



THINKING & LEARNING

Citizen Science: Best Buds

    By: [Nora Mueller](#) | June 9, 2016

“Citizen Science” refers to the method of relying on everyday people to collect or analyze data as part of a larger scientific project. With the advent of Internet technology, this method of research- akin to crowd-sourcing- has become more popular than ever before, especially for

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would otherwise not be feasible to visit.

Below, read our profile of Project BudBurst, which tracks different plants to understand changes in the environment and the effect of climate change. Read more of GC's Citizen Science profiles [here](#).

Being outdoors- whether [exploring a new space](#) or visiting familiar spots- is one of the simplest pleasures of summertime. Plants have pushed past the awkwardness of early spring and spaces are intensified by an ineffable lushness and a rich, vivid green.

Now almost a decade old, [Project BudBurst](#) hopes to take advantage of the time people spend outdoors during the most verdant season. Their project, co-managed by the Chicago Botanic Garden, is split into three periods: Cherry Blossom Blitz (March - April); Summer Solstice Snapshot (June - July); and Fall into Phenology (September - October). Though [cherry blossom season](#) has passed, their summer phase is just beginning. Lil' Sprouts can record information on any plant they happen to be charmed by in either a one-time session

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Oh,
How
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("regular reports"). The data is available to the public and is free to use for anyone curious or with a hypothesis they'd like to test. The mission of Project Budburst is to develop a resource that fosters a deeper understanding of climate change and its effect on plant phenophases, which include leafing, flowering, and fruiting.



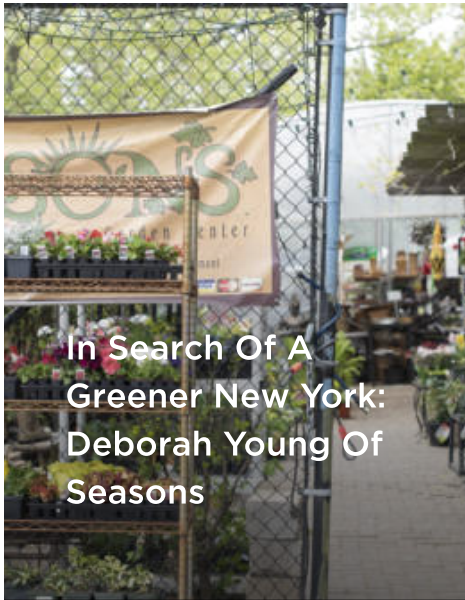
Sprouts Science

- *What is phenology?*

As the seasons change, there are certain events we come to anticipate as a part of nature's cycle: the spring ephemerals as winter thaws, the hellish advent of mosquitos in summer, the melancholy but somehow poignant turning of leaves in fall. Three major factors dictate these changes—sunlight, temperature, and precipitation—and in phenology, scientists study how these

associated with climate change, which is an understandable concept to evoke when studying the ways in which rising temperatures are affecting ecosystems.

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