

George Washington Carver Bioblitz

National park

George Washington Carver National Monument, Missouri

Dates

27–28 September 2013. Similar events are planned for this park on 27 September 2014 and at Buffalo National River on 18 October 2014.

Activity name/type

Bioblitz

Focal taxa/habitats

Aquatic and terrestrial insects, small mammals, water mites

Methods

Staff from the NPS Heartland Inventory and Monitoring Network selected four focus taxa based on understudied groups from previous inventories. Lead scientists selected study protocols with park approval via the NPS Research Permit and Reporting System. Four teams made field collections in various ecosystems using scientific methods. Teams comprised local adult volunteers recruited through public media and university contacts. Team leaders and NPS staff held an orientation meeting to discuss the schedule, methods, data recording, equipment, and safety. Field collections were made from 8 a.m. to noon on Saturday; blacklight traps were set the previous night. Aquatic and terrestrial collections were used for educational purposes Saturday afternoon in the visitor center classroom. Scientists reported taxa count data to the Heartland Network once identifications were complete.

Key partners

Staff from the national monument helped to coordinate the event and provided use of the visitor center, park grounds, and public outreach. Taxonomic team leaders came from Missouri Southern State University, the University of Arkansas, and the NPS Heartland Inventory and Monitoring Network. Team leaders and members volunteered their time.

Participation

Thirty-nine volunteers participated in the event, 4 as leaders and 20 as team members, with an additional 15 visitors participating in the educational program.

Number of species/specimens

More than 1,200 organisms were collected, comprising 141 species, of which 89 were new to the park.

BELOW LEFT: DEREK HENNEN, UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS; OTHERS: NPS HEARTLAND NETWORK/HOPE DODD



(Clockwise from top left). Millipede collected in the forest by David Bowles's team. Aquatic invertebrate sample processing at Williams Pond by Kip Heth's team. Small-mammal collecting from prairie by Karen Pulicinski's team. Water mite sample collecting from creeks by Andrea Radwell's team.

Publications

A final report has been published: Hinsey, J. A., and T. M. Johnson. 2014. George Washington Carver National Monument (GWCA) Bioblitz Event—2013. Natural Resource Data Series NPS/HTLN/NRDS—2014/686. National Park Service, Fort Collins, Colorado, USA.

Outcomes

The event was held in conjunction with National Public Lands Day and was well attended by curious visitors, including toddlers and octogenarians. The park considered the event a success in part because it provided an opportunity to involve adults and older students as citizen scientists in the collection of authentic data that will be archived in the NPSpecies database. The park plans to host future bioblitz events based on the favorable outcomes of this initial activity.

Park contacts

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