

Citizen Science Project Opportunities 2010

An easy way to help out conservation organizations and the protection and study of rare and endangered species is with Citizen Science Projects. Many are as simple as “when you see something rare, report it!” Others ask for monitoring when flowers bloom or birds arrive. These take very little to no extra time other than knowing what to look for. Some of the opportunities to participate in these projects are listed below:



CLIMATE CHANGE

A very important issue to us all these days is Climate Change. Two very important citizen science projects have been set up to give you the opportunity to help the science world study the effects of this large stressor on our environments and species.

The first is BUDBURST. Budburst gives you the chance to monitor the dates that plants and trees bud or bloom in the spring and enter your data online. To sign up and help out, register at: www.budburst.org

The second project is with Cornell Lab of Ornithology's NESTWATCH. Anyone can monitor nests - it's a rewarding way to spend time outdoors and participate in science, and enjoy watching baby and adult birds at the same time. To check out the project go to: www.nestwatch.org Also check out other Citizen Science projects at Cornell at www.birds.cornell.edu/CitSci

Linking Landscapes for Massachusetts Wildlife

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation, the Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program, and the Vernal Pool Association have launched a long-term and multifaceted effort to minimize the impact of the existing road network on rare and nongame wildlife, while improving highway safety. The effort is specifically looking at three main impacts: 1 – general wildlife roadkills, 2 – vernal pool salamander migration, and 3 – turtle crossing hotspots. To sign up, or for more information, go to www.linkinglandscapes.info/roads/home.html

Cornell Lab of Ornithology's eBird – Urgent tracking of Rusty Blackbirds

eBird is a great website to enter any or all of your bird sightings into Cornell Lab of Ornithology's database for population studies and trends. It's a great and easy tool. One species of special note they are tracking is the RUSTY BLACKBIRD. Their numbers have plummeted by as much as 85-98% over the past decades. If you see one... log on to www.ebird.com and report your sighting!



Mass Audubon Owl Reporter & Breeding Bird Atlas II

Do you have owls in your neighborhood? Have you heard or seen an owl? If so – you can report it to Mass Audubon on their Owl Reporter page at: www.massaudubon.org/owls

Are you an avid birder? Help out with a large effort across the state to survey our Massachusetts breeding birds! www.massaudubon.org/birdatlas

Firefly Project – Museum of Science, Boston

Boston's Museum of Science, along with Tufts Univ. & Fitchburg State College are studying the status of fireflies in MA. Firefly sightings can be reported on the website: www.mos.org/fireflywatch/home

Pollinator LIVE: a distance learning adventure

Join the USDA Forest Service and others for a series of live interactive webcasts, seminars and field trips about pollinators and conservation. <http://pollinatorlive.pwnet.org>



Concord Christmas Count

Help count Massachusetts' local birds – either as part of a field team or by watching your feeder from your window. If you are interested in helping, contact Hank Norwood at hankn583@aol.com, and for more info., check out www.audubon.org/bird/cbc

Rare Species Reporting

Anytime you are on refuge land and come across a rare species, give us a call or drop us a note here at the refuge so we can add it to our records and report it accordingly to any other agency. You can call the refuge Biological Staff at 978-443-4661 x 23, 37 or 24 or email in a report to Jason at Jason_stsauver@fws.gov. Here is a short list of some of the species to watch for:

Blanding's Turtle
Spotted Turtle
Sora

Blue-spotted Salamander
American Bittern
Eastern Hog-nosed Snake

Musk Turtle
Least Bittern
King Rail

Common Moorhen
Sedge Wren
Eastern Ribbon Snake

Pied-billed Grebe
Marsh Wren