



Wisconsin Citizen-based Monitoring Network Newsletter

Winter 2016

Winter CBM Projects

Winter certainly isn't peak time for citizen-based monitoring in Wisconsin, but there are still plenty of opportunities to participate in projects throughout the state. Just be sure to bundle up if you head outside for any of these volunteer opportunities:

- **Volunteer Carnivore Tracking**- If you live in central or northern Wisconsin, you can help the Wisconsin DNR estimate the distribution and **abundance of our state's wolves, foxes, fishers,** and other carnivores by surveying for their tracks. All volunteers must complete training before they begin track surveys. Find out more [here](#).
- **Winter Birding**- Birding is popular year-round, but there are a number of bird monitoring opportunities that only happen in the winter. [Christmas Bird Counts](#), one of the longest running citizen-based monitoring projects in the country, are held December 14th through January 5th. If you want to confirm great horned owls breeding for the [Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas](#), look for them in late January through February. [The Great Backyard Bird Count](#) tallies worldwide bird abundance from February 17th to 20th. [Project FeederWatch](#) allows you to observe feeder birds from the comfort of your own home during the entire winter.
- **Snapshot Wisconsin**- This [Wisconsin DNR project](#) uses trail cameras to monitor wildlife. Volunteers from Dodge, Racine, Vernon, Iowa, Iron, Jackson, Manitowoc, Sawyer and Waupaca counties with access to at least 10 acres of private land can enroll now to host a trail camera. Educators and tribal members on tribal land may apply from anywhere in the state. Future counties will be opening in 2017 and **beyond. Everyone can identify the project's** wildlife photos online. Visit the [signup page](#) to apply for a trail camera today or help classify wildlife photos on [Zooniverse!](#)



Wolf caught by trail camera. Photo: Snapshot Wisconsin



White-throated sparrow. Photo: USFWS

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Partner Updates

- **Jack Talin Named 2016 Central Wisconsin Trout Unlimited Riverkeeper of the Year**

Jack Talin has been named 2016 Riverkeeper of the Year for his outstanding efforts and contributions to the continued pursuit of healthy Central Sands Region streams for Central Wisconsin Trout Unlimited Riverkeepers. Jack is the team leader that performs water monitoring of Wedde Creek, Mekan River, and just this May, he started monitoring the South Branch of the Wedde at the request of the DNR. In addition to Water Action Volunteers Level 2 monitoring, Jack also monitored total phosphorus by taking samples at Murray Creek, Radley Creek, and added sampling of the Mekan River on Hwy 21 after some concern was reported about possible abnormal algae growth at the Mekan Springs. There seems to be no 'No' in Jack's vocabulary when it comes to protecting our waters.



Jack Talin (right) receives award from Bob Jozwowski.
Photo: Central Wisconsin Trout Unlimited

- **Trail Cameras Added to Lending Library**

The Wisconsin DNR's [CBM Lending Library](#) now includes trail cameras! Several dozen Bushnell Trophy Cams were generously provided by the Snapshot Wisconsin Team. As with all equipment in the library, they can be borrowed for use in citizen-based monitoring efforts in Wisconsin on a first come, first serve basis. Learn more about the DNR's CBM Lending Library and the WCBM Network's other equipment lending opportunities [here](#).

- **WATERshed Program Introduces Students to Water Monitoring**

Racine is a diverse, urban community located on the beautiful shores of Lake Michigan in southeastern Wisconsin. Partially funded by the **WCBM Network's Partnership Program**, the **WATERshed program** introduces Racine's 4th grade students to how their daily activities affect the Root-Pike watershed and Lake Michigan. Many Racine students are missing out on a meaningful watershed experiences at home and at school. Before participating in the WATERshed program, many students have never seen or visited the Great Lakes. Even though Lake Michigan provides drinking water to all Racine residents, students have limited or no opportunity to learn about this precious resource during the school year.

This September and October, 1,500 Racine Unified 4th grade students visited the Root River Environmental Education Center to study the Root River. During their visit, students studied water quality testing, river geology, biotic index, and connections to the Great Lakes. The data **they collected contributes to the DNR's** information on water quality, and the program builds ecological awareness and explores human relationships to the Root-Pike watershed and Lake Michigan. Participating in this program motivates students to make personal decisions that will have a positive impact within their own watershed.



Racine students participate in WATERshed program. Photo: City of Racine

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- **Wisconsin Lakes Partnership Convention**

The 2017 Wisconsin Lakes Partnership Convention will be held April 5-7 in Stevens Point. It will be a great opportunity to learn about aquatic invasive species, citizen-based monitoring opportunities, water research, and more. Projects like the Citizen Lake Monitoring Network and Water Action Volunteers will be highlighted in talks, posters, and hands-on workshops. The call for participants in the poster session is now open. Find out more about the convention [here](#).

- **Wisconsin Rare Plant Monitoring Program**

The [Rare Plant Monitoring Program](#) started in 2013 and has trained over 140 volunteers to search for the most uncommon members of our native flora across the state. In 2016, 63 monitors were trained in data collection methods, map and compass reading, and other skills necessary to relocate rare plants. Using data collection forms or [iNaturalist](#), these citizen scientists submitted over 40 rare plant reports this year, including 6 of previously unknown populations. Monitors also provided great **updates on rare plant populations that hadn't been seen in more than 45 years!**

Network Updates

- **Directory Updates**

We make regular updates to the [WCBM Network Directory](#) (Who's Who of Citizen-based Monitoring in Wisconsin). Projects, organizations, and groups that participate in citizen-based monitoring of **Wisconsin's natural resources can be listed in the Directory**. If you would like to add or update a Directory listing, follow the instructions on the bottom of the [Directory webpage](#).

- **CBM Event Calendar**

The WCBM Network now has an [event calendar](#), which is a great place to find citizen-based monitoring volunteer opportunities, talks,

conferences, and workshops. Check it out to find an event near you. If you have an event related to citizen-based monitoring that you'd like listed on the calendar, contact us with the event name, date, sponsoring organization, location, a very short (250 characters or less) summary, and a URL for more information.

- **Advisory Council**

We're pleased to announce that we have new members of the WCBM Network Advisory Council. The council provides guidance and advice on the **needs of the state's CBM community**. Our current council members are:

- Matt Berg, Grantsburg High School, Burnett County
- Ben Johnston, Kickapoo Valley Reserve, Vernon County
- Anne Kretschmann, North Lakeland Discovery Center, Vilas County
- Nancy Turyk, Center for Watershed Science and Education, Portage County
- Tim Vargo, Urban Ecology Center, Milwaukee County



Pitcher's Thistle (*Cirsium pitcheri*), a state and federally threatened plant. Photo: Kitty Kohout