

Do you use iNaturalist? Would you like your observations—especially of rare species—to help researchers and conservation? If so, please take these important steps to make it easy for biologists to see your observations and ask you questions about them!

1. **Join the iNaturalist Vermont project.** On iNaturalist.org, log in, then find the Community dropdown at the top of the page and choose Projects. Type “iNaturalist Vermont” into the search bar, click on the iNaturalist Vermont project, then in the upper right above the project picture (in very small blue text), click “Join this project”.
2. **Grant permission for select conservation biologists to view sightings.** iNaturalist automatically obscures the location of Species of Greatest Conservation Need. On the iNaturalist Vermont homepage (<https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/inaturalist-vermont>), look for the gray box to the right of the map and click “Your Membership”. On the right side of the page, find the question that says “Do you want to make your private/obscured observation coordinates visible to the project curators?” and click the circle next to “Yes, no matter who adds the observation to the project”.
3. **Allow your records to be shared with GBIF (Global Biodiversity Information Facility).** (<https://www.inaturalist.org/users/edit#content>)
Find your profile picture in the upper right corner of any page, click this to get your profile dropdown menu and click on “Account Settings” near the bottom. On the left, select “Content and Display”. Scroll to the bottom of that page to the section called “Licensing”. You will see three different categories: observation, photo, and sound. Click the box where you see your current license to bring up a dropdown menu of all licensing options. Change your copyright settings on each of these to “No Copyright (CC0) or Attribution (CC-BY)”. Finally, click the Save Settings button on the bottom right to save your choices.
4. **Turn on Email Notifications.** (<https://www.inaturalist.org/users/edit#notifications>)
In your “Account Settings”, click “Notifications”. At the bottom, you will find “Email Notifications”. Click the Off/On button so that it is green for On. Then check the boxes next to “Messages” and “Project journal posts”. This allows messages from biologists in the iNaturalist platform to reach your email inbox so you see them promptly!

Thank you for your help!

P.S. – Find out more about obscured observations and geoprivacy on iNaturalist at <https://vtecostudies.org/blog/observing-protected-species-hide-location-data>, or about licensing at <https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/inaturalist-vermont/journal/84932-updated-choosing-licensing-that-allows-scientists-to-use-your-observations>