Q: I am new to this so I'm guessing I have to create my own account.
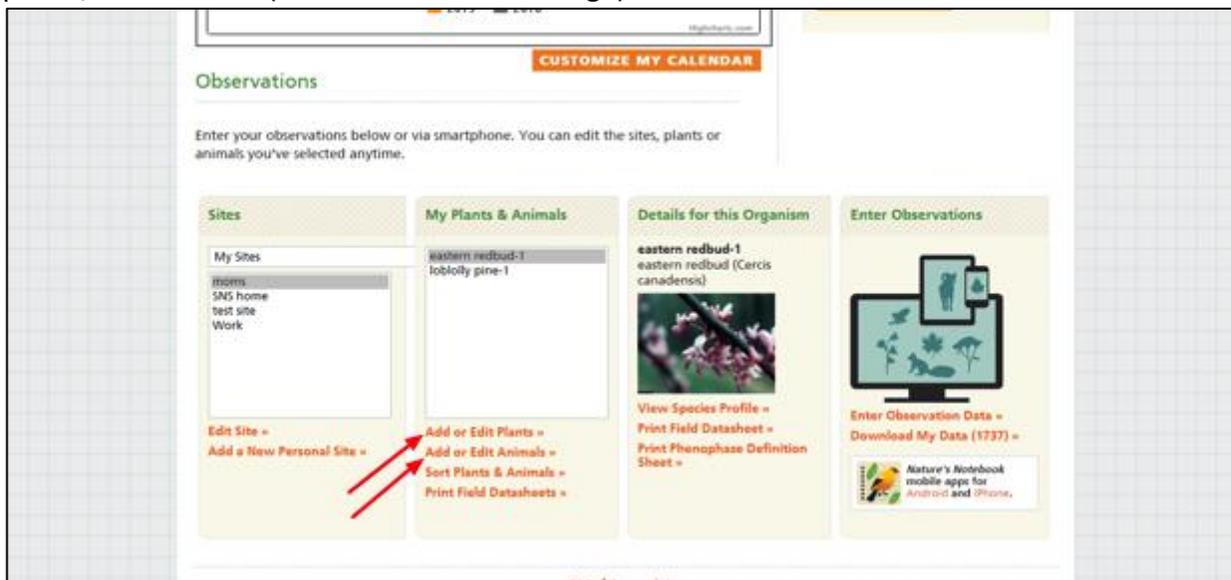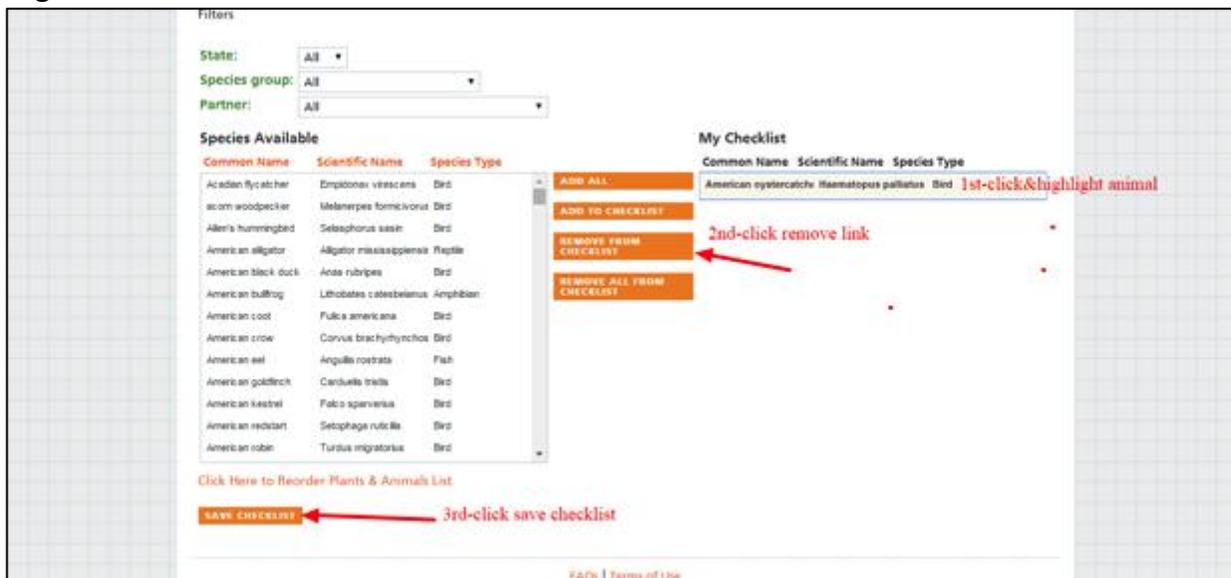**A:** Yes, you must first set up an account – get started here (http://www.usanpn.org/nn/become-observer)!

