

NATIONAL Moth Week

Global Citizen Science

Citizen Scientists Around the World to Participate in National Moth Week, July 20-28

Citizen scientists around the world will hang white sheets and lights in backyards, woods and fields July 20 through July 28 for the second annual [National Moth Week](#), a global project begun last year to encourage the public to observe and document one of nature's most diverse – and under-appreciated – creatures.

As of June 20, participants in 47 states and 33 countries had nearly 300 events for this year's National Moth Week.

In the U.S., public moth-spotting and educational events are planned in museums, parks, nature centers, wildlife refuges and libraries, and at universities, colleges and summer camps. Individuals and families are having “moth slumber parties,” moth nights for home-schooled children, or just checking the lights on their porches. See locations of [U.S. events](#) and [international events](#).

Moths are part of the *Lepidoptera* insect order, but don't get the same respect or admiration that their colorful daytime cousins – butterflies – do. Yet, there are hundreds of thousands of moth species, many as beautiful as butterflies, and just as important or more to the ecosystem. Moths also can tell us a lot about our changing environment by their geographical and seasonal distribution.

National Moth Week literally shines a much-needed spotlight on moths and their ecological importance as well as their biodiversity. The event allows people of all ages to become “citizen scientists” and contribute scientific data about moths they observe in their own communities.

[Participating](#) in National Moth Week can be as simple as turning on a porch light at night and watching what happens, or going outside in daylight to find caterpillars and diurnal moths, often mistaken for butterflies. At night, participants can use ordinary light bulbs, UV lights, or mercury vapor lights to draw moths. And, they can also mix up a batch of sweet moth bait to brush on tree barks for an even bigger response.

National Moth Week grew out of local summer “Moth Nights” organized since 2005 by the Friends of the East Brunswick (NJ) Environmental Commission, a nonprofit organization dedicated to local environmental education and conservation. The events typically attract 30 to 50 persons, some with scientific backgrounds, but mostly local residents and their children who want to experience a unique nighttime nature activity.

In its first year, National Moth Week became an international phenomenon, attracting participants from 49 states and 30 countries, who registered more than 300 event locations.

[Numerous organizations](#) around the world have partnered with National Moth Week and are supporting the event. Through partnerships with major online biological data depositories, National Moth Week participants can help map moth distribution and provide needed information on other life history aspects around the globe.

For more information about National Moth Week or to register an event, visit nationalmothweek.org. National Moth Week also is on Facebook and Twitter (@Moth_Week).

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