



Canada's nature selfie for our 150th

NEWS RELEASE

LAUNCH ON PARLIAMENT HILL FOR CROSS-CANADA BIOBLITZ CANADA 150 EVENTS

Discovering Biodiversity Even at the Heart of the Nation's Capital

OTTAWA, May 10, 2017 – Next May 16, right at Parliament Hill itself, comes the launch of a new cross-Canada initiative, **BioBlitz Canada 150**, one of the Canada 150 Signature Projects. Coordinated by the Canadian Wildlife Federation and more than 60 partner organizations, this series of BioBlitz events will reach thousands of Canadians from sea to sea to sea in a celebration of our wild natural heritage.

The launch will take a “nature selfie” of the Hill, outdoors, in habitat that lives on at this historic site.

A select all-party squad of parliamentarians, some of whom are accomplished scientists in their own right, will team up with expert naturalists and head out to demonstrate what a BioBlitz is. Before media representatives and a film crew, they will have 45 minutes to survey a section along the base of the wooded slopes and the riverside, in a friendly race to list all the living species they can see, hear or reach.

“This fascinating project will help us raise our environmental awareness,” said the Honourable Mélanie Joly, Minister of Canadian Heritage. “Let’s take this opportunity to celebrate Canada 150 by connecting with Canada’s natural beauty and learning more about Canada’s wild species—a priceless resource.”

“BioBlitz Canada 150 calls all citizens to be citizen-scientists this year,” added Rick Bates, CEO of the Canadian Wildlife Federation. “Canadians, like our parliamentarians, range from very expert to just getting to know our wildlife better. But everyone can truly contribute real scientific knowledge in 2017 for the future of Canada’s natural heritage.”

Leading the way, Senator Rosa Galvez (Independent) and MPs Will Amos (Liberal), Richard Cannings (NDP), Elizabeth May (Green) and Robert Sopuck (Conservative) will show how Canadians everywhere can come together too in 2017 to explore Canada’s rich biodiversity.

In 2017, 35 official BioBlitz events across the country will include 5 flagships in Regina, Toronto, Vancouver, Quebec City and Halifax, with 20 community celebrations and science activities, as well as 10 specialized science-intensive surveys by taxonomic experts.

The BioBlitz Canada 150 events, including the demonstration launch, will gather real scientific data, tracking the changing species mix in each area – maybe even making discoveries of species new to science. This information will ground our knowledge of such issues as climate change and the state of our biodiversity.

The results will be shared in the public domain, accessible to all citizens, wildlife managers, conservation groups, science and education institutions, and government organizations to help shape wise decisions now and into the future to help conserve these wild species for generations to come.

For more information about BioBlitz Canada 150 and for the list of events, as they roll out across the country, please visit bioblitzcanada.ca.

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About the Canadian Wildlife Federation:

The Canadian Wildlife Federation is dedicated to fostering awareness and appreciation of our natural world. By spreading knowledge of human impacts on the environment, sponsoring research, promoting the sustainable use of natural resources, recommending legislative changes and co-operating with like-minded partners, CWF encourages a future in which Canadians can live in harmony with nature. Visit CanadianWildlifeFederation.ca for more information.

About BioBlitz Canada:

BioBlitz Canada is a national partnership of leading conservation, education and research organizations with the goal to document Canada's biodiversity by connecting the public with nature in a scientist-led participatory survey of life from sea to sea to sea, and make sure this important information can be useful to current and future science, with open-source access to all. Its vision is to help Canadians learn about and connect with nature, be it in one's own backyard or the most important ecological sites in Canada.

Other partners in conservation include:

Alliance of Natural History Museums of Canada, Biodiversity Institute of Ontario, Biological Survey of Canada, Birds Studies Canada, Canadian Museum of Nature, Canadian Wildlife Service (Environment and Climate Change Canada), iNaturalist Canada, Nature Canada, Nature Conservancy of Canada, NatureServe Canada, New Brunswick Museum, Parks Canada, RARE Charitable Research Reserve, Royal Ontario Museum, Royal Saskatchewan Museum, Stanley Park Ecology Society, Toronto Zoo, Vancouver Aquarium and other organizations.

About iNaturalist Canada:

Launched in 2015, iNaturalist Canada is a virtual place where Canadians can record and share what they see in nature, interact with other nature watchers, and learn about Canada's wildlife. The app is run by the Canadian Wildlife Federation (CWF) and the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) in collaboration with iNaturalist.org and the California Academy of Sciences. Parks Canada, NatureServe Canada and CWF's Hinterland Who's Who have been key partners in the development of iNaturalist Canada and will continue to play a role in the program.

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