



Welcome to the ITC iNaturalist Toolkit

This toolkit was designed to help you get started using the citizen-science application iNaturalist so you can take part in an Islands Trust Conservancy citizen science project. Below we have outlined specific steps and instructions to help you get started with iNaturalist. Once you are set up there are lots of resources and an entire online community waiting for you. If you encounter any issues in using this toolkit, or if you have feedback on the project, please email us at itcmail@islandstrust.bc.ca.

We can't wait to see what you find!

Contents

Welcome to the ITC iNaturalist Toolkit	1
What is Citizen Science?	2
What is iNaturalist?	2
Getting Started	2
Step 1: Create an iNaturalist account	3
If you will be using a smart phone or tablet.....	3
If you will be uploading photos to your iNaturalist account online from a computer	3
If you will not be using the iNaturalist app on a smart phone or tablet, you can create an account online instead. Go to: www.inaturalist.org/signup	3
Step 2: Join the Islands Trust Conservancy Project in the iNaturalist App	3
Step 3: Start observing and recording the world around you	6
How to post observations to iNaturalist.....	6
How to make an observation with an iPhone:	7
How to make an observation with an Android device:.....	8
How to make an observation using the website:	9
Additional video resources to get you started:	10
Tips for effective observations	10
How do identifications work in iNaturalist?.....	11
What is a project on iNaturalist?.....	11
Types of projects	11



ISLANDS TRUST CONSERVANCY

What is Citizen Science?

Citizen science is a participatory approach to data collection that involves public engagement and collaboration in order to increase scientific knowledge. Using citizen science, we are able to acquire and share larger amounts of data by having more people involved. Data collected through citizen science is often used in many different kinds of research, and helps us gain a better understanding of the world around us. With this project, we hope to improve our knowledge of the natural areas around us to inform conservation decisions and protect the islands in the Salish Sea into the future.

What is iNaturalist?



[iNaturalist](#) is a free citizen science platform that is simple to download and easy to use. This independent app is hosted by the California Academy of Sciences and the National Geographic Society, and can be accessed through a website or smartphone app. You can use it to record your observations of plants, animals, fungi—or any signs of life—and get help identifying the biodiversity around you. You can also explore the millions of observations and data collected by other iNaturalist users around the world, and connect with species experts and nature enthusiasts to share and build on our understanding of biodiversity.

iNaturalist connects you with a community of over one million scientists and nature enthusiasts who can help you learn more about nature! iNaturalist uses artificial intelligence to provide suggested identifications for observation photos you upload. Once you review iNaturalist's suggestions and decide on your identification, it will then be reviewed and verified by experts and experienced users.

iNaturalist is not owned by or affiliated with Islands Trust Conservancy. By engaging in the app, you agree to iNaturalist's [terms and conditions](#) and [privacy policy](#). Please ensure you read and agree to these policies when downloading the app.

Getting Started

Starting your iNaturalist journey is easy. All you need is an iNaturalist account with a smartphone or a camera and computer.

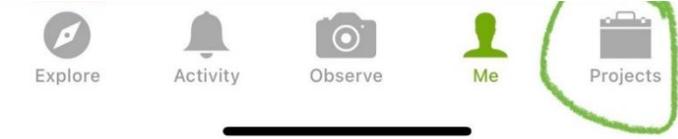


ISLANDS TRUST CONSERVANCY

Step 1: Create an iNaturalist account

<p>If you will be using a smart phone or tablet</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If you haven't already, download the free iNaturalist app from the app store on your Apple or Android device. 2. Open the iNaturalist app and create an account to sign in (you will only need to do this once).
<p>If you will be uploading photos to your iNaturalist account online from a computer</p>	<p>If you will not be using the iNaturalist app on a smart phone or tablet, you can create an account online instead. Go to: www.inaturalist.org/signup</p>

