



News
Release

Contact: Zoe Whyman, Community Relations Manager, (970) 221-6311, zwhyman@fcgov.com

Date: June 15, 2009

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BioBlitz Coming to Soapstone Prairie Natural Area

Everyone is Invited to Join the Fun on Saturday, June 27, 1- 4pm

A BioBlitz is a 24-hour, all species count. Part contest, part festival, part educational event, part scientific endeavor, it brings together scientists from across Northern Colorado in a race against time to see how many species they can count in 24-hours.

Citizens are invited to be part of the excitement. Activities include family-friendly guest speakers, a chance to meet the scientists and imaginative activity stations. Ten scientist teams will inventory insects (spiders, beetles, bees, wasps, leafhoppers, grasshoppers, butterflies, moths and aquatic invertebrates) bats, large mammals, small mammals, plants, fungi, birds, reptiles and amphibians. Come watch the data roll in!

Schedule of Events

- 1- 4 pm - Through fun and creative activity stations, learn about Soapstone's biodiversity. Create your own pollinator trail mix, spin the birding wheel of fortune and make an eco-art project to take home!
- 1 pm - The Biology of Geology! Join Leonard Ewy, Master Naturalist volunteer and former Soapstone Prairie Interpretive Guide in a family-friendly introduction to how geology has influenced ecological diversity.
- 1:45 pm - *Biodiversity - Just A Big Word Or Nature's Bank Account?* With Dave Leatherman, retired entomologist with the Colorado State Forest Service. Dave links together all the parts of the ecosystem in a family-friendly presentation.
- 2:30 pm - Meet the Scientists! Representatives from ten scientific teams explain what they found during the Bioblitz and how they do their work. Ask questions!
- 1- 4 pm - Do your own self-guided BioBlitz search on a trail.

Learn more at www.fcgov.com/naturalareas/bioblitz.php

It is all free, sponsored by the Fort Collins Natural Areas Program. Thank you Fort Collins and Larimer County voters! Your citizen-initiated sales taxes make it possible to conserve natural areas such as Soapstone Prairie and provide visitor services such as the BioBlitz.

Why Do a Bioblitz?



**News
Release**

Raise Awareness of Biodiversity- Sometimes we think biodiversity only applies to exotic rainforests, far away. At Soapstone Prairie there is amazing biodiversity, close to home! We take for granted clean water, fertile soil and air to breathe. Yet these are all the result of working ecosystems filled with species that perform these tasks. From our morning shower to our late night snack, we are supported by biodiversity.

Connect to Nature- The excitement and energy of the scientists from many disciplines working together is infectious! Everyone rallies around the common goal of discovering the wonders of the natural world. Come watch the species tally grow throughout the afternoon!

Generate Data- The BioBlitz generates a list of species found at Soapstone Prairie Natural Area. Who knows, the Bioblitz might identify species that should be monitored or controlled. It may identify unique or rare aspects of Soapstone Prairie that otherwise might not have been known. This information will be used by the City of Fort Collins Natural Areas Program to manage the site. The scientists are donating their time- a major contribution- thank you!!

Celebrate- Soapstone Prairie Natural Area is a very special place where unique biodiversity has been conserved. Soapstone Prairie is part of a larger conservation vision to preserve a corridor from the mountains to the plains- the Laramie Foothills Mountains to Plains Project. Celebrate conservation and learn how you can help at the BioBlitz.

Registration for the BioBlitz is encouraged- email naturalareas@fcgov.com or call 970-416-2815.

###