

COMMUNITY

Biodiversity blitz hits the Bulkley Valley

By Dan Mesec
Smithers/Interior News

The Bulkley Valley's Bioblitz exploded in Smithers last weekend, as biologists and nature enthusiasts gathered at the Hunaker Springs to celebrate biodiversity in the northwest.

"This is the second annual Smithers Bioblitz and it's just an opportunity to get the community out and celebrate some of the natural heritage of our valley," Patrick Williston said.

Smithers is known as a hub for innovation in the northwest

when it comes to research and education in biodiversity.

The Bulkley Valley is home to a number of natural heritage sites that not only intrigue the minds of residents, but also attract flocks of tourists every year.

"I think of the Bioblitz as an opportunity for residents who've lived here for a long time to discover new things about the places where they live," Williston said.

"But in the process we've also had opportunities to interact with tourists and point out some of the more interest-



Finlay Reed helps scientists log and capture a butterfly specimen during the 2012 Bioblitz at the Hunaker Springs near Smithers

Dan Mesec photo

ing areas of diversity in the valley."

The Bioblitz gives the public a chance to gather and

document the flora, fauna, geology and ecology of a specified area.

The event is held

in partnership with the Bulkley Valley Research Centre and Northwest Community College.