



NC Alligators Project on iNaturalist

Step-By-Step Instructions for Participating



NC Alligators is a project developed and curated by the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission’s Alligator Program staff to collect a database of alligator observations made by the public. This project increases our knowledge of local distributions of American alligators in the state, helps identify areas in which to focus educational programs about alligators, and helps scientists connect with a growing network of residents and visitors that enjoy viewing alligators.

The next time you see an alligator in North Carolina... take a picture!

Anyone who sees an alligator in the wild is invited to share photos of their sightings on the **NC Alligators** project, hosted by the **iNaturalist** platform, a *crowdsourced species identification system* and *organism occurrence recording tool*. It’s free to use and anyone can join! Upload your alligator photos online at iNaturalist.org, or download the free iNaturalist mobile app, which is available for iPhone and Android devices. To be included, the observation must be:

- an American alligator (in the taxon *Alligator mississippiensis*)
- observed in the state of North Carolina
- wild (no observations of alligators in zoos, aquariums, or other captive settings)
- verified with at least one photo taken by the observer

Please keep a safe, respectful distance away when viewing wild alligators and do not feed them!

Seeing an alligator in its natural environment is an exciting experience! It’s important to remember not to get too caught up in the moment to remember your manners around wildlife. You should never approach an alligator, no matter its size. For your own safety and out of respect for nature, it's important to keep a safe distance between you and the alligator—at least two school bus-lengths from adults and no less than one bus-length from juveniles. The smaller they are, the more likely it is that a protective maternal female is nearby watching over them. Look, but don’t touch!

You should also **never feed wild alligators**. Alligators tend to be shy and fearful of humans by nature, but can become a safety issue if they are habituated to being fed by people. **It is unlawful** for anyone to intentionally feed a wild alligator, or to touch one without a permit. Alligators are a listed species and protected by law. If you know of someone poaching, harming, harassing, or feeding alligators in North Carolina, please call our Wildlife Enforcement Hotline at 1-800-662-7137.

Read more about alligators and how to coexist with them:

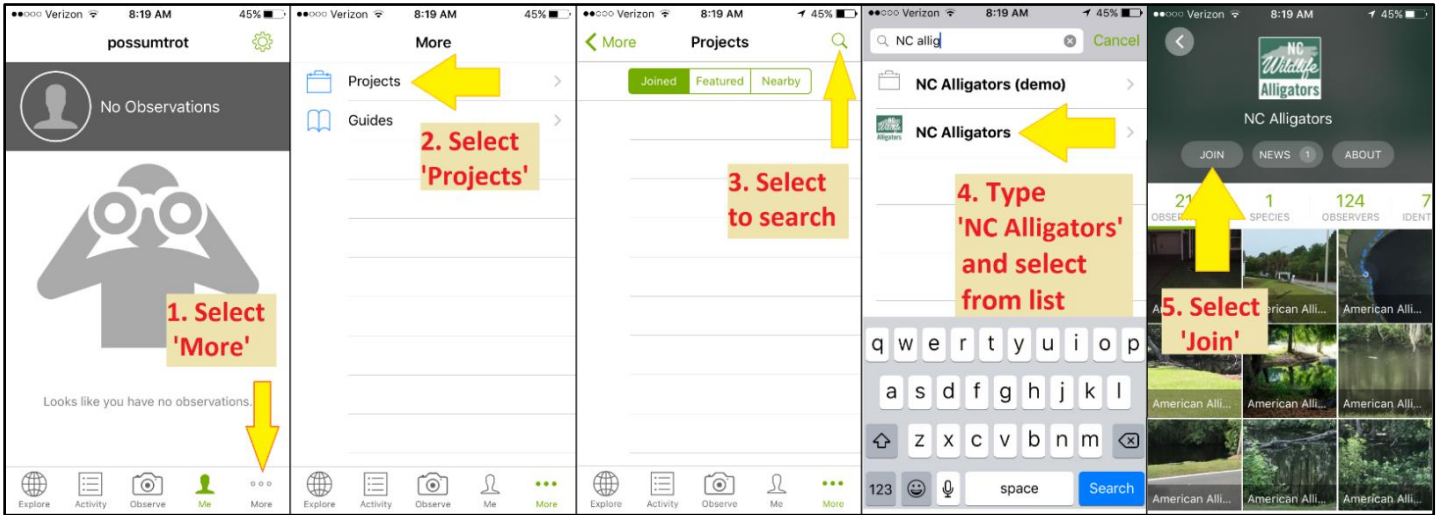
[American Alligator – North Carolina Wildlife Profile](#)

