



Image: Common Grass Blue Butterfly Image source: Museum Victoria

MELBOURNE BIOBLITZ 2014 TOOLKIT

PARTICIPATE.MELBOURNE.VIC.GOV.AU/BIOBLITZ
[#BIOBLITZMELB](https://twitter.com/BIOBLITZMELB)



CITY OF MELBOURNE

CONTENTS

About Melbourne BioBlitz 2014	01
Get involved	02
Frequently asked questions	03
Tips for finding biodiversity in the city	07



THE GOAL

To find and identify as many species of plants, animals, microbes, fungi, and other organisms as possible in the city.

ABOUT MELBOURNE BIOBLITZ 2014

Melbourne BioBlitz is a data collection based event in which members of the public of all ages can become volunteer citizen scientists.

The goal is to find and identify as many species of plants, animals, microbes, fungi, and other organisms as possible in the city. You might even discover a new species!

By participating in Melbourne BioBlitz, you'll be contributing to what we know

about the diversity, range and behaviour of species in our city and help us create local biodiversity management plans. The information gathered will also inform the City of Melbourne's Urban Ecology and Biodiversity Strategy, which is in the early stages of development.

GET INVOLVED

There are two main ways to get involved:

01

Carry out an independent BioBlitz

Explore your backyard, laneway, street or park to see what you can discover. Organise your own BioBlitz event with your friends, family or community to work together as a group for a fun day out.

Our team will then identify and map the species you send through.

The most important things we need in order to include your sightings are *pictures* and *locations* of what you find. For directions using BowerBird see <http://youtu.be/vLF4Vj80j5g>, or contact Ken Walker: kwalker@museum.vic.gov.au at Museum Victoria.

Steps

01 |

Gather up your equipment. Essential: camera. Optional: mobile phone or GPS unit, magnifying glass, binoculars, camera, pencil and paper.

02 |

Choose a location. This may be a nearby park, street or even your back garden! Step outside and observe your surroundings.

03 |

Document your sightings. Note down what you see using the form at the end of this toolkit, or share it online.

04 |

Tell us what you've found.

Upload what you have seen at: participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/bioblitz; via Twitter or Instagram using the hashtag #bioblitzmelb (remember to include your location), or by using Bowerbird: bowerbird.org.au/projects/4481.

02

Join one of our expert-led BioBlitz events

Expert scientists and ecologists will lead participants to conduct a range of biodiversity surveys in a designated location. To register to join an expert-led event see event timetable on our website.

We are also running a range of free events alongside Melbourne BioBlitz 2014.

* Surveys are undertaken at your own risk, so please be careful in your adventures. If participating in an expert-led BioBlitz event please let the survey leader know if you have any injuries or ailments before-hand. Surveys will require some walking and may be led through rough terrain. All children must be supervised by an adult. You are responsible for looking after your dependents and your own safety. The BioBlitz is about observation of species in the city. Please respect the wildlife you may discover.



Image: Spotted Pardalote (Pardalotus punctatus). Credits and acknowledgements in the source: Museum Victoria. Photographer: Heath Warwick

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

01 | Do I need to register for BioBlitz?

For the expert-led events, yes please! Although all events and activities are free, by registering you'll help us with planning. There is no need to register for BioBlitz participation outside of City of Melbourne facilitated events.

02 | How do I do a BioBlitz survey?

When reporting what you discover, we need to identify your **location** so we can record the sighting specific to its position in our urban landscape. We also need you to send us a **photo** so that our team of experts can identify and record the species.

By sharing your photo and location with us you consent to the use of this data for the specific research purpose of creating a species inventory and species richness maps for the city.

We encourage you to consider the full spectrum of biodiversity that we have in the City of Melbourne to increase the diversity of what we document. Think

about all of the different kinds of nature that we find in an urban environment and see how many different things you can find by recording:

- *a variety of locations* (public spaces and private gardens, in trees, waterways and under rocks, and in less likely locations such as rooftops, footpaths and even indoors)
- *all species* (big and small, native and non-native, wild and domesticated), and
- *at different times of day* (different critters have different habits!).



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS CONTINUED

03 | What should I look for when conducting a BioBlitz?



Birds



Mammals



Lizards



Snakes

Frogs &
Turtles

Butterflies



Insects



Spiders

Freshwater
InvertebratesMarine
InvertebratesTerrestrial
Invertebrates

Fungi

All kinds of
plant life

04 | Where can I find information to help me identify species?

We encourage you to explore the range of great information available to us all and do your best, but don't worry, as long as you send in a photo we can have our expert team help to work out what it is.

Species guides

Melbourne Library Service is full of books to help you identify wildlife. During the BioBlitz, Southbank, Docklands and City Libraries will be curating a selection of wildlife identification books to help you, for example *Cronin's Key Guide – Australian Wildflowers* and *Pizzey & Knight's The Field Guide to Birds of Australia*.

Online Tools

BowerBird:
bowerbird.org.au/

BowerBird has a national database of Australian plant and animal species as well as a strong community of naturalists who help each other! This is a great way to make contact with fellow naturalists.

