

## PRESS RELEASE

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Lead Staff: Nicole Slevin  
845-292-6180, ext. 114  
Communications & Diversity Manager  
[nas96@cornell.edu](mailto:nas96@cornell.edu)

### FREE Upper Delaware BioBlitz Family Day Connects Youth to Science

STARLIGHT, PA—A BioBlitz is an event where teams of scientists gather on a demarcated property for 24 hours to collect, identify, and catalog a single specimen of every single species they can find. The latter part of the event is open to the public for youth and their families to meet the scientists, see what they have collected, and learn more about biology in the context of the site.

Families, camps, and youth groups can take advantage of a free hands-on, educational opportunity on Saturday, June 30, for all ages to experience the diversity of life on a unique piece of property in Starlight, Wayne County, PA.

On Saturday, June 30, the public is invited to the Upper Delaware BioBlitz from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm at the Gales Property owned by the Norcross Wildlife Foundation located on PA Rt. 191 at the junction of PA Rt. 370 about 1 mile south of Hancock NY, and in the far northeastern corner of Wayne County at the confluence of the east and west branches of the Delaware River, just downstream of the Shehawken access in PA.

For free, families can view the specimens, meet scientists of various disciplines, and enjoy tours of the site to learn how different species live and thrive in the context of the overall property.

Nine teams and sponsoring organizations will provide information and offer educational programs on their particular areas of expertise. Participants should wear comfortable hiking attire.

Activities will include:

- View the collected specimens and talk to the experts

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Diversity and Inclusion are a part of Cornell University's heritage. We are a recognized employer and educator valuing AA/EEO, Protected Veterans, and Individuals with Disabilities.

- Learn to take nature photos from professional photographers
- Take walks with experts to learn about birds, native plants, fish, bugs, and mushrooms
- Learn how to draw nature by children's book author and artists
- Enjoy an original performance of "Trees" by NACL Theater, live music, and puppets
- PLUS Special Friday night program at 8:30 pm bat acoustic ID and bug light tent demos

For more information, the public can visit <http://sullivanccc.org/events/2016/06/25/upper-delaware-bioblitz-family-day>, [www.upperdelawarebioblitz.com](http://www.upperdelawarebioblitz.com), [www.facebook.com/UpperDelawareBioBlitz](http://www.facebook.com/UpperDelawareBioBlitz), or email [info@upperdelawarebioblitz.com](mailto:info@upperdelawarebioblitz.com).

Teams of scientists and amateur naturalists will converge on the site on Friday to begin their 24 hour survey. The Gales Property was also the site of the 2013 Upper Delaware BioBlitz, the first BioBlitz in the region and this will be the 4th event hosted by the Upper Delaware BioBlitz Steering Committee overall. In 2013 the nine teams of researchers collected 1,022 distinct species in 24 hours!

Teams of researchers will focus on specific categories of life, including aquatic insects; birds; fish; mammals; mosses and lichens; mushrooms; plants, grasses, and trees; reptiles and amphibians; and terrestrial bugs. The scientists are asked to identify what they find down to the species level, if possible, using specialized methods. Some of this will be done in the field either by photos or visual identification. Other items will be brought back to the collection tables for further identification through careful analysis using microscopes and reference material on site.

All of the data will be compiled into an inventory of species collected during the event and will be publicly available to help future scientists understand what was living on the site at this particular time, including rare or endangered species. Experts will travel from far distances to study this unique area of Pennsylvania.

Upper Delaware BioBlitz participating organizations and sponsors include Academy of Natural Sciences at Drexel University, Cornell Cooperative Extension Sullivan County, Delaware Highlands Conservancy, Delaware Highlands Mushroom Society, Delaware Riverkeeper Network, Friends of the Upper Delaware River, John & Helen Villaume Foundation, National Park Service, National Parks Conservation Association, Natural Environmental Education Foundation, Northeast Pennsylvania Audubon Society, Norcross Wildlife Foundation, Pennsylvania Native Plant Society, Sierra Club Pennsylvania Chapter, Sullivan County Audubon Society, Upper Delaware Council, US Forest Service, Wayne County Community Foundation, and Wayne County Conservation District.

Delaware Highlands Conservancy is the fiscal sponsor for the event, and all contributions to the event through the Conservancy are tax-deductible.

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