

Citizen Science Project Opportunities 2012

An easy way to help conservation organizations is with Citizen Science Projects. Many are as simple as “when you see something rare, report it!” Others ask for monitoring of blooming flowers, nesting birds, or road-killed animals. The important projects detailed below need your help!

Linking Landscapes for Massachusetts Wildlife

www.linkinglandscapes.info/roads/home.html

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.



National Phenology Network

<http://www.usanpn.org/>

The USA National Phenology Network brings together citizen scientists, government agencies, non-profit groups, educators and students of all ages to monitor the impacts of climate change on plants and animals in the United States. The network harnesses the power of people and the Internet to collect and share information, providing researchers with far more data than they could collect alone. This is a great way to monitor how climate change may be impacting the natural cycle of the seasons.



Cornell University

www.birds.cornell.edu/CitSci

If you are interested in habitat requirements of forest birds, want to track color variation of pigeons, or have feeders or nesting birds you love to watch, check out the numerous citizen science opportunities at Cornell.

Firefly Project – Museum of Science, Boston

www.mos.org/fireflywatch/home

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.



Flip Me Over, Please!



Concord Christmas Count

www.audubon.org/bird/cbc

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 with this important effort in December and January, contact Stephanie Koch at stephanie_koch@fws.gov.

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 24 or 37, or email in a report to Stephanie at stephanie_koch@fws.gov. Here is a short list of some of the species to watch for:

Blanding's Turtle

Blue-spotted Salamander

Musk Turtle

Common Moorhen

Pied-billed Grebe

Spotted Turtle

American Bittern

Least Bittern

Sedge Wren

Marsh Wren

Sora

Eastern Hog-nosed Snake

King Rail

Eastern Ribbon Snake

Nighthawk Surveys, SuAsCo and Nashua Rivers

<http://www.borobirding.net/>

If you are interested in getting out and enjoying late summer evenings by the river, check out the nighthawk website and consider signing up as a volunteer nighthawk counter! The purpose of the survey is to collect key statistics on the continuing dramatic decline in Common Nighthawk migrants that began in the Boston and SuAsCo valley areas more than 100 years ago and has now spread across all of central and northern MA, north to northern Canada

