

Wildlife Watch: Community Scientist Program

Project Summary

Sageland Collaborative, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization based in Salt Lake City and The Human-Wildlife Coexistence research stream within the Science Research Initiative at the University of Utah, along with Salt Lake City's Trails and Natural Lands Division, Utah's Hogle Zoo, and state and federal land agencies are collaborating on a multi-year project. This project involves investigating the effects of human influence on wildlife distribution, movement, and behavior in Utah's Central Wasatch Mountain Range/Salt Lake Valley wild-urban interface.

The project will engage community scientists and use innovative "camera trapping" technology to study the distribution of wildlife, particularly mammals, along a wild-urban interface of northern Utah, one of the largest such interfaces in the United States. The data gathered will fill gaps in our understanding of how wildlife populations move through and behave across this unique landscape. This, in turn, will help inform wildlife and habitat management decisions and future land use planning and development.

Volunteer Community Scientist Position Summary

We invite hikers and backcountry and outdoor enthusiasts interested in the study of ecology, native wildlife, and wildlife habitats to participate in this camera-trapping field survey effort in the Central Wasatch Mountains and some associated urban areas throughout the Salt Lake Valley. After attending a formal **training on May 18, 2024 at the Crocker Science Center at the University of Utah**, community science volunteers will gain experience installing and maintaining camera traps, uploading photo data, performing habitat assessments, and completing camera site field forms.

The field season will occur between **June 2 and August 10**. During this time, community scientists will be asked to make up to **6 different day trips** (trips may vary between 1 hour to multiple hours depending on travel distance from home to site and hiking distances from parking to camera site) to the selected camera trap locations. Scientists will use these data to develop wildlife species movement and behavior models for the Central Wasatch and abroad.

Partnering Organizations

- **Sageland Collaborative**
- **University of Utah's Science Research Initiative**
- **Utah Division of Wildlife Resources**
- **United States Forest Service**
- **Salt Lake City's Trails and Natural Lands Division**
- **Utah's Hogle Zoo**
- **Urban Wildlife Information Network**
- **Snapshot USA Initiative**



Contacts

- Austin Green, Ph.D. (austin@sagelandcollaborative.org)
 - Ecologist, Sageland Collaborative
 - Associate Instructor, Science Research Initiative, University of Utah
- Mary Pendergast, Ph.D. (mary@sagelandcollaborative.org)
 - Senior Ecologist, Sageland Collaborative
- Sign up for project emails and more information at:
www.sagelandcollaborative.org/wasatch-wildlife-watch

Preferred Skills/Abilities

- Up-to-date driver's license
- Experience hiking and navigating to GPS locations
- Ability to hike and carry a day pack with all personal supplies and an additional 5 lbs. of camera equipment
- Willingness to drive to Salt Lake City parks and riverways or one of the seven Central Wasatch Canyons and hike independently (in self-selected groups of 2-4 people) just off the canyon road/trail to GPS locations. In some cases, areas may be remote with unmarked trails
- After receiving training, ability to upload photo data on personal computer to the program's online database
- Ability to enter data into the Survey123 application

Training Day & Materials Pickups

All volunteers are **required to attend our training or watch the recorded training* prior to participating in this project.** Participants will receive camera equipment at the training. Those who are unable to attend the training will need to schedule an equipment pickup before the start of the season (see below).

When: May, 18, 2024: 1:30 – 3:00 pm. The training is will be at 1:30 and the trail camera demo is at 2:30 pm (the demo is required for all new volunteers).

Where: Crocker Science Center Reading Room 330, 1390 Presidents' Circle, Salt Lake City, UT 84112

Volunteers who cannot attend the training will need to pick up their cameras in Salt Lake City, either at the [Sageland Collaborative office](#) or at the [Human-Wildlife Coexistence Lab at the University of Utah](#) (Room 320, Crocker Science Center, 1390 Presidents' Circle, Salt Lake City, UT 84112). This must be done during regular business hours between **May 20-24 or May 27-31.*

Please schedule your equipment pick-up with Austin Green at austin@sagelandcollaborative.org



Field Rotations

Community scientists will attend a training, pick up materials, complete **two rounds** of camera-trapping, and check equipment in at the end-of-the-season Thank You Event (**November 6, 2024**).

The rotation dates are as follows:

- **First Rotation: June 2 – July 6**, three visits to the first site location, dates flexible to fit personal schedules
- **Second Rotation: July 7 – August 10**, three visits to second site location, dates flexible to fit personal schedules

See the Table below for an example field schedule. Volunteers can select exact dates within the rotation date ranges based on their personal schedule and preference.

	Week 1	Week 3	Week 5
Rotation 1: Red Butte Canyon <u>Location.#1.2024</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install camera <i>(between June 2-8)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check batteries, • Switch memory card, • Upload data at home (optional) <i>(between June 16-22)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take down camera, • Upload data at home (optional) <i>(between June 30-July 6)</i>
Rotation 2: Red Butte Canyon <u>Location.#2.2024</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install camera <i>(between July 7-13)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check batteries, • Switch memory card, • Upload data at home (optional) <i>(between July 21-27)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take down camera, • Upload data at home (optional) <i>(between August 4-10)</i>

Table: Sample field schedule.

Time Commitment

Community scientists will have the option to choose 2 site locations (1 site per rotation) based on preferred level of access difficulty. The effort per site visit will vary depending on the distance traveled to the field site (may be just off a road or hiking trail or in a remote, unmarked area).

Once the field site is reached, the first visit of each rotation may take approximately 1.5 hours, as the camera will need to be installed and some site data collected on a field form. The other two visits for each rotation may take 30 minutes to an hour, as the battery check, memory card exchange, and camera take down will go more quickly than the camera installation day.

By the end of the second rotation, volunteers will have made up to **6 site visits (two setup, check, and takedown visits)** to complete the field season (although camera takedown and installation days can potentially happen on the same day if the volunteer desires, which could result in only 5 total site visits).

