

Backyard Species Discovery – Weekly Challenge

Week 10



Left behind

The Backyard Species Discovery project is a virtual expedition to continue adding to our knowledge of Australian biodiversity while field work is still difficult due to COVID-19 travel restrictions.

While we can't promise you'll find a new species, you will discover some amazing plants and animals living in your own backyard, learn to identify them with the help of Bush Blitz scientists and contribute valuable data to the Atlas of Living Australia.

Finding wild animals can be hard and taking a photo of them before they hide or run away can be even harder. The good news is there are experts that can identify animals by what they leave behind i.e. their tracks and traces.

Here is your challenge

Photograph at least one track or trace of an animal in the wild, i.e. no pets or zoo animals.

Upload your image/s to the [Backyard Species Discovery project on iNaturalist](#). Send us links to your iNaturalist observations as evidence that you have successfully completed the challenge.

Tips

- A track or trace includes footprints, scat (poo), bones, shells etc.
- Identify your observation as best you can, to help it be seen by the right expert. Even if you can only place it in a very broad group, this will help e.g. a shell in 'Molluscs' or a footprint in Mammals/Birds/Reptiles/Frogs (depending on what you think made it).
- For advice on [uploading images to the Backyard Species Discovery project](#) and [making your observations count](#) see our website.
- Provide as much information about your discovery as you can, such as the location, what else is nearby, the weather or recent weather event (like high seas) - anything you think might help identify your record.

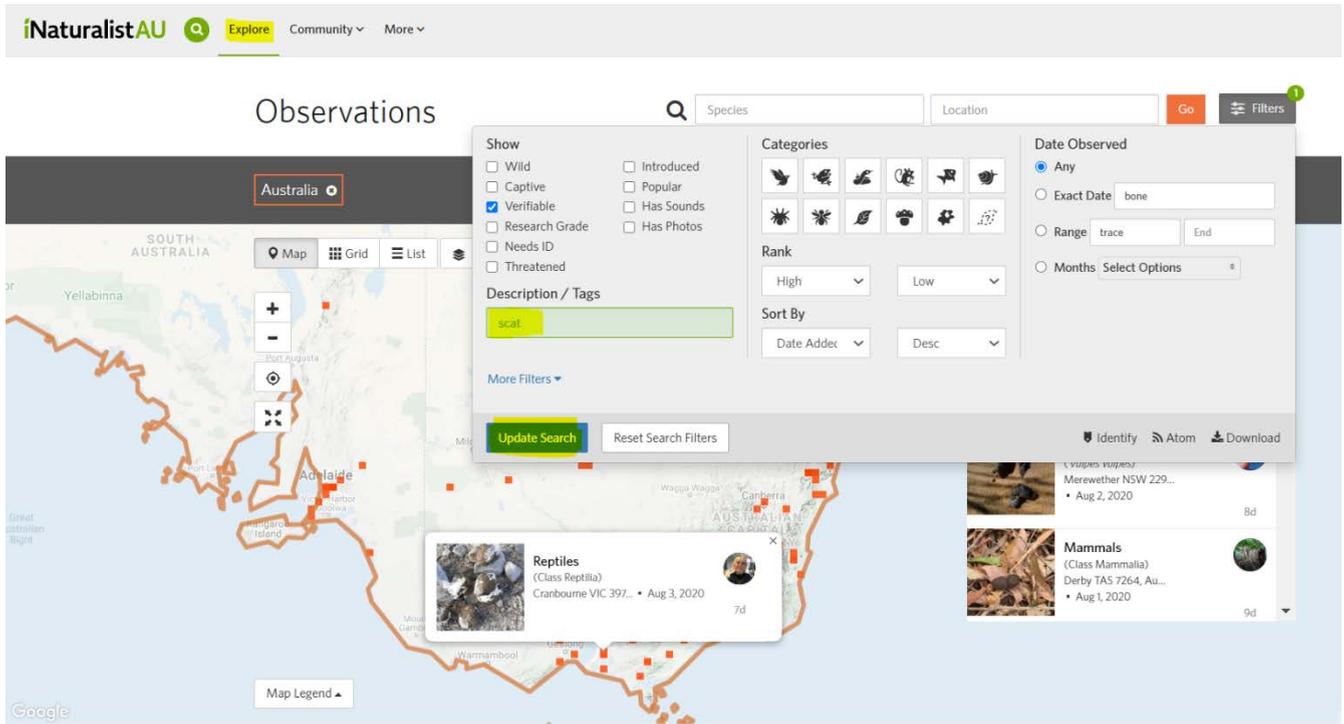
Due date

Email your entry with your name (or group name) to bushblitz@awe.gov.au by midnight AEST on Wednesday 19 August.

Applications will be judged by a panel and the winning entry will be announced on Friday 21 August on the Bush Blitz website and social media platforms.

Extension activity - search iNaturalist for traces

Check out what tracks and traces other users have recorded. Click 'Explore' (at the top of every page), then 'Filters', then (under Description/Tags) try terms like 'scat', 'shell', 'trace', and click on 'Update Search'. You can choose Map, Grid or List to view the observations, and you'll find that there are images for all kinds of things animals leave behind.



Resources to help you learn how to identify track and traces

Information Sheets

(these can be found on our website at <https://bushblitz.org.au/backyard-species-discovery-weekly-challenge/>)

- **Shell classification – Using Family Plates**, Future Makers, Queensland Museum Network and Queensland Government.
- **Identifying tracks, scats, burrows and other signs**, Land for Wildlife, Garden for Wildlife Central Australia

Books

- **Tracks, Scats and Other Traces: A Field Guide to Australian Mammals** – Revised Edition, Barbara Triggs, Oxford University Press, 2004.
- **A Field Guide to the Tracks & Traces of Australian Animals**, R.G.B. Morrison, Rigby 1981.