

CONSERVATION NEWS



VOLUME 28
ISSUE 1
SPRING 2015

Disc Golf Course Volunteer Build Day

Saturday, April 18th
9AM-NOON

**Soup lunch to
follow!**



**Please RSVP by April 8th
by calling or emailing
Iowa County Conservation.**

Help Us Get Up to Par

Mike Bode, Director

Our eighteen disc golf baskets showed up last month and we've been busy mowing and clearing brush ahead of the installation that is scheduled for the spring. On Saturday, April 18th, we're asking for help with trimming and cleaning brush, digging out and framing the tee boxes for concrete, and digging and setting the baskets, along with numerous posts for signage. This work day will last from 9am until noon. A soup lunch will be provided for all volunteers.

The work day will be weather dependent, with ground conditions being the main limiting factor. If enough people express interest and we can get a jump start on setting up a few holes, we may even start pouring concrete that day.

Please RSVP by April 8th so we have a count for food and material preparation. If you are unable to come during the morning, feel free to stop by and help during the afternoon. We will be busy at work all day. Service organizations are welcome to come out and help. We need and appreciate all the assistance we can get!

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Behind the Scenes

Shelby Williams, Ranger



Master Gardeners and Friends Foundation help with a large mulch delivery at the butterfly garden.

The staff is constantly on the move, one project to the next, and working on everything at once to keep things running smoothly. However, the Iowa County Conservation Staff wouldn't get anything done if it weren't for the groups behind them. There's money to be raised, bills to be paid, campaigning to be done, people and property to be managed and life to be balanced. They do all of that with little to no recognition and no compensation. Who are these groups? Who keeps the staff ticking?

These people can all be described in one word: volunteers.

First off, we wouldn't get

events like Iowa County Outdoor Adventure Day or projects such as building the bird blind done without volunteers. These volunteers are the citizens and groups who help us out and provide hours and monetary assistance. All of that does not go unnoticed, however, it may not get recognized, and for those volunteers we thank every one of you. The list of volunteers from our local communities is overwhelming and we appreciate every individual and group — the list is so long we can't fit it in the newsletter! For those of you constantly here by our side, offering assistance when able, or providing monetary support, we

couldn't do it without you!



Williamsburg Jr. High volunteers at Lake Iowa helping out with various projects.



Fall Fest by Friends Foundation.

The second group of volunteers we need to acknowledge are those serving on the Iowa County Conservation Board (ICCB) and the Friends of Iowa County Conservation Foundation (Friends Foundation). These two boards may be ones you are familiar with; they make the events like the Memorial Day Weekend Breakfast, Friend's Banquet, and Outdoor Adventure Day happen. Those boards don't stop there; they make the world go 'round for the staff and make sure we are focusing on conservation, education and recreation. These groups ensure the bills get paid, programs are moving in the right direction, and that the staff is always pushing forward.

(continued on page 6)



ICCB takes a look at Gunderson property to see progress made by UYC.

**Iowa County
Conservation Board**

Gordon Dietze, Millersburg
John Gahring, Homestead
Shirley Messer, Ladora
Jim Scandridge, Victor
Marcia Wehner, Williamsburg

**Iowa County
Conservation Staff**

Mike Bode, Director
Caitlin Savage, Naturalist
Shelby Williams, Park Ranger
Shelley Berger, Office Assistant

**Iowa County
Board of Supervisors**

John Gahring
Ray Garringer
Kevin Heitshusen
Vicki Pope
Dale Walter



Eagle Scout project helps us tear down the old showerhouse.

Now Hiring!

Iowa County Conservation is hiring several seasonal positions: Seasonal Conservation Aide, Naturalist Intern, Park Ranger Intern, and GIS Technician. For detailed descriptions and to apply go to: <http://www.co.iowa.ia.us/jobs.htm>

What's the Difference?

Shelby Williams, Park Ranger

I am often approached with inquiries about fishing, hunting, camping, plants, and various other expected questions. Most seem to be followed up with “So, how do you like working for the DNR?” Having worked for both the Iowa DNR and County Conservation, I thought I would attempt to touch on a few differences.

The differences between the DNR and county conservation are minimal in some areas and great in others. There are state and county parks, state and county officers, and state and county employees, all working to provide you with an outdoor experience. There are differences in our organizations as well. For instance, your county parks, such as Lake Iowa, are very locally oriented with county specific laws, while the state parks, such as Lake Macbride, are run by state laws. Another difference is the location of the main supervisors. County supervisors are working in the county we live and work in, while state employees for the DNR have their bosses working regionally (over several counties) or in Des Moines.

