



Wisconsin Citizen-based Monitoring Network Newsletter

Fall 2020

Network Updates

- **CBM Observations at Heart of New Moose Study**

From 1991 to 2017, citizen scientists and other members of the public reported 762 verified moose sightings to the Wisconsin DNR. Researchers at UW-Madison analyzed these data in a new study; they found that moose occurrence in northern Wisconsin was greatest in areas closest to Michigan's Upper Peninsula, and to a lesser extent, Minnesota. Not surprisingly, moose occurrence also was more common in areas with better moose habitat, such as areas that contain mature forests, aquatic plants, and shrubs. You can read the [full article](#) online, and remember to report your own moose sightings to the DNR through the [large mammal observation form](#).



Bull moose (*Alces alces*); Photo: USFWS

- **New Water Monitoring Project in Upper Fox & Wolf River Basin**

The DNR has launched a new water monitoring [project](#) in the Upper Fox & Wolf River Basin, covering 18 counties. Volunteers will collect water samples from streams and send them to the State Lab of Hygiene for testing of phosphorous, nitrogen, and suspended solids. The goal is to track the water quality over time and contribute information that will help the streams meet water quality standards. For more information, contact Hannah Vorrie, Hannah.vorrie@wisconsin.gov.

- **New Citizen Science Book Has Wisconsin Connections**

[The Handbook of Citizen Science in Ecology and Conservation](#) is a new book with two Wisconsin editors and many Wisconsin authors. You won't want to miss this excellent resource if you're a citizen science practitioner.

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Wisconsin Citizen-based Monitoring Awards

We are pleased to announce the recipients of the 2020 Wisconsin Citizen-based Monitoring Awards. Since 2005, these awards have recognized individuals and groups making tremendous strides in Wisconsin citizen-based monitoring. The 2020 recipients are:

Waukesha County Conservation in the Parks, Citizen-based Monitoring Program of the Year

The Conservation in the Parks program engages Waukesha County volunteers to conduct citizen-based monitoring in their local parks, with the resultant data being used in land management decisions. In 2019, its first full year, the program had an astonishing 382 volunteers who collectively volunteered 2402 hours to monitoring! The public enthusiasm for the project was so high that the County Parks Department surpassed the number of volunteers they needed for their own properties and were able to assign some volunteers to monitor properties owned by partners like the Nature Conservancy. County staff and volunteers monitored wetlands, birds, bumble bees, snakes, dragonflies, and more. One of the most exciting findings was the presence of the federally endangered rusty patched bumble bee in three separate parks.



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.

Wisconsin Citizen-based Monitoring Awards

Ryan Chrouser, Outstanding Achievement in Citizen-based Monitoring

Ryan has made a profound impact on the monitoring of Wisconsin's dragonflies and damselflies. He currently serves as president of the Wisconsin Dragonfly Society (WDS) and is one of the most prolific contributors to the Wisconsin Odonata Survey (WOS). In 2019, Ryan submitted an astonishing 163 surveys for a total 1446 observations to WOS. Since 2002, he has submitted over 14,000 observations, which makes him one of the two most prolific and skilled contributors in the history of the program. He has a strong service ethic, often volunteering to do the hard work behind the scenes, and he loves to share his knowledge about dragonflies with others. He gives talks and leads field outings about dragonflies for the public to promote WDS and WOS, and to help people become more deeply engaged with nature. He has written or co-authored a number of articles for the newsletter of the WDS and has co-authored an article in the news journal of the Dragonfly Society of the Americas (Argia).



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Wisconsin Citizen-based Monitoring Awards

Heidi Conde, Outstanding Achievement in Citizen-based Monitoring

Nighttime projects often have a hard time finding volunteers, but Heidi Conde is stepping up to fill the need in the Eau Claire area! Heidi began her citizen-based monitoring adventure with owl surveys in 2005. Since then she has expanded her efforts to include nightjar surveys, mink frog surveys, the Wisconsin Frog and Toad Survey, and eBird. Over the years, she has participated in at least 106 wildlife surveys. Since 2010, Heidi has submitted 477 eBird checklists documenting under-surveyed night calling birds (e.g., ruffed grouse, snipe, killdeer, woodcocks, sedge wrens, marsh wrens, soras, Virginia rails, and catbirds). In the 2019 season alone, she completed 36 surveys (12 Wisconsin Frog and Toad surveys, 10 mink frog surveys, 9 owl surveys, and 5 nightjar surveys).



