

How to run a **BioBlitz** at your school



What is a BioBlitz?

A “BioBlitz” is an event that engages people with biodiversity, inviting them to get directly involved in surveying and monitoring. It is all about volunteers, scientists, naturalists, wildlife enthusiasts, school groups, students and members of the public.

A BioBlitz is a group of people working together to seek, identify and record as many different species as possible within a natural area over a set period of time.

During 2010 – International Year of Biodiversity (IYB) – BioBlitz events have taken place all over the UK. Many schools have visited BioBlitz events and taken part in surveying and helping locate and identify new species. This resource is designed to help you run your own BioBlitz at your school.

Hint: flip to the last page to find out more about Biodiversity and IYB

Running your own School BioBlitz

A BioBlitz can be run very easily in your own school grounds with very little preparation or equipment. There is no copyright on either the name or the format so your school can adapt the format to fit your particular needs.

You can start by deciding:

- What format the BioBlitz will take?
(there are three ideas listed in this resource for you to follow)
- How long it will take?
(ranging from one hour up to a whole day)
- What time of year it will take place?

Curriculum Links

A BioBlitz can link to your school’s learning in areas of the Key Stage 2 Science National Curriculum and will also feed into Geography, Maths and English. It can provide a creative and stimulating activity that compliments whatever way your school is delivering its curriculum.

In Key Stage 2 Science a BioBlitz is ideal for developing your pupils’ scientific enquiry skills in Sc1 while providing rich, real-life scenarios in Unit Sc2:

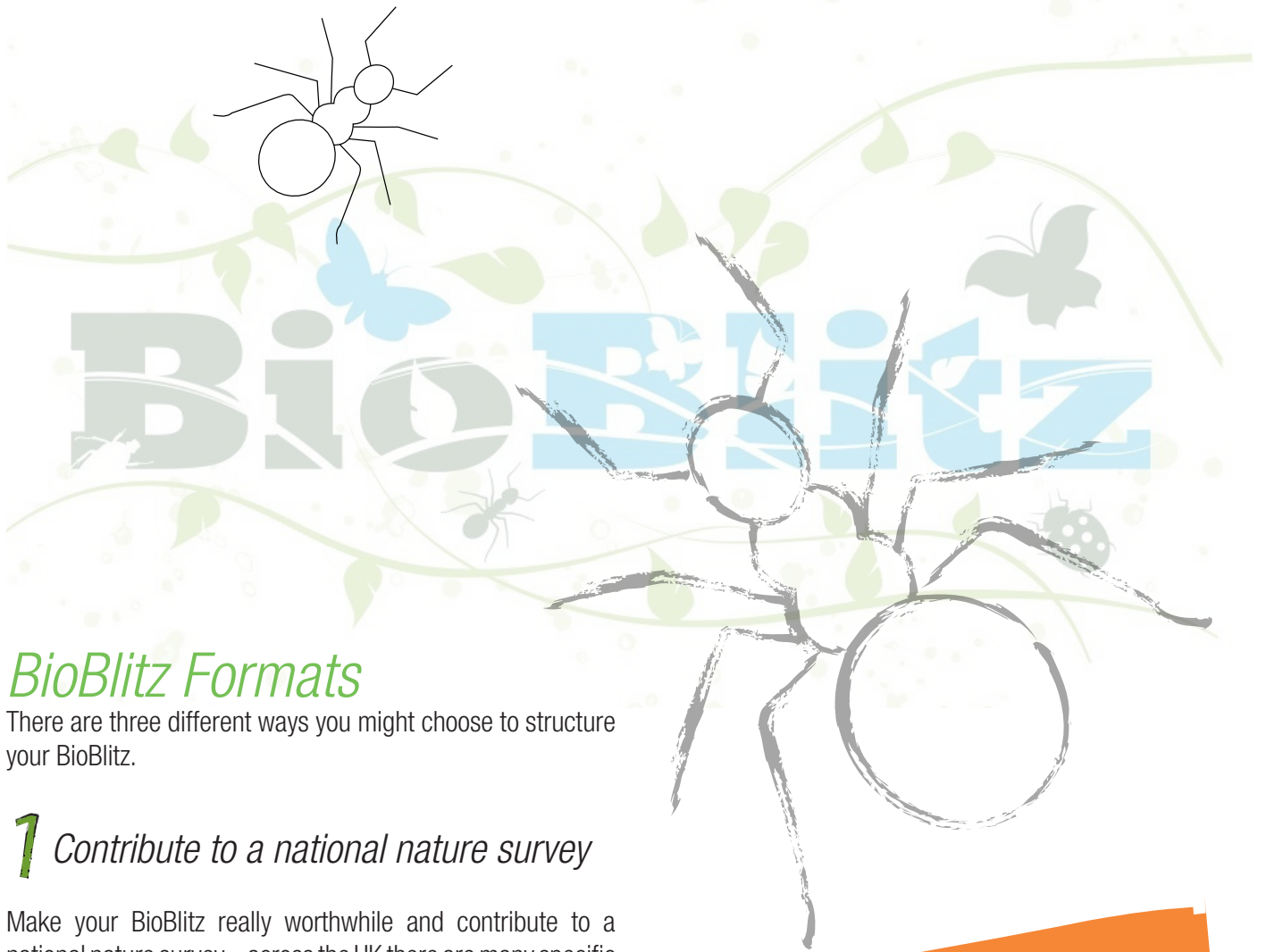
Variation and Classification

(4a - to make and use keys, 4b - how locally occurring animals and plants can be identified and assigned to groups, 4c - that the variety of plants and animals makes it important to identify them and assign them to groups)