One could say they are two completely different government organizations, with missions generally in the same area. We will let you be the judge. Below you will find excerpts from the DNR website and from the County Conservation Board website. Check out their differences:

Iowa DNR

“The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is the state agency responsible for conserving and enhancing Iowa’s natural resources [...] The DNR manages fish and wildlife programs, ensures the health of Iowa’s forests and prairies, and provides recreational opportunities in Iowa’s state parks. Just as importantly, the DNR carries out state and federal laws that protect air, land and water through technical assistance, permitting and compliance programs. The DNR also encourages the enjoyment and stewardship of natural resources among Iowans through outreach and education.”



County Conservation

“The purpose of the county conservation boards is ‘to acquire, develop, maintain and make available to the inhabitants of the county public museums, parks, preserves, parkways, playgrounds, recreational centers, county forests, wildlife and other conservation areas, and to promote and preserve the health and general welfare of the people, to encourage the orderly development and conservation of natural resources and to cultivate good citizenship by providing adequate programs of public recreation.’”



Our overall goals are similar and the two organizations support one another, just how we get it done and what we are capable of doing are the differences.

So, although I don't work for the DNR, I do work in this field for the same reasons. County and State are in this together regardless of what we are called.

Meet the Naturalist

Some of you may have seen me around lately, and for others I may be a new face. For the last few months, I have been working as a Temporary Naturalist for Iowa County Conservation. Recently, I became the permanent Naturalist for the county. I am thrilled to be a part of the Iowa County Conservation team, working towards our goal of natural resource education and conservation.

I have a deep connection with this community, having grown up in Williamsburg. Much of my time as a child was spent exploring outdoor areas in Iowa, whether it was creek stumping, picking up frogs and salamanders, hiking, or swimming. My love for the outdoors led me to apply for my first job in high school as a seasonal conservation technician with Iowa County Conservation. I worked for three summers as a seasonal here, assisting with land management, campground maintenance, and special events.

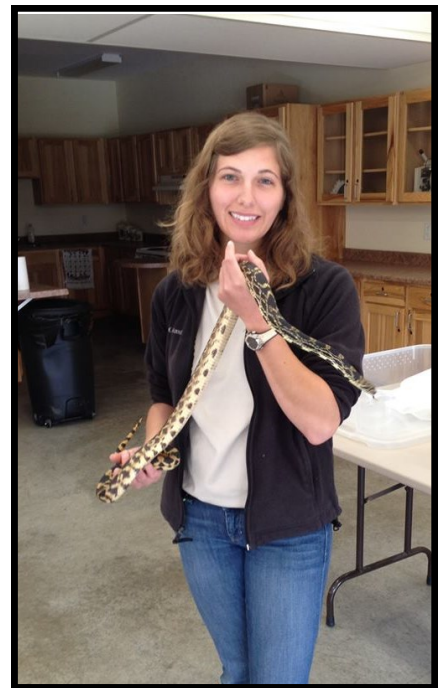
To continue exploring my passion for the natural world, I attended Iowa State University, pursuing a degree in Animal Ecology and Environmental Studies. It was during my time at ISU that I got my first naturalist gig: a summer internship with Louisa County Conservation. When I first took the job, I had no intention of pursuing a naturalist career. I thought it sounded like a rewarding and fun way to spend the summer: exploring the outdoors with kids! It was rewarding, even more so than I had expected. I loved my job, and it was this summer that sparked my desire to work in environmental education.

Upon graduating from ISU in 2012, I completed another summer naturalist internship with Johnson County Conservation. After the season ended, I moved to Faribault, Minnesota, to work as a naturalist educator at River Bend Nature Center for the school year. Since then, I have worked as a summer outreach assistant at the Iowa Children's Museum, a naturalist intern at an Audubon Center in Dayton, Ohio, an outdoor environmental educator at a YMCA camp in Suring, Wisconsin, and a seasonal Naturalist at a State Park in Bottineau, North Dakota. My jobs have taken me around the Midwest, but I couldn't be happier to return to my home state and share my passion for the outdoors with kids who are growing up in the same areas I did.

I have hit the ground running with school and public programs, working to increase our capacities for environmental education and recreation, and planning for summer camps and other programming. I have been loving every crazy minute of it. My goals as ICC Naturalist are to educate both children and adults about their natural environment and to encourage them to spend more time outdoors. I would love to see more kids today exploring ponds and streams, proudly holding up a fish they caught, canoeing, snowshoeing, or just playing outside. I am also eager to play an active role in land management of Lake Iowa Park and our other properties, keeping these areas I grew up in healthy for our future generations.

