

# How to iNaturalist



## What kinds of things can you observe?

- Plants, animals, fungi/lichen
- No fossils or rocks
- Evidence of animals (tracks, fur, feathers) is allowed but usually less likely to get identified
- You can upload a picture with two species in it but if you want them each to get identified you need to upload it twice
- Try not to waste server space on pictures that are unlikely to get identified

## Taking photos

- Take as high quality photos as you can
- Make sure the object is in focus—putting your hand behind it can help your phone focus
- Use your built in macro lens—2x generally works well
- A clip-on macro lens is a great addition to your toolkit (Xenvo makes a pretty good cheap one, Struman makes an excellent expensive one)

## How to upload an observation

1. Make sure Location Services for iNaturalist are turned on in your settings.
2. In iNaturalist, tap Observe.
3. Tap how you want to add an observation. You can use the camera in the app, but we prefer to take photos with the phone camera and upload from the photo library.
4. Select photos. Start with the photo you think will be easiest to identify. That will become the “cover photo” of the observation. Add up to four photos at a time.
5. Tap “What did you see?” Go as specific as you are comfortable with and no farther.
6. Add notes and add to a project if you’d like.

## Identifying and editing observations

- People will add identifications—that’s normal!
- You can change your identification, but don’t blindly agree with someone else because they’re an expert (or sound like one)
- You can use comments to ask questions or make suggestions
- If you want help with something add a note saying “@bertharris what is this?” and Bert will do his best to help

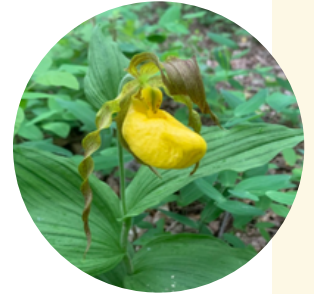


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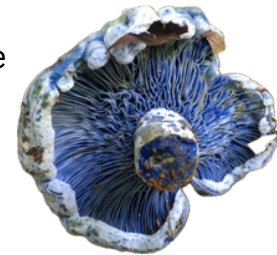
## Plants

- Hold it in your hand and make sure it's in focus!!!
- For flowers: get a picture of the top of the flower, side of the flower, top of the leaf, bottom of the leaf, and the overall plant
- For trees: get the bark, leaves, buds, leaf scars, and overall tree
- For galls: write down what kind of plant it's on (or use iNaturalist to make a separate observation for the host plant)
- It's always a good idea to add a note about the habitat



## Mushrooms

- Before picking a mushroom take a picture of it where it's growing and be sure to capture the substrate (ground, leaf litter, wood, etc.)
- The most important thing is to take a picture of the underside
- You can also take a picture of the top, the stem, and a spore print if you're feeling ambitious



## Lichens

- Take a zoomed out picture of the whole lichen and the substrate (bark, rock, etc.) and then take a picture as close up as you can
- If you can, take a picture of the lobes and the reproductive parts (bumps, discs, or rods),
- You can use a blacklight if you're feeling ambitious and either take a picture or add a note of what you see



## Bugs

- Moths: one good picture is enough
- Butterflies: you usually need a picture of the top and bottom
- Dragonflies: the top of the wings, side of the thorax, and face can all be important
- Bumblebees: get the top of the abdomen to get the pattern of stripes and spots
- Beetles: a good picture from above is enough, but get the bottom too if it's in your hand
- Caterpillars: write down what plant it's on
- In general for pollinators: write down what plant it's on



## Birds

- Cell phone pictures aren't usually good enough
- You can use Merlin or an app like Voice Record Pro to take a sound recording and upload that as well

