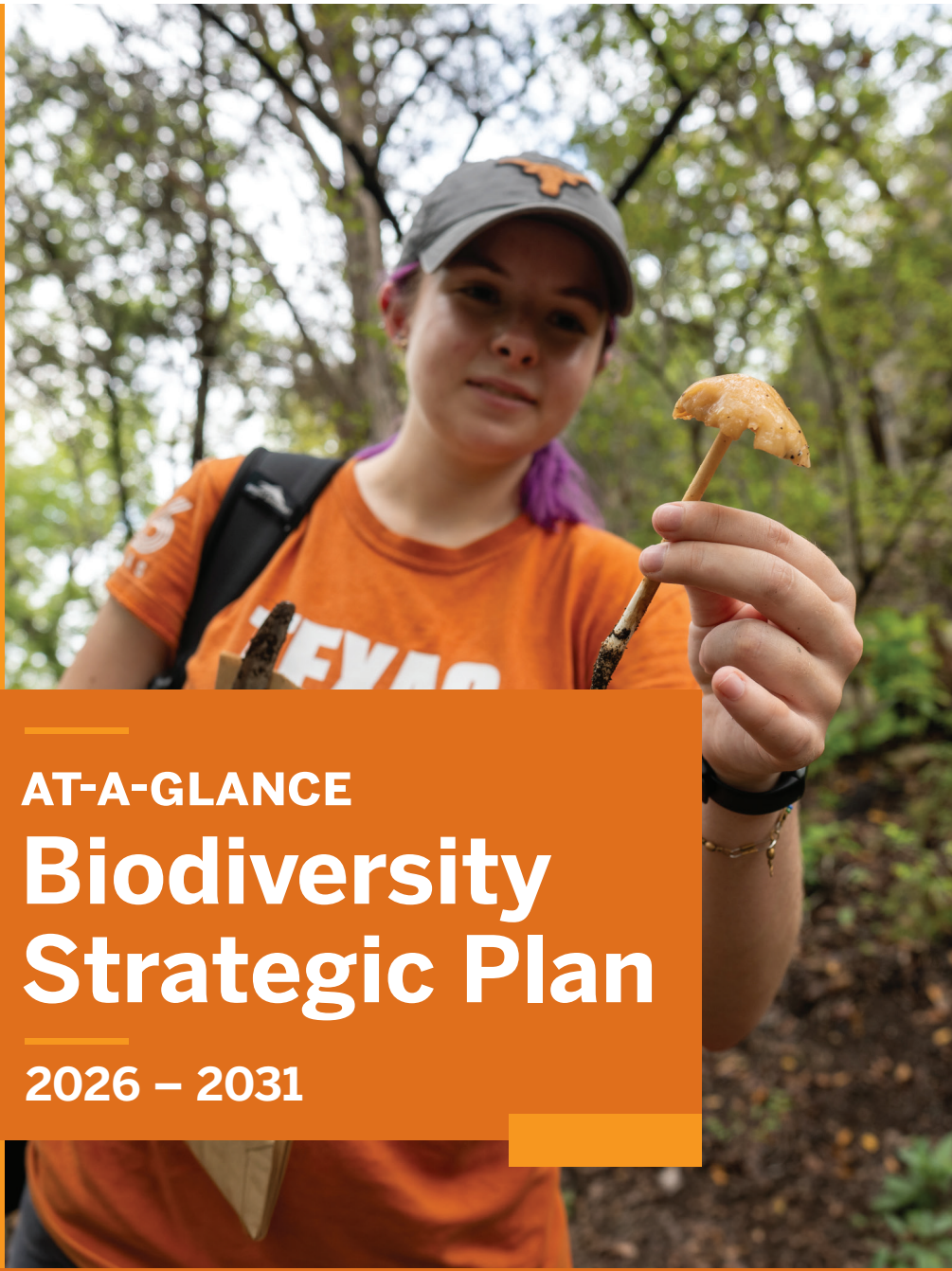
The University of Texas at Austin
Biodiversity Center



AT-A-GLANCE

Biodiversity Strategic Plan

2026 – 2031





About the Biodiversity Center

The Biodiversity Center serves as a central hub for catalyzing biodiversity research, education and public engagement at The University of Texas at Austin. The Center hosts opportunities for innovative research collaborations, experiential education and training, and brings together world-class faculty, students, researchers, and the public to understand and support the extraordinary biodiversity found in Texas and around the world.