Biodiversity snapshots:
biodiversitysnapshots.net.au

With field guides, education plans, and a great range of tips and activities, this is a website well worth a visit.

Atlas of Living Australia:
ala.org.au/australias-species/

For the most adventurous amongst you, this tool is where the records you collect will end up, and be available to scientists and the public alike.

Online Herbarium databases:
rbg.vic.gov.au/science/herbarium-and-resources/online-databases

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS CONTINUED

05 | Where should I look for biodiversity?

We'd like to encourage you to document what you find within the boundaries of the City of Melbourne municipality.

Places to visit include:

- streetscapes
- parks
- backyards
- waterways
- community food gardens
- green roofs
- private land

Parks in the City of Melbourne:

- Alexandra Gardens
- Birrarung Marr
- Carlton Gardens
- Fawcner Park
- Fitzroy Gardens
- JJ Holland Park
- The Domain Parklands
- Princes Park
- Royal Park
- Royal Botanic Gardens
- Treasury Gardens
- Westgate Park
- Docklands Park



06 | What do we expect to find?

Melbourne is rich in biodiversity; however the current biological diversity of the city is undergoing rapid change as a result of habitat loss, population growth, cultural change, climate change pressures, and governance decisions.

The greater Melbourne area supports some 1,864 indigenous plant species, of which 178 are considered threatened, and 520 indigenous animal species, of which 136 are currently considered threatened.

We're expecting to gain a better understanding of what species inhabit the City of Melbourne municipality. While BioBlitz events are primarily an inventory of known species in a geographic area, it is not uncommon for these events to discover new species!

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS CONTINUED

07 | What should I wear?

You will be outside, so you should dress accordingly. Use sunscreen to protect you from potential sun exposure. Wear appropriate footwear for your selected BioBlitz location. Always take drinking water with you for any excursion.

08 | What happens if it rains or there is bad weather?

Nature happens despite the weather. The BioBlitz will take place rain, hail or shine.

09 | Can I bring my dog to the events?

Bringing your dog will limit where you are able to go in the parks. Bringing your dog could also limit other participants from walking on the surveys, for example, those with children. For these reasons, it not recommended to bring your dog on the survey events.

10 | How can I find out more?

Updates on BioBlitz will be posted at participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/BioBlitz. We encourage you to check this website regularly to keep up to date with the latest and engage with other keen urban naturalists.



Image: Nankeen Night Heron | Image source: Museum Victoria | Photographer: David Paul

TIPS FOR FINDING BIODIVERSITY IN THE CITY

Image: Blue Banded Bee. Image source: Museum Victoria
Photographer: Patrick Honan

TREE SECRETS!

Plants and especially trees provide valuable, essential services like food and shelter for all kinds of wildlife. In the early morning or at night take a closer look: there could be a bird, insect or a mammal hiding in that hollow tree trunk!

Mammals

Mammals that live in the city include those you might see often like possums or rats, but there are also many mammals we rarely see, such as micro-bats and native rats. A good way to find animals like these is to look in places where they might eat or sleep: watch tree hollows at dusk, look for burrows or holes under your deck or in your garden, or look out for other signs that these mammals live in your area.

Tracks, scats and signs

Look for tracks in the mud or dirt. Notice the shape and arrangement of paw-prints or footprints, and follow their trail. Some key things to look for: Do you see two feet or four? Are the footsteps close together (maybe indicating a smaller animal) or far apart (a bigger animal)? How many toes are there? Where did the tracks come from and where do they lead? Can you see any other signs that animals have been around? Can you find any feathers, fur, nests or scats? Different animals leave scats of different shapes! For example, possum poo looks very different to bat, or bird poo.

Birds

During spring, many birds start singing very early in the morning. Dawn is the best time to sit quietly somewhere and listen to the birds waking up. Grab a pair of binoculars and look in shrubs, in branches of trees, or in other sheltering sites. If you hear a bird, follow the sound and try to see who is making all of the noise. You might be lucky to find birds nesting in tree hollows, in nests they have built in trees, or in shrubs around your garden. A good way to attract birds to an area is to have a bird bath.

Reptiles

Different types of skinks, turtles, snakes and lizards might inhabit our city. Watch out for reptiles seeking shelter in leaf litter, under logs and rocks and in long grasses. A good way to find lizards is to look under piles of material in your backyard: look under tiles, bricks and wood to see if there are any lizards hiding there.

Frogs

We have ground frogs and tree frogs in Melbourne. Many of our frogs live in or near aquatic environments, such as dams, ponds, wetlands and creeks, and areas with native rushes and sedges. Look out for tadpoles in water in local parks and in your garden. Many frogs are heard before they are seen, and

many of them spend the night calling to each other. The best time to look for frogs is after dusk, if you hear a frog follow the noise and see if you can see them on reeds or on the banks of wetlands.

Insects

Scientists have identified about a million species of insects so far, and estimate that there may be up to 30 million. Insects differ from other animals in that they have three pairs of legs. With or without your magnifying glass, scour the ground, under bark, in leaf litter, search among the flowers or even look in your compost bin for insects.

