

WILDLIFE NEIGHBORS: FACILITATED ECOLOGICAL RESEARCH WITH MINORITY YOUTH VIA CAMERA SURVEYS IN URBAN PARKS | AWARD # 2005812

PI: Nyeema C. Harris (Yale University), nyeema.harris@yale.edu | Co-PI/Community Partner: Stephen Vrla (Detroit Zoological Society) | Project website link: <http://wildlifeneighbor.com>

Project Description

Our goals are to (1) create a comprehensive citizen science program for Detroit middle school students using a network of trail cameras in Detroit parks, (2) implement the program through four facilitation models, and (3) study their effects on participants' environmental literacy.

Key Achievements

What have we accomplished to date?

- We created the citizen science program.
- We implemented the program through four facilitation models.

What have we learned?

- The program had greater positive effects on participants' research competencies than on other aspects of their environmental literacy.
- The summer camp, heavy facilitation model had a greater positive effect on their environmental literacy than the other facilitation models.
- Retaining participants in the asynchronous online program, light facilitation model presented unexpected challenges.

Audience & Settings

Audience: Detroit area middle school students

Disciplinary area: Urban ecology

Learning environment: Summer camp, afterschool program, weekend program, and asynchronous online program

Access and Inclusion

How does your project consider/address equity and who is included?

- It provided Detroit area middle school students with opportunities to engage in authentic ecological research that they may not otherwise have, and it exposed them to STEM career paths that they may not otherwise have encountered.
- It taught the students that science is a collaborative process and that their perspectives matter to and belong in scientific conversations.



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WN **What Foods Do Squirrels Eat the Most?**

Background Research and Methods		Research Question and Hypotheses	
<p>Squirrels can find food buried beneath a foot of snow. Their front teeth can never stop growing. They may pretend to bury a nut to throw off potential thieves.</p> <p>We used a network of trail cameras in Detroit parks to study squirrels.</p>		<p>We couldn't answer what foods squirrels eat the most, so we asked what habitat they spend the most time in.</p> <p>We hypothesized that they spent the most time in forests.</p>	
Results		Discussion	
<p>The Detroit trail camera network recorded 1,819 squirrel images.</p> <p>952 of the images were in forests, 588 were in a field, 268 were near a river, and 11 were in a wetland.</p>		<p>Squirrels habitats are mostly in forests</p> <p>They live in the forest, so squirrels can live in a lot of different seasons in the forest.</p> <p>They can also find their foods in different seasons, too.</p>	

Yale University

