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MEDIA RELEASE

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MEDIA CONTACT: Hallie Shere, 619.255.0189, hshere@sdnhm.org
Marketing Specialist/Public Programs and Publications

**Nearly 1200 Species Documented at BioBlitz Mission Trails Regional Park
San Diego Natural History Museum and Regional Researchers
Joined Public in a 24-Hour Event Celebrating Local Biodiversity**

May 18, 2009; San Diego—On May 1–2, 2009, the San Diego Natural History Museum hosted BioBlitz Mission Trails Regional Park. The event brought together working scientists, volunteers, educators, and the general public to explore biodiversity as a community and showcase the Museum research division, the Biodiversity Research Center of the Californias (BRCC). Over 50 scientists and volunteers scoured Mission Trails for 24 hours and discovered **1193 species** of life.

At the Mission Trails Visitor Center, families and individuals of all ages were able to interact with the scientists as they documented and counted species. Visitors also viewed samples from the Museum’s 9-million specimen collection and participated in guided nature hikes of Mission Trails. A final database of results is currently being compiled by [Museum scientists](#) and will be available [online](#) in a few weeks. The preliminary counts are as follows:

Insects	529
Spiders and relatives	58
Snails and Clams	16
Algae and diatoms	56
Lichens and fungi	58
Birds	101
Mammals	26
Reptiles and amphibians	17
Plants	332
Grand Total	1193

“On May 2 we announced that we documented 1183 species. Since then adjusted numbers keep pouring in,” says Dr. Michael Wall, Director of BRCC and Curator of Entomology at the Museum, “two more mammals. One more bird. Ten more lichens (including two new records for the state). Had we the time to look at all the insects we collected, I am sure we could have easily reached 1500.

The first BioBlitz was conducted in 1996 in Washington, D.C., organized by Sam Droege of the U.S. Geological Survey. Since then similar events have been held in various cities around the

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U.S. and internationally. BioBlitz did not have a public component until the Carnegie Museum of Natural History conducted one in a Pittsburgh park in 1997 and invited the public to see what the scientists were doing. A BioBlitz in New York City's Central Park in 2003 yielded 393 plants, 78 moths, 14 fungi, 10 spiders, 9 dragonflies, 2 tardigrades, 102 other invertebrates, 7 mammals, 3 turtles, 46 birds, and 2 frogs. The San Diego Natural History Museum hosted San Diego's first BioBlitz in 2008, during which scientists counted 1035 species in Balboa Park over 24 hours. The Museum's BioBlitz in 2010 will take place in Agua Hedionda Lagoon, located in Carlsbad, California.

Celebrating its 135th year, the San Diego Natural History Museum is the second oldest scientific institution in California; third west of the Mississippi. A binational museum, its mission is to interpret the natural world through research, education, and exhibits; to promote understanding of the evolution and diversity of southern California and the peninsula of Baja California and to inspire in all a respect for nature and the environment. Located in Balboa Park at the intersection of Village Place and Park Blvd., the Museum is open daily except for Thanksgiving and Christmas. Phone: 619.232.3821. Website: www.sdnhm.org.

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