



BioBlitz: Notices and Instructions to Participants

Your compliance with these notices and instructions are important to your own safety and that of other participants, and to the RI Natural History Survey's (RINHS's) ability to organize BioBlitzes in the future. **By participating in BioBlitz, you agree to follow the rules laid out here**, participating land owners' rules, and relevant local, state, and federal laws. You will be in a wilderness area with known and unknown hazards. Neither the hazards nor your behavior are in the control of RINHS, land owners, or event sponsors. **YOU are responsible for your own safety.**

If you have any questions about these rules, please ask. If you won't follow the rules, you should not participate.

GENERAL

► **Science Central** is the HQ for BioBlitz. It is located at _____ . **All participants must sign in at Science Central upon arrival, sign a liability waiver, and receive notices and maps of the BioBlitz boundaries and other features.**

► **All enquiries should be directed to Science Central.** RINHS and local reps are on duty at Science Central at all times (or nearby during late overnight hours).

► **Obey game laws. BioBlitz has a catch & release scientific permit** from RIDEM but you are responsible for having any other required permits (e.g. fishing licenses, mist netting license, etc.). For all vertebrates and any regulated species, if you intend to do anything other than catch and release, you must report your take at Science Central. Thanks to generosity of the land owners, invertebrate animals and non-vascular plants may be collected (unless they are on the federal or state rare species lists). If you are going to keep specimens, please record your take with RINHS at Science Central.

► **Do not un-necessarily disturb animals, plants, or their habitats in the course of counting.** In particular, note that animals must be treated humanely at all times. Handle animals carefully and as little as necessary. Put animals back exactly where you found them.

► **Please respect the privacy of abutters and stay "In Bounds."** Consult the event map or ask if unsure.

► **You are responsible for personal property you bring to BioBlitz.** Neither RINHS nor other organizers can accept any responsibility for your personal property. Do not leave out microscopes, books, cameras, phones, or anything else valuable that you're not prepared to lose.

SAFETY

► If you have an emergency and require help, **call for emergency services by dialing 911.** Tell the operator you are participating in an event location in town, and if possible give your approximate location so help can be staged from the best access point. Then contact Science Central.

Phone numbers:

Emergency 911

RNIHS Science Central

or

Town Representative

► In case of emergency, phones and first aid kits are located at Science Central. **Organizers' representatives are on duty at Science Central at all times** (except late overnight hours, when they will be nearby). In addition, an RINHS-designated "Safety Ranger" is on duty and available to go to a location, direct emergency services, or otherwise assist you.

► **Hazards:** While this is not a remote expedition, **the landscape of the site and the activities of BioBlitz are likely to have inherent dangers that are beyond the powers of the organizers to warn you about or to control.** Therefore, a safe BioBlitz is **YOUR responsibility.** Be careful in what you do, and if you see someone doing something unsafe, say something to them and/or bring it to organizers' attention.

- **Be careful around water and mud.** People wishing to enter the water, even just wading, should be with a partner or in a group. Be alert for deep mud. Probe ahead with a stick. Have a partner. **Participants must observe all applicable boating laws. If you are on the water, you must be in possession of a personal floatation device and have any other state mandated safety gear.**

SAFETY—HAZARDS cont.

- Disease bearing **ticks** and **mosquitoes** occur in Rhode Island. Wear protective clothing, use repellants, conduct tick checks, and be vigilant for symptoms afterwards. For information on Lyme disease see: www.health.ri.gov/diseases/#ticks.
- Protect yourself from **over-exposure to the sun**—wear appropriate clothing and use sunblock (available free at Science Central). **Drink water** if the weather is hot OR if it is otherwise dress warmly and stay dry to avoid hypothermia.
- Stay away from **poison ivy**. (Ask one of the botanists for a lesson if you don't know what it looks like).
- Use extreme caution around **ledges, boulders, tree snags, docks, holes in the ground, wire fence, cliffs, caves, swamps, road traffic** and other hazards as **THEY COULD KILL YOU**.
- **Stay off of stone walls**. Climbing them could result in serious injury to you and possibly the wall.
- **When the event takes place on or near a farm**. Stay out of enclosures with farm animals. Stay away from farm animals and farm machinery. Leave gates the way you find them. Watch out for barbed wire and electric fences.
- Do not handle **wild animals** unless you are familiar with appropriate techniques and have appropriate equipment. Stay clear of animals acting unusually.

SCIENCE

► Observations only count if made between 3 P.M. Friday and 3 P.M. Saturday.

► Count any living organism you observe within bounds during this period and can identify as taxonomically discrete. **You do not have to identify every organism you observe to species**. If you can't, your count should reflect the number of likely taxonomic subgroups within the lowest taxonomic level you **CAN** differentiate (e.g. "two different bees in the genus *Halictus*" or "three beetles of the Staphylinid family"). To avoid double counting, however, any such "generalized" additions to the count will be discarded if someone else submits a count of the same group identified to a lower taxonomic level without examining your specimens.

► For surface and airborne species, the seaward boundary is defined as the distance at which you can securely identify the organism, so it is farther out for whales and closer in for petrels and varies by the skill and equipment of the observer. For underwater species, the boundary is defined as twice the distance from shore you can cast a 5" Creek Chub Striper Strike (white with a red face) using an 8' fiberglass spinning rod and 15# test line (~250-350 ft).

SCIENCE cont.

► Please record your results on the official BioBlitz Reporting Forms and turn them in to the leader of the appropriate team or to Science Central.

► If at all possible, please submit your discoveries through the appropriate team. This will help avoid double counting and greatly speed up the final tally. Also, it will speed the tally if you note the general taxonomic group along with the species name because sometimes it is hard to know where to count things listed by genus and species only.

► **If you gather specimens, put them back exactly where you found them**. Do not knowingly collect listed species or game species unless you have a license to do so. Participants wishing to use special trapping techniques are responsible for doing so safely (UV lights, aquatic electroshocking, swimming, gas-powered equipment, etc.) and for having the necessary licenses (e.g. for mist nets, SCUBA).

► You can set up your own work area at Science Central. Be careful of expensive books and equipment (yours and others'). The organizers cannot be responsible for personal property that brought to BioBlitz.

► We have many volunteers eager to assist. Don't hesitate to ask for help. Be courteous to the curious. We were all beginners once and that kid who won't stop asking you questions might be the next E.O. Wilson.

► All inventory results must be reported to Science Central by 3 P.M. Saturday. The final tally will be announced to the public as soon after 3 P.M. as possible, and at any rate by 4 P.M.

► Some main taxonomic reporting categories for this year's BioBlitz are below (for the full list visit rinhs.org).

- butterflies, moths
- ants, bees, and wasps
- spiders and kin
- crustaceans and allies (isopods, amphipods)
- bugs (hemiptera and homoptera)
- beetles
- crickets, grasshoppers, and katydids
- dragonflies and damselflies
- birds
- mammals
- reptiles and amphibians
- fish
- mollusks
- soil microfauna
- micros (dinoflagella, paramecia, amoeba, etc.)
- vascular plants
- mosses
- lichens
- fungi (mushrooms)
- algae (incl. seaweeds and diatoms)