

Thank you for registering for the 2016 CT State BioBlitz!

This document contains important information to help you enjoy the 24-hour BioBlitz adventure to the fullest and to steer clear of problems, so please read it carefully. We will send updates to this document periodically, as well as additional information, such as a scoping document and maps of the area.

General information:

Start: Friday June 3rd at 3pm

Headquarters: CREC Two Rivers Magnet Middle School, 337 E River Dr., East Hartford, CT 06108

The Great Hall (located on the ground floor) will be the main gathering place for scientists. You are encouraged to bring your collected specimens here for identification if ID in the field is impossible or impractical. There will be tables, chairs, electricity and internet available. Space will be assigned. Lighting will be good but sometimes having your own desk lamps and illuminators is helpful. There are classrooms that can be committed for extra space if needed. Some dissecting and compound scopes will be available, but feel free to bring your own.

Multiple classrooms will be available as sleeping quarters – please bring a sleeping mat and sleeping bag if you plan to sleep at the school. There are excellent bathroom facilities and a locker room for showering. We do not recommend camping outside the school for safety reasons.

Wireless password is !2riversmms! and coffee will be available throughout the event.

Food: Food will be available only to *registered participants* in the school's cafeteria. **If you are bringing any unregistered taxonomists or volunteers with you, let us know immediately so we can adjust our food order. Similarly, if you are not planning to attend some of the meals (dinner, breakfast, lunch), let us know as soon as possible.**

Parking: By 1-1:30pm on Friday, school buses will have departed and you'll be welcome to start setting up. Signs will indicate where you can load and unload your car – conveniently at the entrance to the gymnasium. Afterwards, there are two options for parking. The closer one is the parking lot directly east of the building. However, space is limited there. Your best bet, especially if arriving later or on Saturday, is the much larger overflow lot northwest of the school. It is still a short, easy walk to the school building, less than 1000ft.

Saturday's public portion of the BioBlitz: We have various activities scheduled for Saturday between 10am and 3:30pm. Among these are guided walks and mini-safaris, tours of the Great Hall, during which the public can interact with and observe the scientist (you) at work, and an enormous exhibitors' space with live animals and hands-on activities. A detailed schedule is forthcoming.

Closing ceremony: Saturday June 4th 3-3:45pm

The closing ceremony will largely consist of 1- to 3-minute speed talks (reports) by TWiG leaders and a cumulative species count will be announced. None of us will have a clue as to how we did until the various TWiG reports are shared.

Friday Details:

Check-in: When you arrive, find the check-in table on the school's ground floor. We would like you to sign in and if possible provide us with a phone number we can reach you at, should we need to contact you while you are out collecting.

Field collections: On Friday, after the official start at 3pm, you are free to explore the 5 mile radius around the school that we consider 'in' for the BioBlitz. A number of parks are included in this area - we are developing a "best sites" document and will distribute it in about a week. Avoid destructive collections and trespassing on private property. If you intend to leave your vehicle on the side of the road for a while, please print the last page of this information packet and put it on your dashboard. The towns of Hartford and East Hartford will have been notified that BioBlitz participants will be working in the area and might leave vehicles unattended.

Specimen identification and observation records: Each taxonomic group (e.g., birds, beetles, vascular plants, fungi, algae, ...) will be assigned a Taxonomic Working Group (TWiG) leader. You have 24 hours to collect and identify as many species as you can. **It is essential that you work on your final species list with your TWiG leader** to ensure all observed species are included in the final count, and to avoid counting any species more than once. Feel free to set up a work station in the Great Hall. Ca. 20 compound and 20 dissecting microscopes will be available for your use if you cannot bring your own.

Photodocumentation: Where practical and when time allows, we encourage you to take photographs of your specimens and record your observations in iNaturalist, as we will project a live feed of our iNaturalist 2016 CT State BioBlitz project on a big screen in the Great Hall. At the end of the 24 hour period, we expect each TWiG leader to give us the total number of species observed in their focal taxonomic group. Not all species have to be identified with a name – operational taxonomic units are fine, as long as you can give us the total number of distinct, species-level taxa observed at the end of the day.

Friday dinner: Dinner will be served buffet-style in the cafeteria to registered participants. There will be a vegetarian option (pasta) and a salad, but if you have very specific dietary restrictions, please bring food to make sure that you have enough.

Friday night: Many will stay all night to continue identifying specimens. For your convenience, we will have several classrooms available at the school where you can set up your mat and sleeping bag and get sleep.

Saturday details:

Breakfast: We will have continental breakfast and coffee available around 7am – fresh fruit, bagels, etc.

Public program: Members of the public will be invited to the BioBlitz from 10am to 3:45pm. Encourage your family members and friends to attend the public programs. As noted above there be “tours” of the Great Hall where more than 100 scientists and helpers will be sorting, imaging, and identifying specimens; there will be a full schedule of exhibits and activities in the gymnasium and amphitheater; a series of short classroom presentations; and nature walks; and many hands-on activities for children. Do your best to interact with the public (at least in measured doses)– outreach is one of the BioBlitz’s foci.

Lunch: Assemble-your-own sandwiches will be available in the cafeteria at noon. We expect to have many fixings, fruit, cookies, chips, and beverages for all.

Closing ceremony: Coordinate as a TWiG to make sure you have a final species number for your focal taxonomic group to give us by 2:30pm on Saturday. The closing ceremony is largely a matter of concatenating a set 1- to 3-minute speed talks that summarize each TWiGs totals and most interesting discoveries about the tree of life. Again, not one of us will have a clue as to how we did until the various TWIG reports are shared.

2016 CT State BioBlitz

Participating Scientist



Print and place on your dashboard