Q: How do I REMOVE a plant or animal that was incorrectly added?
A: Logged in, from your Observation Deck, highlight the correct site, then click the "add or edit plants/animals" link (shown below in the image).
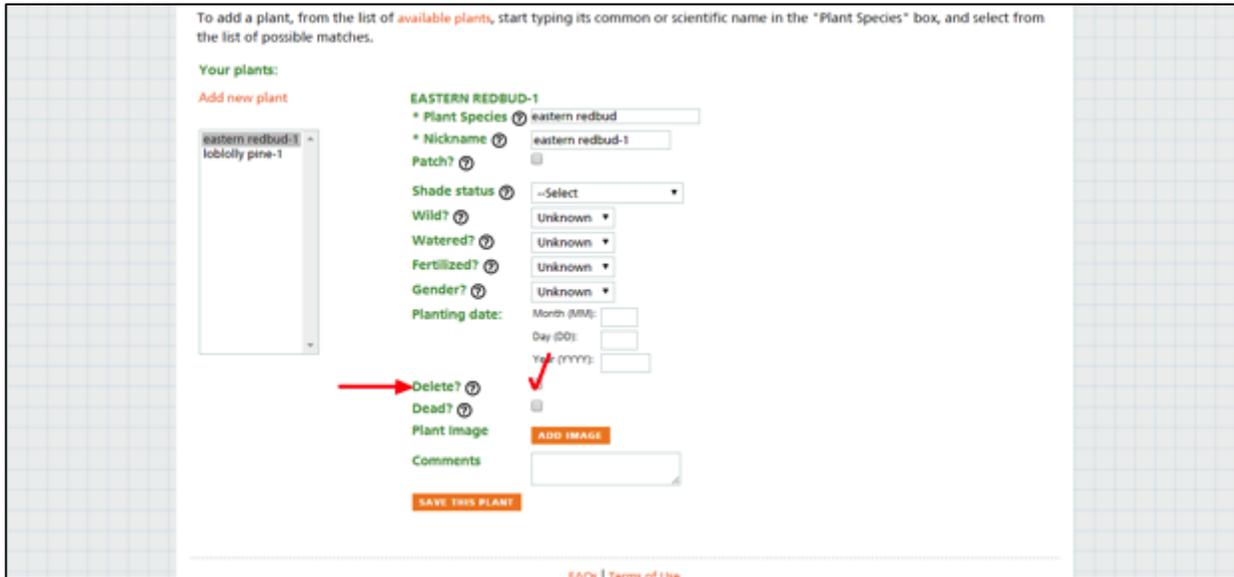

Page 2 – For Animals:

For Plants:

Logged in from your Observation Deck, highlight your site and click the "add or edit plants" link in the second column. Then on Page 2 (shown below), highlight the plant and check the box next to "delete". In the pop-up box, providing 'Data Entry Error' as the deletion reason, it will be removed from your list. Click delete.

Q: Is this system Ok use for observations such as ice on or off lakes; first return of bluebirds (migration), bird counts in backyard or traveling, etc.

