

EXPLORE: URBAN NATURE

Join the challenge

Using iNaturalistUK to engage new audiences in the national programme of the Urban Nature Project

Dr Jessica Wardlaw

Citizen Science Programme Developer

THE
URBAN
NATURE
PROJECT

N
NATURAL
HISTORY
MUSEUM

 HERITAGE
FUND

Community Science programme: Strategic goal

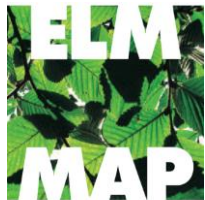
Embedding and demonstrating best practice in all aspects of citizen science, to deliver an innovative programme that achieves high impact outcomes for science research, the people who take part, and the planet.

Strategic objectives:

- a. Deliver an ambitious programme of innovative new citizen science projects that deliver impactful outcomes for all participants
- b. Create pathways & tiers of participation to develop participants' skills, science identities & sense of agency.
- c. Work towards engaging and involving the widest possible audience through intentional EDI activity.
- d. Use our high profile to advocate for citizen science, share tools and disseminate best practice.



PAST PROJECTS AND COLLABORATIONS



Walkers and naturalists collaborating to map Britain's surviving elm trees



Project Plumage



URBAN NATURE IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER



More than 80% of the UK population live in urban areas, set to rise more than 90% by 2030



There's a current shortfall of 173,000 skilled STEM workers, and new STEM roles are expected to double in the next 10 years



Urban green spaces are the natural environment that children visit most frequently, but almost a quarter of children spend time outside less than once a month



Rich biodiversity can exist in urban areas, and can exceed that of the surrounding landscape



Adults who experience nature as children are more likely to be motivated to protect the environment



Spending time in nature can improve mental and physical health

URBAN NATURE PROJECT

Developing evidence and agency to connect with and restore nature within the UK's urban spaces

By:

1. Transforming our five-acre gardens into an exemplar of urban wildlife research, conservation and awareness
2. Kick-starting an urban nature movement across the UK
3. Developing new scientific tools, skills and networks to restore urban nature



EXPLORE: URBAN NATURE *JOIN THE CHALLENGE*

Aim

To support a new generation of advocates for the planet, dedicated to studying and protecting urban nature, working together to create positive change by:

- Connecting a broader audience to the natural world
- Building scientific skills needed to understand the natural world and the threats it faces
- Enhancing and supporting the protection of urban biodiversity through the application of science

Outcome

Young people feel more confident and increase their skill in:

- Forming scientific questions (for community science)
- Making and recording scientific observations to address hypotheses or questions

TIERS OF PARTICIPATION

CROWDSOURCING

Engage new audiences with citizen science through surprising, engaging and innovative digital means, enabling them to contribute through **quick, entry-level activities.**

Project Plumage

CONTRIBUTORY

Provide opportunities for people to deepen their engagement with citizen science by **contributing research data.**

The
Microverse
Revealing invisible urban ecosystems

COLLABORATIVE

Provide opportunities for citizen scientists to **connect with nature and expand their scientific knowledge and skills** by participating in multiple steps of the scientific process.

Decoding
NAture 

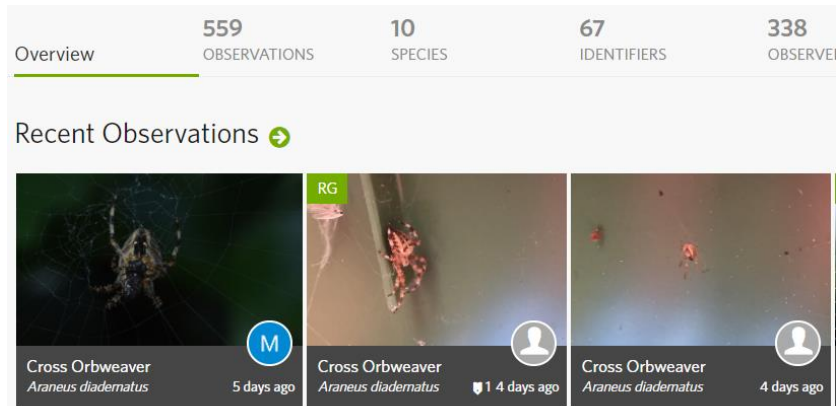
CO-DESIGNED

Co-development of project design between project team and target audience participants

**THE
URBAN
NATURE
PROJECT**

CITIZEN SCIENCE IN UNP

- Mass citizen science projects
- Seasonal nature trackers
 - Fat Spider Fortnight
 - Slime Search
 - Fly Finder
- Bioblitz events



SPECIES SELECTION CRITERIA

- Identifiable in photos
- Of scientific interest
- Balance of species easy enough to find and rarer or under recorded species
- Season-appropriate



FAT SPIDER FORTNIGHT 2021

6-19 September 2021

- > 670 people took part,
> 1250 observations.
- All 11 target species were observed.
- At least 10 new geographic ranges were established - new areas where a species has never been recorded before.
- 150 observers were new to iNat

NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

FAT SPIDER FORTNIGHT

Explore: Urban Nature is delivered in partnership with **Garfield Weston FOUNDATION**

SEP 6, 2021 - SEP 19, 2021

About Members 335

Join our spider-spotting team to discover the beauty and variety of these silk spinners. Spiders love autumn so you won't need to look far to support our understanding of their numbers and range.