Step 2: Join the Islands Trust Conservancy Project

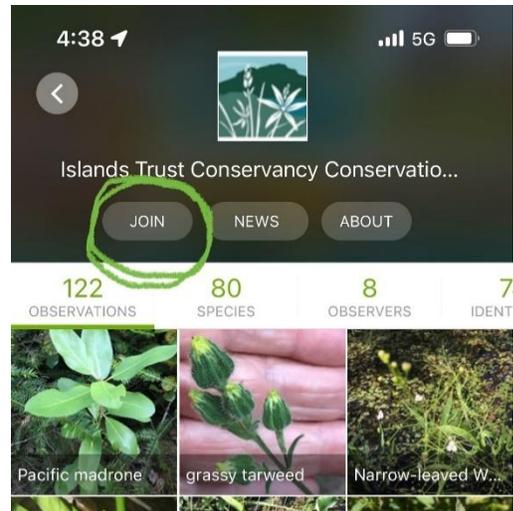
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Open the app or website and use your iNaturalist account to sign in (you only have to do this once) 	
<p><u>To join using the App:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. If you're using an iPhone or iPad, select "More..." on the main menu screen (not pictured) or select the 'Projects' icon if it is visible in the bottom right corner (pictured) <p>On an Android, click on the menu bar in the top left corner (not pictured)</p>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Search for Islands Trust Conservancy projects by typing 'Islands Trust Conservancy'- a number of options will appear (pictured). 	



ISLANDS TRUST CONSERVANCY

4. Click on the **Islands Trust Conservancy Conservation Covenants** project and select 'Join' to have your covenant and your observations included in the project (pictured; above)

If you are joining the project online you will select 'Join' in the top right corner above the project description (pictured; below).



To join online:

1. If you are accessing the project **through the website/online**, select – 'Community' – Projects' in the top drop-down menu bar next to the iNaturalist logo. Then search for 'Islands Trust Conservancy in the search bar below the main project featured on the Projects page (pictured – bottom)
Or – use this direct link to our project page:

<https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/islands-trust-conservancy-conservation-covenants>





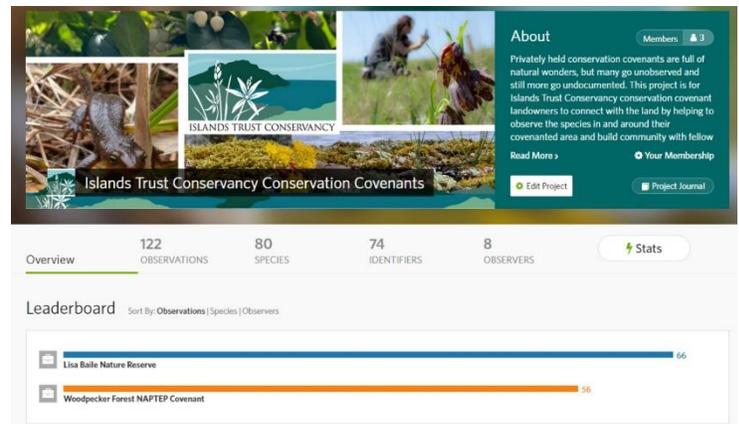
ISLANDS TRUST CONSERVANCY

2. Click 'Join' in the top right hand corner to join the project (pictured right – see green circle).



3. Once we have added your covenant to the project, you will be able to [view it online](#) (see Lisa Baile Nature Reserve and Woodpecker Forest NAPTEP Covenant projects pictured here).

Any observations you make within the geographic boundary of your conservation covenant will automatically be collected in your project and be visible here. Note: only your observations made within this geographic area are captured in this project.



4. **ALL DONE** - Go out and start snapping pictures of your nature observations and upload them to your iNaturalist account. Once your covenant is added to the project, any observations you or anyone else makes within the boundaries of your covenant area will automatically be collected into the project.

Step 3: Start observing and recording the world around you

An observation records an encounter with an individual organism at a particular time and location. This includes encounters with signs of organisms such as tracks, nests, feces, or things that have just died. When you make an observation, you'll record:

Who you are

You'll need to make an **iNaturalist account** and please only post your own personal observations

Where you saw it

Record both the coordinates of the encounter as well as their accuracy. You can obscure the location from the public

What you saw

Choose a group of organisms like **butterflies** or better yet a specific organism like the **Monarch butterfly**. If you provide evidence you can leave this blank and the **community can help**

When you saw it

Record the date of your encounter, not the date you post it to iNaturalist

Evidence of what you saw

By including evidence like a **photo or sound**, the community can help add, improve, or confirm the identification of the organism you encountered. Help the community by taking clear well framed photos, by including multiple photos from different angles



Photo: iNaturalist.org

Note: Your observations do not need to include all of the above components, but in order for them to become research grade, they need to.

For each organism you encounter, you should make a separate observation. If you observe something that is domestic, or not in the wild, such as animals in a zoo, aquarium or farm, or garden plants, make sure you select 'captive/cultivated'.

