

SAMPLE BIOTHON MESSAGING

I cut and paste my message into an individually addressed email (rather than sending a group email). I typically send out 50 email messages from my address book and get a near 90% participation rate. The average gift I get is around \$25. You do the math!

– Julie Johnson, Executive Director

SAMPLE 1:

Dear _____:

I'm writing in hopes that you can support a great organization and have fun at the same time!

The **Hitchcock Center for the Environment** in Amherst, MA holds an annual Biothon – this year, (the 19th anniversary of the event!), we are dedicating the event in memory of our dear friend and colleague **Elizabeth Farnsworth**.

As a renowned biologist, educator and illustrator, Elizabeth spearheaded the Biothon for the past three years, encouraging people to form teams, headed by a naturalist or two, and get out to explore a favorite natural area where lots of plant, animal, fungal, and/or insect, etc. species might be found. These teams count species during peak spring biodiversity, recruiting a cohort of people to bid on the total number of species they find during their foray (i.e., \$1 or any amount per species). Supporters can also pledge a fixed amount (i.e., \$50 or any amount).

These donations directly support the year-round innovative science and nature programming happening at the Hitchcock Center, all from their world-class new home, where Elizabeth has created beautiful “glyphs” used as teaching tools throughout the new Visitors Center.

Will you help to support my Biothon team, in memory of Elizabeth? This year, Biothon is happening during the second weekend of May (11-13) and the first weekend of June (1-3).

My team is hoping to <<insert goal here, such as “see a Black-Throated Green Warbler” or “count a total of 100 species”>> .

If you'd like to make a per-species pledge, just reply to let me know. I would contact you soon after we complete our species count with the results, and you can make your gift then. To make a donation securely and easily online, please visit: hitchcockcenter.org/biothon.

Many thanks for supporting education for a healthy planet and the Biothon!

<Your name>

p.s. The Hitchcock Center for the Environment is a registered 501c3 charitable organization and all donations are tax-deductible to the fullest extent allowable by law.

SAMPLE 2:

It's time for the Hitchcock Center's annual Biothon: the Annual Search for Species!

Biothon happens each year when bird migration is at its peak and when most plants are in leaf and/or bloom. It's when we can expect to see the greatest biodiversity.

Biothon is a fun and educational way to document the biodiversity of our region, celebrate the return of spring, and raise funds to support the Hitchcock Center's year-round environmental education programs.

This year, Biothon is in memory of renowned biologist, educator and illustrator, Elizabeth Farnsworth, who spearheaded the Biothon for the past three years. Biothon is happening over the weekends of May 11-13 and June 1-3 (our 19th year!). My team will be counting <<insert goal here, such as "anything with fur, feathers, scales, leaves">> found at <<insert location where you will be going out, such as "Larch Hill Conservation Area">>.

We plan on counting up to <<insert goal here, such as "200 species, from Black- Throated Green Warblers to Canada Mayflower">>.

Would you consider a pledge to my team? Pledges can be made on a per species basis (5 cents, 10 cents, a \$1 on up) or as a lump sum, whichever you prefer, and in any amount that feels comfortable.

Please let me know if you would like to support my team. I would contact you soon after we complete our species count with the results, and you can make your gift then.

You can also donate easily and securely online by visiting: hitchcockcenter.org/Biothon.

Many thanks for your consideration!

<Your name>

p.s. The Hitchcock Center for the Environment is a registered 501c3 charitable organization and all donations are tax-deductible to the fullest extent allowable by law, and support the year-round innovative science and nature programming happening at the Hitchcock Center, all from their world-class new home!

FOR FUNDRAISERS (not going on an outing):

SAMPLE 1:

As you may know, I'm a big fan of the Hitchcock Center for the Environment. You've heard of marathons, walk-a-thons and dance-a-thons for a cause – but have you heard of Biothon?

It's become a great outdoor tradition (this is our 19th year!) and this year we're dedicating it to the memory of Elizabeth Farnsworth, renowned biologist, educator and illustrator, who spearheaded the Biothon for the past three years.

Biothon happens each year when bird migration is at its peak and when most plants are in leaf and/or bloom. It's when we can expect to see the greatest biodiversity.

Teams headed by a naturalist or two get out in our local habitats to explore a favorite natural area where lots of plant, animal, fungal, and/or insect, etc. species might be found. These teams recruit a cohort of people to bid on the total number of species they find during their foray (i.e., \$1 or any amount per species). Supporters can also pledge a fixed amount (i.e., \$50 or any amount).

This year I am sponsoring a team that will be counting *<insert team goal, such as "100 bird species">* on *<insert date>*. Would you help support my efforts on behalf of the Hitchcock Center and this Biothon team?

Please let me know if you would like to make a pledge. I would contact you soon after the team's outing, to share the results of their species count.

You can also donate easily and securely online by visiting: hitchcockcenter.org/Biothon.

Many thanks for your consideration!

<Your name>

p.s. The Hitchcock Center's mission is to foster a greater awareness and understanding of our environment and to develop environmentally literate citizens. Their educators serve an average of 8,200 individuals of all ages annually. I am especially impressed with the wide-reaching impact of their hands-on environmental education work with children and youth, and their dedication to inspiring the next generation of environmental problem-solvers. Thanks again for considering a tax-deductible donation to support the Hitchcock Center's Biothon!

SAMPLE 2:

It's that time of year again, when I'm part of the [Biothon](#) for the [Hitchcock Center](#) and abashedly, tapping my friends for a pledge or donation. Ack! I wouldn't do it if I didn't believe wholeheartedly in the mission of this great organization. And this year, the Biothon is dedicated to the memory of our dear Elizabeth Farnsworth, renowned biologist, educator and illustrator.

As you may know, the new Hitchcock Center building on the Hampshire College campus is the first environmental learning center in New England to seek full [Living Building Challenge](#) certification, recycling all of its water, energy, and waste to be net-zero.

We've all been working hard to finish the building project, which is going well! But in the meantime, we need to -- oh, I dunno -- pay staff and meet day-to-day expenses to run the great programs that serve thousands of kids and adults with environmental learning each year. So, humbly, I ask for your support this year.

Here's some cool stats from last year (2017). We broke records!

- More than 185 people went out to explore the wildlife in our Valley.
- 20 teams, including 7 youth outings, found 620 different species of birds, plants, trees, insects, mammals, amphibians, reptiles and more.
- More than \$14,000 in Biothon support poured in from nearly 150 people.

THIS year, it's easier than *ever* before, either to join a team in the field, make a pledge on the number of species found, or to make a flat donation by visiting the [Biothon](#) website.

And, if you're so inclined, you can buy a set of Elizabeth Farnsworth's hand-designed coloring postcards of species native to our Pioneer Valley. Don't you know a niece, nephew, grandchild, or even adult who would enjoy coloring these in and sending them to a friend?

Anyhow, teams launch on the weekends of May 11-13 and June 1-3. Thank you for reading this and for considering my request to donate to a wonderful Valley institution.