

Level up your iNaturalist search game as a PIP contributor!

While we're in the middle of a cold, dreary winter, consider spending your time looking at beautiful pollinators and flowers! Many observations on iNaturalist can be added to the Plant Interactions on Plants (PIP) project with some annotation. If you're keen to curate some observations that have plant interactions already ID'd or ID some plants on your own, you can help our observations increase. In the following paragraphs, I'll walk you through how to annotate observations properly so they end up in the PIP project.

Find interactions that already have plants identified but use another field.

Step 1: Add '&field:name+of+associated+plant' to the search URL. (Note: This search is also filtering observations by those not in the project with 'not_in_project=pollinator-interactions-on-plants-pip-of-the-ne-us' AND those that don't have our preferred field)

https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/identify?quality_grade=needs_id%2Cresearch&verifiable=any&has=geo¬_in_project=pollinator-interactions-on-plants-pip-of-the-ne-us&without_field:interaction-%3Evisited%20flower%20of&place_id=52339%2C48%2C51%2C42&taxon_ids=47157%2C47201%2C47822%2C47208%2C11989%2C71349%2C5562&field:name%20of%20associated%20plant

(P.S. If you include spaces, iNaturalist will add in %20 in the URL to fill in those gaps.)

That link will give you the observations (7k+ in Jan 2024) that have the field '**name of associated plant**' filled out using that field.

✓ Projects (2)

 Biodiversity of Pennsylvania

 Global Pollinator Watch

✓ Observation Fields (1)

Name of Associated Plant: Sweet Pepperbush (*Clethra alnifolia*)

Step 2: Use other filters in "Identify" to find your favorite pollinator in your favorite place or on your favorite flower.

The *identify* interface on iNaturalist can be really useful! If you're not familiar with using it, check out this tutorial [here](#). If you only want to search for a single pollinator group (e.g., *Bombus*), or a single place (e.g., your state or county), you can use those filters here.

You can also add the plant to search only observations of pollinators visiting a certain plant by adding the iNaturalist taxonomic number to the end. (Notes: You can find the iNaturalist taxonomic number by doing a simple search and looking at the URL) For example, this link is searching only bumblebees visiting *Monarda fistulosa* (taxon ID=52775) with the 'name of associated plant' field filled in:

https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/identify?quality_grade=needs_id%2Cresearch&verifiable=any&has=geo¬_in_project=pollinator-interactions-on-plants-pip-of-the-ne-us&place_id=52339%2C48%2C51%2C42&taxon_id=52775&field.name+of+associated+plant=85320

If the field only uses a text-based field (e.g., Flower or plant association), you will need to add the written-out name of the plant rather than the iNat taxon number (if you put in the taxon number, the search won't yield anything). Here's a search for pollinators on Zinnia with the 'flower or plant association' field filled in):

https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/identify?quality_grade=needs_id%2Cresearch&verifiable=any&has=geo¬_in_project=pollinator-interactions-on-plants-pip-of-the-ne-us&place_id=52339%2C48%2C51%2C42&taxon_ids=47157%2C47201%2C47822%2C47208%2C11989%2C71349%2C5562&field.flower%20or%20plant%20association=Zinnia

(Note: it **does** matter whether you use common or scientific names here. It is purely a text-based search)

Observations

 Bumble Bees

Vermont	49 OBSERVATIONS	6 SPECIES	11 IDENTIFIERS	5 OBSERVERS	
Map Grid List					
Media	Name	User	Observed	Place	Added
	Subgenus Pyrobombus	 erikamitchell	Aug 2, 2023 4:28 PM EST	Marshfield, VT, USA	Aug 11, 2023 8:10 PM EST
	Yellow-banded Bumble Bee (<i>Bombus terricola</i>)	 erikamitchell	Aug 2, 2023 2:45 PM EST	Marshfield, VT, USA	Aug 11, 2023 7:24 PM EST
Research Grade					

Step 3: Confirm the observation is actually a pollinator visiting a flower. Many observations returned by the filtered search do not show the type of interaction we are looking for—a caterpillar eating a plant, a moth resting on a leaf, bees on logs, etc. Only add the observations that show the pollinator visiting a flower.

White-marked Tussock Moth (*Orgyia leucostigma*)

Research Grade

Follow

White-marked Tussock Moth (*Orgyia leucostigma*)

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keimwj

16,294 observations

Observed:

Jun 17, 2013 · 8:53 AM EDT

Submitted:

Feb 1, 2024 · 8:22 AM EST

Map

Satellite

+

−

Map data ©2024 Imagery ©2024 TerraMetrics

5 km

Terms

Bucks County, PA, USA

Details

☆

Be the first to fave this observation!