A good way to see which insects are using your yard is to place biscuits in a jar lying down in the garden on a sunny day, return in a few hours and see what has been attracted to the bait! Another good way to watch for bees and butterflies is to sit and watch flowers on a sunny day, as these insects need to visit flowers to get nectar for food. We don't know a huge amount about the insects in our city, so, you might even discover a new species.

Water

Life depends on water. Look around you. Do you see a waterway, pond, lake or the ocean? What varieties of plants and animals do you see in or near the water?

MELBOURNE BIOBLITZ SURVEY FORM 2014



This form is optional. Please print as many copies as you require, and use it as a guide for the information you need to document when participating in the Melbourne BioBlitz.

Steps



Gather up your equipment. Essential: camera. Optional: mobile phone or GPS unit, magnifying glass, binoculars, camera, pencil and paper.



Choose a location. This may be a nearby park, street or even your back garden! Step outside and observe your surroundings.



Document your sightings. Note down what you see using the form below in the best way that suits you, or use technology to jump straight to step 4 in the field.



Go online to send us what you've found.

Upload what you have seen using the online form on our website: participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/bioblitz; via **Twitter** or **Instagram** using the hashtag **#bioblitzmelb** (remembering to include your location!), or by using the City of Melbourne's special page on **Bowerbird**: bowerbird.org.au/projects/4481.

BioBlitz survey form

Name: _____

Contact email: _____

Time and Date: _____

Location visited: _____

GPS coordinates (if known): _____

Please be as specific as possible, using the nearest street address or intersection, or local landmarks to help us to pinpoint your sighting on a map.

Species or description: _____

Think about the kind of things that might help us identify the species. If you want to have a go at describing its size, call or behaviour we'd love to hear about it! We encourage you to do your best, but don't worry; our experts will be verifying all records.

Photograph (please attach to each sighting).

Important! For us to use your sighting a part of our BioBlitz we need a photograph so that we can verify the species. Please include photos with each record you upload (see step 4. above) and remember to keep track of the location where you took each picture.

All entries will automatically go into the running for our great BioBlitz photography prizes!

Contact us:
urbanlandscapes@melbourne.vic.gov.au

Visit website:
participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/bioblitz



CITY OF MELBOURNE

MELBOURNE BIOBLITZ SURVEY FORM 2014



This form is optional. Please print as many copies as you require, and use it as a guide for the information you need to document when participating in the Melbourne BioBlitz.

Steps



Gather up your equipment. Essential: camera. Optional: mobile phone or GPS unit, magnifying glass, binoculars, camera, pencil and paper.



Choose a location. This may be a nearby park, street or even your back garden! Step outside and observe your surroundings.



Document your sightings. Note down what you see using the form below in the best way that suits you, or use technology to jump straight to step 4 in the field.



Go online to send us what you've found.

Upload what you have seen using the online form on our website: participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/bioblitz; via **Twitter** or **Instagram** using the hashtag **#bioblitzmelb** (remembering to include your location!), or by using the City of Melbourne's special page on **Bowerbird**: bowerbird.org.au/projects/4481.

BioBlitz survey form

Name: _____

Contact email: _____

Time and Date: _____

Location visited: _____

GPS coordinates (if known): _____

Please be as specific as possible, using the nearest street address or intersection, or local landmarks to help us to pinpoint your sighting on a map.

Species or description: _____

Think about the kind of things that might help us identify the species. If you want to have a go at describing its size, call or behaviour we'd love to hear about it! We encourage you to do your best, but don't worry; our experts will be verifying all records.

Photograph (please attach to each sighting).

Important! For us to use your sighting a part of our BioBlitz we need a photograph so that we can verify the species. Please include photos with each record you upload (see step 4. above) and remember to keep track of the location where you took each picture.

All entries will automatically go into the running for our great BioBlitz photography prizes!

Contact us:
urbanlandscapes@melbourne.vic.gov.au

Visit website:
participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/bioblitz



CITY OF MELBOURNE

How to contact us

Online: melbourne.vic.gov.au

In person:

Melbourne Town Hall - Administration Building
120 Swanston Street, Melbourne
7.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday
(Public holidays excluded)

Telephone: 03 9658 9658

7.30am to 6pm, Monday to Friday
(Public holidays excluded)

In writing:

City of Melbourne
GPO Box 1603
Melbourne VIC 3001
Australia

Fax: 03 9654 4854

Translation services:

03 9280 0716	አማርኛ
03 9280 0717	廣東話
03 9280 0718	Ελληνικά
03 9280 0719	Bahasa Indonesia
03 9280 0720	Italiano
03 9280 0721	國語
03 9280 0722	Soomaali
03 9280 0723	Español
03 9280 0724	Türkçe
03 9280 0725	Việt Ngữ
03 9280 0726	All other languages

National Relay Service: If you are deaf, hearing impaired or speech-impaired, call us via the National Relay Service: Teletypewriter (TTY) users phone 1300 555 727 then ask for 03 9658 9658
9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday
(Public holidays excluded)

