



# NEWS FROM WAV



## January Newsletter

Happy New Year!

Before we jump into all the wonderful things ahead, we'd like to take a moment to recognize the contributions of the WAV network to Wisconsin's streams and rivers last year.

In 2024, WAV volunteers monitored **540 stream sites** across Wisconsin. Over **490 stream volunteers**, in **addition to their monitoring teammates**, submitted stream data to the DNR's surface water database. When looking at baseline stream monitoring, nutrient sampling, continuous temperature monitoring with thermistors, and aquatic invasive species monitoring, WAV volunteers completed **3,881 fieldwork events** in 2024!

Behind these numbers is a diverse community of Wisconsin residents who care deeply about their lands and waters. We hope you are able to join us again in 2025 to monitor and steward your local streams!

## CONTENTS

- 
- Spotlight on WAV Stream Data Dashboard creator Ben Bradford
  - Wisconsin Crayfishes webinar
  - Register for the WI Lakes and Rivers Convention (in-person or virtual)!
- 

## From Streams to Screens: The Person who Helps Empower Volunteer Stream Monitors with Data



*By Emily Heald, Extension Rivers Educator*

The Water Action Volunteers (WAV) program relies on community-driven data collection to assess water quality across Wisconsin. Volunteers monitor water conditions at hundreds of sites, gathering essential data on parameters like temperature, dissolved oxygen, and pollutants. However, this vast dataset can be overwhelming to process and interpret without proper tools.

**Ben Bradford, a researcher in the Department of Entomology at UW-Madison**, has dedicated much of his career to bridging this gap between data and understanding. He combines his passion for programming, web design, and environmental science to create intuitive data visualizations that help volunteer monitoring programs make sense of their data. You are likely familiar with his work on [WAV's Stream Data Dashboard](#)!

We invite you to read our spotlight on Ben, and how he came to be involved in WAV!

[Read Ben's story](#)

---

## Join us for our final Winter Water Talks webinar on Friday, February 14!

Wondering what to do after the regular monitoring season wraps up? Join us this winter for our annual Winter

# Biology & Identification of Wisconsin Crayfishes



*Photo: Kevin Darcy, iNaturalist*



**Friday, February 14**  
**12:00-1:00pm**

**Dr. Chris Taylor**

*Emeritus Curator of Fishes and Crustaceans  
Illinois Natural History Survey*

## Biology and Identification of Wisconsin Crayfishes

**Friday, February 14**

**12:00-1:00pm**

**Description:** This webinar will cover the biology of crayfishes found in Wisconsin and their importance in freshwater ecosystems. Topics will include growth, diet, and habitat preferences of crayfishes and the impact of invasive crayfishes in the state. We will also discuss the identification of Wisconsin's nine species of crayfishes.

**Speaker:** **Dr. Chris Taylor** is a "semi-retired" aquatic biologist and Emeritus Curator of Fishes and Crustaceans at the Illinois Natural History Survey at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. Chris worked at the Illinois Natural History Survey for 31 years where he conducted research on the systematics, ecology, and conservation of non-game fishes and crayfishes and oversaw the growth and care of INHS's museum collections of fishes and crustaceans. Chris has published over 90 peer-reviewed papers, including 4 books on the identification and ecology of crayfishes in the Midwest, the fishes of Illinois, and crayfishes in Kentucky and Alabama. Chris continues to stay active in the conservation of native biodiversity and freshwater habitats.

# Register today for the Wisconsin Lakes and Rivers Convention, March 26-28!

**REGISTER NOW!**

[wisconsinwaterweek.org](http://wisconsinwaterweek.org)

Early bird DEADLINE  
**January 31, 2025**

*Wisconsin*  
**Lakes and Rivers Convention**  
March 26-28th 2025

 2025 Wisconsin  
Lakes and Rivers Convention

**the POWER of WORDS**  
Working for Our Waters

☒ **In Person Option**  
\$180 by January 31  
Students \$90

☒ **Virtual Option**  
\$80 by January 31  
Students \$40

**20% Off by January 31**

**additional 50% Off for Students!**

We hope you will join WAV staff at the 2025 Wisconsin Lakes and Rivers Convention this year, taking place March 26-28 at the Stevens Point Holiday Inn and Convention Center! This statewide convention brings together professionals, students, community members, and businesses who love water.

With the theme: *The Power of Words: Working for Our Waters*, this event will showcase the impact our communications have, especially when advocating for our waters. By raising awareness, promoting conservation efforts, and crafting compelling messages, words can inspire action and drive positive change to protect our water resources for future generations.

