



Ages: 5 & Up

Time Required: 15-45 min

Backyard Biodiversity Bonanza

What is hidden in plain sight in your backyard?

Materials

- Pencil and chart *"Backyard Biodiversity Bonanza -What I found on my Bioblitz!"*
- Hula hoop or 8 feet of string or rope

Try this!

Step 1: Take that broken hula hoop you were going to throw away and plop it down somewhere outside, the more natural the space, the better. Don't have a hula hoop handy? Use 8 feet of string or rope to make a circle in a good spot.

Step 2: Take paper and pencil and make a list of everything living you can see in your tiny world. Don't forget to count plants as living things.

Step 3: Start by listing everything you can see without disturbing or touching anything.

Step 4: Next, gently move leaves or sticks to see what is sheltered under them. Be very careful with the living things in your circle. Remember to put everything back after checking for signs of life.

Step 5: Once you got the hang of this, expand your horizons. Try several spots in the yard. Which have the most diversity? Challenge family members to pick a spot and see who can find the most different kinds of life.



What's going on?

Scientists have a tool called a bioblitz, special type of field study, where a group of scientists and volunteers do 24-hour biological inventory, attempting to identify and record all species of living organisms in a defined area. How about trying a mini bioblitz yourself? Backyard hula hoop biodiversity is an environmental education favorite! Make sure you pick a space without those invasive fire ants! <https://www.floridamuseum.ufl.edu/science/new-study-pinpoints-u-s-as-source-of-worldwide-fire-ant-invasions/>.

Extension Activity

Use iNaturalist.org to identify all the living things you find! Take pictures of the things you find and upload them to iNaturalist. By doing this you are helping scientists learn about the things that live on the location where you do your mini bioblitz and at the same time they can help you identify what you found.

Additional Resources

Backyard Biodiversity Bonanza

What I found on my Bioblitz!

Draw pictures here of your four favorite creatures!
