

Backyard Biologist



Description:

Teams will be assessed on their knowledge of living organisms that they may encounter in their own backyard. In 2020, the focus will be on trees, plants, and local wildlife. Teams will be required to identify organisms from a provided list and know about the habitat and conditions required for growth of the organisms.

Number of Participants: 2

Approximate Time: 45 minutes

Materials:

1. Each team may bring up to 2 commercially produced field guides and/or 2 – 3-ring binders with pages in any form from any source. (This means 2 guides, or 2 binders or a guide and a binder.) No Actual specimens –plant or animal - are allowed in the binders.
2. Teams may also bring up to two hand lenses.

The Competition:

This event will be run as stations that the students rotate through. Stations may include but are not limited to drawings, scenarios, leaves, photographs, specimens, and songs.

1. Plants and Horticulture

- a. Identify plant structure such as leaves, bark, fruit, flower, native range, and habitat.
- b. Concepts of gravitropism, phototropism, thigmotropism and hydrotropism.
- c. Basic soil properties (texture and capacity to hold water) and components (sand, clay and humus).

2. Wildlife

- a. Basic characteristics and description of habitat
- b. Eating habits and life cycles
- c. Importance to the ecosystem and impact on humans or human activities
- d. Identify calls, songs, tracks, pelts, skulls, and other identifying factors

Scoring:

The score will be based on the following:

- Points awarded for the accuracy of responses. Students are not required to provide scientific names of specimens. Common names are appropriate. Ties will be broken by responses to pre-selected questions chosen by the event leader.

This event was adapted from North Carolina ESO event of same name.

Wildlife

- American Robin
- American Toad
- Armadillo
- Banded Water Snake
- Barn Swallow
- Barred Owl
- Black Bear
- Blue Jay
- Bobcat
- Brown Thrasher
- Carolina Chickadee
- Copperhead
- Cottonmouth
- Cow Bird
- Coyote
- Eastern Bluebird
- Eastern Narrow Mouth Toad
- Eastern Spadefoot Toad
- Eastern Wild Turkey
- Great Horned Owl
- Green Treefrog
- Grey Fox
- House Wren
- Kingsnake
- Mole
- Mourning Dove
- Northern Mockingbird
- Opossum
- Raccoon
- Red Fox
- Red-cockaded Woodpecker
- Red-shouldered Hawk
- Red-Tailed Hawk
- Southern Leopard Frog
- Timber Rattlesnake
- Tufted Titmouse
- Vole
- White-tailed Deer

Plants, Bushes, Vines, & Flowers

- American Elm
- American Sycamore
- Black Cherry
- Blackberry
- Cross Vine
- Eastern Poison Ivy
- Eastern Red Cedar
- English Ivy
- Flowering Dogwood
- Green Ash
- Honey Suckle
- Kudzu
- Loblolly Pine
- Longleaf Pine
- Muscadine
- Red Hickory
- Red Maple
- Red Mulberry
- Southern Red Oak
- Sparkleberry
- Sweetgum
- Trumpet Creeper
- White Oak
- Yellow-Poplar