



ILLINOIS

Master Naturalist

PROGRESS REPORT

Summary of Accomplishments 2005–2007

- ✓ Successful demonstration sites in Rock Island and Champaign counties
 - 185 completed the Illinois Master Naturalist training
 - 74 certified Illinois Master Naturalists
- ✓ Ad hoc steering committee convened in August 2006 to develop mission and goals for statewide organization.
- ✓ Secured \$300,000 from University of Illinois Extension for program development 2007–2010; Illinois Master Naturalist program designated as an Extension Flagship Program.
- ✓ Statewide coordinator hired.
- ✓ Statewide advisory committee organized in September 2007.
- ✓ MyExtension Web site and member forums created for communication, information exchange, reference library, calendar and news about the program and training for staff and advisory committee members.
- ✓ Assessment of local Extension offices; 44 counties anticipate offering the program by 2010.
- ✓ Staff training workshop for 44 people representing 30 counties in Illinois.

Current and Future Activities

- ✓ Extension staff training workshops to be held April 3–4 and August 4–5.
- ✓ Finalize the Illinois Master Naturalist logo and new marketing materials.
- ✓ Create an Illinois Master Naturalist curriculum; Manuals for participants, instructors and staff.
- ✓ Develop an Illinois Master Naturalist Web site.
- ✓ Formalize partnerships with agencies and organizations at the local, regional and state level.
- ✓ Offer local training in at least three new locations across the state each year for the next three years.

Our Mission

To provide science-based educational opportunities that connect people with nature and help them become engaged environmental stewards.

Our Vision

Individuals experience nature, develop knowledge of and respect for the environment, and practice natural resource stewardship.

Volunteers Advance Local Environmental Stewardship

Over the past three years, nearly 200 people have participated in the Illinois Master Naturalist training in Rock Island and Champaign counties. The knowledge, skills, and experience of Illinois Master Naturalists have led to the development and revitalization of numerous stewardship projects within local communities, such as prairie restorations, youth environmental education camps, and backyard conservation programs. Today, over 40 additional Illinois counties anticipate offering the hands-on, science-based program within the coming three years!

Illinois Master Naturalists Make a Difference

Illinois Master Naturalist graduates make an amazing difference in education and stewardship in Illinois communities. With local Extension staff and partners mentoring their volunteer service and continuing education opportunities, Master Naturalists make a difference by building trails, planting trees, establishing wildlife viewing areas, conducting species inventories, building schoolyard habitats, interpreting nature, creating educational displays, and much more!

Agency Partners Extend Resources with Master Naturalists

Agencies and organizations with a strong and growing need for more trained volunteers to act as environmental educators and stewards greatly benefit when partnering with local Illinois Master Naturalists. And Illinois Master Naturalists benefit from partners who provide training expertise, volunteer opportunities, and address the needs of local issues. Due to strong interest from both participants and partner organizations, local program growth is generally rapid.

"There are many opportunities to learn, volunteer, explore, and become involved!"

*"Do it!
It's fun and you'll learn something about the world you live in!"*

"The Illinois Master Naturalist program has provided a fresh, new approach to connecting informed citizens to the natural areas in their community."



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