



# Wisconsin Citizen-based Monitoring Network Newsletter

Winter 2018

## WCBM Network Updates

- **WCBM at 15—Share Your Milestones**  
The Wisconsin Citizen-based Monitoring Network turns 15 next year, and throughout 2019 we will be celebrating our state's tradition of volunteers partnering with professionals to study our natural resources. We'll be commemorating important milestones online and at events throughout the state. We'd love to hear about important moments in citizen-based monitoring from your community, project, or organization. Whether it's a project's noteworthy research finding, a school group participating in monitoring for the first time, the creation of a new monitoring project, or some other important point in your history, we want to know about it. Help us celebrate your great achievements by sharing your story with us [here](#) and posting on social media with the hashtag #WCBMat15.
- **New Funding Information Available**  
The WCBM Network is pleased to share a [recording](#) and [slides](#) from a recent presentation on citizen-based monitoring funding by CBM Coordinator Eva Lewandowski and Natural Resources Foundation's Cait Williamson. Additional funding information is available on the [Resources tab](#) of the Network's website.



DNR's Volunteer Carnivore Tracking Program is a popular winter project in central and northern Wisconsin.



Many birders delight in finding a bald eagle framed against a snowy backdrop during Wisconsin's winters.

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WCBM Network

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## Network Updates

- ### Waukesha County Parks Launches New Citizen Science Program

*By Julia Robson, Waukesha County Parks & Land Use*

From sunny, rolling prairies speckled with ancient oak trees to lush, green forests carpeted with ephemeral wetlands teeming with life, Waukesha County is a unique place to experience some of the most ecologically diverse natural areas remaining in southeastern Wisconsin today. The Waukesha County Park System alone contains over 9,000 acres of public land, 35 miles of trails, eight lakes, and is home to the renowned Retzer Nature Center. Effectively protecting and managing the diverse and unique natural resources in Waukesha County is of paramount importance in preserving the ecological integrity and function of these green spaces for the enjoyment of generations to come.

Want to get involved in helping to promote environmental stewardship, conduct research, and create healthier natural areas throughout Waukesha County? Then join Waukesha County Parks and Retzer Nature Center for the launch of our first-ever county-wide Citizen Science Program! We are looking for volunteers to help gather data on plant and wildlife species within the Park System to assist in making sure that common species remain common and that rare, threatened, and endangered species are protected. This data will also help our staff plan and prioritize their land management and habitat restoration efforts. Citizen Scientists will be trained to help monitor wetlands, birds, small mammals, amphibians, reptiles, butterflies, and much more! For more details on projects to get involved in as well as training dates, visit our [website](#).



A girl scout joins Waukesha County's Julia Robson in citizen science work.

- ### October Big Day a Big Success!

October 6<sup>th</sup> was the first October Big Day, a global day to count and observe as many birds as possible. The event was a roaring success across the globe and locally. Worldwide, over 18,000 people participated, and 6,286 bird species were observed. Here in Wisconsin, birders saw or heard 181 species, including Baird's Sandpiper, belted kingfisher, horned lark, and cedar waxwing. Read more about the results on the [eBird event page](#).

### CoCoRaHS Tips for Measuring Snow

- Looking for a fun project to join this winter? The Community Collaborative Rain, Hail & Snow Network offers guidance for those hardy citizen scientists who want to measure snowfall this winter. Learn how to measure snowfall with a ruler, a snowboard, or a rain gauge, and how to estimate the liquid equivalent of each snowfall. Once you've mastered measuring snowfall, be sure to submit your data to CoCoRaHS for use in science, land management, and education. Check out the snowfall measurement tips [here](#).

## Network Updates, continued

### • Optimizing Citizen Science at the Landscape Level – The Northern Highlands Project

*By Michael W. Meyer and Kathy Holperin, Ad Hoc Committee, Northern Highland Citizen Science Community*

In the Fall of 2017 and Spring of 2018 NOVA Ecological Services conducted, and WCBM Network sponsored and facilitated workshops at Moon Beach Camp in St. Germain, WI bringing together a gathering of citizen scientists working in the Northern Highlands Ecological Landscape (NHEL) and the immediate surrounding area. The goal was to develop a long-term sustaining Northern Highlands Citizen Science Community (NHCSC) by 1) providing information on various monitoring opportunities in the region and 2) developing peer-to-peer relationships by sharing experiences and developing objectives for NHCSC.

Ninety project leaders and citizen scientists attended the first workshop with the project leaders presenting information in hopes of getting current citizen scientists informed of other options in the NHEL.

The Spring workshop succeeded in building off the first workshop by providing a platform for project leaders and citizen scientists to share ideas and suggestions. An objective of this workshop was to explore the benefits of sustaining a community of Northern Highland Citizen Scientists. The attendees were divided into four facilitated discussion groups were questions such as the following were asked:

- What motivated you to become involved in

Citizen Science projects?

- Do you feel there could be benefits to you in developing this community and if so, what would they be?
- How could a Northern Highland Citizen Science Community be organized and structured?

A summary of the work group discussions was presented at the end of the meeting listing: Potential Benefits, Potential Products, Organization and Structure, Potential Funding Sources, Long-term Objectives, and Potential Partners.

At the end of the meeting 12 volunteers formed an Ad Hoc Committee to guide the group towards development of the NHCSC with the objectives of adopting a group name and to create a Vision Statement and develop three action items designed to move the group towards a sustainable, stand-alone citizen science community. The committee has since voted to retain the name **Northern Highland Citizen Science Community** and created the following vision statement:

*“The vision of the Northern Highland Citizen Science Community is to encourage and support community involvement in citizen science in the Northern Highland region heading to better understanding and stewardship of our natural resources.”*

You can read a more detailed account of the creation and coordination of the Northern Highlands Citizen Science Community on the [WCBM Network website](#).



A fisher photographed at night by a Snapshot Wisconsin trail camera

The Wisconsin Citizen-based Monitoring Network is a collaboration of individuals and organizations that works to improve the effectiveness of natural resource monitoring efforts through communications, resources, and recognition.