A: While we don't have official mechanisms for capturing 'ice on or off' information (there are other more appropriate databases out there which capture that information), we allow observers to enter 'comments' in the "Observation Details" for the day or after each species phenophase daily entry. Users can set up as many sites as they wish, so you could establish another site for "Vacation Home" or "Winter Residence" to capture different locations – even if they are in different states.

You essentially would be reporting first return of bluebirds when you enter a yes observation for that species. *Nature's Notebook* allows you to track presence and absence of a species, so the first reported yes after a series of no's would be the "first return of the species".

Q: Is there an Apple App for *Nature's Notebook*? I was under the impression that the App works for Droid, not Apple.
A: We have apps for both Apple and Android Devices, available in the US Apple ITunes Store or Google Play Store, respectively. You can find out more, as well as download our tip sheets on our mobile apps page (https://www.usanpn.org/nn/mobile-apps).

Q: Can we create a group, especially if there are no groups in the area?
A: Yes, please! To find out how to get started in establishing a group – read more here (https://www.usanpn.org/nn/groups/shared-site)! Groups are available for leaders to create a place where more than one observer can contribute observations to one location. This functionality is good for schools, campuses, nature centers, or other similar organizations that have an interest in engaging students or volunteers at a site in *Nature's Notebook*.

Q: Would Project BudBurst data be entered here?
A: At this time, Project BudBurst data is stored in a different database. In the future, we may consider combining the two, but BudBurst uses different protocols.

While our programs both focus on phenology and citizen science, they do vary slightly from each other. The data we collect and the methods we use are different from those in Project Budburst. *Nature's Notebook* was designed specifically for researchers to contribute and review long-term phenology observations made consistently at one site. *Nature's Notebook* plant and animal protocols are more detailed. *Nature's Notebook* would be more appropriate for observers who frequently visit the same location through time and for researchers interested in having long-term observations available to answer detailed phenological questions. Depending upon your desire for participating in a phenology-monitoring program, you may wish to compare the two programs and see what fits best for your needs.

Q: Do you want only native species of plants? We have a few invasives around our school.
A: We are interested in contributions of observation data on ANY species available in our database. Some of them are native, and others are invasive. If it is in the database, you may observe it. Here is the link to the species search page where you will find a list of 1100+ species you may observe: https://www.usanpn.org/nn/species_search. You may also wish to check out our 2016 Campaign on invasives, called Shady Invaders, if you live in the eastern United States. More information is on our campaign page: https://www.usanpn.org/nn/campaigns

Q: Can several plant phenophase pictures be shown or only one picture?
A: Currently you can only display one picture per plant on your Observation Deck. This photo is best used for locating the plant – a picture of it with surrounding trees, etc., so you can be sure that you are always returning to the same individual. This is especially helpful when working with a Group in *Nature's Notebook*, so people who are observing can all be sure to locate the correct plant. Our database does not have the capacity to hold more than one photo per individual – all of those photos take up a great deal of

space.

For phenophase identification, we also host a Plant [Phenophase Flickr page](#), with vetted photos of plant phenophases, and we are creating a Plant Phenology Primer, which will display representative photos of plant phenophases for each plant functional group.

Q: Should we try to observe the same time every day?
A: Observing at a similar time of day has benefits, especially if you are searching for animals that are active during a certain part of the day. We recommend that you try to observe at the same time each day but we don't require it. We also recommend going out to observe at least once a week, especially during the growing season.