(Great observation of an interaction! But not a pollinator on a flower this time)

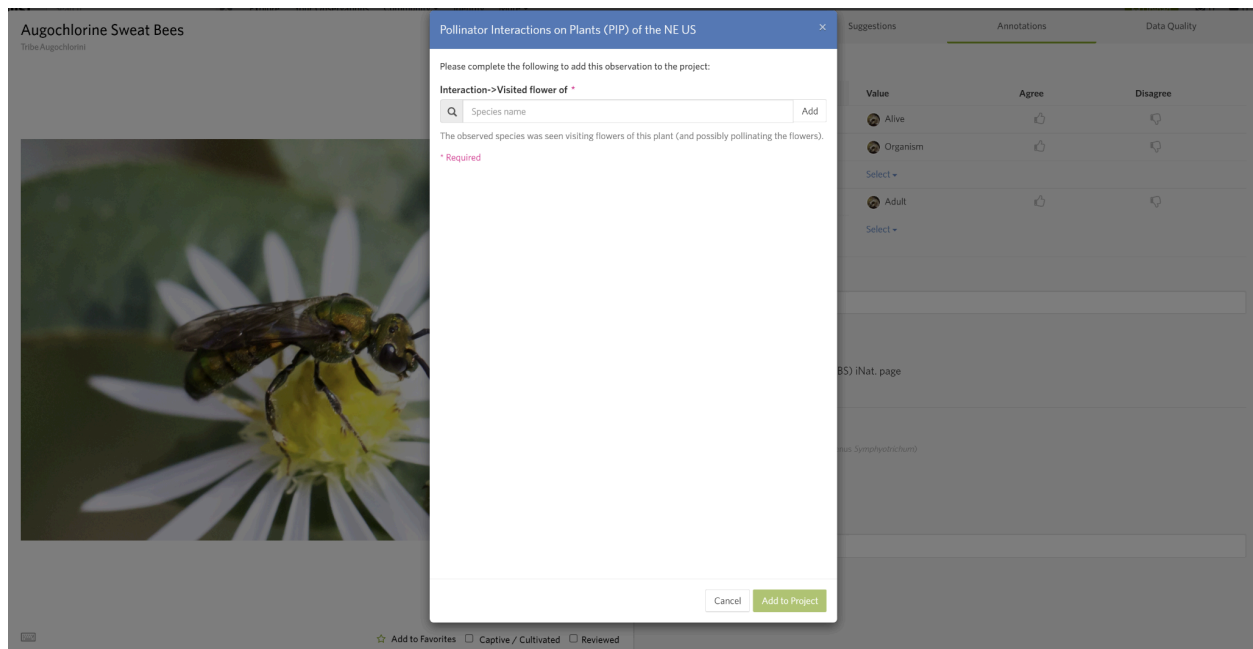
Step 4: Add to the project and fill out the field. Go to ‘Annotations’ on the specific observation. There, you can add to the PIP project. It will ask you for an interaction field. Fill in the plant identified. And the observation is added! Ensure you use the correct species if only the common name is filled in.

Augochlorine Sweat Bees
Tribe Augochlorini

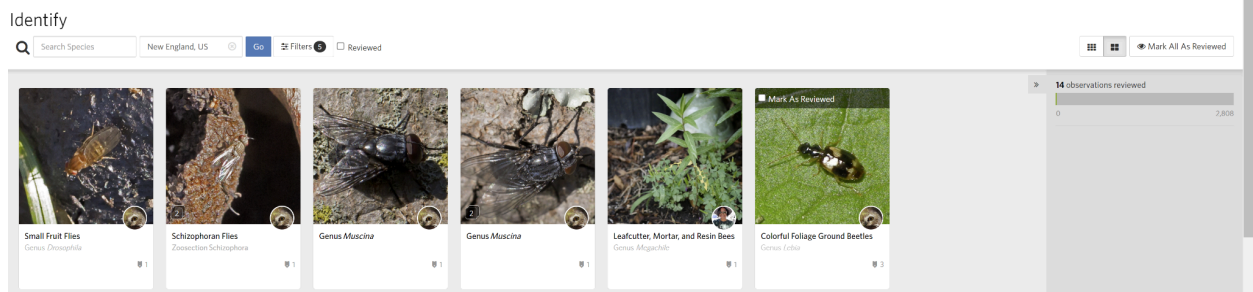
Fields ID

Info		Suggestions		Annotations		Data Quality	
Annotations							
Attribute	Value	Agree	Disagree				
Alive or Dead	☑ Alive	👍	👎				
Evidence of Presence	☑ Organism	👍	👎				
Evidence of Presence	Select ▾						
Life Stage	☑ Adult	👍	👎				
Sex	Select ▾						
Projects							
Add to a Project							
Christian Naturalists Observations Pennsylvania Biological Survey (PABS) iNat. page							
Observation Fields							
Name of Associated Plant: American Asters (Genus <i>Symphoricarum</i>)							
Primary flower color: white							
Secondary flower color: yellow							
Choose a field							

☐ Add to Favorites
 ☐ Captive / Cultivated
 ☐ Reviewed



Step 5: Review more observations. Using *Identify*, you can **mark observations** as reviewed to know you already checked them for flower interactions. That way, they won't come up again. If you want more observations on a page than the standard 30, add '&per_page=' to the end of the URL. For example, '&per_page=200' gives you 200 observations per page.



Step 5: Search through other fields. Here's a list of fields that tend to be fruitful for finding plant interactions (many thanks to @lmtaylor for adding to the list!). *Note: capitalization matters!*

- Nectar plant (iNat taxon)
- Nectar / pollen delivering plant (iNat taxon)
- Name of associated plant (iNat taxon)
- Associated species with names lookup (iNat taxon)
- Flower or plant association (text)
- Species of goldenrod (or other flower)the insect was observed on (text) (text)
- EwA – host documentation (iNat taxon)
- Plant species visited (iNat taxon)
- Other Species in Photo (text)
- Pollinates (iNat taxon)

- Milkweed species (iNat taxon)
- Visiting a flower of: (Interaction) (text)
- Feeding on (iNat taxon)
- On (iNat taxon)
- Flower/Plant Name (what plant was the pollinator visiting?) (text)

Thanks for your help! What other tips do you have? Share them with us!

Desiree