How to Make Great iNaturalist Observations

1. Take Great Photos

- Make sure your photo is clear and bright. Blurry photos can't be identified.
- If your camera won't focus, put your finger near the plant to help it, then move it away.
- Take photos from the side of the plant, not just from above.
- Use your body or backpack to shade the plant if it's too sunny.
- Get close, but not so close that the camera can't focus.
- Use a simple background (your hand, paper, or the sky) so the plant stands out.

2. Take Multiple Photos

Show different parts of the plant so others can identify it:

- The whole plant and where it's growing.
- The stem and how the leaves attach.
- The underside of a leaf (bend one so you can see it).
- The flowers from the front, back, and side.
- Any fruits or seeds you can find.
- The bark if it's a tree or shrub.

3. Include Something for Scale

Help others understand size:

- Use a ruler, or a coin, pencil, or your finger.
- Put tiny things (like seeds) right on the ruler.
- For tall plants or trees, note the height or include a person in the photo.

4. Other Helpful Tips

These aren't required, but they make your observation even better:

- Add notes about smells, textures, or anything interesting.
- Make sure your GPS location is accurate before saving.
- If you want to hide the exact location, choose "obscured" in geoprivacy.
- If the plant was planted by people, mark it as captive/cultivated.
- Add annotations like "flowering" or "fruiting" to help scientists.

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