Q: From Cascades Phenology Network: Why is my default site not contained within the "My Sites" dropdown menu? Are they somehow different categorizations?
A: If you are observing as part of a group, or several groups, you will find them listed under the site selection drop-down list in far left column of your Observation Deck. The choices you will see include My Sites, for personal sites, and a list of your Group sites. If you do not have any personal sites, when the My Sites dropdown menu is highlighted, you will see nothing in the box below the dropdown. Otherwise, you may choose from one of your groups, which you will see listed in that box. One of your partner groups will load on default.
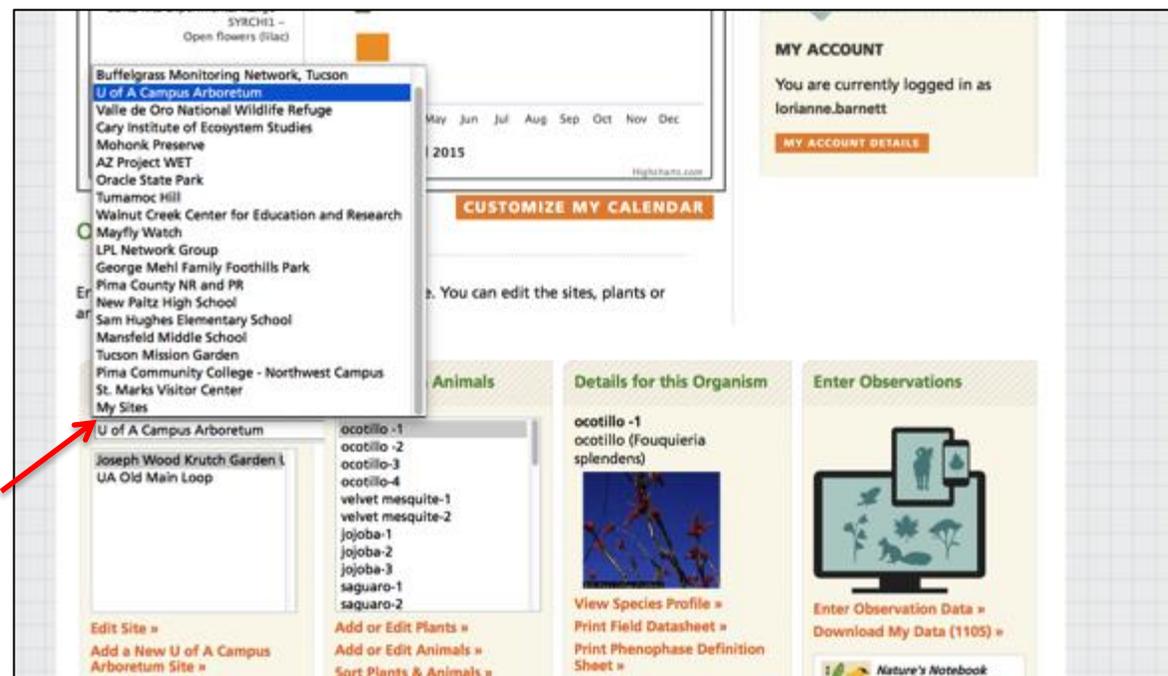

Q: Is it true that anyone using our submitted data can see these pictures under the species list?
A: If you have added a photo to display on the Observation Deck for certain plants, only you and members of your group can see the photo added. The pictures are not downloaded with the rest of the phenology data during a data download session.

Q: If we use picture for species on a group site to make sure the correct plant is observed, can all observers see the picture in their app?

A: Yes, if you load a picture of your individual plant on the computer website, it will display in the iPhone and Android apps on the upper right hand side. If you are observing as part of a Group and the administrator has loaded photos for the individual plants, you will see the same link to click on it in the upper right corner of the screen.
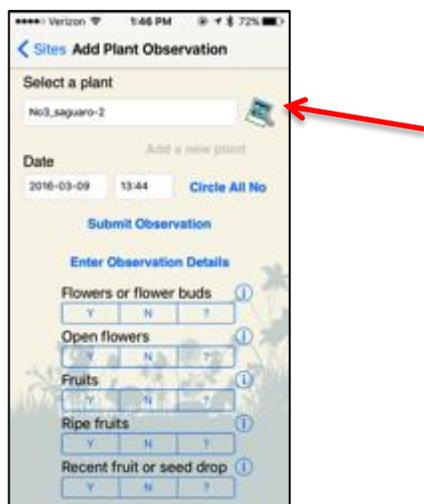
Q: I would like to know what "My calendar" shows me and why/how I would customize it.

A: That's a feature for you to create your own phenology calendar using your data collected and entered in *Nature's Notebook*. Tune to last year's webinar (39:14) where we had the time to go into more detail to review.
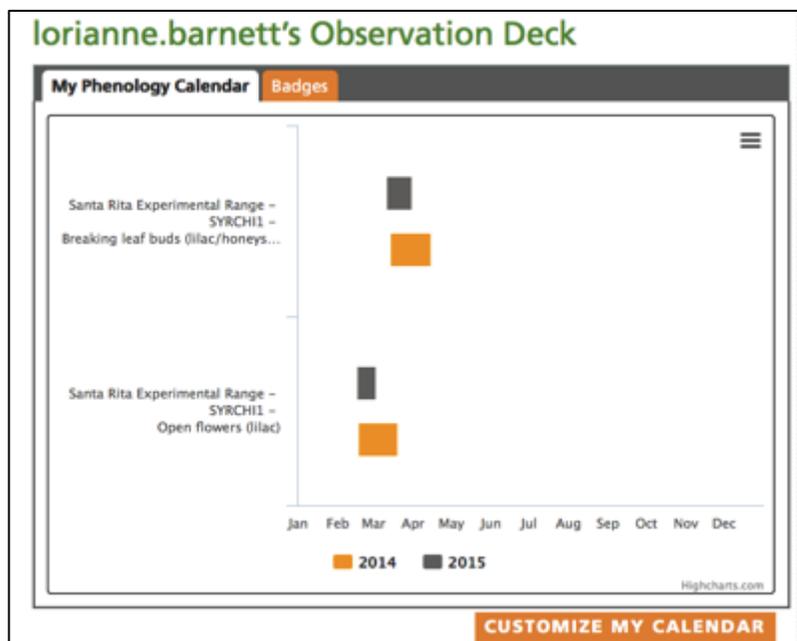
Q: Is there an international companion to *Nature's Notebook*? I'm currently in the Caribbean and would love to input my collected information.

A: Using *Nature's Notebook* abroad can be done, yet you might be hung up on species availability, as we may not have many species on our list that are in the Caribbean. We are working with other phenology organizations to populate a list of global phenology networks, so you could start by checking there. As we find other world-wide organizations we add them to the list.

Q: When I uploaded my app it asks me to choose a 'network'. Is that the same as a group?

A: Yes, network is a group on the app. If you are associated with one or more, you can select them using that dropdown menu.

Q: When I download my data, I see that the 'Abundance Category' values are pretty inconsistent as to whether they're filled in. It seems like the data that I've entered from the mobile app does not populate that column.

A: This sounds like a more technical problem, I'll reach out to you separately. However, opening your app, and allowing your phone app to sync while over a strong Wi-Fi signal would be your first step to troubleshooting. You might want to plan to do this after each field session, to make sure that the observations on your phone, while stored locally, are uploaded to the database when you return to service. You may also wish to check if your observations are downloaded into the database when you return to the computer.

Q: I keep getting people who join our group but I prefer them to be trained in order to participate. SO I have to send them message and then delete them. Is there any way to screen this?

A: We allow group screening to be done by the administrators of the group, as you describe. If you feel the need to reach out and email them before deleting them from your group, please do. Also, emailing support@usanpn.org with a list of the users you have attempted to contact and remove would be appreciated. In the future we may consider adding another layer of security so only approved group members may join the group, but we do not have that functionality at this time.

Q: You have expressed a preference for weekly observations. Would less frequent visits to a site still be valuable for you?

A: You should make observations as often as is convenient for you. Ideally, we would like observers to make observations once a week, or even as frequently as every two or three days, particularly during the spring and fall when plant and animal phenology is changing quickly in many parts of the country. Plants and animals can often be active during the winter, but if you live in a cold region where their activity is reduced, you can lengthen the time between observations during this season. ***Most importantly, you should record all the observations you make in the database! Your observations, no matter how often you make them, provide valuable data!*** Read more on this in our FAQ's section!

You may also find answers to other questions on our FAQ page (https://www.usanpn.org/nn/faq). It is linked at the bottom of each page in *Nature's Notebook*. If you have other questions, don't hesitate to contact support@usanpn.org for more help.