View the results here <https://www.nhm.ac.uk/take-part/citizen->

[Read More >](#)

[Project Journal](#)

Overview **1,443** OBSERVATIONS **11** SPECIES **145** IDENTIFIERS **777** OBSERVERS [Stats](#)

Most Observations			Most Species			Most Observed Species		
	1st jacobsnanny	35		1st esmond1	7		Cross Orbweaver	1,074
	sara1677	30		bcarbuccia	5		Noble False Widow	119
	greataukward	21		phil313	5		Long-bodied Cellar Spider	104
	caerellia	20		mmpppp	4		European Nursery Web Spider	32
	bcarbuccia	19		jacobsnanny	4		Walnut Orbweaver	28
	esmond1	18		sara1677	4		Green Meshweaver	27

 Sarah Bell
@sarahsgonewild

#fatspiderfortnight

Just the hashtag I've been waiting for. Been watching this chonk grow all summer



Social media analytics	
Twitter pictures shared	45
Twitter # interactions	994
Facebook pictures posted	212
Instagram pictures posted	86

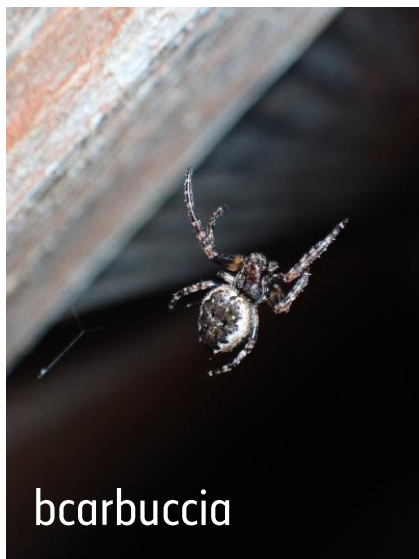
SOCIAL MEDIA: WHO ATE ALL THE FLIES?

She is beauty, she is wonder, she is our Fat Spider Queen 👑



@Leila Button

FAT SPIDER FORTNIGHT 2022



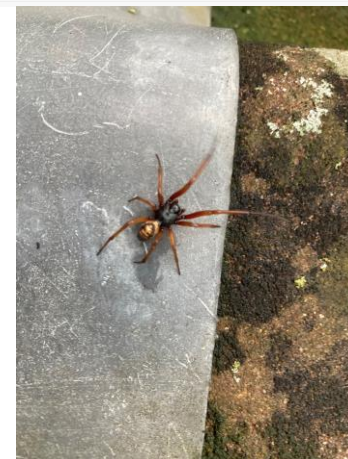
Overview



















1,346 OBSERVATIONS	98 SPECIES	127 IDENTIFIERS	638 OBSERVERS
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[Stats](#)

10-31st October 2022

- > 670 people, > over 1250 observations.
- Less large scale promotion and more emphasis on the community-based organisations.
- Does the timing of the end of the ‘maturity’ period (i.e. when spiders are fattest) vary between species?



Most Observations		Most Species		Most Observed Species				
 1st	bcarbuccia	103	 1st	bcarbuccia	25		Cross Orbweaver	277
	jamie-aa	73		tomgibo	9		Noble False Widow	119
	nhmllearning	47		jamie-aa	8		Long-bodied Cellar Spider	66
	jenflip	31		mothyfriend	7		Silver-sided Sector Spider	42
	jarvo	23		catharticlodge	6		European Nursery Web Spider	39
	mothyfriend	14		birdworld	6		Giant House Spider	29

SLIME SEARCH



- 10 species
- 5 slugs/5 snails each paired with a similar-looking but rarer species
- Disappointing in terms of the observations made but mostly because of the storms
- Project extended by a week to give more people the opportunity to participate

NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

Slime Search ID
FEB 11, 2022 - MAR 4, 2022

SLIME SEARCH
11 - 26 FEBRUARY 2022

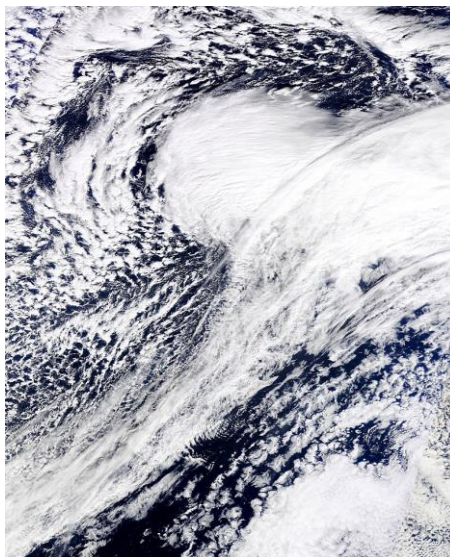
Explore: Urban Nature is delivered in partnership with
Garfield Weston

About
Members 5

Slow down and join our slug- and snail-spotting team to see how some mollusc species are faring in the UK. View the results here <https://www.nhm.ac.uk/take-part/citizen-science/slime-search.html>
Read More >

Project Journal

Overview 32 OBSERVATIONS 6 SPECIES 11 IDENTIFIERS 18 OBSERVERS Stats



Corrie Primary @CorriePrimary · Feb 25

Children at Corrie had fun participating in #slimesearch. Which species can you spot?



Natural History Museum @NHM_London · Feb 24

Have you spotted any slugs and snails out this week? Remember to share photos of your slippery finds with us using #SlimeSearch so we can see them!

Find out more about Slime Search here nhmlondon.org/SlimeSearch



LESSONS LEARNED

- You can't control the weather!
- Great to work directly with recording schemes who are already interested in iNaturalist
- It's difficult to understand the iNat audience as well as we'd like to.
- An innovative approach to attract social media users to iNaturalist to reach new audiences





QUESTIONS?

nhm.ac.uk/schools/explore-urban-nature

nhm.ac.uk/take-part/citizen-science/fat-spider-fortnight

nhm.ac.uk/take-part/citizen-science/slime-search.html

nhm.ac.uk/take-part/citizen-science/city-nature-challenge

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