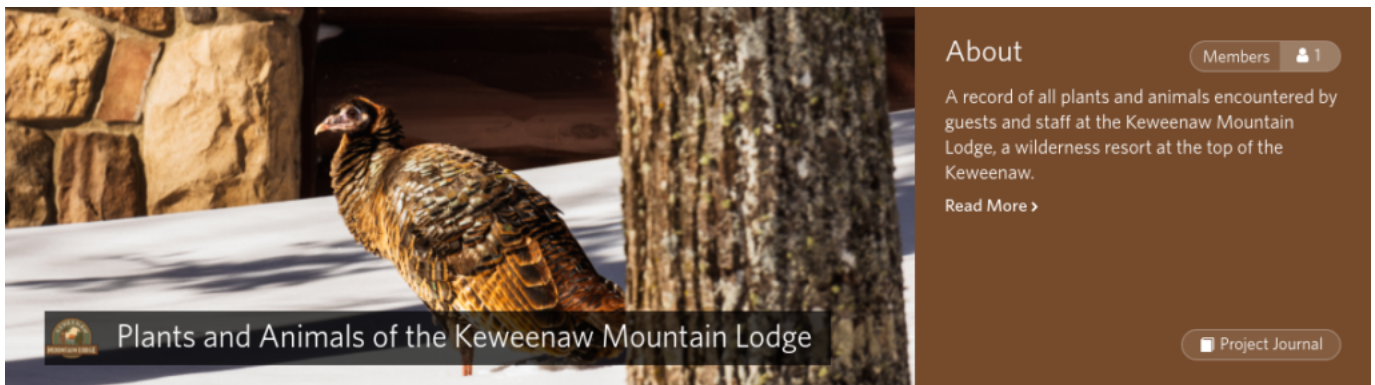


# The Plants and Animals of the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge

written by Tom Oliver | March 30, 2022

Finally...after a long time of planning and prep work, I have gotten the [Lodge's iNaturalist project](#) up and running.

