

NATURALIST NEWS

THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE UNIT 27
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS EXTENSION MASTER NATURALISTS

SUMMER 2020 - ISSUE 4

COVID-19 UPDATE

After consideration and approval by Extension administration, on July 6, Illinois Extension Master Naturalists will have the option to start volunteering at their local volunteer project sites, with the requirement that no more than 10 people be present and established safety guidelines are followed.

Before returning to volunteering, you must confirm with your Master Naturalist Coordinator, Erin Garrett, that the activities you plan to participate in have been approved. Be prepared to give details about location, time, and contacts. Pre-approval is required.

Please note that all Extension sponsored events and public programs continue to be postponed or hosted virtually until July 31. Master Naturalist volunteers have received special permission to return to volunteering and it applies only to working solo or in very small groups with fellow volunteers at approved sites. Volunteering with the general public and any other audience is not permitted at this time.

REMEMBER, because of limited volunteer opportunities available, the 30-hour volunteer requirement to maintain your active status for 2020 has been waived.

This is an evolving situation, so these guidelines are subject to change, based on guidance from the University of Illinois and guidelines provided by the Centers for Disease Control. We appreciate the commitment of our volunteers to these volunteer programs, as well as your patience and commitment to safety as we navigate these times.

Updates will be emailed as they become available.



**Illinois
Master
Naturalist**

ILLINOIS EXTENSION
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL, CONSUMER
& ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

University of Illinois | U.S.
Department of Agriculture | Local
Extension Councils Cooperating

University of Illinois Extension provides equal opportunity in programs and employment. If you need a reasonable accommodation to participate in any program, please contact your local Extension office. Early requests are strongly encouraged to allow sufficient time for meeting your access needs.

SUMMER 2020 CITIZEN SCIENCE OPPORTUNITY

We are on the hunt for honeysuckle leaf blight, can you help us find it?

Honeysuckle leaf blight, caused by a fungus, is a disease that affects honeysuckle species, particularly invasive Asian bush honeysuckles like Amur honeysuckle (*Lonicera maackii*). We (researchers at the University of Kentucky and Northern Kentucky University) are interested in its diversity, host range, and virulence.

We are reaching out to ask for your help in mapping where honeysuckle leaf blight can be found. All you have to do is look for symptoms on your nearest honeysuckle (distorted, yellow to brown dead patches on leaves) and submit any observations you see on iNaturalist. You can see photos and learn more at our iNaturalist project page: <https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/honeysuckle-leaf-blight-survey>



PARTICIPATE IN I-TICK THIS SUMMER

The Tick App is a smartphone application that shows you how you can avoid ticks and also invites you to share information with scientists about your tick exposure and what kinds of locations and activities are associated with them.

In addition, you can submit photos of ticks for timely species identification by an expert. The goal is to develop better strategies to prevent tick bites and tick-borne diseases.

How can I get the app?
You can download The Tick App here: <https://thetickapp.org/>

If you don't have a smartphone, or would like to participate on your desktop computer, you can fill out the same questionnaires here <https://thetickapp.org/web-app/>

Reporting ticks can count towards MN volunteer hours.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Below are volunteer opportunities as of July 6. Please contact Erin Garrett and the respective site staff prior to volunteering.

Fort Massac State Park – pollinator garden care
Contact Amy Keigher - 618-524-4712 - amy.keigher@illinois.gov

River to River CWMA – boot brush project
Contact Nick Seaton - rtrcwma@gmail.com

Giant City State Park – pollinator garden care
Contact Jennifer Randolph - 618-457-4836 - jennifer.randolph@illinois.gov

Cache River State Natural Area – pollinator demonstration garden care, various other landscaping tasks, assistance with cleaning signs along trails
Contact Molie Oliver - 618-657-2064 - molie.oliver@illinois.gov

NEW WEBPAGE

The U of I Extension Master Naturalist program has a new statewide webpage on Extension's new website. Visit extension.illinois.edu/mn as a central page for volunteer resources, reporting, and upcoming online learning opportunities!