



HIGHLANDS BIOLOGICAL FOUNDATION

Week 6

Nearby Nature – Biodiversity

Monday 4/20

This Wednesday is the 50th anniversary of [#EarthDay](#) 🌍, and we're celebrating it all week long by highlighting the incredible biodiversity found here on the Highlands Plateau! Get outside and help us celebrate by documenting all the wonderful plant and animal species you discover. Keep track of what you find and contribute to scientific research by using [iNaturalist.org](#) or participating in [ecoEXPLORE](#) 's BioBlitz challenge for anyone under 13! [#NearbyNature](#)

Get started here:

<https://www.ecoexplore.net/badges/bioblitz>

Tuesday 4/21

Post 1:

Tomorrow is the 50th anniversary of [#EarthDay](#) , and we're continuing our week-long celebration by highlighting the incredible biodiversity found here on the Highlands Plateau! For today's [#NearbyNature](#) we're sharing [Kids in Parks](#) ' [#MushroomMadness](#) Track-tivity to encourage you all to get outside and see if you can find one of each of the different types of mushrooms listed: <http://ow.ly/jgj150zkj1A>

Mushrooms, and other fungi, are important because they help cycle nutrients throughout an ecosystem. Thousands of species have been identified throughout the world! Can you find some of them? Remember, for your safety, it's best not to touch or collect the mushrooms you find.

Don't forget to share your mushroom findings with us! 📌

Post 2:

Following our mushroom post from earlier, here is a very interesting [TED Talk](#) about fungi from mycologist Paul Stamets in 2008 that is still relevant today. Watch it to hear about the amazing qualities of mycelia, the vegetative bodies of fungi. [#EarthWeek](#)

Wednesday 4/22 EARTH DAY! :)

Happy 50th anniversary of [#EarthDay](#) ! This week, we have been highlighting the incredible biodiversity found here on the Highlands Plateau, and today, we are focusing on one of our most iconic critters - SALAMANDERS! Did you know there are more salamander species in the southern Appalachian Mountains than anywhere else in the world? Watch our [new video](#) for tips on how to responsibly search for salamanders in your local streams. Get outside and explore:) Let us know what you find in the comments below! [#NearbyNature](#) 🌍

Thursday 4/23

Post 1:

[#EarthDay](#) may have come and gone, but we're still celebrating the wonderful biodiversity of the Highlands Plateau! Today's [#NearbyNature](#) is all about lichens - what they are, their different forms, and how they can be used as bioindicators of environmental pollution. Explore your own backyard and look for lichens using [Discovery Place Nature](#) 's Looking for Lichens activity guide [HERE](#).

At the bottom of the page, you'll find great resources like a lichen field guide and more info. on how lichens can be used as bioindicators for environmental pollution.

Find any cool lichens?? Share them with us!

Post 2:

Join the Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy on a hike through a protected conservation property to learn about lichens! Follow Sarge on a scenic hike through the forest, with pauses along the way to explain interesting facts about lichen and examine different examples you are likely to encounter when exploring the southern Appalachian Mountains. It's a great virtual hike to celebrate [#EarthWeek](#) !

Watch it [HERE](#).

Friday 4/24

Want a great way to wrap up Earth Week and this week's [#NearbyNature](#) highlighting biodiversity of the Highlands Plateau?? Consider joining in the City Nature Challenge! Today through Monday (April 24th to 27th), take as many pictures of plants and animals as you can and upload them to iNaturalist (or ecoEXPLORE for those who are 12 years and younger). Then, from April 28th to May 3rd help people identify what has been posted.

Get started here: <https://citynaturechallenge.org/>

Don't forget to share some of your picture with us!