Tips for documenting species for CNC X USC

1. Download the iNaturalist app and create a profile
2. Join the CNC X USC 2023 project (in projects, search 'City Nature Challenge X USC 2023')
3. Observe from April 28-May 1, 2023! Observations made in LA County by project members during this time are automatically added to our project
4. Be sure to mark any cultivated (planted) plants or captive animals

Remember…be safe!

1. Be aware of your surroundings
2. Lift rocks towards you when looking for wildlife underneath
3. Be gentle and safe with the wildlife you observe

Find Wildlife

It can be any plant or critter anywhere in Los Angeles County

Tips for finding and documenting wildlife in an urban area

1. *The goal is to document wildlife, rather than captive or cultivated species*
2. Find habitat – animals need food, water, and shelter
3. Look up – in the sky, in trees, on roofs, under the eaves of buildings
4. Look down – under rocks, leaves, tables, plants, etc.
5. Weeds are wild plants!
6. If an observation is a cultivated (planted) plant or captive animal, be sure to mark it!

Take a Picture of What you Find

Be sure to take lots of pictures that will help in identifying the critter or plant

Tips for taking the best and most useful pictures for identification

1. Take multiple pictures if you can – iNaturalist observations can include many images
2. Make sure the picture is in focus
3. Take pictures from different angles
4. **PLANTS:** Take pictures of the different parts – whole plant, leaves, flowers, berries, etc.
5. **ANIMALS:** Take a picture right away when you spot something – it may run/fly away!! Slowly walk towards the animal taking pictures as you go

Share Your Observations

There are 3 ways to share your observations

- You can make an observation directly in the iNaturalist app
- You can take photos on your phone and add them as an observation later
- You can take photos with a traditional camera and upload them to the iNaturalist webpage

Examples of Best Practices for taking photos
(images from Natural History Museum)

Make sure the picture is in focus

Isolate the organism you want to document

Take photos from different angles

Take photos of different parts of the plant