[Coexist with Alligators](#)

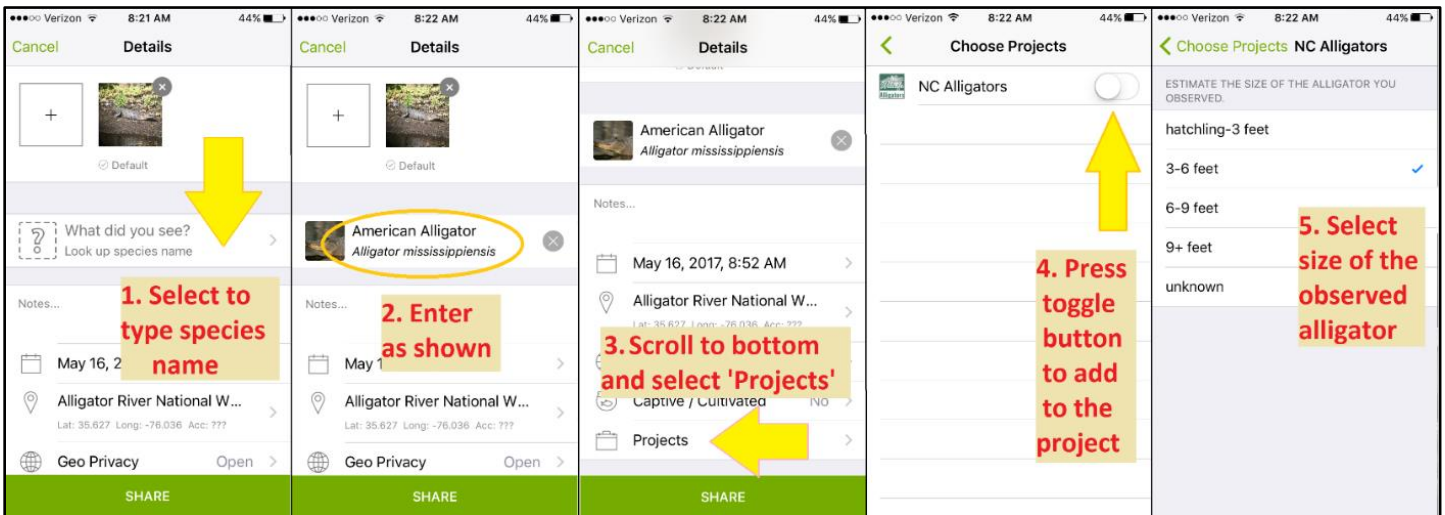
Table of Contents

How to join the NC Alligators project using the iPhone app	2
How to add your alligator observation to the project using the iPhone app	2
<i>Note: instructions for Android users can be found at inaturalist.org/pages/video+tutorials</i>	2
How to join the NC Alligators project on iNaturalist’s website	3
How to allow project curators to view the location of your alligator observation	4
Helpful Links.....	6
FAQ.....	6

How to join the NC Alligators project using the iPhone app



How to add your alligator observation to the project using the iPhone app



Note: instructions for Android users can be found at inaturalist.org/pages/video+tutorials



