

Walking with Wildflowers – Getting Started

Before you hit the trail, you need to do a bit of preparation to get ready to make phenology observations. This whole process should take less than 10 minutes. We recommend completing these steps while you are on a wifi connection.

Step 1: Download the *Nature's Notebook* app on your smartphone. This app is how we process and store the phenology data that you collect. You will enter time-stamped phenology observations into this app on the trail, and the data will be submitted once you get back into an area with wifi (or cell service). After opening this app for the first time, the app will first direct you to an opening page describing the app. Click “OK”

Step 2: Set up your *Nature's Notebook* account. Click Join *Nature's Notebook* on the home page of the app. To do this, please enter a username, an email address, and create a password. You do not need to check the boxes for “NWS Cooperative Observer”, opt into receiving the “Nature's Notebook Quarterly” publication or “Opt Out of the Leaderboard”. In long list of partner organizations, please select “Walking with Wildflowers” near the bottom of the list. Agree to the terms of use and check that you are not a robot. Click “create new account”. When you login on the home screen for the first time, it will ask if you want to grant access to your account (click “Yes”). Then it will ask if you want to you want to sync species and location data (again, “Yes”). Then you will be prepared to make observations!

Step 3: Download the Halfmile App. This app will allow you to know the exact GPS coordinates of your location on the trail, and is needed to locate phenology sites on the trail. This app also will continue to provide location information even on airplane mode (to save battery while hiking).

Step 4: Download the hiker companion guide for the section of trail that you are about to hike through. These documents provide you with guides to the species that you will see in each site and maps of each plants location within the site. Go to pct.usanpn.org/resources . Halfway down the page there are site guides for Inyo National Forest/ Yosemite National Park and for North Cascades National Park. Click the link to open the appropriate .pdf in your browser. To download a copy that you can come back to on the trail, click the three dots icon in the top right corner and go to the “open in” command. Select “Copy to iBooks” icon (with a iPhone). You should now be able to view this document in your iBooks app.

Congratulations, you are now ready to be a citizen scientist!