Stewardship Tips for Walk Leaders DC Area City Nature Challenge

The City Nature Challenge is an opportunity to explore and enjoy biodiversity through respectfully observing and documenting the wild plants and animals who share our environment. **Consider these planning questions**, and then tailor the template on page 2 to your walk. Each site, audience and event is unique! Feel free to save your event-specific piece in this folder as a helpful example for others.

PLANNING QUESTIONS: Pre-Event Prep

Know	before you go: lay of the land			
	What are the rules and norms for the site you're visiting?			
	Are people required to stay on trails at this location?			
	Are smoking or pets allowed? What do people do with trash and biodegradables?			
	☐ Do you need to provide for boot cleaning (e.g. <u>decontamination for wetlands</u> ; <u>brushing for seeds</u>			
	of invasive plants)? What footwear should participants wear?			
	Triat de participante need to know about nablad, terrain and codecitatty.			
	☐ Safety: Hazards such as cliffs, known yellowjacket nest, snake or ticky areas, poison ivy and			
	nettle areas			
	□ Protecting nature: bird nesting areas, amphibian nurseries, fragile boggy areas, sensitive			
_	locations where you want to keep people away or on the edges			
Prepare to manage well:				
	to minimize site impacts. Consider how to break participants up into smaller groups with less impact, or			
_	who to recruit as a helper.			
	expected to stay together or explore on their own? What if someone needs to leave early? What about			
	bathroom facilities? [Do you want to show or provide copies of a trail map?]			
_	2			
	geotagged. Should people upload observations on site or take pictures & audio and upload later? Will you be on private land or sensitive areas where location should be obscured? Are there areas with			
	captive/cultivated species that need to be tagged as such?			
	Review Leave No Trace Principles, LNT for City Parks, American Birding Association Code of Ethics,			
_	and iNat Community Guidelines; decide which are essential to highlight in your intro.			
	Prepare to do more leading and managing than observing! If YOU want lots of observations of this			
	area, a pre-hike on your own will allow that AND give you a fresh view of the site features described			
	above to share with your participants.			

Day of Event Intro: Prepare a short, cheerful and meaningful intro on good stewardship to your participants using the template below.

During Event: Provide gentle guidance to support a spirit of stewardship during your event. Use skillful intervention strategies; positively redirect as needed. When feasible, keep your group on durable surfaces.

Event End and Follow Up:

- Can you commit to following up and helping with ID on participants' observations? If so, have a way to capture their iNat handles and give them a deadline for uploading that works for you.
- What handouts do you want to leave them with? Consider one CNC postcard per person with your email and iNat handle and the project url:
 - https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/city-nature-challenge-2025-washington-dc-metro-area written in.
- What remaining <u>CNC events</u> do you want to recommend to them?

Day OF Checklist for Walk Leaders DC Area City Nature Challenge

Your walk is almost here! Consider these pointers for day-of to make sure you have the resources you need and that walk participants are well-prepared. This is a TEMPLATE. Use as needed. Replace blue text with your details, delete if not applicable, and/or choose one of the options provided.

Name of Walk

Location Date and	on nd Time of Event				
WHAT :	TO BRING				
□ Smartphone					
	Trail map(s)				
	Training handouts				
	Taking Good Pix for iNat				
	Species lists for site				
	Bags for trash pickup				
	Boot brushes/bleach solution				
	Other Items				
WHAT :	TO SAY: INTRO SUGGESTIONS				
	ne to the City Nature Challenge and this site				
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	☐ Introduce yourself and any co-leaders				
	Participant intros (optional: their level of experience with iNat, their area of natural history interest and level of expertise, their iNat handle, have they been here before?)				
	Who protected this site? Who manages it?				
	Site rules				
	☐ Stay on trails/fan out				
	☐ Are smoking or pets allowed?				
	■ No Trash park, take your trash and biodegradables home with you/Trash can locations				
	□ Restroom location/No restrooms available				
	Habitat, terrain and seasonality				
	☐ Safety and hazards: cliffs/ known yellowjacket nests/ snake areas/ ticky areas/ poison ivy areas				
	[show people how to ID]/ nettle areas [show people how to ID]				
	□ Protecting nature: bird nesting areas/ amphibian nurseries/ fragile boggy areas/ sensitive locations / no-go locations				
	Event logistics:				
	☐ We will stay together on the trails/ We will fan out and explore in small groups/ We will stay				
	within sight of each other/ We will stay within speaking range of each other/ We will stay within calling range of each other				
	■ How long will the outing last? What if someone needs to leave early?				
	iNaturalist pointers (include a quick walk-through if people are iNat novices):				
_	Everyone please turn Location Services ON so that photos are geotagged (demo if needed).				
	Please upload observations on site/ Please take pictures & audio and upload later. If uploading				
	onsite, identify people in the group familiar with iOS/Android operating systems as resources.				

	_	it's OK to set Geophyacy to Open here, we are on private or sensitive land so please set		
		Geoprivacy to Obscured for today's observations (demonstrate if needed.)		
		Identify areas with captive/cultivated species that need to be tagged (demonstrate if needed).		
		Capture people's iNat handles if you plan to help with their ID's.		
	Stewar	dship principles (feel free to add additional - use card if helpful)		
		Today we are guests in someone else's home. What ideas do you have about how we should		
		behave as good guests? [If not brought up by the group, highlight the following]:		
		We will look under logs and rocks but always put them back in place.		
		Don't remove any flower, plant, animal or rock, but we encourage you to pick up trash.		
	u	Put a hand or common object in your photos for scale, but if you have sunscreen or insect repellent on your hands please don't touch insects or amphibians.		
		Please keep bird calling (pishing) to a minimum/Don't use pishing/ Don't use recordings of bird sounds/Don't photograph nests.		
		Observe wildlife quietly and respectfully. Avoid loud noises and sudden movements. This will also help you get more observations!		
		Watch where you put your feet. Don't trample plants; take pictures of them!		
		Add additional stewardship guidelines, Do's/Don'ts		
interve	ntion stra	ategies; positively redirect as needed. When feasible, keep your group on durable surfaces.		
WHAT	TO SAY	: WRAP-UP		
		you for contributing to our regional and planetary knowledge through your data collection! It's int to conservation and to science.		
	•	any materials, such as your contact info on CNC postcard and/or the project url:		
		www.inaturalist.org/projects/city-nature-challenge-2025-washington-dc-metro-area		
	comme	nt on observation with @mention, and/or iNat private message.		
	Remen	nber to tag captive/cultivated (planted) observations. (Demonstrate if needed.)		
		and garden bugs are all wild; garden plants and street trees are OK too if marked c/Cultivated.		
		elp you with your ID's if I have your handle and you upload by (date).		
		mend other CNC events that might be of interest to this group, including walks and ID events.		
		ople come back here on their own or only as part of a guided trip?		
		ny additional plugs for the organization that owns this land or takes care of the trails.		
	Your sa	afety: Remember to wash your hands before you eat, do a tick check when you get home, and hing directly into the laundry if you have been in poison ivy.		
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