NC Alligators Project on iNaturalist

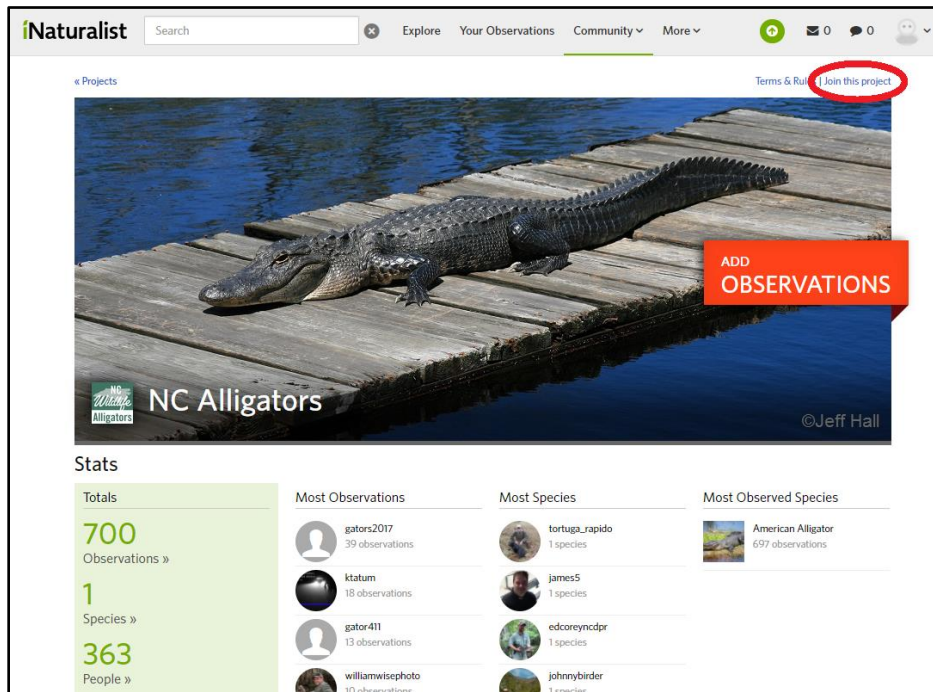


Step-By-Step Instructions for Participating

How to join the NC Alligators project on iNaturalist's website

Use this method to participate from a web browser (such as Google Chrome or Internet Explorer) from a PC, tablet, or other computing device. While the mobile app is super handy for uploading observations right from your smartphone, there are a lot more features available on the website than the mobile app!

1. Go to the **NC Alligators** project homepage on iNaturalist ([inaturalist.org/projects/nc-alligators](https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/nc-alligators)).



2. Click 'Join this project' in the upper-righthand corner. On the next screen, make sure to select the option that makes your observation coordinates visible to the project curators, no matter who adds the observation to the project. This way, if you upload an alligator observation to iNaturalist but forget to add it to the **NC Alligators** project, the project curators (NCWRC biologists) can do it for you!

Do you want to make your private/obscured observation coordinates visible to the project curators?

Yes, but only if I add the observation to the project myself.

Yes, no matter who adds the observation to the project.

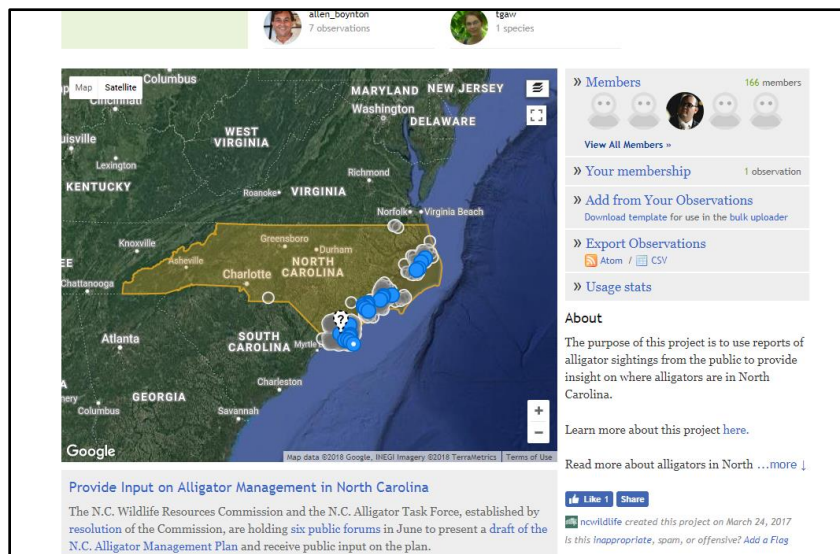
No.

Note: You can also choose to share the hidden coordinates of observations in this project on a case-by-case basis.

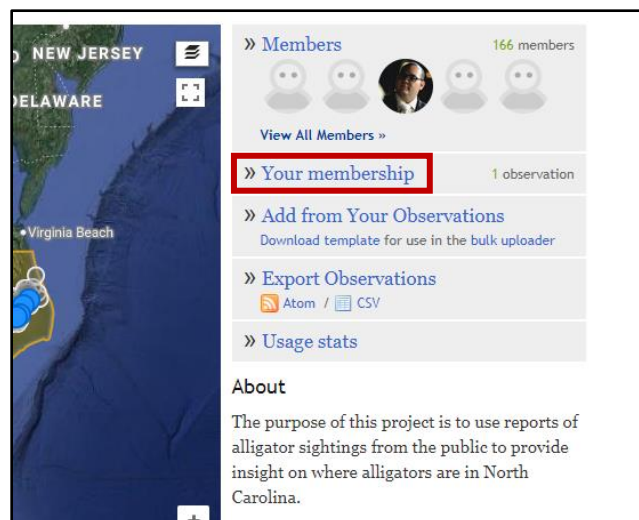
How to allow project curators to view the location of your alligator observation

