

Welcome & FAQ for City Nature Challenge Organizers Lincoln, Nebraska

As of 02/05/2021

THE BASICS

What is the City Nature Challenge (CNC)? The City Nature Challenge (CNC) is an annual friendly competition among cities across the globe to find and document plants and wildlife over a four-day period. Starting in 2016 for the first- ever Citizen Science Day, the community science teams at Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County and California Academy of Sciences dreamed up the CNC as a fun way to capitalize on their home cities' friendly rivalry and hold a community science event around urban biodiversity. The first CNC was an eight-day competition between Los Angeles and San Francisco, engaging residents and visitors in documenting nature to better understand urban biodiversity. In 2017 the CNC went national, and in 2018, the CNC became an international event. The 2019 CNC reached almost 1 million observations! Over 200 cities are expected to participate in 2021.

It is more important than ever to foster a sense of community, and the City Nature Challenge allows participants to do just that. For both budding and veteran community scientists, participating is easy:

1. Find wildlife! It can be any wild plant, animal, fungi, or any other evidence of life (scat, fur, tracks) found in your neighborhood, home, yard, or even through your windows. You might be surprised by how many insects thrive in the nooks and crannies around you. The City Nature Challenge for the Lincoln, NE area includes all observations found in Lancaster County.
2. Take pictures of what you find and upload to iNaturalist. [Check out this video for more information about how to use iNaturalist.](#)
3. Learn more as your observations are identified and help others identify their observations. Nobody knows everything, but we all know something! Helping others identify their observations is a great way to provide support.

When is the 2020 City Nature Challenge happening?

Friday, April 30th – Monday, May 3rd is the observation period

Friday, April 30th – Sunday, May 9th is the identification period

Monday, May 10th the final results announced

How are observations counted? All observations made in Lancaster County and uploaded to iNaturalist during the observation period (April 30 – May 3) of the challenge will automatically be counted towards Lincoln's CNC totals. [This iNaturalist project](#) will collect the iNaturalist observations for our project's totals. The larger [international iNaturalist project](#) will display our project's totals along with the 200+ other participating cities and will act as the leaderboard.

Why participate? There is nature all around us, even in our cities! Knowing what species are in our metro area and where they are helps us study and protect them, but the ONLY way to do that is by all of us - scientists, land managers, and the community - working together to find and document nature in our area. By participating in the CNC, not only do you learn more about your local nature, but you can also make your city a better place - for you and other species!

WAYS TO PARTICIPATE: PROMOTE THE CHALLENGE

Recruiting new organizations to participate and/or advertising the challenge to your organization's contacts.

WAYS TO PARTICIPATE: MAKE WILDLIFE OBSERVATIONS

Get outside! From 12:01am on Friday, April 30 when the challenge starts through 11:59pm on Monday, May 3 when the challenge ends, we need people to make wildlife observations within Lancaster County. Take a picture of any living thing you see (birds, amphibians, reptiles, mammals, fish, snails, spiders, insects, plants, fungi, etc.) and upload your findings on the free iNaturalist app or webpage.

Do I need to be a wildlife expert? Nope! All skill levels are welcome to participate. If you don't know what a species is, just upload the photo to iNaturalist and the other iNaturalist users can identify it for you. When uploading an observation, it is important to identify it as much as you can, even if it is just "Plant", "Mammal", or "Sparrow". This helps the observation get seen more easily by iNaturalist users that may be able to help!

WAYS TO PARTICIPATE: IDENTIFY SPECIES During the challenge and in the week following the challenge (Friday, April 30th – Sunday, May 9th), iNaturalist users will be needed to help verify observations and identify species that have been uploaded. Wildlife experts and enthusiasts who are comfortable with species identification are welcome to help. This can be done online via the iNaturalist website. There will also be an option to attend or host an Identification party.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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RESOURCES

- [CNC Website](#)
- [Covid-19 FAQ](#)
- [2021 Lincoln City Nature Challenge on iNaturalist](#)
- [Past Challenge Results](#)
- [Education toolkit](#)
- [Lincoln CNC Google Drive Folder](#)
- [iNaturalist.org](https://www.inaturalist.org) – community science platform used for the challenge
- [Getting Started on iNaturalist](#)