

Study Shows Citizen Scientists Learn Comparably by Smartphones

DURHAM, N.H.-A study funded by the Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry, and published in the Public Library of Science revealed that smartphone-based training was as effective as in-person training in helping citizen scientists to recognize invasive plants. Traditional in-person training, while effective, can become prohibitively expensive over broad geographic areas.

University of Massachusetts analysts studied three training models: in-person; app-based video; and app-based text/images in the context of invasive plant identification in Massachusetts. The study found that, while smartphone-based training provided comparable results to in-person delivery methods, text-based training was less effective.

The study noted the results have exciting implications for the field of citizen science.

"Over a broad landscape, smartphone-based training provides a potential cost-effective alternative to traditional methods," said Durham Field Office Forest Health Group Leader Mike Bohne. Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry funded the \$200,000 project. [Read the study](#) on the Public Library of Science Web site.

Please see the article below summarizing a study that may be of interest to you. The full research article is available here:

<http://www.plosone.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0111433>