Living things in their environment

(5b - about the different plants and animals found in different habitats)





BioBlitz Formats

There are three different ways you might choose to structure your BioBlitz.

1 *Contribute to a national nature survey*

Make your BioBlitz really worthwhile and contribute to a national nature survey – across the UK there are many specific surveys being carried out by schools and families looking out for everything from butterflies to birds and ladybirds to trees. This is a great opportunity to play a part in national scientific research and also focus learning on one group of species.

Most wildlife surveys:

- Provide information about the species to locate and record – and why the survey is being run.
 - Provide resources that you can use or photocopy.
 - Give guidance on what time of year to run the survey, what equipment you will need and how to record the results.
- Are designed for non-experts, and can be completed by anyone.

Start by reviewing the surveys available on the BBC's Nature UK website, bbc.co.uk/nature/uk/indepth/surveys.shtml. If you can't find a survey that's right for you, contact us with some details about your requirements at schools@bioblitzuk.org.uk and we'll help you find a suitable activity.

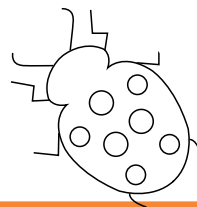
Hint: The Avon Wildlife Trust has launched the 'Big Bristol Habitat Hunt.' The programme includes a school grounds survey, but also contributes to important data collection for the region's biodiversity. For more information or to download the survey pack and teachers notes please visit: avonwildlifetrust.org.uk/people/Education/education.html



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Contact us by email:
schools@bioblitzuk.org.uk

2 *Invite a wildlife expert to run a BioBlitz at your school*



Inviting a wildlife expert to your school is a great way to learn more about biodiversity. Most experts focus on one area of nature (insects, plants or birds) and can bring a range of knowledge, practical experience and identification skills. Additionally, inviting a wildlife expert provides an opportunity for your pupils to meet people working in jobs that are related to nature.

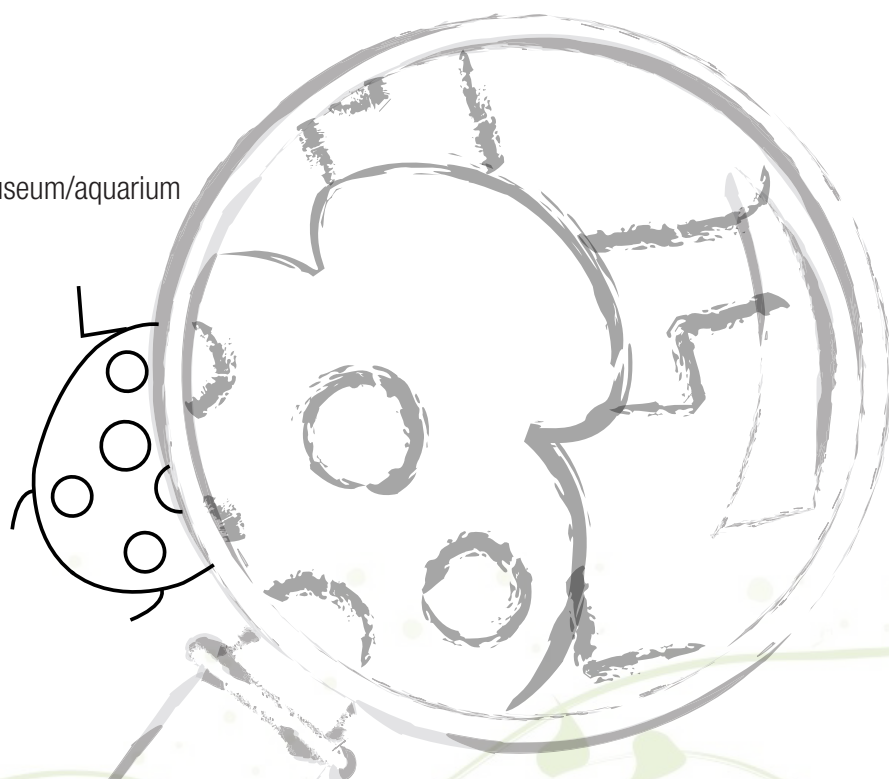
You may wish to focus on a range of species that are common in your school grounds (trees, birds, butterflies) or you might want to invite an expert to help you discover the 'lesser-seen' side of your grounds.

To find an expert try contacting:

- Your local wildlife trust
- Your local council
- Your local zoo / butterfly garden/museum/aquarium
- Your local university

We'd love to help you run an event at your school.

