



Wisconsin Citizen-based Monitoring Network Newsletter

Spring 2017

Spring CBM Projects

Spring is peak time for citizen-based monitoring projects in Wisconsin. The majority of our statewide projects begin in April, with others kicking off in March and May. Below, we highlight a handful of the projects that are starting up again. You can find a complete list of statewide projects [here](#), or check our [Monitoring Directory](#) to see local and statewide opportunities.

- **Wisconsin Frog and Toad Survey**

Volunteers are needed to maintain and expand the [Wisconsin Frog and Toad Survey](#) (WFTS), which is one of the longest running amphibian monitoring projects in the world! There are two ways to help. Throughout spring and summer, volunteers can conduct acoustic surveys of frogs and toads along predetermined driving routes. Or, volunteers can participate in phenology surveys by choosing a single location and monitoring it for frog and toad calls 1-2 times per week during the spring and summer. WFTS needs new volunteers to conduct road surveys in 26 counties; you can view a map of the routes

[here](#). Phenology survey volunteers are needed in all parts of the state.

- **Monarch Larva Monitoring Project**

The monarch population has declined dramatically over the last decade, making it crucial that we keep a close eye on the species. Volunteers with the [Monarch Larva Monitoring Project](#) monitor patches of milkweed for the presence of monarch eggs, larvae (caterpillars), and pupae. Volunteers for this project are needed throughout the entire state.

- **Water Action Volunteers**

If you're passionate about Wisconsin's streams and rivers, this is the project for you! [Water Action Volunteers](#) monitor the quality of streams and rivers by collecting data on things like water clarity, dissolved oxygen, water temperature, and more. There are trainings scheduled throughout the spring; see the list [here](#).



Pickerel frog (*Lithobates palustris*). Photo: Dan Nedrelo

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Partner Updates

- ### Snapshot Wisconsin Expands to Marinette, Oneida and St Croix Counties

Snapshot Wisconsin uses a network of trail cameras, hosted by volunteers, to monitor wildlife throughout the state. The program is now looking for trail camera hosts in Marinette, Oneida, and St Croix counties! This brings the total area for open enrollment to 12 counties; previously open counties include Dodge, Iowa, Iron, Jackson, Manitowoc, Racine, Sawyer, Vernon, and Waupaca counties. Volunteers with access to at least 10 acres of private land can apply at www.SnapshotWISignup.org. Training and equipment is provided and no previous experience is required.

- ### Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas Kickoff Events

This year marks the mid-point of the Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas II, an effort to document the distribution and abundance of all the bird species breeding in Wisconsin. Help the Atlas get 2017 off to a dynamic start by joining one (or more!) of the FREE [Atlas Regional Kickoff workshops](#). These events are for everyone, whether you're a newer member of the Atlas team, a seasoned veteran, or just want to learn more about how to participate.

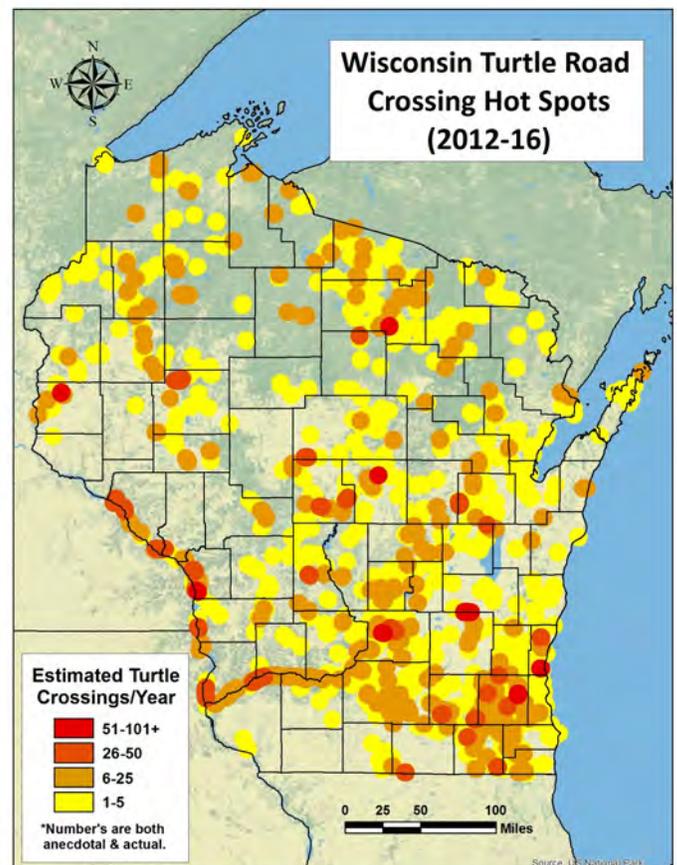
- ### Wisconsin Turtle Conservation Program Volunteers Needed

