

The challenges of documenting biodiversity

All ATBIs have special challenges, but there are several issues common to all inventories that truly include “All Taxa” and, thereby, are dominated by invertebrates. Any sort of invertebrate sampling will inevitably bring in overwhelming numbers of specimens that need to be processed, identified, and ultimately stored somewhere. Each of these three steps can pose huge difficulties for parks, in terms of processing labor and lab space, finding taxonomists willing to share their expertise, and finding museums willing to house large collections of park material. As biodiversity discovery activities gather momentum across the country, it will be important for each park to consider and address these challenges in its own planning process. A new Taxonomists-in-Parks program is being developed that will provide guidance at a national level. For more information, contact the author, Jessica Rykken, or Sally Plumb (sally_plumb@nps.gov), NPS biodiversity coordinator.