Coming full circle back to the area I was raised and the organization I first worked for has been a gratifying experience. Some of my most vivid memories from childhood are of school field trips coming out to Lake Iowa Park. I am excited to be an active part of helping children explore and appreciate the outdoors just as naturalists did for me when I was growing up.

Check out the public program schedule on page 11 for some upcoming opportunities to say hello while doing some fun activities. If you are ever out at the campground or the Nature Center, feel free to stop in and say hi. You may also find me outside hiking, kayaking, birdwatching, cross-country skiing, or just exploring!



(continued from page 2)

If you see members of these boards out and about in the community, be sure to thank them, and let them know what you like about what is happening. Our staff can't thank them enough for what they do. Unsure of who they are? The ICCB is made up of five appointed members from the Iowa County community. Currently serving on the ICCB are: Jim Scandridge, Shirley Messer, Gordon Dietze, Marcia Wehner and our newest appointed member John Gahring. Recently, we had a member of the ICCB leave us —Vic Rathje, who served on the board for 15 years. Thank you for your service, Vic! The second board, the Friends Foundation, is made up of a group of volunteers from around Iowa County, and they are always looking for more interested volunteers. The Friends Foundation is made up of: Diana DeMeyer, Candy Crane, Betty Goodman, Bill Shafer, Chris and Ronnie Foster, Joan and Dennis Robinson, Joanna Read, Duane Hinrichs, Shirley Messer and Vicki Van Nevel. Thank you all for your hard work!



ICCB explores the Gunderson property to see the hard work of the UYC.

The third group we must recognize is the families of the staff. The staff works long and sometimes very odd hours, which can take a lot away from the home and a smooth functioning family. The staff's families put forth a lot of volunteer hours, whether it is providing items for or volunteering at events, picking up the slack at home, or helping the staff stay fed during the crazy times. Our families go unrecognized and taken advantage of for the hard work they put in. We appreciate you every day and are glad you are behind us. Having a rock at home is what provides us with the capabilities to keep moving forward!

To summarize what we are trying to say to these amazing people in our lives, we have to let you know that without you, there would be no education, conservation or recreation in Iowa County. We are thankful for your support and generosity, you truly are invaluable.



ICCB members and volunteers take a break from assisting with the tear-down of the old showerhouse.



Take Flight!

Have you ever wondered how an owl flies silently or how a hawk can find its prey? Join presenters from the Macbride Raptor Project (MRP) at Lake Iowa Nature Center. They will discuss birds of prey and the important work the MRP does to protect these animals.

**Saturday, March 21st
2:00pm
Lake Iowa Nature
Center**



Attendees will get the chance to see a live hawk and owl!

Friends Banquet
Saturday, April 11th
Lake Iowa Nature Center

Wine tasting, food provided, silent auction, and more! Purchase tickets by contacting a Friends member. Tickets go quickly, so be sure to get yours today.

Find more details on page 8

**Iowa County Outdoor
Adventure Day**
Saturday, June 27th
Lake Iowa Park



More details to come soon!

If you are interested in volunteering, contact the Iowa County Conservation staff.

Food, Friends, and Fun

**The Friends of Iowa County Conservation Foundation Banquet will be held
Saturday, April 11th.**

Silent Auction begins at 5:00PM

Dinner begins at 6:00PM

Catering by P.H.A.T. Daddy's

Wine tasting by Fireside Winery

Meat and cheese from Roehrkasse Meat Co.

Silent auction, door prizes, and more!

The Friends Banquet has provided a great deal of assistance to large projects for Iowa County Conservation. For instance, the Friends Banquet provided funding for Lake Iowa Nature Center educational supplies, the Playscape, and the Bird Blind, to name a few! There are always projects on the move and the Friends Banquet provides the majority of funding for many of these projects. If you are unable to attend the Friends Banquet but still want to support them, contact us or a Friends member today!

The Friends purpose is: “to maintain, develop, increase, and extend the facilities and services provided by the Iowa County Conservation Board, including, but not limited to, promoting conservation practices through land management, education and environmental preservation.”

Discovering Iowa History

Iowa County Conservation is still working to raise money for a bison hide and supply kit to add to our educational materials. The kit includes bison bones, teeth, horn, tail, hooves, beard, and several other supplies. These materials would be purchased from a South Dakota-based company, whose owner makes everything in the traditional methods used by the Plains Indians.

The bison is an important part of Iowa natural history. We are hoping to get the supplies to use for both public and school programs. Being able to observe a bison hide and see the ways that Native Americans used different parts of the bison is an exciting way to experience this part of our culture.