*Contact us at:
schools@bioblitzuk.org.uk
and we'll work with you to find an expert to take part in your BioBlitz.*



BioBlitz



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3 Organise your own BioBlitz challenge

Your BioBlitz could also take the format of a walk around the school grounds, or a challenge during a lesson. Here are a couple of ideas.

Challenge 1.

How many animals and plants can you find in one hour?

Take a walk around your school grounds and see how many different types of plants and animals you can identify in one hour (or more or less – some larger BioBlitzes take place for around 24 hours!). Factsheets and online nature sites can help identify unusual finds, or a wildlife expert can help you identify what you have seen.

Listed below are some examples of wildlife likely to be found in your school grounds:

Birds

Pied wagtails, carrion crows, magpies, black-headed gulls, woodpigeons, collared doves, house sparrows, starlings, blackbirds and song thrushes.

Trees

Lime, sycamore, oak, cherry blossom, beech, whitebeam, hawthorn, yew, pine, holly, london plane, horse chestnut and willow.

Butterflies

Peacock, small tortoiseshell, red admiral, holly blue, large white, small white, green-veined white, brimstone, meadow brown and gatekeeper.

Mammals

Foxes, badgers, roe deer, rabbits, grey squirrels, moles and hedgehogs.

Other insects

Various ants, bees, beetles, ladybirds, hover flies, crane flies (daddy long legs), moths, shield bugs, earwigs, grasshoppers, bush crickets, dragonflies and damselflies.

Challenge 2.

How many natural colours can you find?

This activity is known as “Nature’s Palettes”. Each child is given a blank piece of card shaped like a paint palette and lined with a strip or two of double sided tape. They are set a time limit and race round the school grounds sticking as many natural colours as they can find on to their palettes (berries, grass, leaves, twigs)

Challenge 3.

Can you remember what you have found?

This activity requires a space which includes a number of trees and is known as “Meet a Tree.” Children are split into pairs and one of the pair is blindfolded. The other child leads them to a tree where they touch it, paying particular attention to the texture, trunk size and any other distinguishing features. The child is then lead away from the tree and spun round, the blindfold is removed and they have to point to, or find the tree that they ‘met’.



Keep in Touch

We'd love to know more about how your activity went, provide help where we can, and add your stories and images to our website.

Email us at schools@bioblitzuk.org.uk and we will also add you to our mailing list of future free nature activities for your school to take part in.

Background & About Us

Biodiversity (a definition)

'Biodiversity' is the term used to describe the assortment of life on earth. It includes each and every plant, animal and micro-organism. Less than two million species have been identified so far but scientists estimate that there could be at least 13 million species in total. Biodiversity is all around us; it shapes and enriches our way of life.

International Year of Biodiversity



2010 has been declared the International Year of Biodiversity (IYB) by the United Nations. This year we are celebrating the diversity of life on earth, including every plant, animal and micro-organism. In the UK, over 200 partners of IYB have come together to promote the understanding of biodiversity. This year is the chance to learn more about the intricate web of life around us, discover why it's important and get involved in monitoring and conserving the wildlife on our doorstep.

About Airbus



Airbus is a leading aircraft manufacturer offering three highly successful families of aircraft, ranging from 107 to 525 seats, the most modern, comprehensive and eco-efficient product line on the market. Headquartered in Toulouse, France, Airbus is an EADS company.

Why Airbus and biodiversity?

Airbus is committed to reducing the 2% aviation contributes to manmade CO2 emissions and its engineers are looking at nature itself in the hope that it may provide some of

the answers. After all, biodiversity has been inspiring aeronautics engineers since Leonardo da Vinci first sketched flying machines some 500 years ago.

Losing biodiversity also means losing a major source of inspiration, and with 30% of all known species currently under threat, Airbus is working with the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) to raise awareness with young people of the importance of maintaining the rich variety of life on earth, through The Green Wave programme.



The Green Wave programme encourages young people around the world to celebrate all life on Earth – and in particular at 10:00 on The International Day of Biological Diversity, which falls on 22 May each year. As the celebration passes through each of the world's time zones it creates a 'green wave' of awareness and activity.

To learn more, see:

www.airbus.com or www.greenwave.cbd.int.

Bristol Natural History Consortium

The Bristol Natural History Consortium started in 2003, and gained charitable status in May 2008. Their mission is to improve the way we communicate about the natural world through innovative public events, professional development and international dialogue. The Consortium currently has 11 members who work collaboratively within the BNHC charitable structure. Their membership reflects Bristol's reputation as a leading centre for the understanding and appreciation of the natural world, although their programmes have national reach and impact. This resource has been prepared through the work of BNHC staff and committee members working on the BioBlitz project and collated by Stephanie Hoddinott from BNHC.

Edited by Ed Drewitt

Ed Drewitt is a naturalist, broadcaster and consultant and has a large range of experience providing learning opportunities for schools and families participating in nature surveys in the UK. Website: www.eddrewitt.com



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