

Montana Citizen Botany Pilot Study (Poster)

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Successful Citizen Science Programs across the nation have made important contributions to conservation. Studies on Citizen Science efforts agree that success is only achieved by programs that are well adapted to specific objectives and stakeholders. In Montana, meaningful conservation of rare plant species is often a challenge due to insufficient or outdated knowledge of simple plant population parameters. Aligned in mission, the Montana Natural Heritage Program and Montana Native Plant Society developed the concept of a Citizen Botany Program aimed at training volunteers to collect survey data from rare plant sites where population status has not been updated in more than 20 years. In 2022 a two-year pilot study was funded to test the framework and function of this concept in action. The Citizen Botany Pilot Study is an operating prototype demonstrating benefits for rare plant conservation and those who contribute. We will present the purpose, methods, and accomplishments of Year 1, share what we have in store during Year 2, and show you how to become a Citizen Botanist.