How to post observations to iNaturalist

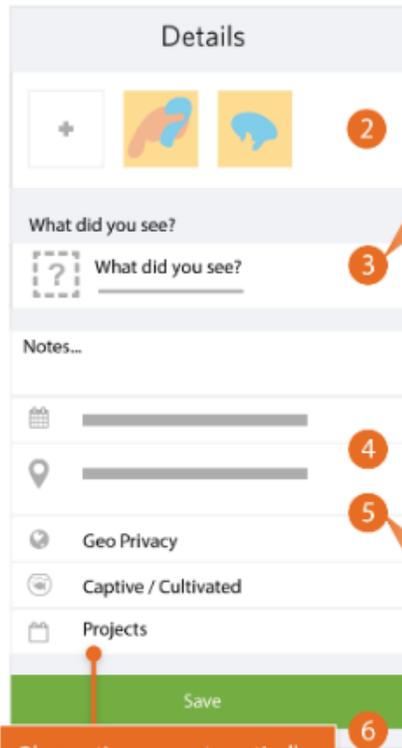
There are a number of [video tutorials](#) available on the iNaturalist website to help you get started. You can also review the infographics below to learn [how to post an observation](#) using the mobile app or the iNaturalist website.

How to make an observation with an iPhone:

1 Tap **observe**.



2 Add one or more photos as **evidence**.



3 Choose **what** you saw.

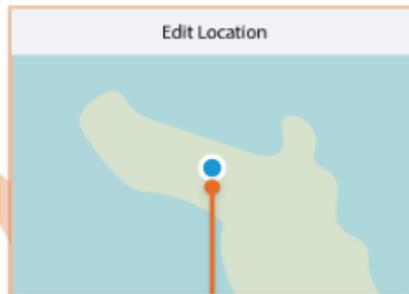
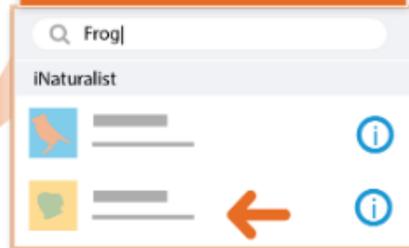
4 **When** you saw it should be added automatically.

5 **Where** you saw it should be added automatically. If it doesn't, check Privacy in the Settings app.

6 **Save** your observation.

Observations are automatically counted by collection projects and can't be added manually

Choose one of the computer vision suggestions, search for something else, or type in a 'Placeholder' if offline



The app should fetch your location automatically and display it on the map. If it doesn't, go to the Settings app and tap Privacy to enable Location Services for iNaturalist

7 **Upload** to share with the community. This should happen automatically. If it doesn't, tap the Upload button. You can turn off automatic upload from the app settings from the Me tab.



8 Check back for **activity** on your observation from the community or be notified by email to the address in your account settings.





ISLANDS TRUST CONSERVANCY

How to make an observation with an Android device:

- 1 Tap the **observe** button from the My Observations tab.



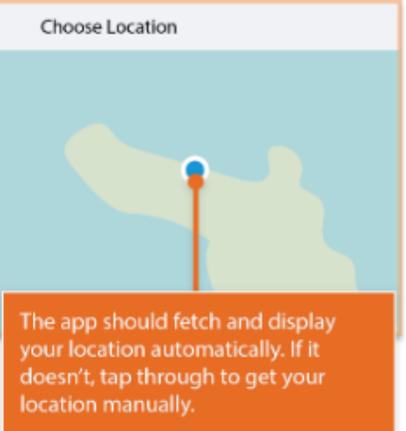
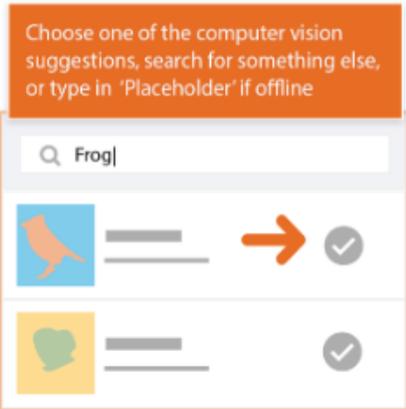
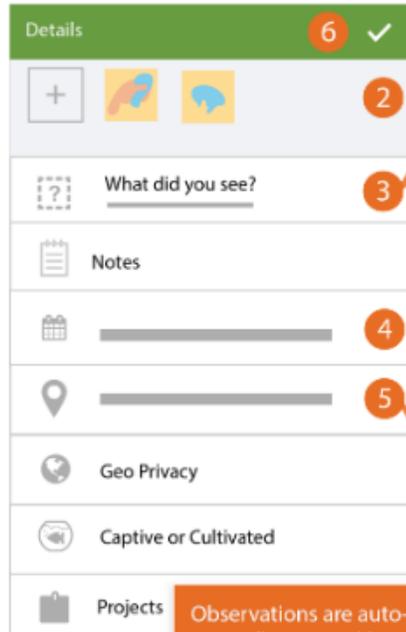
- 2 Add one or more photos as **evidence**.

