

Many Eyes - One Health

Public reporting of wildlife health events could lead to the detection and containment of wildlife disease outbreaks.

Wildlife Health Event Reporter (WHER)

Early detection of health events that affect wildlife is often difficult to achieve. There must be observers in the area to take note of the event, and have knowledge of what to do with that information. To help address this need, the NBII Wildlife Disease Information Node, in collaboration with its partners, the USGS National Wildlife Health Center and the Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison have developed the *Wildlife Health Event Reporter (WHER)* at www.wher.org.

WHER is a web-based application launched to record wildlife observations by citizens concerned about dead or sick wildlife. After being recorded, these observations are joined with other wildlife sightings and are viewable in tabular reports or on a map, enabling people to see where similar events are happening.

Figure 1: Points on the WHER map depict reports of dead or sick wildlife and can be filtered by species, location and date.

Why Collect this Information?

Seventy-five percent of recent emerging infectious diseases in humans began as animal infections, and most of these have involved wildlife. With the help of citizens, this system can collect timely and useful information about wildlife mortality events (e.g. date, location, and affected species). The data are integrated and summarized by the system to provide essential information for better understanding wildlife disease patterns and their potential impact on wildlife, human, and domestic animal health.

Who Uses this Information?

This information is being used by natural resource managers, researchers, and public health officials in an effort to protect the well-being of all living

things and promote a healthy ecosystem by:

- Assisting in detection of common disease events and biosecurity concerns
- Exploring the interconnections between human, domestic animal and wildlife diseases
- Helping to design and coordinate disease control and prevention strategies

How Citizen Scientists Can Help?

Individuals can help with this wildlife health surveillance effort by reporting their sightings of sick/dead wild animals to WHER. After creating an account, users can enter their observations. The system will guide them step by step through the process. Data



such as date and location, species of animal(s) involved, actions taken and any additional event observations are recorded. Registered users can also manage their account. In addition, they can see their individual reporting history separately or joined with reports made by other users. After a user completes a report, contact information, when available, for the area's local wildlife agency will be provided.

More WHER Features

Registered users have access to other WHER features such as viewing and filtering the records within WHER in a table or map format. Users can limit data included to only display reports they have submitted by toggling the checkbox for “My Reports” and “My Map Data” in both the reporting and map functions. The results from a search request viewed through either the Map or Report tools can be downloaded into a spreadsheet for analysis and/or integration with a local data system.

Monitor WHER Reports

To stay current on where wildlife health reports are happening, anyone can select from different information delivery options:

- **Email Alerts:** Reports are delivered to an email account.
- **GeoRss feeds:** Reports are available to a feed reader or can be used as a map layer in a mashup.
- **GeoRss feed for Google Maps:** Reports are formatted for display in Google Maps.

Mobile Phone Application

Users can also make mobile reports to WHER using mobile phone technology. HealthMap.org has enhanced its smart phone application “Outbreaks Near Me”, www.healthmap.org/outbreaksnearme, to collect and relay animal disease reports to the WHER

Figure 2: An accompanying WHER News and information site provides additional guidance on how to access many of the features of the application.

site. The mobile application captures similar data elements that the web-based WHER application collects and allows users to upload photos.

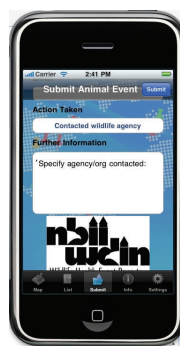


Figure 3: Image of the smart phone application, “Outbreaks Near Me”.

WHER Features and News

WHER is currently in a public Beta release. Modifications and improvements will be made in the future based on user feedback. Submit your feedback to wher@wdin.org or use the “Feedback” link in the footer of every page. Individuals can learn about upcoming WHER features and news from the Wildlife Health Event Reporter News and Information site, www.news.wher.org.

For More Information

Visit the WHER web site at about.wher.org or contact us:

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