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Wisconsin Citizen-based Monitoring Awards

Licia Johnson, Outstanding Achievement in Citizen-based Monitoring

Licia is a familiar face to many in the Northwoods, as a longtime employee of the North Lakeland Discovery Center. Since 2010, Licia has coordinated the acoustic bat monitoring program at the Discovery Center. She works with around 40 bat monitoring volunteers each year, providing new and returning volunteers with training and coordinating the sharing of just two acoustic bat detectors between all participants. She answers calls late at night on her personal cellphone to assist volunteers having technical problems with the monitoring equipment. In 2019, the volunteers she supported successfully conducted 67 bat surveys. Licia further supports bat monitoring through her outreach efforts; she leads over 20 bat education programs for schools and community groups each year, reaching 500-700 people! While bats are often her primary focus, she also is involved in citizen-based monitoring of monarchs, birds, and amphibians.



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Wisconsin Citizen-based Monitoring Awards

Sue and Bob Volenec, Outstanding Achievement in Citizen-based Monitoring

Since moving to Lake Mills a few years ago, Sue and Bob have become pillars in their local citizen-based monitoring community. They monitor water quality at two streams in Jefferson County through the Water Action Volunteers, and they are happy to cover for other stream monitoring volunteers when needed. They encourage others to become stream monitors by volunteering at public events and visiting local schools to teach children about the importance of streams. Their love of water had a major role in how they participated in the recent Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas. While most atlasers searched for birds on foot or in cars, Bob and Sue paired up with fellow bird enthusiast Karen Etter Hale to atlas in a canoe, allowing them to observe birds in otherwise inaccessible sites. Their other birding contributions include the Annual Midwest Crane Count, kestrel nest box monitoring, the Christmas Bird Count, and the Swift Night Out. Sue and Bob are also active in the Zeloski Marsh frog monitoring team, bat monitoring, and the statewide AIS Snapshot Day.



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Wisconsin Citizen-based Monitoring Awards

Mike Reese, David N. Redell Award for Lifetime Achievement in Citizen-based Monitoring

Mike is the first person ever to receive two individual Wisconsin Citizen-based Monitoring Awards; he was the recipient of an Outstanding Achievement Award in 2008 and since then has continued to dedicate himself tirelessly to citizen-based monitoring, resulting in his selection for the Lifetime Achievement Award this year. Mike's commitment to butterfly monitoring is incomparable here in Wisconsin. With the help of his son, Mike created the Wisconsin Butterflies website over 15 years ago; the site provides a detailed guide to each of the state's butterflies and serves as a centralized location for butterfly observers to report their observations. Mike created the extensive content for the species profiles. He vets each observation that is submitted and communicates with participants regularly about their observations. For the last 15 years he has also been heavily involved in the North American Butterfly Association by leading counts in Wisconsin, compiling the data from all the counts in the state, vetting data coming in from across the Midwest, and contributing to the organization's quarterly magazine.

In addition to his work with butterflies, Mike played a crucial role in the recent Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas II, which ran from 2015 to 2019. He served as director of volunteers and partnered with Bill Mueller to crisscross the state recruiting and training volunteers. Mike was also the county coordinator for four different counties, traveling far from his home and even camping overnight to collect important data on breeding birds. His years of effort were essential to the success of the Atlas.

On top of that, Mike has also been involved with other projects throughout the state. He observes bumble bees, tiger beetles, and robber flies, and he provided the photographs for the recently updated field guide *Damselflies of Minnesota, Wisconsin & Michigan*, a book used by many volunteers with the Wisconsin Odonata Survey.



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