

# Citizen Science and Nature Apps

Have you ever spotted an amazing butterfly that you have never seen before? Or wondered what that beautiful wildflower growing near your cottage is? Well, there's an app for that! Not only can you use your phone's camera to help identify just about any plant or animal you encounter, you can also use apps and interactive websites to discover which rare species are in your area, connect with other amateur naturalists, share photos, and organize your checklists. Most importantly, by simply recording an observation of what you see around you in nature, you are helping to create a large, real-time record of local flora and fauna that scientists can use to monitor and protect biodiversity across Canada and the world.

Below, we've rounded up a few of our favourite apps and websites that can turn you into a citizen scientist.

## iNaturalist Canada

(free app for Android and iPhone)



iNaturalist Canada has over 52,000 users across the country, and has documented more than 21,500 species. With the app, you can record and share your nature observations, get help identifying species you are unsure about, learn more about local

wildlife, and connect with other nature-lovers in your area. You can also help with specific projects, like local "bioblitz" events to track a certain species at risk, or canvas a specific area. The Canadian version of the app is run by the Canadian Wildlife Federation, Parks Canada, NatureServe Canada, and the Royal Ontario Museum, and it is part of a global iNaturalist network.

For more information, visit [www.inaturalist.ca](http://www.inaturalist.ca)



## eBird

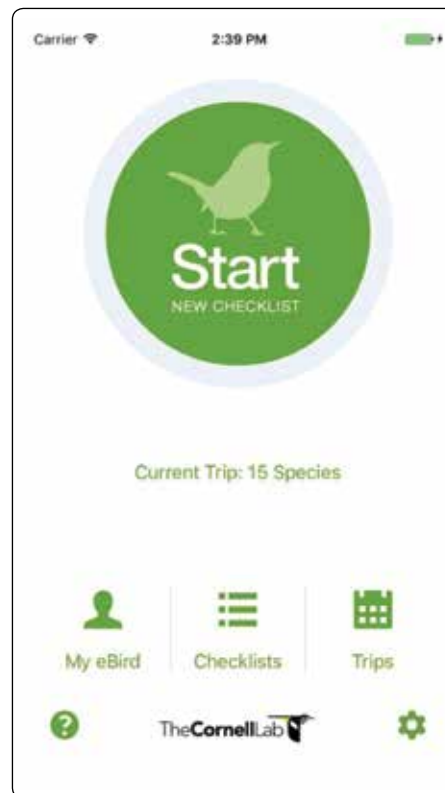
(free app for Android and iPhone)



eBird is the world's largest birding community, with more than 100 million bird sightings contributed each year. You can use the app to upload your birding checklists,

then login to the website to explore detailed distribution maps, learn about birding hotspots, and find out about rare birds spotted in your area. You can also participate in global birding events, like the Christmas Bird Count and Global Big Day. eBird is run by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

For more information, visit [www.ebird.org/content/canada](http://www.ebird.org/content/canada)



Note that many of these apps need to use your phone's location and access your camera in order to work properly. To make sure you are comfortable, please review the terms of agreement and adjust your privacy settings before downloading any apps.

## Bumble Bee Watch

(free app for Android and iPhone)



Bumble Bee Watch is a collaborative effort to track and conserve bumble bees across North America. It has over 8,300 users across North America and has received over 40,000 observations with photos.

You can submit a photo of a bumble bee, use the online key to help you identify the type based on your location and the bumble bee's color patterns, and then a volunteer expert will verify your ID. The data collected is used to enhance bumble bee conservation efforts, such as planning habitat for pollinator parks. Bumble Bee Watch is run by The Xerces Society, the University of Ottawa, Wildlife Preservation Canada, BeeSpotter, The Natural History Museum, London, and the Montreal Insectarium.

For more information, visit [www.bumblebeewatch.org](http://www.bumblebeewatch.org)



## eButterfly

(website)



eButterfly is an international, data-driven project dedicated to butterfly biodiversity, conservation, and education. You can create an account to record and track your butterfly observations, explore interactive maps, learn more about butterflies, and share

your photos on their interactive website. Experts will review your submissions before they are entered into the database. eButterfly was developed at the University of Ottawa, and is run in partnership with Espace pour la vie in Montreal, the Vermont Center for Ecostudies and the University of Arizona.

For more information, visit [www.e-butterfly.org](http://www.e-butterfly.org)

## Seek

(free app for Android and iPhone)



Seek helps you identify plants and animals using your smartphone's camera. Using image recognition technology based on observations submitted to iNaturalist, Seek shows you common flora and fauna in your area, and helps you identify and learn more about what you are looking at. Seek is family friendly, and includes fun monthly observation challenges to earn badges. Seek was made by iNaturalist, with support from Our Planet on Netflix and WWE, among others.

For more information, visit [www.inaturalist.org/pages/seek\\_app](http://www.inaturalist.org/pages/seek_app)



## EDDMapS Ontario

(free app for Android and iPhone)



EDDMapS Ontario tracks and maps invasive species across the province. Users can submit information and photos about suspected invasive species, which are then reviewed by experts. Once confirmed, the information is made publicly available for use by scientists, conservationists, and the public. Since

its launch, over 51,000 records of invasive species have been logged across Ontario. The Ontario version of the app is supported by the Canada/Ontario Invasive Species Centre, the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources.

For more information, visit [www.eddmaps.org/ontario/about](http://www.eddmaps.org/ontario/about)