



Wildlife Monitoring Program 2023 Summary



A bobcat and her two kittens observed in a Rock Creek neighborhood. Photo by Jeff Krause.

Sponsored by the
Open Space Advisory Committee

Introduction:

The Superior Wildlife Monitoring program, sponsored by the Open Space Advisory Committee, completed its first full year of reporting in 2023. Building on the pilot program launched in 2022, this community volunteer effort is designed to build an observational database of wildlife activity within the town borders and closely adjacent properties. By increasing our knowledge of where wildlife is present and the behaviors of the wildlife common to our area, the Town can continue to limit human/wildlife conflicts, increase relevant educational opportunities for citizens, and better ensure the protection of our wildlife. In addition, the wildlife monitoring program will provide the Town with the opportunity to document and tell the story of our commitment to co-existence with wildlife, ranging from the original Town design incorporating wildlife corridors to today's monitoring and educational programs. The monitoring program observes and supports a broad range of native species, including coyote, fox, bobcat, deer, elk, beaver, raccoon, muskrat and skunk.

Volunteers report sightings via an easy online form, and there's no minimum number of observations required per month.

This monitoring program is in addition to the successful Raptor Monitoring Program being managed and staffed by town volunteers.

2023 Results: The Year of the Bobcat

From the seven volunteers in the pilot program, the 2023 program grew rapidly as outlined in the table below:

	2022	2023
Number of Participants	7	35 total, 14 with multiple observations during the year
Number of Observations	37	132
Wildlife Observed	81% coyotes	55% coyote, 34% bobcat

The local bobcats, including at least one mother (shown on the report cover and below left), were the hit of the season. The cats were spotted in multiple neighborhoods on the north side of Coalton Road.

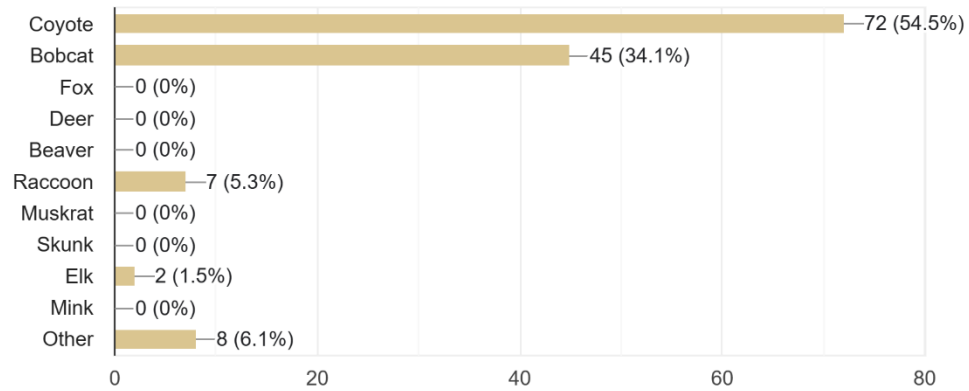


The prevalence of bobcats spurred our Town Ranger to organize an educational session on these mesopredators in August. The session was attended by over 20 residents.

The chart below shows a more detailed breakdown of the species reported in town:

Wildlife Species

132 responses



Note that both mink and bear were reported in the Other category. In addition to many casual observations of wildlife, volunteers were able to contribute to our knowledge of our local wildlife through observations of events such as coyotes hunting and mating at Hodgson-Harris Reservoir, an animal killed through a collision with a vehicle, and attempts to cross major arteries such as McCaslin Boulevard and Rock Creek Parkway.



Actions resulting from the information gathered through the wildlife monitoring program include:

- Outreach to Superior Elementary from our Town wildlife ecologist to open communication about bobcats in the area
- A bobcat educational program at Purple Park attended by over 20 residents
- Formalization of a shared folder and naming convention for storing wildlife photos not submitted via the Google form
- Trends and background to inform our Town social media efforts related to wildlife

Recommendations:

- **Develop a vigorous public education campaign** to discourage the use of all rodenticides outdoors. Rodenticides pose a significant threat to wildlife that was not the intended target of the poison through a process called bioaccumulation. Rodenticide residues build up in rodent carcasses to levels many times the lethal dose, exposing predators and scavengers to large amounts of poison. A rodent that has ingested poison but not yet died can also pass the toxins on to any predator that eats it. These secondary poisonings are a significant cause of death among many raptor species and also affect bobcats and coyotes.¹ It's important to note that many coyotes in town have mange, a condition that can be exacerbated by exposure to anticoagulant rodenticides.
- **Leave dead trees in open space areas** due to their value as a food source, habitat, and hiding place for a variety of wildlife species.
- Consider and adopt as many of the Wildlife Encouragement Team's suggestions related to the **Coyote Ridge Master Plan** as reasonable.
- **Conserve the remaining Plains Cottonwoods** in Town and plant new Plains Cottonwoods as replacements for lost or removed older trees.

Coming in 2024:



Deep In - Wildlife

WILDLIFE MONITORING AND SCARF BIRTH BOUNTY
Age 18+ | 1 hour/week/night

Are You Ready To Lead? Help us support the children and our local community. Through this program, you will understand the importance of wildlife monitoring and the role of our community in protecting our natural resources. You will also learn about the importance of wildlife monitoring and the role of our community in protecting our natural resources.

WILDLIFE MONITORING CLASS
Program of training sessions held by Superior's Wildlife Monitoring Group

TRAINING SESSION
All ages | 1 hour/week/night

Are You Ready To Lead? Help us support the children and our local community. Through this program, you will understand the importance of wildlife monitoring and the role of our community in protecting our natural resources. You will also learn about the importance of wildlife monitoring and the role of our community in protecting our natural resources.

1/16/24	Saturday	8-9pm	\$55
2/27	Saturday	8-9pm	\$55
3/20/24	Saturday	8-9pm	\$55
4/26/24	Saturday	8-9pm	\$55

*Fee waived for each child in a drop-in class.

Check in program names or sections to register!



A training session for 2024 volunteers is scheduled for January 9th at the Community Center. Wildlife ecologist Ashley DeLaup will lead the session, which was promoted through various Town communications vehicles including the Recreation Guide, PROS newsletter, and social media.

Results of the 2024 monitoring program will be reported quarterly to the Parks, Recreation and Open Space director and ranger for the Town of Superior, as well as to the Open Space Advisory Committee.

Acknowledgements:

Report prepared by Tracey Bain, OSAC Liaison and Program Coordinator.

We are grateful for the observational work and data reporting by the volunteers in the 2023 wildlife monitoring program. The following volunteers each contributed observations: Steve Roughton, Jamie Dixon, Peter Ruprecht, Guy Knauer, Sandy Hardy-Reigel, Frank Parker, Karen Repine, Rita Trainor, Liza McKenzie, Karen Waligorski, Amber Greves, Joann Maneri, Brad Clayton, Henry Smith, Liz Fusco, Stephanie Miller, and Kara Neuse.

Particular thanks to Sandy Hardy-Reigel, Joann Maneri, Jamie Dixon, and Peter Ruprecht, each of whom submitted over a dozen observations.

The program participants are also grateful for the involvement and assistance from Tom Keras, Town Ranger during the 2023 reporting period.

Photo credits to Jeff Krause, Kara Neuse, Stephanie Miller, Jamie Dixon, Sandy Hardy-Reigel, and Joann Maneri.

For more information about the wildlife monitoring program, or to volunteer as a monitor, please contact OSAC@superiorcolorado.gov.

1 – United States Geological Survey (USGS) and the Center for Biological Diversity