- 3 Choose **what** you saw.

- 4 **When** you saw it should be added automatically.

- 5 **Where** you saw it should be added automatically. If this doesn't happen, check app permissions in the Settings app.

- 6 **Save** your observation.



Observations are automatically counted by collection projects and can't be added manually

- 7 **Sync** to share with the community. This should happen automatically. If it doesn't, tap the button. You can turn off auto upload from the Settings tab.



- 8 Check back for **activity** on your observation from the community or be notified by email to the address in your account settings.



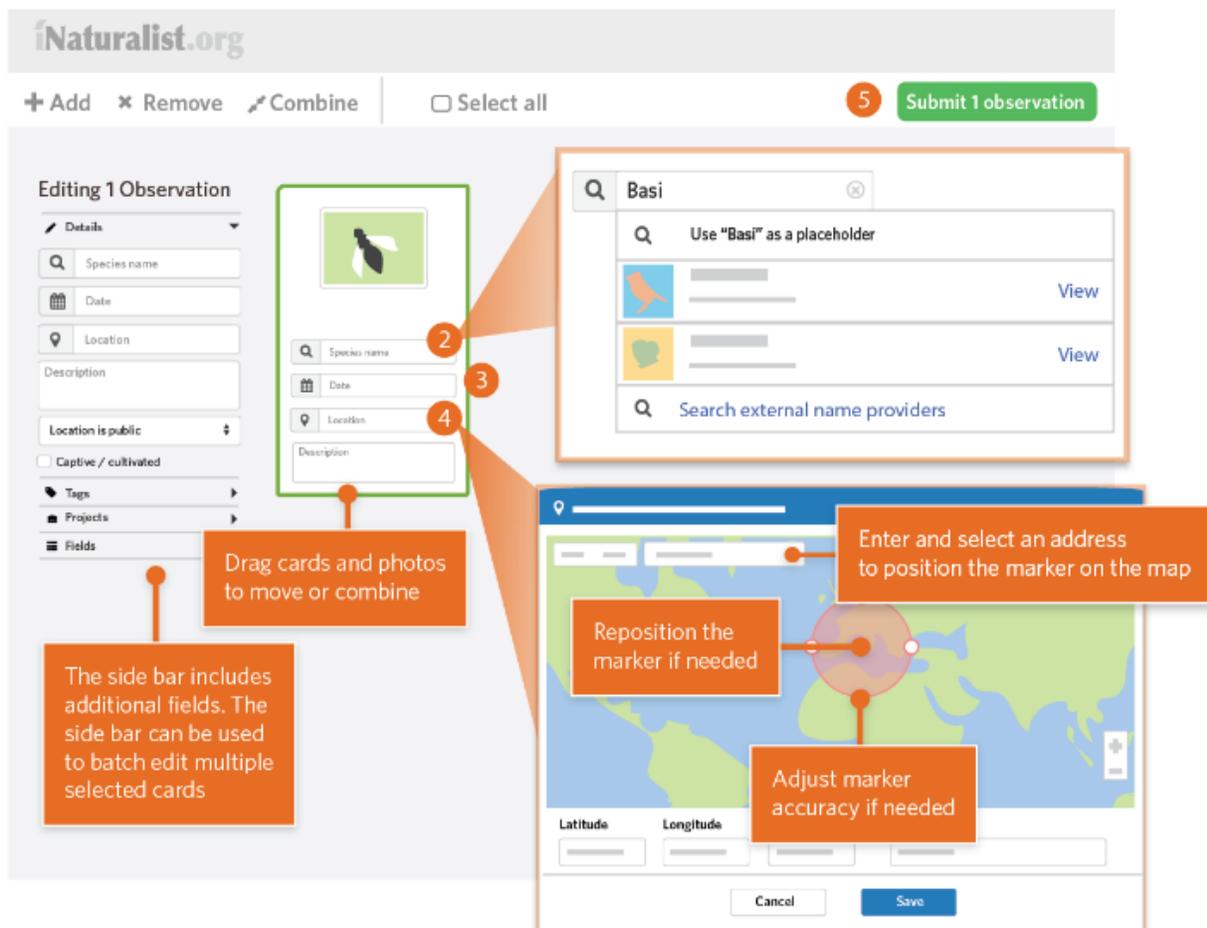
iNaturalist.org

How to make an observation using the website:



- 1 Start by clicking the green **Upload** button from the header when you are logged in.