Because alligators are a listed species, iNaturalist automatically obscures the exact coordinates of all alligator observations from the public and will not allow project curators (NCWRC biologists) to view the true coordinates unless the observer grants explicit permission. You must first join the NC Alligators project (please follow the instructions on page 3 of this document). Then, use these instructions below to change the default settings and allow project curators to see the location of an alligator observation that you've already uploaded to iNaturalist.

1. From the **NC Alligators** project homepage on iNaturalist ([inaturalist.org/projects/nc-alligators](https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/nc-alligators)), scroll down to the interactive map of North Carolina.

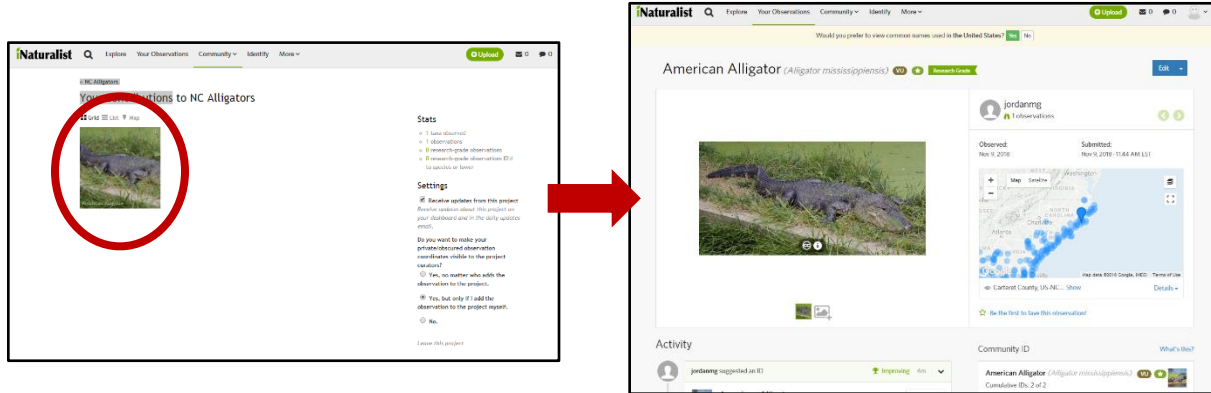


2. Click on 'Your Membership' to the right of the map.

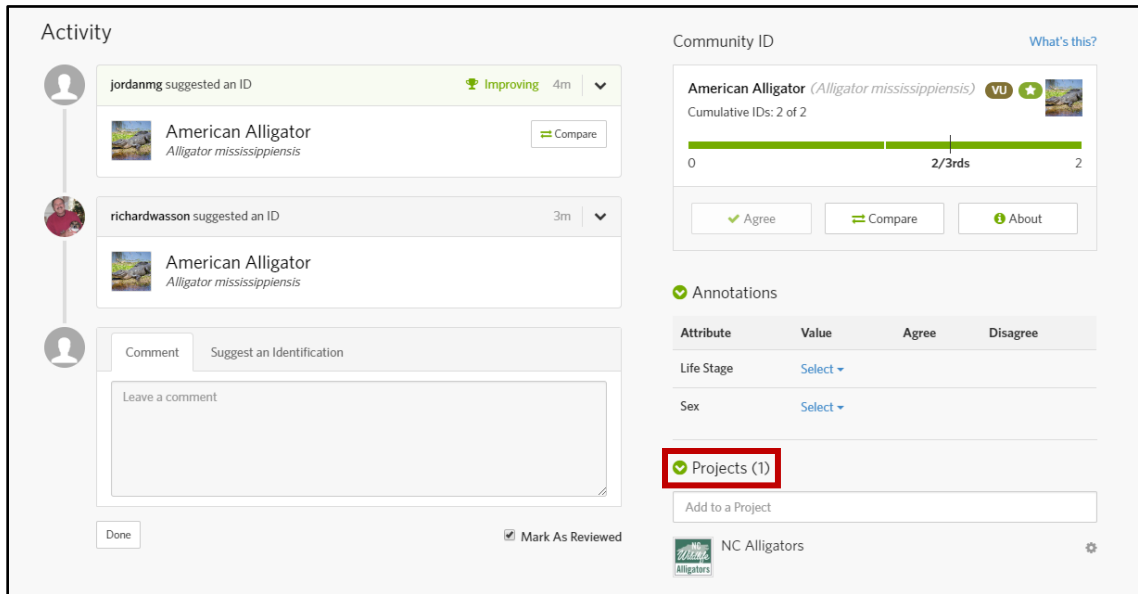


Step-By-Step Instructions for Participating

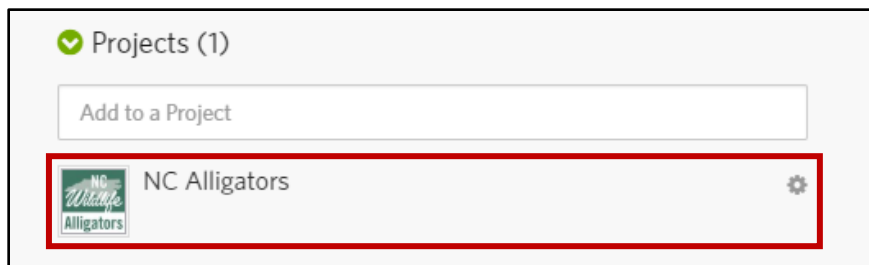
- Click on your photo of the alligator you observed, which will take you to a page with more details about your observation.



