

What is Citizen Science?

- Citizen science is simply a scientific research conducted by people who are not professional scientists.
- Some of the biggest discoveries in the world have been made by people without official scientific qualifications or funding.
- Anyone can be a citizen scientist.
- Since usually there are not enough qualified scientists to carry out this research all by themselves, community volunteers are especially useful in big projects where scientists need to gather information from across the whole world, a region or a particular country.
- You don't have to be an expert.
- Often, the tasks are quite simple – for example, photographing plants or spotting birds in your garden. With more complex tasks, you will be given training on exactly what to do to help you send your observations back to the scientists running the project.



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Citizen Science for Birds



HOW DOES CITIZEN SCIENCE HELP BIRDS?

- Birds can be found in almost every part of the world and often migrate vast distances.
- Citizen science can help us keep track of bird numbers and how they are changing around the globe.
- With this information, we can identify species and habitats that are under threat, and act to help them.
- Citizens across the world use the Natura Alert mobile phone app to report any dangers that are threatening their local Important Bird & Biodiversity Areas, prompting conservation groups to take action.
- Birds are also found in remote areas that are difficult for scientists to access. Local people can help here, too.
- Citizen science helps birds by encouraging people to love and respect nature. Spending time watching and learning about birds makes people more likely to protect them.



HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

- One fun way for young people to get involved is to enter sightings of the Spring Alive species on our interactive map. This will help us to keep track of the birds' migrations in real time as the waves of sightings move from country to country.
- Get in touch with Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL), the national Spring Alive Partner, to learn more about Citizen Science in Sierra Leone.
- If you're looking for something more global, you can download the eBird mobile app, where you can log your bird sightings wherever you are in the world.
- If you just want a taster, consider signing up to a one-off bird count event such as Global Big Day, Global Bird Weekend or EuroBirdwatch.
- Outside of these, if you see any unusual wildlife or spot threats to nature, you can always report them directly to your local conservation group or School Nature Club.



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