The bison hide and kit together cost \$1000. An anonymous donor has agreed that if we raise \$500, they will match this amount so we can purchase the bison supplies. To date we have raised about \$100 towards our \$500 goal. If you would like to help us meet our goal, please consider donating. You can fill out the form on the back of the newsletter and send it in with your donation. Please mark your donation for “Environmental Education materials.” Feel free to call us if you have any questions. We appreciate your support!

Getting Ready for Summer Camp!

The chilly temperatures make it seem like summer is nowhere in sight, but we are getting ready for our summer Nature Day Camps. There will be three camps offered this year for three different age groups. Day campers will meet at Lake Iowa Nature Center and spend each day exploring the park, discovering more about nature, and having fun! Each camp will cost \$20 per session per attendee to help cover the cost of materials and snacks.



Additional details will be available starting March 23rd at <http://www.mycountyparks.com/county/iowa.aspx> and on our “Lake Iowa Park” Facebook page. Camp registration will be available starting April 13th at 2:00pm. Registration packets will be posted on our website and on the “Lake Iowa Park” Facebook page. Iowa County schools will also be provided with the information. Registration will be limited to 12 participants per session. If your information is received after the camp fills up, you will be put on a waiting list.

Nature Discovery Camp, 5-7 year olds

June 16—June 19, 9:00am-11:30am

Get outside and discover the wonders of nature! Campers will get firsthand experience in exploring the natural world and trying out exciting outdoor activities.



Junior Naturalist Camp, 8-10 year olds

June 23—June 26, 9:00am-noon

Join us to explore the habitats of Lake Iowa Park! We will venture through the prairie, forest, lakes, and streams and investigate the animals and plants that make their home here.



Outdoor Skills Camp, 11-13 year olds


June 30—July 3, 9:00am-2pm


Are you ready to get outside for some exciting outdoor activities? Campers will go on adventures throughout the park and get the chance to try out canoeing, archery, fishing, and more!





There is the possibility that additional camps may be held in July based on interest and scheduling conflicts. If you are interested in enrolling your child in a summer camp but are unable to make any of these dates, please contact the naturalist by emailing csavage@co.iowa.ia.us to indicate that you would like to be on a mailing list for July camp information.


Creature Feature: White-Tailed Deer

 White-tailed deer get their name because the underside of their tail is white. When they sense danger, they raise their tail to warn other deer.

 In the summer, the deer has reddish-brown fur and spends lots of time in fields. In the winter, its fur is grayish-brown and it spends more time in the forest to provide it with shelter.

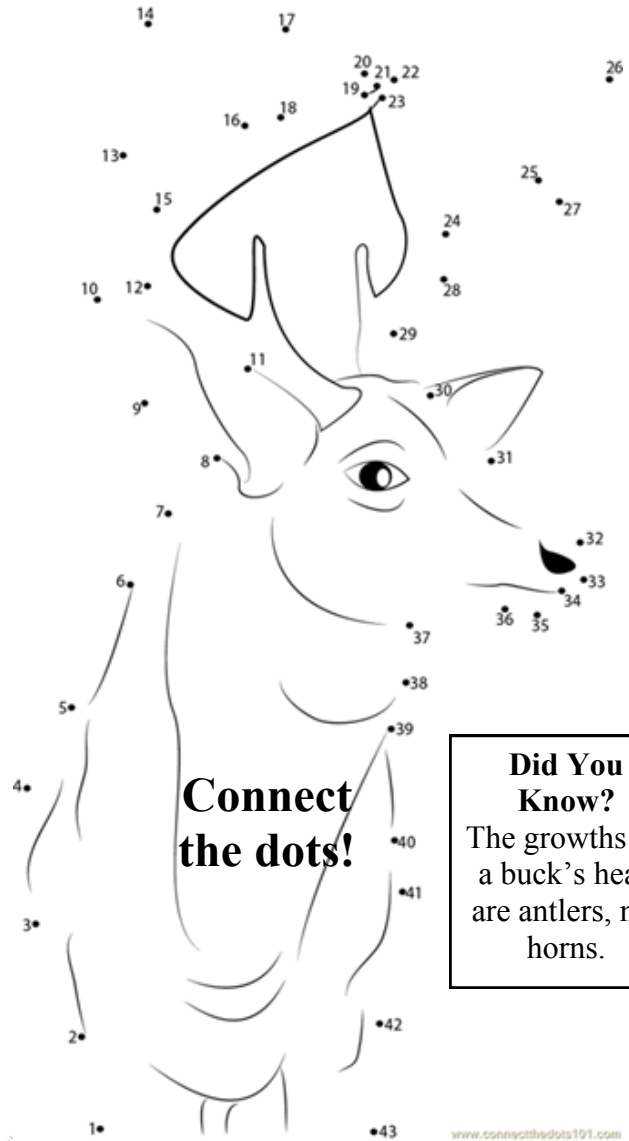
 Male deer are called bucks. Female deer are called does. Only bucks have antlers.