The [Wisconsin Turtle Conservation Program](#) began in 2012 with the help of Wisconsin Citizen-based Monitoring Partnership Program funding. The program's goals are to incorporate citizens in the inventory and monitoring of Wisconsin's 11 species of turtles. In addition, citizens can report dangerous road crossings that pose serious threats to turtles throughout the entire state. The program is also designed to educate and engage Wisconsin residents in the conservation of our state's turtles. When volunteers submit

data, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources staff (i.e., biologists, environmental review specialists, and property managers) can more effectively and efficiently utilize reports to lessen road mortality, increase rare species numbers, and keep common species common.

Since 2012, the Wisconsin Turtle Conservation Program has catalogued over 2,177 individual reports from 1,036 volunteers. Of these reports, volunteers have helped DNR staff document 33 new populations of rare turtles and 1,021 road crossing areas! The map below shows locations where volunteers have reported turtle road crossings.

Check out the Wisconsin Turtle Conservation Program today and see how easy it is to get involved! Submit your turtle reports this upcoming spring and summer [here](#).



Network Updates

- **Partnership Program Funding Available**

The Partnership Program is a joint effort by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the WCBM Network to fund citizen-based monitoring efforts throughout the state. Since 2004, more than 1.1 million dollars has been shared by 241 projects working to better understand our animals, plants, and habitats. Applications being accepted now through April 6; projects can request up to \$5000. View the Request for Proposals [here](#).



In 2015, Partnership Program funds supported wetland monitoring in Milwaukee County Parks. Photo: Milwaukee County Parks

- **WCBM Network at the Citizen Science Association Conference**

Citizen science volunteers, project leaders, researchers, and educators will be flocking to Saint Paul, MN May 17-20 to attend the Citizen Science Association Conference; many attendees will be from Wisconsin. You can register for the conference [here](#). The Network is planning to schedule a get-together during the conference for all Wisconsin attendees. If you will be at the conference and would like a chance to network and catch up with other members of the WCBM community, contact WCBM Coordinator Eva Lewandowski.

- **Citizen Science Day**

The 2nd Annual Citizen Science Day will be celebrated throughout the nation from April 14th to May 20th. We encourage the WCBM community to join in the celebration of citizen science by hosting and promoting events, recognizing outstanding volunteers, and publicizing projects. You can find logos, press releases, and other **resources on the Citizen Science Association's** website. All events on the WCBM Event Calendar will be added to the national Citizen Science Day calendar, which has the potential to reach many new Wisconsin volunteers. If you have questions about how to best plan or promote your Citizen Science Day event, contact WCBM coordinator Eva Lewandowski.



Network Updates, Continued

• Monitoring Safety Tips

Spring in Wisconsin ushers in a resurgence of citizen-based monitoring, with many volunteers returning to the field to collect information on our plants, animals, and waters. Volunteers often focus on collecting high quality data and enjoying the outdoors, but we want to remind citizen-based monitoring volunteers to think of safety first. Here are a few simple tips that you should keep in mind to stay safe while monitoring:

- ◆ Monitor in pairs or in a group whenever possible.
- ◆ Tell someone where you are going and when you will return.
- ◆ Dress appropriately to avoid sunburn, heat stroke, bug bites, and cuts and scratches.
- ◆ Bring a cellphone, food, water, and a first aid kit with you.
- ◆ Avoid monitoring in severe weather.
- ◆ If your monitoring site looks unsafe for any reason, **don't put yourself at risk.**
- ◆ Be cyber safe. Think twice before publically sharing personal information (like your full name, photos of you, or specific times that you plan to monitor) on sites like eBird or iNaturalist.

• Stop the Spread of Invasives- Take Precautions When Monitoring

In addition to our wonderful native plants and animals, Wisconsin is also home to a number of invasive species. These invasives can have serious ecological impacts, so it is imperative that we all take precautions to prevent introducing them to new areas. When we go on a bird hike, visit a stream to collect water samples, or engage in any other form of citizen-based monitoring, there is the possibility that we will encounter an invasive species. Many of these species stick to shoes, clothing, and gear.

To ensure that you aren't spreading invasives when you monitor, take these simple precautions. Use a brush to remove all plants, animals, and dirt from your shoes, clothing, vehicle, and monitoring gear. For aquatic monitoring, drain all water from your boat and equipment; water should never be transported between waterbodies. Watch this short Water Action Volunteers [video](#) on the best ways to disinfect equipment.



Monitoring in a group at Zeloski Marsh. Photo: Rock River Coalition



Invasive Autumn olive (*Elaeagnus umbellata*). Photo: Eva Lewandowski