

Q&A with Lucille Tower
**She entered the millionth record
in *Nature's Notebook***



Q: Why do you participate in *Nature's Notebook*?

I started participating as part of my environmental problem solving class at Portland State University. We are doing a unit on phenology, so over the last three weeks we made a field trip to each of the three Portland Budwatch Trails. I plan to keep participating in *Nature's Notebook* after this year because building such a broad database will provide important information on phenology trends in years to come. Also, it motivates me to get outside and enjoy the woods and parks around Portland.

Q: Why did you choose to observe vine maple and what do you enjoy about tracking it through the seasons?

Everyone in our class observed all the plants on the trails, but I chose a vine maple for the picture because I've always found them to be an aesthetic plant, and the leaf shape is easy to identify. I take my little brother out for walks in the park near

my parents' house sometimes, and vine maple is one of the plants he's proud to be able to recognize.

Q: I understand you belong to Portland Budwatch, one of our partners. Would you recommend joining a local group like this that provides in-person training and on-the-ground support to other *Nature's Notebook* participants?

Portland Budwatch, and other groups like it, are great resources for anyone interested in phenology. However, I think they are especially advantageous for people who are new to *Nature's Notebook* or unsure how regularly they can participate because they can provide established trails and premade datasheets, which makes getting out there and getting started easier for those new to this form of data collection.

Q: How has observing as part of this program impacted you?

Participating in Portland Budwatch has reminded me that being a scientist is a frame of mind, not a credential. A six year old can be a scientist by noticing the day the leaves start to fall over their playground, and a retired history teacher can be a scientist by marking down the day the flowers bloom where they walk their dog. If you can get outside and get to the *Nature's Notebook* website to submit your data, absolutely anyone can contribute to phenology research. Collecting this data is a community effort that lets anyone interested participate in a big project with even bigger implications. It's a way to get involved and engage with the world.