

# City Nature Challenge ABQ 2021 to Begin on April 30

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 27, 2021

## MEDIA CONTACT

Patrick Rodriguez

505-629-2257

[patrick.rodriquez@state.nm.us](mailto:patrick.rodriquez@state.nm.us)

In a partnership between the Sandia Mountain Natural History Center and the R.H. Mallory Center for Community Geography at the University of New Mexico, City Nature Challenge ABQ 2021 invites residents of Bernalillo, Sandoval, and Valencia counties to explore nature in their community and share those observations via the free mobile app iNaturalist from Friday, April 30, through Monday, May 3, 2021.

This annual four-day event is an opportunity to go outside and discover wild plants, animals, and fungi around your home, neighborhood, parks, and other outdoor spaces. Participants can contribute to the knowledge of urban wildlife and feel connected to other people, locally and globally, during this time of social distancing.

City Nature Challenge is a worldwide collaborative effort to find and document nature observations in and around cities. More than 400 cities across six continents are participating in this sixth annual event, organized by the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco and the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County.

This is the third year that Albuquerque has participated in the City Nature Challenge. In 2019, the city placed in the top five for numbers of observations, observers, and species based on the population, land area, and climate. At the beginning of the pandemic during the 2020 challenge, participants in Bernalillo County were able to get outside safely and make over 5,000 observations of 967 species. This year, the goal is to bring in more people and find more observations and species than ever, with the range expanding to now include Sandoval and Valencia counties. Additionally, this year's event marks the first-ever competition between the Albuquerque area and the Phoenix, Arizona, area.

City Nature Challenge promotes community science, in which people of all ages – from avid outdoor enthusiasts to nature newbies – can participate in searching for and documenting urban biodiversity. As human populations worldwide continue to concentrate more in cities, it is increasingly important to pay attention to wildlife in urban areas. Scientists are also relying on community science data more than ever due to the travel restrictions during the past year. In the 2020 challenge, more than 1,300 species that are endangered, endemic to a particular place, or understudied, were recorded across the world, including the critically endangered harlequin frog in Panama, and the first observation of a white-spotted slimy salamander in the Washington, D.C., area in over 40 years.

Follow these directions to participate in the City Nature Challenge ABQ:

1. Set up an account on [iNaturalist.org](https://www.inaturalist.org) or download the app.
2. Take photos of wild animals and their signs (tracks, scat, feathers, etc.), plants, and fungi you find from April 30 to May 3, 2021.
3. Submit your observations on the iNaturalist website or app.
4. Help identify others' observations, and have iNaturalist and its community help you through May 9.

The Sandia Mountain Natural History Center is jointly run by the New Mexico Museum of Natural History & Science, a division of the New Mexico Department of Cultural Affairs, and Albuquerque Public Schools.

To learn more about City Nature Challenge ABQ, including virtual events happening, tutorials on how to use iNaturalist, and the wildlife people are finding, visit <https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/city-nature-challenge-2021-abq>