

seek 
by iNaturalist

EXPLORE YOUR WORLD, DISCOVER OUR PLANET

Instructions and tips for using the
Seek app to discover and record
your local wildlife.

**DOWNLOAD FOR ANDROID
OR APPLE**

[www.inaturalist.org/pages/
seek_app](http://www.inaturalist.org/pages/seek_app)



EXPLORE

- Open the Seek app.
- The app will load some examples of species that you can expect to find nearby. How many of these do you recognise? Can you find them all?
Requires wifi or network connection.
- Looking for something in particular? Limit the list of nearby species to a particular category by clicking on 'all species' and selecting from the list of options – select from Plants, Amphibians, Fungi, Fish, Reptiles, Arachnids, Birds, Insects, Molluscs, Mammals
- Click any species to find out more about it – including a map showing where it can be found around the world, examples of similar species, and whether it is 'native' or 'non-native'.

IDENTIFY

- Select the camera button.
- Browse your environment through the camera interface, pointing the camera at plants, animals and fungi to identify them in real-time.
- If the app can't tell you exactly what species it is it might still be able to help you identify the 'class' or 'family' to help you ID using books or the internet.

RECORD

- When the seven dots are all green and you have a species identification, click the camera button to capture the photo and record your observation.
- If have already taken a photo of an organism you want to identify, select 'photo' to access it from your image library, and then click 'Identify Photo'.
- Provided your photo is identified by the app as a species, it will go into MY OBSERVATIONS.

TOP TIPS

IDENTIFYING WILDLIFE IN REAL TIME

Seek identifies wildlife by comparing whatever the camera is showing it to a huge database of photos of wildlife sightings that have already been identified. Shapes, colours and patterns will give it the clues it needs to tell you what plant, animal or fungi you have found. For the best chance of identifying your wildlife find follow these tips.

1. Slow and steady wins the race

Give the app time to process what it is seeing by holding your device as still as possible or moving it slowly. This will also reduce motion blur which can make it harder for the app to recognise shapes.

2. Be bright

If your wildlife find is in darkness, or if there is light behind it causing it to be silhouetted, the app won't see its patterns and colours. Avoid shadows and carry a torch when investigating shaded areas.

3. Get ready for your close-up

Try to fill the frame with your wildlife find to give the app the best view of its details, and to cut distracting background details out of the frame. You can do this without getting too close to the organism by using the camera's zoom.

4. Focus on the matter in hand

Make sure you are not too close to your subject for your device's camera to focus. Tap the screen to tell the camera which detail to focus on. This might take a few attempts if there are lots of different details in frame.

5. Watch the dots

The seven dots on the camera interface represent seven 'levels' of identification. Watching these tells you whether your angle or frame is helping or hindering the app from identifying your find. If more dots turn green, you are getting warmer!



EARN BADGES

- Any observations will contribute to unlocking **ACHIEVEMENTS**. Unlock achievement badges for each kind of species successfully recorded, and 'level up' as you collect more badges.
- To earn **CHALLENGE BADGES** you have to enter the challenge and open the camera from within the challenge to ensure your observations will count towards that mission. Enter the challenge at any time to check your progress towards completion. Your progress is saved and you can work towards more than one challenge badge at the same time.

CONNECT

When you are confident in collecting observations, you can use your skills to become a true citizen scientist. By creating an iNaturalist account (under 13s will require authorisation from an adult) you can become part of a global community of naturalists and contribute to a growing database of biodiversity. This means your observations could help scientists to monitor biodiversity, identify changes in ecosystems due to climate change, and track the movements of migrating species.

When connected to an iNaturalist account you'll be able to submit your observations to iNaturalist. They will then appear on iNaturalist.org and can be shared online, or submitted to group projects or local bioblitz challenges.

NATIVE VS NON-NATIVE

Native species are organisms that normally live and thrive in an area, and are therefore used to the ecosystem which has developed around it. Changes to the ecosystem, such as destruction of habitat or the introduction of new species, can make life hard for native species.

Non-native species are those found in an area where they have not been part of the ecosystem before. They may be called "introduced species", "exotic" species, and sometimes "invasive" species. New species can upset the balance of an ecosystem by eating food that native species need to survive, hunting native species who are not used to having predators, or bringing with them diseases or parasites that attack native species.

TOP TIPS

RECORDING BUGS

1. Wait, don't chase

If you try to follow a fast-moving insect or arachnid as it scurries or flies around amongst grass, flowers or leaves you'll probably always be struggling to catch up, and your movements could frighten it into making itself scarce.

2. Borrow the bug

Your best chance of getting an identification may be to scan or photograph it on a plain white background. There are lots of ways to extract bugs from their natural surroundings – nets, pooters, traps, or simply a piece of paper used to gently scoop up a bug, or to shake it onto from a leaf or branch. In a glass or jam jar a bug is easier to photograph through the glass while it is unable to move far from one spot. No matter how you capture and contain your bug, ensure you don't keep it for long and release it gently in the same spot that you found it.

3. Crop to fit

Take a wide photo to avoid getting too close, but then crop the photo on your device so that the bug fills the frame. Access it via the Seek camera 'photo' tab.



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SEEK

Location access

Access Seek settings on your device to turn location access on in order to receive nearby species information.

Location

Click to change from your current position and explore species found in different areas.

Category

Click to refine the nearby species list to a specific category.

Species list

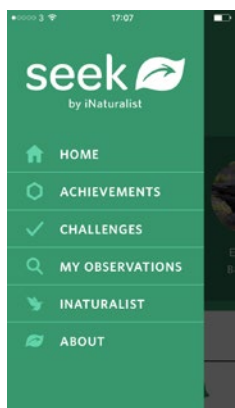
Click on a species for more details.

Monthly Challenge

Click through to start the challenge, or browse to Challenges via the menu for a list of all live challenges.

Menu

Click to access



Camera

Click to identify wildlife and/or record an observation.

Notifications

Updates and messages.

