

# SWOSU Represented at Oklahoma BioBlitz Held in Western Oklahoma

10.14.2014

Students and faculty from the Department of Biological Sciences at Southwestern Oklahoma State University recently participated in the 13th annual Oklahoma BioBlitz that was held this year in western Oklahoma. Among those participating were (from left): Jessie Huffman, Dr. Lisa Castle, Dr. Rickey Cothran, Dr. Andrea Holgado, Ryan Christensen, Abby McKisson, Ashley Powers, Allison Statton and Amber Rymer.

Several students from the Department of Biological Sciences at Southwestern Oklahoma State University in Weatherford recently participated in the 13<sup>th</sup> annual Oklahoma BioBlitz, learning about the biodiversity of Oklahoma.

Students visited three sites in western Oklahoma: Black Kettle National Grasslands, Washita Battlefield National Historic Site and the City of Cheyenne.

Oklahoma BioBlitz is a rapid inventory of biological diversity in a particular area over a 24-hour period that has been coordinated by the University of Oklahoma Biological Survey annually since 2001. The effort includes participants from several Oklahoma colleges and universities as well as citizen scientists.

Anyone can volunteer in this effort to learn more about the biodiversity of Oklahoma. Over 600 species were collected at this year's event and the team from SWOSU was instrumental in collecting and tallying the aquatic invertebrates.

Student participants included Forrest Clarke, Jessie Huffman, Abby McKisson, Ashley Powers, Amber Rymer, Allison Statton, Lyly Van and Brenda Vang. Faculty participants included Drs. Lisa Castle, Rickey Cothran, Amanda Falk and Andrea Holgado.

Several friends of the department also participated including Claudio Briguada, Camila Briguada, Jeff Walker, Andrew Walker, William Walker and SWOSU biology alumnus Ryan Christensen.

Rickey Cothran of the department said next year's Oklahoma BioBlitz will be held in the fall at Osage Hills State Park near Pawhuska. This is a lush area of the state and is an ideal place for a BioBlitz. Many habitats including streams, lakes and deciduous forest as well as nearby tallgrass prairie are within the reach of bioblitzers.

More information about Oklahoma's BioBlitz, past and present, can be found at <http://www.biosurvey.ou.edu/bioblitz/BioBlitz.html>.