



# Illinois RiverWatch Offering Training Workshops for Volunteer Stream Monitors

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ILLINOIS – The Illinois RiverWatch Network is offering Illinois citizens and educators the chance to train to become citizen scientists and join the network of hundreds of volunteers throughout the state who monitor water quality of Illinois streams.

A series of RiverWatch volunteer training workshops will be held throughout the state this spring and summer. The workshops will take place from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturdays and combine both lecture and classroom time with field training in a local stream.

Registration is \$50 per person for most workshops and must be paid in advance of the workshop. Children accompanied by an adult and Illinois 4-H leaders can register for free.

“Our rivers and streams are some of the most important natural resources we have, providing clean drinking water, pollution reduction and wildlife habitat, while also playing a vital role in many sectors of the economy,” RiverWatch Coordinator Charlie Blake said. “The scientific monitoring of our streams is important to safeguard the future of Illinois rivers and streams.”

RiverWatch is a statewide partnership of organizations and individuals working to protect Illinois streams and waterways. Established in 1995 as a sub-program of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources’ Eco Watch Network, RiverWatch certified volunteers, called citizen scientists, examine indicators like stream habitats and macroinvertebrate (stream bug) communities to provide reliable water quality data that can be used by scientists to determine how the conditions of streams are changing over time.

“While there are government agencies devoted to stream monitoring, resources are limited to monitor all streams regularly,” Blake said. “This is why RiverWatch citizen scientists are so important – they provide reliable scientific data on stream health where none previously existed and also can provide broader watershed perspectives on the quality of Illinois streams.”

RiverWatch and Stream Discovery are programs of the National Great Rivers Research and Education Center, a partnership between Lewis and Clark Community College, the University of Illinois and the Illinois Natural History Survey.

Since its founding in 1995, more than 2,000 individuals have received certification through RiverWatch, and more than 800 stream sites have been surveyed.

To register for a workshop, contact Blake at (618) 468-2784 or [cablake@lc.edu](mailto:cablake@lc.edu). For more information about RiverWatch Citizen Science, or to register for a workshop online, visit [www.ngrrec.org/Riverwatch](http://www.ngrrec.org/Riverwatch).

## **2019 RiverWatch Training Workshops**

Charleston.....Saturday, April 13 Apple River.....  
Saturday April 20 Peoria.....Saturday, April 27  
Moline.....Saturday, May 4 Alton.....  
Saturday, May 11 Stay tuned for another date in Lake County in May.

*National Great Rivers Research and Education Center (NGRRECSM)*  
*Founded in 2002 as a collaborative partnership between the University of Illinois at Urbana- Champaign and Lewis and Clark Community College, NGRREC is dedicated to the study of great river systems and the communities that use them. The center aspires to be a leader in scholarly research, education, and outreach related to the interconnectedness of large rivers, their floodplains, watersheds, and their associated communities. To learn more about NGRREC, visit [www.ngrrrec.org](http://www.ngrrrec.org).*