Challenge](#) from April 24 – May 3, 2020.

Although sports may be postponed, the Indianapolis City Nature Challenge (**#IndyCNC**) offers Hoosiers an opportunity for friendly competition between Indianapolis, Fort Wayne, and South Bend; as well as other major cities in the Midwest. In 2018 and 2019, nearly 1,000 citizen scientists completed over 7,000 observations during Indianapolis’ first two years participating in the City Nature Challenge.

With all previously organized partner events canceled, the **#IndyCNC** aims to be a vehicle for organizations to stay engaged with participants through individualized “do it yourself” remote challenges that empower Hoosiers to uncover the urban wildlife right outside of their window. Organizers encourage Hoosiers to participate in their own yard, or local green-spaces and local/state parks, while following appropriate social distancing guidelines.

While so many Hoosiers navigate the challenges of stay at home orders, continuing “essential job” obligations, and caring for children and loved ones during the pandemic, the organizers of the **#IndyCNC** hope to create opportunities for individuals to rediscover wonder and beauty while we are all surrounded by things that understandably invoke fear and anxiety.



For both budding and veteran citizen scientists, participating is easy:

1. Find wildlife. It can be any plant, animal, fungi, slime mold, or any other evidence of life (scat, fur, tracks, shells, carcasses!) found in your participating city.
2. Take a picture of what you find, and be sure to note the location of the critter or plant.
3. Share your observations by uploading your findings on our [iNaturalist](#) project!

#IndyCNC “SOCIAL DISTANCING EDITION” CITYWIDE CHALLENGES

Document plants, animals, bugs, and more with iNaturalist, wave at your neighbors from an appropriate distance, and pick-up any litter you see!

📅 Friday, April 24th starting at Noon

- Student “15 Minute Backyard Field Trip!” Challenge
 - *Parents and Teachers: Need a change of pace in your eLearning? Have your students open the backdoor and discover the natural world tucked right between the house and the car!*

📅 Saturday, April 25th starting at Noon

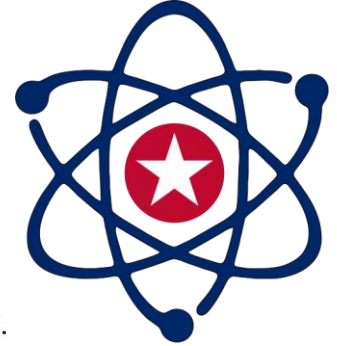
- Citywide “15 Minutes of Nature!” Challenge
 - *We are encouraging everyone in the Indianapolis Metropolitan Area to take 15 minutes to step outside and appreciate the urban biodiversity right outside of their front door!*

📅 Sunday, April 26th starting at Noon

- Family “15 Minute Nature Walk!” Challenge
 - *Talk a walk with the kids, your partner, or that special four-legged friend; whatever family means to you; and document the urban wildlife hiding right outside of your window!*

Participation in the Indianapolis City Nature Challenge is an easy way for the community to contribute to the City of Indianapolis’ sustainability and resiliency plan, **Thrive Indianapolis**, as City agencies and community partners ramp up efforts to clean up neighborhoods, build healthy local ecosystems, and foster a vibrant community. Residents and businesses will be encouraged to further invest time and resources in improving and expanding local green-spaces.

As citizen science initiatives increase in popularity and impact on research, this year’s fourth annual **City Nature Challenge** has expanded to more than 250 cities across the globe. Kicking off April 24 at 12:01 am in each time zone, the Challenge runs through April 27, 11:59 pm; then citizen scientists will verify identifications until May 3. The multi-city, global event calls on current and aspiring citizen scientists, nature and science fans, and people of all ages and science backgrounds to observe and submit pictures of plants and wildlife using the free app [iNaturalist](#). Indianapolis participants should add observations to the [“City Nature Challenge 2020 Indianapolis”](#) project in iNaturalist. Results will be announced on May 3.



More Information and Education Toolkit

Visit <https://indianasciences.org/cnc-2020/>

iNaturalist

Signing up is easy and free.

Visit <https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/city-nature-challenge-2020-indianapolis> from your browser, or download iNaturalist from the [Apple App Store](#) or [Google Play](#) store.

Social Media

#IndyCNC and **#CityNatureChallenge**

Twitter handle: [@IndianaSciences](#) and [@ScienceMarchIND](#) and [@kibiorg](#)

About Indiana Sciences

Indiana Sciences is an all-volunteer nonprofit organization uniting Indiana's community of passionate science enthusiasts and advocates as a diverse, nonpartisan group to celebrate and communicate science. From "March for Science Indianapolis" and "Books, Booze, and Brains" to "A Day For Science" and "The Science of Science Fiction", Indiana Sciences is dedicated to fostering a new frontier for science communication and science advocacy. To learn more, visit IndianaSciences.org or follow us on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook at [@IndianaSciences](#).

About Keep Indianapolis Beautiful, Inc. (KIB)

Keep Indianapolis Beautiful, Inc. is a private nonprofit organization with a mission to engage diverse communities to create vibrant public places, helping people and nature thrive. Annually, KIB works with over 15,000 volunteers on nearly 900 community projects. To learn more, visit www.kibi.org or follow us on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook at [@kibiorg](#).