- Scroll down to the 'Projects' section on the right-hand side of the screen.



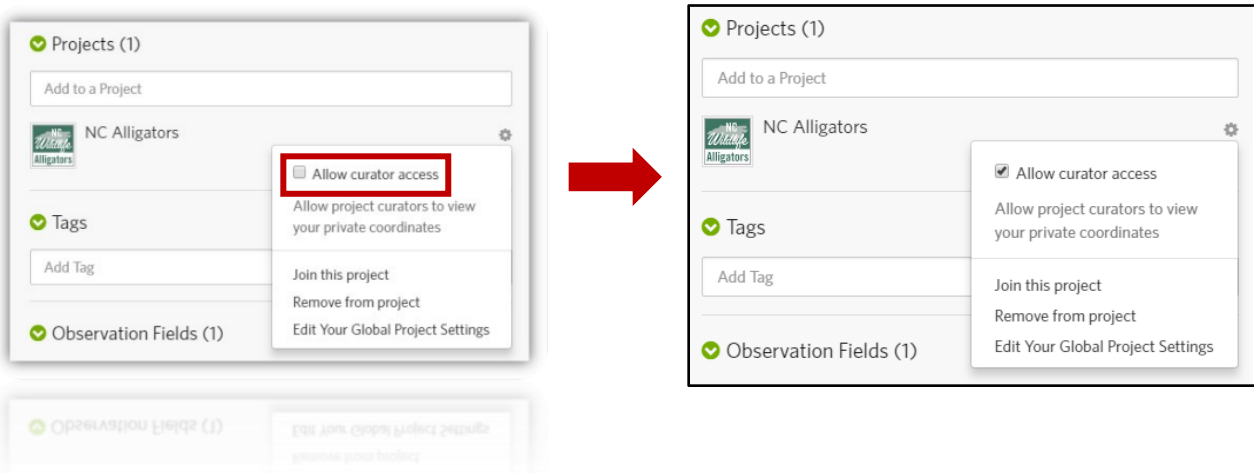
- You will see the 'NC Alligators' project listed here.



6. Click on the gear icon to the right of the 'NC Alligators'



7. A box will pop up as shown below. Click the checkbox next to 'Allow curator access'



8. Congratulations! You have successfully shared your location with us!

*Thank you for participating in the **NC Alligators** project!*

Helpful Links

- Getting started on iNaturalist: <https://www.inaturalist.org/pages/getting+started>
- iNaturalist video tutorials: <https://www.inaturalist.org/pages/video+tutorials>
- iNaturalist FAQ: <https://www.inaturalist.org/pages/help>
- American Alligator profile: <https://www.ncwildlife.org/Portals/0/Learning/documents/Profiles/Reptile/Alligator-Wildlife-Profile.pdf>

FAQ

This section will be used for sharing answers to any frequently asked questions from users.

This document will be updated as needed—the most recent version will be posted on NCWRC's website at [ncwildlife.org/alligator](https://www.ncwildlife.org/alligator) on the 'Related Links' tab!