



Wisconsin Citizen-based Monitoring Network Newsletter

Summer 2018

New CBM Projects Abound!

Wisconsin is already at the forefront of citizen science, with volunteers participating in projects that monitor everything from stream quality to invasive plants to nesting American kestrels. This summer, members of the Wisconsin citizen-based community are volunteering their time with a variety of new projects.

- **Wisconsin Bumble Bee Brigade**

The DNR's newest citizen-based monitoring project, the Bumble Bee Brigade is a photography-based monitoring project designed to improve our understanding, management, and conservation activities related to Wisconsin bumble bees. Volunteers can help by submitting photos from incidental observations or by conducting small area surveys of bumble bees. To access bumble bee identification resources, download a volunteer manual and field guide, or sign up for a training, visit the [project website](#).



Yellow bumble bee (*Bombus fervidus*). Photo: Jay Watson

- **Karner Blue Butterfly Monitoring**

Wisconsin has the world's largest population of the endangered Karner blue butterfly, and you can help protect these beautiful pollinators! Sign up to join the Karner blue butterfly citizen-based monitoring program. Volunteers will receive training on the butterfly's life cycle, habitat, and identification and will learn how to easily collect and submit important information that will help recovery efforts. Find out how you can get involved [here](#).

- **Mink Frog Surveys**

Volunteers with the Wisconsin Frog and Toad Survey are doing something new this year. In addition to nighttime acoustic surveys for all 12 of our frog and toad species, some volunteers in northern Wisconsin are conducting both daytime and evening surveys specifically for mink frogs. The surveys will collect information on the distribution of mink frogs, a species of special concern that calls during the day and night. Learn more about the Wisconsin Frog and Toad Survey on their [website](#).

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Successful CBM Conference

More than 200 people gathered in Eau Claire, March 22-24, for the 8th conference of the Wisconsin Citizen-based Monitoring Network. Called the Wisconsin Summit for Natural Resources Volunteers, the event was the first joint conference between the Network and the Wisconsin Master Naturalist Program. The Summit was widely considered a rousing success; according to a post-event evaluation, 98% of participants thought the Summit was a valuable use of their time, and 95% thought it covered the topics that interested them.

The Summit featured 17 different workshops and trainings, such as a Wisconsin Rare Plant Monitoring Program training, a bird banding activity, and a workshop on addressing controversial issues in environmental education. 40

different 20 minute talks gave attendees a chance to learn about a wide variety of topics in a short amount of time, and Keynote Speaker Julia Robson's talk about her own conservation journey was inspiring and thought-provoking.

The awards banquet and silent auction with items donated from over 40 businesses, organizations, and individuals was fun for everyone involved. Attendees also had time to network and connect during the poster session and volunteer fair.

Even the flu couldn't put a dent in the event. Multiple conference goers stepped up to fill last minute and even next-day presentation slots when scheduled presenters had to cancel due to illness. We're grateful to all sponsors, attendees, volunteers, and presenters for their contributions!



Attendees gained hands-on experience with bird banding at Beaver Creek Reserve. Photo: Ruth Forsgren

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

Wisconsin Citizen-based Monitoring Awards

Three individuals and one organization were recognized for their outstanding efforts in citizen-based monitoring at this spring's Wisconsin Summit for Natural Resources Volunteers. Since 2005, the Wisconsin Citizen-based Monitoring Awards have been awarded to individuals and groups making tremendous strides in Wisconsin citizen-based monitoring. The 2018 recipients are:

- **Barbara Duerksen, Outstanding Achievement in Citizen-based Monitoring**

Barbara Duerksen's award comes after 35 years volunteering with bird monitoring. She has served as Richland County's coordinator for the Annual Midwest Crane Count for 35 years, making her the longest serving county coordinator for that project. In addition to her volunteer work counting cranes, Barbara is the current Richland County coordinator for the Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas, a project designed to document the distribution and abundance of all the bird species that breed in the state. She also conducted bird surveys for the Breeding Bird Survey for 33 years and has served on the Board of the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology.



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Wisconsin Citizen-based Monitoring Awards

- **Jim Hess, Outstanding Achievement in Citizen-based Monitoring**

Jim Hess has been a committed citizen-based monitoring volunteer in Lafayette County for almost two decades. He began his volunteer experience in 2001, when he participated in the Christmas Bird Count, and since then he's joined multiple volunteer projects. Currently, he counts bats at their summer roost sites, monitors and manages both bluebird and kestrel nest boxes, and surveys for rare plants. Additionally, he collects and submits plant and insect specimens to research collections. Jim frequently shares his volunteer experiences with others and introduces them to citizen-based monitoring.



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Wisconsin Citizen-based Monitoring Awards

- **Ansel Brenneman, Outstanding Achievement in Youth Citizen-based Monitoring**

Ansel Brenneman, a student at Laurel High School in Viroqua, was honored for his work conducting and promoting bat monitoring. Ansel got involved in bat monitoring in 2016, as part of an 8th grade school project. Since then, he's volunteered to count bats at their roosts and to monitor them with acoustic detectors, and he assisted DNR staff in capturing and banding bats. He's become extremely active in promoting bat conservation and citizen-based monitoring, and he has volunteered at educational events and given talks to youth and adults, sometimes with crowds of more than 100 people.



Wisconsin Citizen-based Monitoring Awards

- **Clean Lakes Alliance, Citizen-based Monitoring Program of the Year**

[Clean Lakes Alliance](#), a nonprofit dedicated to improving and maintaining water quality in the Yahara River Watershed in Greater Madison, received an award for their Yahara Lakes Monitoring Program. Their program involves 70 volunteers throughout the Madison area who collect information on water temperature, chemistry, clarity, and other aspects of water quality. Most of their work takes place at nearshore monitoring sites, the parts of lakes most often used by the public for swimming, fishing, and paddling. Information gathered by the volunteers is made publicly available at lakeforecast.org.



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.