

Call for citizen scientists for 2020 Sudden Oak Death Blitzes

March 10, 2020

Sudden Oak Death (SOD), one of the most notorious invasive tree diseases in North America, infects and threatens not only oak but also various other oak species across California. While there are a variety of management methods available to prevent the further spread of the disease, these tools are only effective if implemented before trees become infected. By mapping the location of the disease, scientists can then enact measures to stop SOD in its tracks.

To help combat the disease, researchers from UC Berkeley and across the state have partnered to put together Sudden Oak Death Blitzes (SOD-Blitzes), programs where citizen scientists can help gather data on SOD to aid in its prevention. ESPM Cooperative Extension Specialist and adjunct professor [Matteo Gar-elotto](https://ourenvironment.berkeley.edu/people/matteo-gar-elotto) (<https://ourenvironment.berkeley.edu/people/matteo-gar-elotto>), who has been leading the program for 13 years, views the blitzes as a way to detect and stop SOD early on. Volunteers are trained to detect SOD and record this data using smartphones. This data helps to create local maps highlighting the distribution and spread of SOD, which allows scientists and officials to identify areas where proactive management strategies can be implemented.

Interested in participating in one of this year's SOD-Blitzes? Training for volunteers begins on April 11 in Napa and continues through June across the state. Learn [more about the SOD Blitzes](#)

(<https://nature.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/2020Blitz%20information.docx>) and view the [training program schedule](#)

(<https://nature.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/Sudden%20Oak%20Death%20Blitzes%202020%20v2.docx>).

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