- **Save 20% by registering by the January 31 early-bird deadline.**
- **Unable to travel to Stevens Point? We encourage you to register as a virtual attendee!** Virtual attendance is available for select sessions as well as plenary speakers on Thursday and Friday. You must have the ability to use Zoom to join these events.



- We also invite you to join us in celebrating Wisconsin's 2024 Volunteer Stream Monitoring Award winners at the Thursday Evening Awards Ceremony and Banquet! **WAV volunteers are eligible for a \$20 discount to attend the banquet**, thanks to a generous donation from the Petenwell and Castle Rock Stewards (PACRS). The first 25 stream or lake monitoring volunteers to use the code "secchi" during registration will receive this discount!

Register for the 2025 Convention

The Convention has a wealth of stream and river content for you to explore. Here are a few highlights:



2025 Wisconsin  
Lakes and Rivers Convention

**the POWER of WORDS**

Working for Our Waters

WISCONSINWATERWEEK.ORG

FOCUS ON

# Rivers & Streams

MARCH 26-28, 2025 | STEVENS POINT

SAMPLE OF  
**CONCURRENT SESSIONS**  
GENERAL ADMISSION

THURS, MARCH 27

- FROM WOOD TO WATERCRAFT: DUGOUT CANOES OF WI
- TROUT UNLIMITED'S TROUT IN THE CLASSROOM
- BETTER KNOW A RIVER: THE WI RIVER AND WI'S GEOLOGIC HISTORY
- MANY RIVERS TO CROSS: ONEIDA COUNTY STREAM CROSSING PROJECT
- CRITTERS ARE KEY
- PARTNERSHIPS IN WATERSHED EDUCATION IN SE WI

FRI, MARCH 28

- WONDERFUL WATERS OF WI: TOOLS TO PROTECT HEALTHY WATERSHEDS AND HIGH QUALITY WATERS
- DROUGHT, DAMS, AND MUSSELS: WHAT'S AT RISK WHEN THERE'S NOT ENOUGH WATER?
- TAXONOMY, NATURAL HISTORY, AND CONSERVATION OF WI FIREFLIES 2025
- THE BUZZ ABOUT MOSQUITOES AND THEIR MANAGEMENT

SAMPLE OF  
**WORKSHOPS**  
PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED

WED, MARCH 26, 9A-12P

- AQUATIC PLANT ECOLOGY AND ID
- CRAFTING YOUR WATER STORIES

WED, MARCH 26, 1:00-4:00P

- TROUBLEMAKER TAXONOMY: ID TIPS FOR INCONSPICUOUS INVERTEBRATES
- RESPONDING TO NATURE THROUGH WRITING

FRI, MARCH 28, 1:45-4:00P

- AN INVITATION TO WONDER: WAUBESA WETLANDS FILM SCREENING
- MAKING YOUR VOICE HEARD: CREATING CONNECTION THROUGH SONG

**20% OFF**  
REGISTER BY  
JANUARY 31

## Wednesday, March 26 (workshops)

*Aquatic Plant Ecology and Identification*

*Troublemaker Taxonomy: Identification tips for inconspicuous invertebrates*

*Crafting your Water Stories*

## Thursday, March 27 (sessions and speakers)

*From Wood to Watercraft: Dugout Canoes of Wisconsin*

*Trout Unlimited's Trout in the Classroom*

*Better Know a River: The Wisconsin River and Wisconsin's Geologic History*

*Many Rivers to Cross: Oneida County Stream Crossing Project*

*Critters are Key*

*Partnerships in Watershed Education in Southeastern Wisconsin*

**Friday, March 28 (sessions, speakers and workshops)**

*Wonderful Waters of Wisconsin: Tools to Protect Healthy Watersheds and High Quality Waters*

*Drought, Dams, and Mussels: What's at risk when there's not enough water?*

*Taxonomy, Natural History and Conservation of Wisconsin Fireflies*

*The Buzz about Mosquitoes and their Management*

*An Invitation to Wonder: Waubesa Wetlands film screening (workshop)*

---

**Questions or suggestions? Contact us!**

Phone: (608) 331-0173  
Email: [wav@extension.wisc.edu](mailto:wav@extension.wisc.edu)  
[wateractionvolunteers.org](http://wateractionvolunteers.org)

**Follow us on Facebook and Instagram**



[Manage](#) your preferences | [Opt Out](#) using TrueRemove™  
Got this as a forward? [Sign up](#) to receive our future emails.  
View this email [online](#).

445 Henry Mall | Madison, WI 53706 US

This email was sent to .  
*To continue receiving our emails, add us to your address book.*

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.