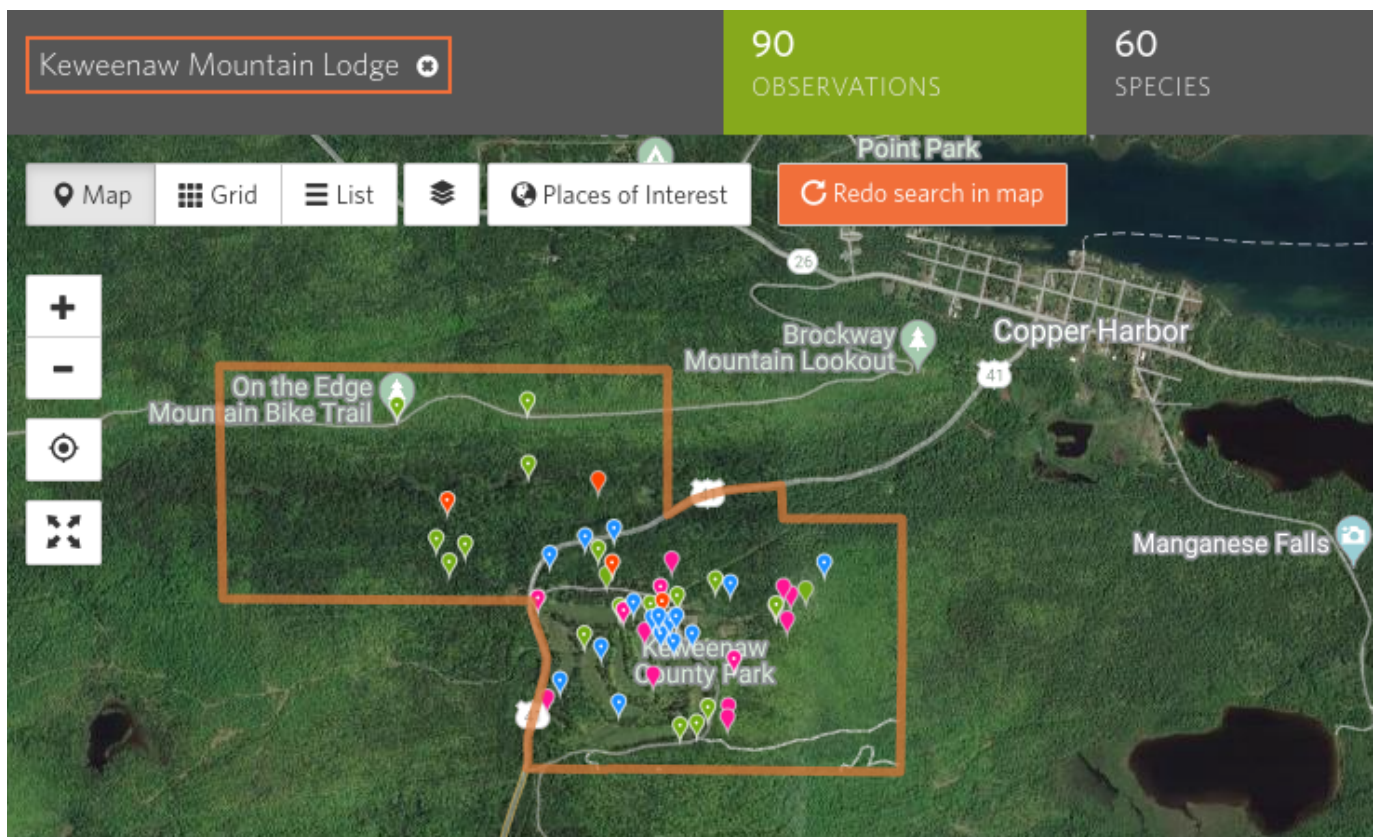


Header from the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge's iNaturalist project page, entitled "Plants and Animals of the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge."

iNaturalist (a joint initiative by the California Academy of Sciences and the National Geographic Society) is a one of the world's most popular nature apps. It helps people identify plants and animals and connects them with a social network community of over a million scientists and naturalists. By recording and sharing observations of living things, participants also create research quality data for scientists who are working to better understand and protect nature.

Participants, once they have collected enough "Research Grade" observations, are able to create projects within the network. Projects tend to focus on aspects of the living world in which the participants who create them are interested.

For the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge's project (entitled [\*Plants and Animals of the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge\*](#)), I first needed to create a defined boundary which closely follows the Lodge's property boundary. A georeferenced "KML" file (that's the name of the file-type...not, in this case, the initials of the Lodge) was created using Google Earth Pro. That file was then imported into iNaturalist. Once the "place" was created, I was then able to define the parameters of the project – basically, all living things documented by iNaturalist participants which fall within the boundaries of the property.



This is a map of the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge's property in iNaturalist. Within the property boundaries, you can see the color coded pins for the 90 observations of 60 different species identified at the Lodge, so far.

The purpose of the [\*Plants and Animals of the Keweenaw Mountain\*](#)

[Lodge](#) project is actually multi-faceted:

1) Many of our guests and employees value their encounters with nature as an important part of their experience at the Lodge. There is always people curious about what they have seen and what they might encounter. This platform will give us all an additional means of sharing that information with each other.

2) One of the [Keweenaw Mountain Lodge's values](#) is to "be fearless and persistent in learning on a daily basis." Using iNaturalist for recording and identifying species on the Lodge's property is one more way in which people can learn about the plants, animals, and ecology of the the Lodge and or the region.

3) The [Keweenaw Mountain Lodge is pursuing certification](#), through Audubon International's "[Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program](#)." One of the core tenets of that program is that participating organizations must maintain a list of species found on the property and incorporate wildlife management initiatives. Having a project (such as this project in iNaturalist) in which we have a broader collection of people contributing enhances the Lodge's ability to know what plants and animals we have on the property.

4) The Keweenaw Mountain Lodge regards environmental issues as a very important point of focus. One environmental issue, in particular, which is often related to resorts and golf courses, is the introduction and unintended propagation of invasive species. [The Lodge will use iNaturalist to identify locations of invasive species on the property and actively work to remove them.](#)

5) The Keweenaw Mountain Lodge supports efforts in academic research and views the encouragement of people participating in citizen science projects (e.g., iNaturalist) provides data from which researchers may benefit.

6) Our iNaturalist project will serve as the data collection site for future activities (e.g., BioBlitzes) which require the collection of data about plants and animals.

7) We will be able to create [checklists](#) from the data stored in iNaturalist, which guests and employees will be able to use if they decide to search the property for unique species they have never seen.

The free iNaturalist app is available for [download on iOS devices in the App Store](#) and people with [Android devices can download the app from Google Play](#). The [iNaturalist](#) website can also be used for uploading observations and general exploring at <https://www.inaturalist.org>



[Tom Oliver](#)

Since I was a child, nature, wildlife, and the outdoors have always been my deepest fascination – the intrinsic force which drives me. Those interests led me through, both, my career (in wildlife ecology/management and science education) and my preferred forms of recreation (hiking, backpacking, canoeing and kayaking, photography, hunting and fishing, and birding). Although, I was born and raised in the UP, these pursuits also provided me the opportunity to live overseas (in Europe and Asia) for 15 years, which greatly expanded my experience with the outdoors and outdoor recreation in different cultures. So, if you're interested in anything related to the outdoors, stop by the Lodge (or catch me anywhere you may see me on the grounds) to chat about or get set up for your next outdoor adventure.