From the upload page, begin by dragging in one or more photos. Each photo will create an 'observation card' that you can edit before submitting. You can also use the 'Add' button in the upper left to create observation cards without photos or the 'More Import options' menu to upload a CSV or import from external sites.



The screenshot shows the 'Editing 1 Observation' interface on iNaturalist.org. It includes a sidebar with fields for Species name, Date, Location, Description, Location is public, Captive/cultivated, Tags, Projects, and Fields. A central area displays an observation card with a photo of a bird. A search bar at the top right shows 'Basi' and a list of suggestions. A map at the bottom right shows a location marker with callouts for repositioning and adjusting accuracy. A 'Submit 1 observation' button is visible in the top right corner.

1. Start by clicking the green **Upload** button from the header when you are logged in.

2. Drag cards and photos to move or combine

3. The side bar includes additional fields. The side bar can be used to batch edit multiple selected cards

4. Enter and select an address to position the marker on the map

5. Reposition the marker if needed

6. Adjust marker accuracy if needed



ISLANDS TRUST CONSERVANCY

- 2 Choose **what** you saw from the suggestions or by searching for a name. If you can't find what you're looking for, leave it blank or use some placeholder text. If you entered a scientific name that's not recognized, click 'Search external name providers' to first import the organism from elsewhere. Use the sidebar to let us know if the organism you observed was captive or cultivated.
- 3 Use the calendar to enter **when** you observed the organism
- 4 Type in an address and select from the places offered in order to calculate coordinates and an accuracy circle describing **where** you were. You'll probably also need to zoom into the map and manually adjust the marker position and accuracy circle size.
- 5 **Submit** your observation.

iNaturalist.org

Additional video resources to get you started:

- [Adding an Observation on a Mobile Device](#)
- [Adding an Observation via the Web](#)
- [Duplicating an Observation](#)
- [Adding a photo or sound to an Observation](#)
- [Exploring Observations with iNaturalist](#)

Tips for effective observations

- Take photos of different angles and features of the organisms.
- Get close without disturbing the organism or surrounding organisms. If this isn't possible, use a zoom or crop the image later.
- Include another object, such as a lens cap or hand for scale.
- Try to get the image as clear as possible, focus on the target species.
- If the image has a busy background, try putting a hand or a solid coloured object behind the organism.



ISLANDS TRUST CONSERVANCY

How do identifications work in iNaturalist?

Another way to participate with iNaturalist is to help identify other users' observations, either by agreeing with identifications or by suggesting alternatives. iNaturalist uses artificial intelligence to provide initial suggested identifications for observations (pictures or sound clips) that users upload. These suggestions are not always correct, and sometimes correct suggestions are not selected by the user, so it's important to have identifications confirmed by the iNaturalist community.

Each additional identification helps the community reach consensus on which species was observed. These are then verified by experts and experienced users. All verified and research grade sightings go into a global database.

What is a project on iNaturalist?

Projects are essentially ways of collecting observations together that meet set observation criteria; in this case, geographic boundaries. You do not need to participate in a project to use iNaturalist, but projects can be a helpful way to organize observations.

Types of projects

There are three types of iNaturalist projects: Collection, Traditional, and Umbrella.

Collection

A collection project is like a saved observation search with set search criteria. Project requirements, such as taxa, geographic location, dates, or quality grade, are set and any observations that meet these requirements will automatically be pulled into the project.

Traditional

A traditional project has more features than a collection project, including the ability to use observation fields and taxa lists. Traditional projects are also not limited to search filters like collection projects are, which means that they can be used for more "outside the box" projects. However, unlike collection projects, observations are not automatically pulled into traditional projects. This means a user must join a traditional project in order for their observations to be included. In order to create a traditional project, the creator must first have 50 verifiable observations on their account.

Umbrella

Umbrella projects group together multiple collection or traditional projects. They are used to collate, compare, analyze or promote individual projects. The ITC iNaturalist project is an umbrella project and each covenant area represents a unique collection project.