

Creating a Place for an iNaturalist Project

Purpose:

This guide teaches librarians how to create a geographic “Place” for an iNaturalist project. No mapping or technical experience is required.

What You Will Do:

- Make a simple boundary map in Google My Maps
- Export that map
- Upload it to iNaturalist
- Use it in an iNaturalist project

Part 1: Create Your Map in Google My Maps

Step 1: Open Google My Maps

- Go to: <https://www.google.com/maps/d>
- Select “Create a new map”

Step 2: Find Your Area

- Type your library or town name in the search bar
- Zoom until the area is clearly visible

Step 3: Draw the Boundary

- Click “Draw a line” → “Add line or shape”
- Click around the edges of the area you want to include
- Finish the shape by clicking the starting point
- Name and save the shape

Part 2: Export the Boundary File

- Click the three dots next to your layer
- Select “Export to KML/KMZ”
- Choose “Export as KML”
- Download the file

Part 3: Create the Place in iNaturalist

- Log in to iNaturalist
- Go to: <https://www.inaturalist.org/places/new>
- Fill in name, region, and place type
- Upload the KML file and save

Part 4: Use the Place in an iNaturalist Project

- Create a new project
- Select your custom place under “Project Places”
- Save the project

Tips for Success:

- Keep boundaries simple
- Use broad outlines for large areas
- Reuse KML files for future events