

Riffles & Pools

Office of Water Quality www.idem.IN.gov



Squirrels-eye view of a wintery stream near Indianapolis, Indiana.

Greetings Riverwatchers!

Sending you all the happiest of holiday greetings during this difficult and surreal year! Though faced with many trials, sweet have been the victories of 2020.

On this, the cusp of a new year, the days are lengthening once again. So many of you—faithful volunteer monitors, amazing teachers, bright students, talented instructors, and dedicated professionals at the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) and elsewhere—have contributed so much to keeping a diligent and watchful eye on the water quality of Indiana during the many challenges that were thrown our way throughout 2020.

We here at Hoosier Riverwatch, and IDEM as a whole, are so thankful for the flexibility and resiliency demonstrated by so many of you as you readily (and creatively) adapted to rapidly changing conditions and protocols this season. What an amazing opportunity this year afforded us to see how ready nature is to bounce back when we give her a chance. What new skills and talents have been developed in up and coming generations of movers and thinkers through virtual interaction on a sometimes-global scale.

For those of you who had to lay low this year, we look forward to seeing you back in the swing of things as another new season opens for us soon. For myself, who am also laying low, here's to hoping I can also step back into the batter's box soon.

— Carol Newhouse, Hoosier Riverwatch Coordinator

Winter 2020

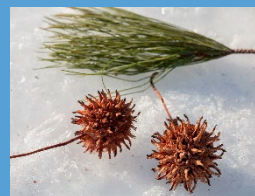
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- [Enjoy a Few Photos and Thoughts Shared from the Heart of Your HRW Coordinator](#)



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Looking forward to seeing you in 2021!



Hoosier Riverwatch is administered by



A Few Photos and Thoughts from the Heart



A look back at 2019, which ended strong with students (left photo) putting HRW methods to work in assessing Cicero Creek and participants in a HRW workshop taught in Kosciusko County (right photo).

Like many starts to the new year (and the first sledder pictured here), 2020 came in with great gusto. Before long, the pandemic and its ramifications swept the whole world off its feet and hurtled many of us along a path not of our choosing (not unlike the parent trying to keep up with their child in the photo on the right).



A photo (left) of a tenacious fern during a pre-pandemic visit to the [Hilbert Conservatory](#) at [White River Gardens](#). I recall the discussion with my Okinawan exchange student about how inspiring and precious life can be, especially when it exists under such harsh and inhospitable conditions.

Little did we know what was headed our way and that a 'daughter' I had so recently received would leave as quickly as she had arrived.

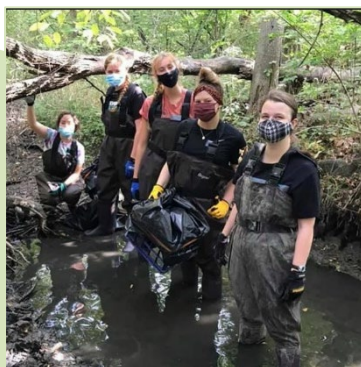
Bad times have a scientific value. These are occasions a good learner would not miss.

- *Ralph Waldo Emerson*

Although early 2020 HRW workshops were canceled or postponed during the initial shutdown, such activities resumed along with statewide reopenings.

Enthusiastic volunteer/homeschooler Jo Ellen Lengacher and her assistant/son Eli (who momentarily shed their masks so I could safely snap a socially distanced photo) met me in a parking lot at Garfield Park to borrow a

HRW loaner kit. HRW staff were more than happy to provide her Johnson County field day event with enough extra supplies to properly accommodate multiple teams of related/sibling learners.



I was equally inspired by those of you who continued to actively practice stream-stewardship skills (and tagging HRW along the way), as seen in the left-hand Instagram posts by the [Avon Outdoor Learning Center](#) (OLC).

Shout out to the Avon OLC staff who posed the question about "what could be happening when shoes and water bottles are spied alongside a trail?" Loved the subsequent photo they posted of the Avon Community School Corporation's creek cleanup crew working on their Hendricks County waterway.



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IDEM Office of Water Quality Mission

The Office of Water Quality's mission is to monitor, protect, and improve Indiana's water quality to ensure its continued use as a drinking water source, habitat for wildlife, recreational resource, and economic asset.

The office achieves this by developing rules, guidance, policies, and procedures; assessing surface and groundwater quality; regulating and monitoring drinking water supplies and wastewater facilities; protecting watersheds and wetlands; and providing outreach and assistance to the regulated community and the public while supporting environmentally responsible economic development.



Your HRW Coordinator wishes you well until we see you here in the next edition of *Riffles & Pools*.

Hoosier Riverwatch Mission

The mission of Hoosier Riverwatch is to involve the citizens of Indiana in becoming active stewards of Indiana's water resources through watershed education, water monitoring, and cleanup activities. [Hoosier Riverwatch](http://www.idem.IN.gov/riverwatch) is a water quality monitoring initiative sponsored by the Indiana Department of Environmental Management's *Office of Water Quality*.

Mark Your Calendars

Hoosier Riverwatch training workshops have concluded for the year.

We are so thankful for you! If you have joined us via a 2020 workshop, "Welcome!" If you are here as an interested bystander or professional participant in water quality issues, "Welcome!"



Check the next [newsletter](#) in April 2021 to see what [workshops](#) are lining up for spring and summer.

We invite you to review steps for *What it Takes to Host a Workshop* (page 6 of the [Spring 2017](#) newsletter) for information on how to organize and hold a successful workshop.

Feel free to contact a [Hoosier Riverwatch instructor](#) near you to discuss a workshop for your area in 2021!
We look forward to hearing from you.