 Bucks grow a new set of antlers each year. In the winter, the antlers fall off. These are called “sheds.” During the spring and summer, bucks grow a new pair of antlers.


 White-tailed deer eat leaves, stems, twigs, fruits, nuts, grass, corn, and mushrooms.




Look for deer tracks in the snow and mud. Their hoof prints make a nearly straight line. Deer often make trails where many deer have taken the same path and pack down the soil and snow.



Did You Know?
The growths on a buck's head are antlers, not horns.

 Deer can be eaten by coyotes and bobcats. This happens most often to young deer, which are called fawns.

 Deer can run up to 30 miles per hour. They can jump as high as 10 feet and as far as 30 feet.



PUBLIC PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Programs will meet at Lake Iowa Nature Center unless otherwise stated. All are free (unless otherwise noted) and everyone is welcome.

Saturday, March 7th

9-10AM: *For the Birds*

While many birds migrate, lots of birds stick around in Iowa, and the cold winter months make it harder for them to find food. Come to the Nature Center to make some bird food treats that you can take home! Afterwards, we will visit our bird blind to see what feathered friends are still here.

10:15-11:15AM:

Snowshoeing Adventure

Come explore the park with this exciting winter travel. We will cover the basics and give it a try. We have snowshoes you can borrow, or you can bring your own. Please pre-register by calling us at (319) 655-8466 or emailing csavage@co.iowa.ia.us by Friday, March 6th. This program will be cancelled if we have less than 4 inches of snow cover.



Saturday, March 21st

2PM: *Take Flight!*

Join presenters from the Macbride Raptor Project (MRP) at the Lake Iowa Nature Center. They will discuss birds of prey, including their habitat needs, identification, and adaptations. They will also talk

about the important work the MRP does to protect these animals. Attendees will get the chance to see a live hawk and owl!



Saturday, May 2nd

10AM-11AM: *Celebrating Moms*

Bring the kids to make a nature craft to celebrate Mother's Day at this family event. Meet at the Nature Center to make a gift to take home.

Saturday, May 23rd

12PM-1PM *Welcome Back, Campers!*

Summer is getting close and that means camping season is starting too! Meet at the Roundhouse for some fun games to celebrate the warming weather. We will also make s'mores to kick off the start to summer.

S'mores supplies will be provided, but you are welcome to bring some of your own. Please bring roasting sticks if you have them.



Wish List

The following items are needed by Lake Iowa Nature Center. Please bring donations to the nature center. Thank you!

- ◆ Cash donations
- ◆ Donations for bird seed
- ◆ Dry erase markers
- ◆ Donations for bison hide and kit (see page 8)

Visit us online at:

www.mycountyparks.com/County/Iowa

Like "Iowa County Conservation" and "Lake Iowa Park" on Facebook.





Iowa County Conservation News

Lake Iowa Park
2550 G. Ave
Ladora, IA 52251

For more information about
Iowa County Conservation,
please contact us:

Director
Park Ranger
Naturalist

319-655-8465 **mbode@co.iowa.ia.us**
319-655-8465 **swilliams@co.iowa.ia.us**
319-655-8466 **csavage@co.iowa.ia.us**

Thank you for supporting the Iowa County Conservation programs with your tax-deductible donation:

Enclosed is my donation for:

___ \$50 ___ \$100 ___ \$500 ___ \$1000
___ \$5000 ___ Other

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Please earmark my donation for:

- ___ Cabin Development
- ___ Lake Iowa Park Improvements
- ___ Environmental Education materials & equipment
- ___ Conservation News newsletter
- ___ Habitat improvement/development on ICCB areas
- ___ Use my donation where needed most
- ___ Other: _____

Send to ICCB, 2550 G. Ave, Ladora, IA 52251

The Conservation News is a quarterly newsletter of Iowa County Conservation and is mailed to those persons on our mailing list. If you know of someone who is not currently receiving the newsletter, but would like to, simply fill out the coupon below and return it to us. There is no charge for the newsletter, although contributions to help defray printing and mailing costs are greatly appreciated. Please help us to keep our costs down and make sure that you get your newsletters on time by keeping us informed of any change of address.

Yes, sign me up to receive Conservation News!

I want to receive *Conservation News* electronically:

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Name: _____

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