



Biothon 2018 in Memory of Elizabeth Farnsworth

The Annual Search for Species

Biothon weekends: May 11 - 13 & June 1 - 3

Help document the biodiversity of our region while raising funds to support the Hitchcock Center's year-round environmental education programs for all ages.

More information: hitchcockcenter.org/biothon.



OVERVIEW FOR BIOTHON TEAMS:

- The Hitchcock Center's Biothon happens each year when spring bird migration is at its peak (May weekend) and when most plants are in leaf and bloom (June weekend). This time of year is when we see the greatest biodiversity.
- Biothon is a fun and educational way to enjoy the return of spring, document the biodiversity of our region, and to also help raise funds for the Hitchcock Center's year-round environmental education programs.
- People can participate in Biothon by leading a team of their own (which can be a team of one, if that suits you best), by joining an existing team, and/or by collecting donations or pledges in support of a team (you can help to fundraise even if you choose not to go out in the field on an outing).
- If forming your own team, you will choose where and when to go out in the field, as well as what species you wish to count. Your outing can happen any time during Biothon weekends of Friday, May 11 through Sunday, May 13 **OR** from Friday, June 1 through Sunday, June 3.
- You choose how long you want to go out. Teams have been known to go out for 2 hours or up to 24 hours!
- When counting species, you can look for birds, plants, mammals, reptiles and amphibians, insects, or everything! It's your choice. The only rule here is that they need to be undomesticated and wild— going to a zoo or to a botanical garden doesn't count! Links to species guides can be found on our website: hitchcockcenter.org/biothon.
- On our website you will also find a pledge form and sample language you can use to ask your family, friends, neighbors, and colleagues to give in support of your outing and the Hitchcock Center's work. Some choose to give by numbers of species found (i.e. 10 cents for each species your team finds) while others choose to give a flat donation amount. Flat donations can be made securely on our website. Pledges will need to be collected on your pledge form.

WHEN ASKING FOR A GIFT OR PLEDGE please keep in mind:

- ✓ If taking a pledge, be sure to let the person know how many species you expect to count.
EXAMPLE: Let's say you count 50 birds and someone pledges 50 cents per species, you just raised \$25 from one person! Now, collect pledges like that from 10 other people and you've just raised \$250!! It's that easy.
- ✓ If collecting pledges per species seems too complicated, you can always ask for a flat gift amount.
- ✓ Consider asking for a bonus if you find a particularly rare species or a life species.
EXAMPLE: I hope to find an Indigo Bunting for the first time in my life - would you pledge an extra \$25 if I do?
- ✓ Find out if your person is willing to give more if you exceed your species goal! Alternatively, they could give less if you don't meet your goal. It all adds to the excitement of the day.

- There are many ways to collect pledges from your family, friends, colleagues, and neighbors. You can send letters or emails, post a message on your Facebook page, or go door-to-door in your neighborhood.

Visit hitchcockcenter.org/biothon for sample language to help get you started.

- For offline fundraising, please use the Pledge Form on our website to keep track of your pledges. **Be sure to follow the instructions and send your pledge sheets in to marcus@hitchcockcenter.org!** After your team's outing, you will need to follow up to let your supporters know how you did, collect cash or checks, or ask that they send their gift directly to:

Hitchcock Center for the Environment, 845 West Street, Amherst, MA 01002

Checks should be made payable to the Hitchcock Center. Please ask that they write your name in the memo line.

Credit card payments can be made securely through our website: hitchcockcenter.org/biothon.

THANK YOU AND HAVE FUN!