



BioNet Web Service

Release notes

February 2026 (Release 4.1.0)

Department of Climate Change,
Energy, the Environment and Water



Acknowledgement of Country

Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands where we work and live.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

This resource may contain images or names of deceased persons in photographs or historical content.

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Artist and designer Nikita Ridgeway from Aboriginal design agency Boss Lady Creative Designs created the People and Community symbol.

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Background

BioNet is the repository for biodiversity data maintained by the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (the department) and contains species sightings and systematic survey records, vegetation classification and threatened biodiversity data.

The BioNet Web Service initiative is a program of work conducted by the department. It progressively makes data held in BioNet open and available via open application programming interfaces (APIs).

The BioNet Web Service enables organisations and individuals to directly integrate biodiversity data into their software systems and unlock the innovation potential of this valuable community-owned data asset. By delivering these data via open APIs, we are improving environmental decision-making by integrating up-to-date, consistent and reliable biodiversity data into planning and assessment systems. As the size of the datasets and user base grow, system upgrades and database optimisations need to be applied to retain a stable and efficient web service.

Release 4.1.0 is part of broader enhancement initiatives under the BioNet Next Generation program. The program takes a comprehensive approach to addressing NSW biodiversity data management needs and infrastructure challenges.

Under 4.1.0, a new entity set `SpeciesSightings_CoreDataExtended` has been added to the Species Sightings Web Service. It differs from the existing `SpeciesSightings_CoreData` entity set by (a) including 34 new fields to provide sighting-level flora and fauna data collected during systematic surveys, and address existing gaps in the sighting-level data delivered by the `SpeciesSightings_CoreData` entity set, (b) excluding 3 fields, (c) modifying some existing fields to standardise field names, improve sensitive species data security, or correct other parameters that would otherwise cause a breaking change to user applications.

The existing `SpeciesSightings_CoreData` entity set will remain available for approximately 6 months to allow users to transition to the `SpeciesSightings_CoreDataExtended` entity set without causing a break in their applications, after which the original `SpeciesSightings_CoreData` entity set will be retired.

New functionality

Species sightings data

A new entity set SpeciesSightings_CoreDataExtended has been released. This differs from the existing SpeciesSightings_CoreData entity set as follows.

A. New fields to provide sighting-level flora and fauna data

Table 1 New fields in the SpeciesSightings_CoreDataExtended entity set

Name of new field present only in CoreDataExtended	Systematic survey data field?
abundanceScore	Yes
elevationInMeters	–
*endDateTime	–
entryOrder	Yes
estimatedDistanceInMeters	Yes
growthHabit	–
interimBiogeographicRegionalisationForAustraliaID	–
interimBiogeographicRegionalisationForAustraliaSubregionID	–
isWithinBoundary	Yes
lowerHeightInMeters	Yes
microhabitatType	–
organismInteractionDescription	Yes
organismInteractionID	Yes
organismInteractionType	Yes
percentagecover	Yes
relatedOccurrenceID	Yes
samplingEffortUnit	Yes
samplingEffortValue	Yes
sightingID	–
siteID	Yes
specimenLocation	–
specimenRegistration	–
*startDateTime	–

Name of new field present only in CoreDataExtended	Systematic survey data field?
strataType	Yes
subplotNumber	Yes
surveyID	Yes
surveyName	Yes
timeResponding	Yes
transformedCoverScore	Yes
trapID	Yes
upperHeightInMeters	Yes
validationFlags	–
verbatimCoverScore	Yes
visitID	Yes

* startDateTime and endDateTime in datetime format added to improve user filtering on when observations were made.

B. Fields excluded from SpeciesSightings_CoreDataExtended entity set

Table 2 Fields not in SpeciesSightings_CoreDataExtended entity set which are present in CoreData entity set

Name of field not present in CoreDataExtended	Reason for exclusion from CoreDataExtended
minimumElevationInMeters	Maximum and minim values not required for elevation. Replaced with elevationInMeters
maximumElevationInMeters	Maximum and minim values not required for elevation. Replaced with elevationInMeters
samplingEffort	Composite field. Replaced with samplingEffortType and samplingEffortUnit

C. Modified existing fields to standardise field names

Table 3 Fields that have a new name in the CoreDataExtended entity set compared with the CoreData entity set

Name of field in CoreDataExtended	Name of field in CoreData
interimBiogeographicRegionalisationForAustralia	IBRA
interimBiogeographicRegionalisationForAustraliaSubregion	IBRASubregion
localLandService	LLS
privateNativeForestry	PNFFilter
recordStatus	status
threatenedBiodiversityProfileID	TSProfileID

D. Applied correct application of BioNet Sensitive Species Data Policy to all fields

Corrections have been applied in the SpeciesSightings_CoreDataExtended entity set to provide sensitive species data in accordance with the policy:

- The following fields are withheld where relevant in accordance with the *Sensitive Species Data Policy*:
 - siteID
 - elevationInMeters
 - locality
 - locationRemarks
 - locationID
 - subplotNumber
 - eventID
 - visitID
 - eventRemarks
 - eventTime
 - samplingProtocol
 - samplingEffortValue
 - samplingEffortUnit
 - trapID
 - habitat
 - surveyName
 - surveyID
 - occurrenceRemarks
 - isWithinBoundary

- estimatedDistanceInMeters
- organismInteractionType
- organismInteractionDescription
- organismInteractionID
- The following fields are generalised where relevant in accordance with the *Sensitive Species Data Policy*: coordinates given in decimalLatitude, decimalLongitude, easting and northing have been rounded. Time has been removed from startDateTime and endDateTime.
- No fields are withheld for non-sensitive species.

E. Bug fixes in data population

- protectedInNSW: applied standardised provision of Boolean data output to correct output from 'true'/'false' to 'yes'/'no'.
- stateProvince: fixed population of incorrect value to some records.
- nomenclaturalCode: ICBN updated to ICN.

Enhancements and fixes

There are no enhancements or fixes to the SpeciesSightings_CoreData entity set.

Documentation

Detailed information on the new SpeciesSightings_CoreDataExtended entity set has been added to the BioNet Species Sightings Web Service data standard.

Documentation for the BioNet Web Service are available via the [BioNet web services web page](#).

Warnings and known limitations

Query run times for the larger SpeciesSightings_CoreDataExtended entity set take proportionally longer compared with the existing SpeciesSightings_CoreData entity set, however, there is no significant impact on the BioNet Web Service performance due to the larger data volumes and run time. The BioNet Web Service performance is monitored, however, please advise if you discover any issues.