As the home of the Texas Field Station Network and Biodiversity Collections, the Center facilitates access to unique ecosystems for field-based learning, millions of natural history specimens and a network of partnerships that drive transformative research, discovery and learning across disciplines.









Why Biodiversity

Biodiversity is the variety of life on Earth, that sustains us by providing clean air and water, food, medicine, and protection from floods and pests. Understanding, nurturing, and communicating the value of biodiversity is essential to making decisions that support the health of our communities, economy and environment – for our daily lives, and generations to come.

Texas is one of the most biodiverse places in the United States, with a dozen distinct ecoregions – spanning deserts, forests, coasts and prairies – and hundreds of plant and animal species found nowhere else in the world. Since 1891, the University has been a key steward of this biodiversity, and a national leader in biodiversity sciences, with exceptional faculty, top-ten ranked graduate programs, distinctive field stations and biological collections.

FIVE-YEAR VISION

In the next five years, the Biodiversity Center will catalyze, amplify, and coordinate biodiversity research, education and public engagement opportunities across disciplines. The Center will foster collaboration, enhance accessibility of biodiversity resources and training, develop shared priorities, build public awareness, and advance the work of faculty, students and staff across the University.

FRAMEWORK

To carry out this vision, the Biodiversity Center will implement specific, interconnected goals under five strategic pillars: Research Excellence, Education and Career Pathways, Essential Biodiversity Resources, Public Outreach and Engagement, and Leadership, Governance and Culture. Implementation will occur in phases, with these overall objectives:

- Catalyze transformative, large-scale biodiversity research across colleges and departments
- Support classroom-to-career pathways by providing experiential learning, networking and seed funding opportunities
- Build community and partnerships within the University and throughout Texas – K-12 students, educators, policymakers and nonprofit organizations – in biodiversity conservation and education
- Elevate and enhance the accessibility of UT's field stations and natural history collections as long-term institutional assets
- Build a collaborative, interdisciplinary leadership team to develop shared priorities











5 STRATEGIC PILLARS

1. Research Excellence

Interdisciplinary research and collaboration

Goals: Establish 3-4 priority themes for the Center to align funding opportunities and activities. Facilitate interdisciplinary, innovative research collaborations.

2. Education & Career Pathways

Undergraduate, graduate, and postgraduate education and career support

Goals: Provide education and career pathway support for students and early career scientists, including paid opportunities. Build alumni networks and partnerships.

3. Essential Biodiversity Resources

Field stations, collections, core facilities and technologies

Goals: Enhance accessibility of shared UT infrastructure, data and resources. Integrate the Texas Field Station Network and Biodiversity Collections with research, education and public programs.

4. Public Outreach & Engagement

Communications, public engagement and community building

Goals: Create a thriving hub for UT's biodiversity community. Translate science to deepen public understanding of biodiversity, tailored to public audiences, from "K to Gray" including educators, policymakers, local community members, alumni and donors.

5. Leadership, Governance and Culture

Collaborative leadership and shared priorities

Goals: Assemble an interdisciplinary leadership team, to develop shared priorities and strategy. Report annual accomplishments and review community input to inform decisions.

Join the Community

We welcome your engagement, questions and partnership as we put this strategic plan into action to serve and grow the biodiversity community.

Learn more about the full strategic plan and how you can get involved.
txsci.net/bio-strat-plan

Questions? Contact Us.

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Thank You

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