

# City Nature Challenge

**Dates:** Friday, April 26- Monday, April 29 (& Identification Days thru May 5<sup>th</sup>). The City Nature Challenge begins at midnight at the start of Friday 4/26, and ends at midnight at the end of Monday 4/29.

City Nature Challenge ABQ and City Nature Challenge Santa Fe Area include the 6 counties surrounding Albuquerque and Santa Fe: Bernalillo, Los Alamos, Rio Arriba, Sandoval, Santa Fe, and Valencia counties. We invite the mentioned counties to explore nature in and around your community and share your observations on iNaturalist from Friday, April 26th through Monday, April 29th. Join over 500 cities on 6 continents that are participating in this 9th annual worldwide event!

Simply go outside and take pictures of wild plants, animals and their evidence, and fungi that you find around your home, neighborhood, in city parks, open spaces, national forest land, or wherever you choose to explore and upload your findings to the iNaturalist app or at iNaturalist.org. Contribute to knowledge of urban wildlife and connect with people all across the world who are doing the same thing at the same time.

City Nature Challenge is a worldwide collaborative effort to find and document nature observations in and around cities. It is organized by San Francisco's California Academy of Sciences and the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County.

Last year, nearly 1.9 million observations were made of 57,227 species! More than 750 scientific studies were published using iNaturalist data in 2022. This data helps policymakers make informed conservation decisions that allow humans to coexist with the wildlife around them and view themselves as a part of, not apart from, nature.

City Nature Challenge Santa Fe Area is participating for the very first time! City Nature Challenge ABQ is in its 6th year. It is exciting to have two City Nature Challenge projects in New Mexico for the first time, and the hope is to bring in many new participants who want to get outside in our beautiful state and help make a great showing to the world.

It's easy to participate:

1. Set up an account on [iNaturalist.org](https://www.inaturalist.org) or download the app.
3. Take photos of wild animals and their signs (tracks, scat, feathers, etc.), plants, and fungi you find from April 26th through April 29th.
4. Submit your observations on the iNaturalist website or app.
5. Help identify others' observations, and have iNaturalist and its community help, you through May 5<sup>th</sup>.

To learn more about City Nature Challenge ABQ and take part:

- Join the [City Nature Challenge ABQ iNaturalist project](#)
- Visit [abqcitynature.org](http://abqcitynature.org)
- Follow on social media: [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), & [Instagram](#)

To learn more about City Nature Challenge Santa Fe Area and take part:

- Join the [City Nature Challenge Santa Fe Area iNaturalist project](#)

Visit [citynaturechallenge.org](http://citynaturechallenge.org) to learn more about this global event and to access an [Education Toolkit](#) for getting students involved.

## Earth Day

You are invited to join the Outdoor Learning Initiative Team at the Earth Day Festival on Sunday, April 21, from 10am-4pm at Balloon Fiesta Park. We will be housed in the Youth Pavilion along with partners and agencies. We will have activities and information for children.

A very special fish who will be moving into Balloon Fiesta Park! The fish needs a name, and we are asking classrooms to enter a contest to name the fish! Student's classes can enter our fish naming contest at [Outdoor.Learning@ped.nm.gov](mailto:Outdoor.Learning@ped.nm.gov)

This recycled fish is a sculpture designed for collecting plastics to be recycled and is being built by one of our local builders. The sculpture is a New Mexico Cutthroat Trout, which is the New Mexico State Fish. There are recycled fish sculptures like ours all over the world, but this will be the first that we know of that will live so far from an ocean – our rivers are still getting polluted, and we don't want plastics in the Rio Grande! The sculpture will stay at Balloon Fiesta Park as a permanent installation, so we will be able to visit it and contribute our plastics whenever we visit the park and those coming during Balloon Fiesta can see student submissions.

The New Mexico Cutthroat Trout that our sculpture represents is a beautiful brass-colored fish with green, bronze, and orange/red tones, with spots sprinkled from its tail up to its nose, fading away as they move up the fish.



[Earth Day Festival Link](#)

[Grumpy Fish Needs a Name Book](#)

[Grumpy Fish PreK Lesson Plan](#)

[Grumpy Fish K Lesson Plan](#)

[Grumpy Fish 1<sup>st</sup> Lesson Plan](#)

[Grumpy Fish 2<sup>nd</sup> Lesson Plan](#)

## New Teacher Outdoor Learning

We have an online course open to any and all teachers, both formal and informal, who are interested in learning more about outdoor learning. [New Teacher Outdoor Learning \(instructure.com\)](#)

It is a self-enrollment course. .

Educators in PK-12 s can also request teacher professional learning by emailing [outdoor.learning@ped.nm.gov](mailto:outdoor.learning@ped.nm.gov)

## Technical Assistance

Schools can request technical assistance for grant applications, reviews, and more by emailing [outdoor.learning@ped.nm.gov](mailto:outdoor.learning@ped.nm.gov)

# Smokey Bear Reading Challenge

Smokey Bear turns 80 this year! To celebrate join in on the Smokey Bear Reading Challenge.

<https://smokeybear.com/library-toolkit-reading-challenge>

The State Library isofficially enrolled in the program and will distribute to the public libraries 97 in the state and every public library will receive cards, stamps, digital toolkit, bookmarks, games, completion certificates, etc. Some libraries will roll this in the summer reading program and some will do this as a separate program. The libguide is created for Smokey Bear! [Kelly McCabe, NMSL \(Guest\): https://libguides.nmstatelibrary.org/SmokeyBear](#)

The summer reading program is Adventure Begins at Your Library with adventure packs having been sent to all libraries.

## 4th Grade Every Kid Outdoors Passes

Every Kid Outdoors program: [Every Kid Outdoors](#) is an interagency program that began in 2015 with the goal of getting young people outdoors to learn, explore, and play in their public lands. All fourth graders are eligible for a FREE 4th Grade Pass, which gives them and their families free access to hundreds of federally managed parks, lands and waters for an entire year (September 1st-August 31st). Pass holders are also eligible for a free Christmas tree permit through their local national forest, as supplies last.