How Do I Participate in Weeklong Activities?

DIY Litter Clean-Up Challenge

Litter in a stream does not always start at the streambank, but it will end up there. If it is on the ground, chances are that it will end up in our local streams and creeks. By cleaning up trash around your neighborhood or business, you are helping protect our local waterways from pollution.

Orange County Creek Week invites you to host your own litter clean-up for a chance to be recognized via social media and win prizes. Winners will be selected based on the following criteria:

1. The largest group
2. The weirdest find
3. The most litter picked up in poundage
4. The most litter picked up by volume (measured in total # of bags)

We will recognize all winners via social media. Winners will also have the option of picking up a certificate and prize at the Town of Chapel Hill's Stormwater office.

Sounds fun, so how do I participate?

1. Read the "Stay Safe" Tips
2. Gather your group. Ensure your group reads the "Stay Safe" Tips.
3. Pick a location, or, if you don't have one in mind, reach out to your municipality's Creek Week coordinator for suggestions.
    a. Chapel Hill: reach out to Morgan Flynt
    b. Carrboro: reach out to Heather Holley
    c. Hillsborough: reach out to Heather Fisher
    d. On UNC's campus: reach out to Janet Clarke
    e. Anywhere else in the county: reach out to Wesley Poole or Lisa Pope
4. Gather your materials:
    f. You will need gloves or trash grabbers, bags, and safety vests if you're hosting a roadside clean-up. Contact your municipalities' litter clean-up organizer above if you need help acquiring materials.
5. Pick up litter!

6. Take pictures!
7. **VERY IMPORTANT:** Fill out this data sheet for a chance to win!
8. Post pictures of your clean-up and tag us on social media @chapelhillgov @carrborotowngov @hillsboroughnc @orangecountync @unc_ehs @sustainable_unc or use the hashtag #occreekweek

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GSI, Oh My! Scavenger Hunt

Rain Garden - Photo by NC State University

This Creek Week, CWEP is encouraging people to get outside and explore Green Stormwater Infrastructure examples that already exist in their own communities.
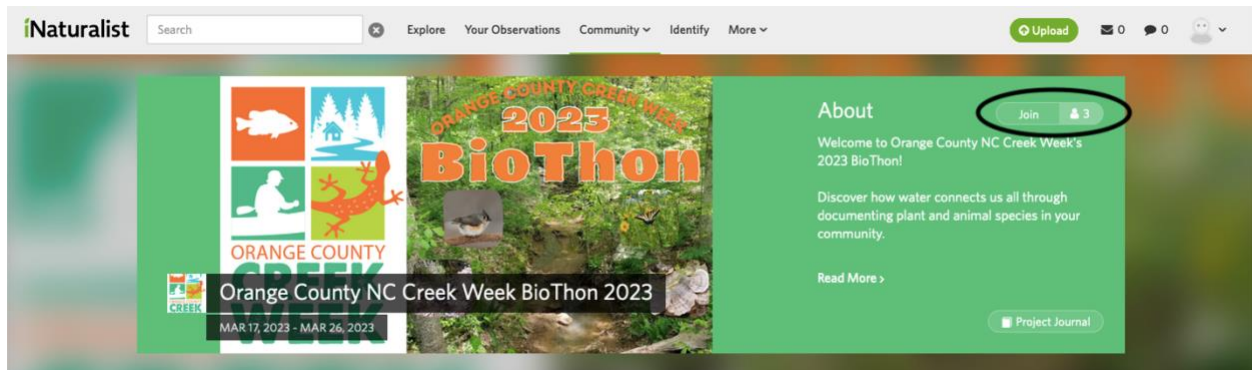
Here is how to participate:

– Read CWEP's blog to learn more about Green Stormwater Infrastructure and its relationship with our waterways and community.

– Go explore and find an example of GSI, snap a picture and post on Instagram or Facebook!

– Tag @cwep_nc on Instagram or NC Clean Water Education Partnership on Facebook to be entered in a prize drawing that will be held on March 21st and 25th. Feel free to also tag your local government.

– There will be a total of 3 winners. There can be a maximum of 3 entries per person to be entered in the prize drawing, but feel free to post as many pictures of GSI as you would like.

– If your account is not PUBLIC, please direct message your picture.

– Pictures submitted will be saved and added to a GSI photo album on CWEP's website!

Orange County Creek Week Biothon and Tips for New iNaturalist Users

Orange County Creek Week is hosting an iNaturalist BioThon from March 17-March 26th, 2023. Join us in exploring our local watersheds! Join the project by following the link above and clicking the "join" option in the top right corner, shown below:

Have you ever heard of the iNaturalist app? iNaturalist is a crowdsourced species identification system and social media platform designed to showcase local flora and fauna observations. Users collect photo and audio observations that upload onto an online database where other users can help with identification. iNaturalist is a helpful tool to get to know the plants and animals that live in your watershed, and view observations by others.

Just created an iNaturalist account and downloaded the app? Click here to learn how to create a post using an iPhone, Android, or computer.

Tips for New iNaturalist Users

- iNaturalist most easily integrates with a smartphone, but photographs taken on a camera instead can also be uploaded to the iNaturalist website. When using a camera, try to keep track of where certain species were seen as best you can, as you will be asked to add the location of the photo when you upload your observations.

- Consider taking photos with your phone or camera and uploading to iNaturalist later. This gives you time to properly ID species when you have access to WiFi, ID guides, or more time to look through options using the app. If you go this route, **remember to make sure that your phone location services are on** so that the location will upload with the photo into the iNaturalist app.
- Familiarize yourself with species nearby by looking at posts that others have made. You can do this using the "explore" tab in the app or on the webpage
- If you are unsure about an exact species ID, opt for a more general identification such as genus or family. Others in the iNaturalist community can then help narrow it down to species.
- Try to crop photos close to the subject for easier identification by the iNaturalist app and community.

Free Apps to Help with Species ID
Animals/General:

- **Seek:** Created by the same developers as iNaturalist, this app will compare your photo with other observations from the same area to find a more accurate ID.

Birds:

- **Audubon:** This virtual field guide is similar to Merlin but also helps you ID a bird from its call, habitat, tail shape, and wing shape.
- **Merlin Bird ID:** Using features such as bird behavior, coloring, and size, this app can help narrow down the possible options for IDing a sighting. This app also has a photo ID feature if you can get close enough to snap a picture.

Plants:

- **Leafsnap:** A collaboration between Columbia University, the University of Maryland and the Smithsonian Institution, this app will let you ID plants and trees using photos of their flowers and leaves.

Fungi:

- **Mushroom Identificator:** This app helps ID mushrooms by having the user take several photos of the same species and comparing them to species within the guide.

Happy collecting! If you have any additional questions or concerns, feel free to reach out to the CWEP team via their contact page.