

Tutorial\Guide: How to Enter Project Data into the New York Area Biodiversity Research & Conservation Database (NYBD)

Greetings!

Thank you for participating in the New York Area Biodiversity Research & Conservation Database (NYBD). We hope you will find it a useful way to share information about your research and to learn about other conservation work in the New York City region.

Below you will find detailed instructions on how to enter information about your research into the database using the online interface. To help us make this product as useful as possible, we encourage you to share any observations or comments you might have, using the email link provided on the website.

To facilitate your data entry, we recommend that you begin by compiling the information on your research project that NYBD will ask you for (detailed in Sections II and III). You can organize this information prior to logging in by using an Excel spreadsheet we have provided you that lists all the fields in the NYBD. If you choose, you can enter your project information into this spreadsheet, and then copy and paste the information directly from the spreadsheet into the online database fields. The NYBD automatically logs the user out after 30 minutes of inactivity, so the spreadsheet can save you this trouble when entering your data into the NYBD interface.

I. Start


- A. To get started, be sure you have a User Name and Password. These may be obtained by filling out the registration form on the *How to Participate* page.
- B. Next, compile the necessary information on your research. You can use the provided Excel file as a guide.
- C. Go to the NYBD homepage: <http://beta.nbio-nin.ciesin.columbia.edu/nybd>. Click on “Log In” at the top right or bottom left of the page. Log onto site with your User Name and Password. If it is your first time entering projects, you will be taken directly to the *Add Project* page. If you already have projects in the system, you will be taken to a summary page which lists the projects you have entered and from which you can select existing projects to edit or add information.

Please note: We have included a “Mouse Over” function for the interface. When the mouse is held over specified areas, a pop-up box will appear with detailed information for that feature.

II. General Project Information (new and existing projects)

Paste\Type information for:

- A. Project Title (up to 255 characters)

- B. Brief Abstract (up to 2000 characters)
- C. Objective - Concise, specific project foci and steps. Can be bulleted. (up to 1000 characters)
- D. Acknowledgements - Recognition for persons or institutions supporting work. (up to 1000 characters)
- E. Goals - Broad-based, general outline of ultimate project work. (up to 1000 characters)
- F. Location - Description, as specific as possible, of the geographic site, feature, region or area covered by the project, e.g. Rockland County, NY; Black Rock Forest, Cornwall, NY.
- G. Notes - Other pertinent information not previously included. (up to 4000 characters)
- H. Start Date\End Date - Use calendar popup. If end date is unknown, leave “End Date” blank.
- I. Spatial Information - Latitude/longitude coordinates of the project’s bounding box.
 - 1. Adding projects - The system will not accept projects without spatial information. Default box values have been provided but *it is important to enter actual and accurate information here whenever possible*. To facilitate this, we provide a link to a simple pop-up map you can use to select a rectangle whose the lat/long corner coordinates will be entered in the project form. When this pop-up map opens you will need to click on the 'Select by Rectangle' tool () from the toolbar on the left. Next, click your mouse on the map where you want your bounding box to begin, move the mouse to the other corner (as you move the mouse the rectangle will be drawn) and click again. The window will close and your coordinates will be entered in the appropriate form fields.
 - 2. Editing spatial information - It is not yet possible to change or upload spatial coordinates through the web interface. Please use the email link to inform us if you need changes made; if you have a shapefile (acceptable formats: .dbf, .shp, .shx, .prj, .sbx, .sbn, .xml, .zip) indicating a more complex project area, you can also email it to nybd@ciesin.columbia.edu as an attachment.

Once this information is entered and saved, your project becomes an “existing project” in the NYBD. The next section explains how to enter additional information about your project.

III. Associated Information (existing projects only)

- A. **URL** - A project may have one or more associated URL's. Click as indicated in this area to add or edit links to a main project page, websites with related information, etc. (You do not need to type <http://>; this prefix will be included automatically.)
1. URL Address
 2. URL Title - Brief title, as displayed on website.
 3. Description - Brief description of website.
- B. **Topics** – Four categories, in the column on the left of the page, will help you describe your project. It is not required that you complete these categories, but we encourage you to do so to the extent possible. The categories have been pre-populated with lists of terms from which you may choose; if you believe your project can't be properly described with the terms available, please email additional terms to be considered to nydb@ciesin.columbia.edu.

For each category, the process of adding information is the same. On the *Project Edit* page, use the radio button choices to select the category you wish to work on, then click the “Topics” button. Follow instructions in the new page to associate/disassociate available topics with the project you are editing.

1. Keywords - Words/phrases describing the disciplines/types of information the project involves.
 2. Field of Application - Words/phrases describing the fields or disciplines to which the project's conclusions may apply.
 3. Results - Common formats/types of results produced by this project.
 4. Spatial Data Used - A selection of common formats/types of spatial data used for this project.
- C. **Agents** – The column on the right of the page lists “Agents”, a term we use to refer to the people and institutions responsible for a project. An agent can stand alone or be paired with an affiliation. In this way, you can use NYBD to define your project's responsible parties as accurately as possible. For example, the “Agents” menu may contain many PI's named John Doe, but only the John Doe at CUNY worked on your project.

The database interface allows you to add new people's names to the "Agents" menu, but you cannot use the interface to add new institutions to the menu; if an institution you require is not listed, please send its information to CIESIN at nybd@ciesin.columbia.edu (see the Excel Institution Info worksheet for required information on institutions). For this reason, you can only pair people in the "Agents" menu to institutions already listed in the menu.

NOTE: Because people, once added, become available for association and may be associated to any projects by other users, it is not possible to allow deletion or correction of agents through the web interface. Consequently, please be accurate when entering this information. If an error is made, you can send corrections to nybd@ciesin.columbia.edu.

1. PI (Principal Investigator) - A project entry may include multiple PI's; they should be listed in the order in which they were associated with the project. A PI will usually be paired with an institution, but this is not required.
2. Funding Source - Sources of funding for the project. This could be any number of individuals, institutions, or individual/institution pairs.
3. Institution - The primary institution carrying out the research.
4. Collaborating Agents - Indicates who is collaborating on the research. This could be any number of individuals, institutions, or individual/institution pairs.

In the same manner as for "Topics", use the "Agents" radio button choices on the *Project Edit* page to select the category you wish to work on, then hit the "Agents" button. Follow instructions in the new page to associate/disassociate available agents, create new individual/institution pairs, or add individuals.

IV. Feedback

We are striving to make NYBD as helpful a tool as possible for the New York area conservation and environment communities. To that end, we look forward to receiving your feedback. Any questions or comments can be emailed to nybd@ciesin.columbia.edu. Thank you!