

Greetings Fellow Educators, Citizen Scientists and Bird and Lepidoptera Enthusiasts!

We would like to invite you to participate in an exciting new citizen science project--Caterpillars Count!

[*Caterpillars Count!*](#) is a citizen science project that measures the seasonal variation and abundance of arthropods like caterpillars, beetles, and spiders found on the foliage of trees and shrubs in an effort to answer important questions about patterns of food availability for birds.

Researchers are using the data collected in *Caterpillars Count!* to help determine if plants, insects and birds are all responding to ongoing changes in climate to the same degree. If either insects or birds are not keeping up with phenological shifts of the other organisms that they depend on, then further climate change may have negative consequences for their populations.

We are actively looking for partners to start up new Caterpillars Count! survey sites for this upcoming spring and summer. Calvin College Ecosystem Preserve is in one of our target areas for expansion and may be a good fit for this project.

Ideally, Caterpillars Count! survey sites should have at least 30 survey trees and have dedicated volunteers or staff that can commit to conducting weekly foliage surveys over the spring and summer. The expected time commitment would be ~3 person-hours per week, but the task is easily divided up among multiple participants. For more details on the project and what hosting a survey site for Caterpillars Count! entails, please check out our [project website](#).

To get you started, we also have funding available through a grant from the National Science Foundation to support your involvement in the project.

- For select sites, there may be up to **\$1,000 per site available to support staff time** for implementation of Caterpillars Count!
- In addition, a limited number of participating sites in our target regions will be selected for a visit from the project team and an opportunity to host a **train-the-trainer workshop for their region**. During this half-day workshop, participants will receive in-person instruction in how to conduct surveys of insects using the Caterpillars Count! protocol, and we'll introduce sample learning activities and the project website, where you can explore the data collected by your group along with others from around the country.

If you are interested in hosting a Caterpillars Count! survey site and/or a train-the-trainer workshop at your facility, please fill out the Interest Form at the link below, and we will contact you with more information.

[Caterpillars Count! Host Site Interest Form](#)

In the meantime, do not hesitate to contact us if we can answer any questions. You can reach the team by emailing caterpillarscount@gmail.com, or call 919-966-0895 to reach Sarah Yelton, Project Coordinator.

And, please, forward this email along to any friends, colleagues or local groups you think may be interested in Caterpillars Count!

Yours in Citizen Science,

The Caterpillars Count! Team

Allen Hurlbert
Associate Professor, Department of Biology
University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill

Sara Snell Taylor
Graduate Assistant, Department of Biology
University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill

Sarah Yelton
Environmental Education Coordinator, Institute for the Environment
University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill