

KANKISU LAND TRUST'S APRIL 2016 SUSTAINABLE LIVING SUBMISSION TO THE DAILY BEE

BIO BLITZ BRINGS FUN-FILLED DISCOVERY

Whether you prefer to search for salamanders, wallow in wetlands, or marvel over mushrooms, there will be something for everyone at Kaniksu Land Trust's Sandpoint BioBlitz this May. A fun-filled community event, the Blitz will bring together teams of volunteer scientists, families, students, teachers, and community members to find and identify as many species of plants, animals, microbes, fungi and other organisms as possible over a 24-hour period.

Over the past decade, National Geographic and the National Park Service have collaborated on a BioBlitz in a different national park each year leading up to this year's centennial celebration of the National Park Service. To commemorate 100 years of national parks, the BioBlitz initiative is going national this spring. The cornerstone Blitz will take place in Washington, D.C. on May 20-21, with hundreds of other Blitzes occurring across the country, including right here in Sandpoint!

While national parks have provided outdoor adventure and respite for people from across the nation, so the University of Idaho's North Idaho Research Center has provided agriculture and farm-based education and research opportunities for people from across our community.

In the nearly 100 years since this land was granted to the University by Humbird Lumber Company in 1913, the property has evolved from a stump farm to a unique system of varied habitats ranging from cultivated fields and hardwood plantations to native forest and wetland. Over the years, it has seen everything from watermelons to sweet corn, and from huckleberries to Christmas trees.

Now, what better way to celebrate than to hold a BioBlitz on the Extension Station land in Sandpoint? This is a great opportunity to assess the forms of life, both native and otherwise, that have taken up residence on this distinctive property in the heart of our community.

The BioBlitz will kick off at 2pm on May 20, with inventories of various plant and animal life continuing into the evening. More studies are planned for Saturday morning. A coordinated series of educational presentations and events will unfold simultaneously with the scientific inventory. Whether you'd like to participate on a structured inventory team, or just drop in to check out our species count and listen to a brief talk on bats or butterflies, there will be much to discover for all ages.

Please check in with Kaniksu Land Trust in mid-April for a complete schedule of events and opportunities or to sign up. You can find us at www.kaniksu.org, or call (208) 263-9471.

