



WISCONSIN CITIZEN-BASED MONITORING NETWORK NEWSLETTER



Spring 2021

Upcoming Events

- **CitSciVirtual: Local, Global, Connected**

The Citizen Science Association is hosting an online, interactive conference this spring. CitSciVirtual events throughout May will engage practitioners and researchers in the field of citizen science (educators, community leaders, scientists, students, technologists, data managers and more) in sharing the ideas and innovations that make work in this field thrive. This international conference will include both real-time and on-your-own-time opportunities to make connections and learn new things. Live events will include keynote presentations, discussion sessions and networking events. The conference is an excellent opportunity to attend an international conference without the need to travel.

Reduced registrations costs are available for students, retirees, volunteers and community environmental justice leaders; early registration rates are available through April 25. Learn more about the agenda and how to register on the [conference website](#).

CitSciVirtual



LOCAL, GLOBAL, CONNECTED

- **Citizen Science Month**

As citizen science continues to grow, so too does the celebration devoted to it. What started as Citizen Science Day has become [Citizen Science Month](#), to be held throughout April. This annual event celebrates and promotes all things citizen science: Amazing discoveries, incredible volunteers, hardworking practitioners, inspiring projects and anything else citizen science-related! Project leaders, teachers, nature center staff and other practitioners are encouraged to host webinars, online book discussions, backyard bioblitzes and more. Everyone can get involved by participating in an event or contributing to their favorite spring project.

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Upcoming Events continued

- **Great Wisconsin Birdathon**

The Natural Resources Foundation's Great Wisconsin Birdathon engages bird enthusiasts from across the state to play an important role in conserving Wisconsin's birds. Each spring birders form teams to find as many unique bird species as possible within 24 hours, while raising important funds for conservation. To expand their impact, birders are also strongly encouraged to submit their findings from the Birdathon to eBird.

Birdathon teams can participate any day from April 15th to June 15th, and all skill levels are welcome to join! Teams can bird anywhere – a backyard, local park, or a route to hit all their favorite birding hot spots. Teams who cannot

be physically together are welcome to participate as a team of solo birders (or families, pods of birders). As COVID-19 remains a dynamic situation, teams are encouraged to bird mindfully and adhere to public health guidelines.

With the incredible support from Wisconsin's birding community, the Great Wisconsin Birdathon has raised over half a million dollars since 2012 and has engaged thousands of individuals in bird conservation. Are you interested in participating in this year's Birdathon? Learn more, register your team, or support the cause at www.WIBirdathon.org.

Research Roundup

- **Invasive Jumping Worms**

[New research](#) provides information on the distribution and habitats of three species of invasive jumping worms, a type of earthworm found in Wisconsin and known to impact urban landscapes. 40 volunteers partnered with local biologists to sample sites across Madison for the worms. The worms were more common in forests and gardens than in lawns and open spaces, and they were not found in grasslands during the study. Jumping worms were more often found alone than at the same site as the long-established European earthworms familiar to us all (Wisconsin does not have native earthworms).

- **Monarch Research Review**

The Monarch Joint Venture has compiled a summary of 67 monarch biology and

conservation research studies published June 2019-August 2020. The review includes studies on the efficacy of monarch citizen science, as well as research based on data collected by citizen science volunteers. The full document is available [online](#).



Observations Needed

- **Report Road Crossings and Mortalities**

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) collects reports of road crossings and road mortalities for frogs, salamanders, snakes and lizards. If you see one of these animals crossing the road, successfully or not, please report the sighting with the [online reporting form](#). The information will be used to identify areas where mitigation efforts are needed to reduce mortality and better understand the ranges of Wisconsin's species. Please exercise caution when observing or photographing wildlife on roads; only do so if you can safely park your vehicle, slow down, and leave your car. The form to submit a road crossing or mortality sighting is available [here](#). Note that turtle crossings can continue to be reported to the [Wisconsin Turtle Conservation Program](#).

- **Share Rare Mammal Sightings**

DNR biologists seek the public's help in spotting two rare mammals, the eastern spotted skunk and the white-tailed jackrabbit. The eastern spotted skunk has not been confirmed in Wisconsin in over a decade; it is considerably smaller and has a more complex black and white color pattern than the common striped skunk familiar to most Wisconsinites. The white-tailed jackrabbit inhabits Canada and the western United States; Wisconsin is on the edge of its range and their abundance and distribution in the state are unknown. They are large (2ft in length), with extremely long black-tipped ears and a white tail. Both species prefer prairie and grassland habitats. To learn more about them and how to report a sighting, visit the DNR's [rare mammal webpage](#).

- **Tracking the Monarch Migration**

Journey North, a citizen-based monitoring project coordinated at the UW-Madison Arboretum, monarchs' migration across North America each spring. You can report your first monarch sighting of the season, first milkweed spotted and other information to the project. Monarchs usually arrive in Wisconsin in May, but some locations might not have a sighting until June. View maps of current and previous migrations, look at sightings, and report your monarch observation on the [Journey North website](#).



Eastern spotted skunk; photo: USWFS



White-tailed jackrabbit; photo: USWFS

Have an update or announcement you'd like to share in our newsletter? Email eva.lewandowski@wisconsin.gov.