

Peer Review Process

Scientists have other scientists Peer Review their work before they make their research and ideas public. Scientists rely on each other to point out what they have done well and what parts of their work or ideas need to be strengthened. In general, *Vital Signs* Peer Review Process involves:

- Telling the scientist what you think he/she did really well
- Offering ideas for how notes and evidence can be improved before it gets published
- Communicating what *you* learned from the observation
- Asking questions about what you are curious about

Before species observations are published to the *Vital Signs* database, they must undergo a Data Quality Check and a Peer Review to ensure that the observations will be useful. Use the following questions to guide your review and critique of another scientist's species observations and habitat data. When you are happy with the scientist's work, enter your username in the "Peer reviewed by" field at the bottom of the Review & Submit Data tab of the *Vital Signs* online data entry form.

Username of the scientist:

Username of the reviewer:

Field Notes

Does the field note help you understand more about *where* the scientist was collecting data?

Does the field note help you understand *why* the scientist was collecting the data? Does it include the research question or reason for the investigation?

Species Evidence

Does the evidence match the scientist's claim that they either Found or Did Not Find the species they were looking for?

Does each piece of written evidence go with the photo evidence? Does it make sense to you? Did this scientist prove his/her case well enough? Are you convinced?

Did the scientist use the most important identification characteristics in their evidence? (HINT: Take a look at the species card, especially the "similar species" information) If not, what key characteristics did they miss?

General Comments

What did *you* learn from reviewing this record?

What are you still curious about? What questions do you have for the scientist?