

Membership and Outreach Committee Report for 2019 Annual Meeting of the Michigan Chapter SWCS

The Michigan Chapter SWCS membership stands at 58 members, two of which are organizational memberships. Several memberships have lapsed and the organization has gained a few members, maintaining an average near 60, consistent with previous years.

New this year is the service of Michigan Chapter's Communication Intern. Anna DeBraber, a second year ecology student at Michigan Technological University, has been assisting with communications and outreach. In addition to her contributions to the Chapter's Facebook, DeBraber has created LinkedIn and Instagram accounts to represent the Chapter; (please "Like" or "Follow" if you have not already.) This fall, she has created a member survey to explore the possibilities of formalizing and enhancing mentorship opportunities in the Michigan Chapter. Twenty responses have already been recorded and participants in the annual meeting will be invited to fill out the survey in person. A final summary of responses will be shared before the end of the year.

Committee chair, Rebecca Bender, has continued to produce a monthly newsletter summarizing Chapter activities, promoting conservation efforts, and reporting ecosystem threats in the Great Lakes region. Several other committee members have contributed editorials and articles, and members at-large are encouraged to submit relevant materials for distribution in this manner. Particularly, Bender would like to include additional "Membership Spotlights" featuring profiles of the Michigan Chapter SWCS community. Please consider sharing your personal story or nominating a fellow member.

Several phone calls have been shared among new committee chairs to discuss the benefits and challenges of professional outreach. Since these discussions, the newsletter is now more focused on Michigan news. Zach Curtis has begun new initiatives for student outreach at Michigan State University and Grand Valley State University. There continues to be growth and innovation in the field of conservation, and SWCS continues to provide opportunities to learn from peers and professionals of all career stages and disciplines.

Rebecca Bender, Chair, Membership and Outreach Committee