

# CONSERVATION NEWS



VOLUME 30  
ISSUE 3  
FALL 2017

## Bees in Iowa County

By: Chris Anderson

My family and I are beekeepers. Last winter we lost our two colonies, so when we moved to Lake Iowa in April we brought with us empty hive boxes that we planned on getting bees for in the Spring of 2018. While I was preparing our garden this spring I could hear honeybees working on some wild grape growing on the garden fence so I watched them for a while. Low and behold they had their colony in the base of a dead Siberian elm in my yard!

During the first week of July I was taking something forgettable to the garage and I happened to walk by my empty hives and there were honey bees pouring out of one of them. A swarm had moved in!

A week or so later my wife was exploring the woods near our house and she found an abandoned hive that had been knocked over by a tree at some point in the past 15 to 20 years from the look of things. One box had not been crushed and had a piece of plywood on top of it which protected it from the weather and it turned out to be full of bees! We moved the hive box up to the area where we had stored our hives, now we have 3 colonies in our yard; two are in hives and one is in a tree.

I have found other bee tree in the park near the Round House and there was a feral colony that moved into the southeast wall of the Nature Center in May.

*(continued on next page)*



### IN THIS ISSUE

- |     |                           |
|-----|---------------------------|
| 1   | Bees in Iowa County       |
| 2   | Bees / From the Director  |
| 3   | Deer in Iowa              |
| 4-5 | Iowa County Outdoor Adv   |
| 6   | Nature's Neat! Kid's Page |
| 7   | Public Program Schedule   |

### ***Bees of Iowa County continued...***

We recently tried to extract the bees from the Nature Center wall because they had started to get into the main floor classroom. We used some scrap lumber and put together a simple horizontal top-bar hive and carefully opened up the exterior wall only to find the bees had absconded (abandoned their site for someplace better). We removed all the comb from inside the walls and sealed up all the possible entrances to keep bees out in the future and we now have a hive all ready to go for next spring to hopefully entice a swarm into. The bees will be used for pollinating the park's fruit trees, community garden and for education. Be sure to keep an eye out for beekeeping classes in the near future and a Pollinator Festival next Fall!

As I explore Lake Iowa and the other properties that Iowa County Conservation manages I see a lot of bees, both native and non-native. There is a lot of focus on honey bees, and rightly so, but our native bees often get lumped together or overlooked altogether. The next time you are strolling through a patch of flowers slow down and see who else is visiting. Are those honey bees? Sweat bees? Carpenter bees? Bumble bees? Not sure? Take a picture and send it to us. We would love to help you learn more!



### **From the Director's Desk**

My first summer at Lake Iowa is coming to an end, and I have to say it was amazing! The park itself is beautiful with good stands of oak and hickory and patches of other diverse hardwoods scattered throughout. The prairies here have a species richness that I have not seen in many other places barring some remnant prairies in the Loess Hills.

The landscape here is appealing to the natural resource manager in me, but the park would not be a park without its people. I have had lots of great talks with park visitors and I love to hear compliments about the park. I am always quick to thank them, and to let them know that I will be sure to tell the people who make the park look so good.

We have volunteers that do the mowing (Gene & Mike), campground hosts that maintain our bathrooms and assist the public (Roy & Rondi), the maintenance staff who keep everything running (Dan, Warren, Anthony & Dakota), the ranger that does the rounds (Phil), the naturalist who answers "what bird/flower/insect is that?" questions (Mary) and the office assistant that works miracles before you even realized they needed working (Shelley).

I want to thank the visitors and staff for making my first summer here so spectacular and I look forward to the future of Lake Iowa and the 13 other Iowa County Conservation Board properties!

# Deer in Iowa

By: Phil DeJarnatt

This year started off with good rains and was not too hot or wet, and then turned a bit dry with a drought in southern parts of Iowa. It looks like a good hatch for turkeys, pheasant, and quail. Some people have been seeing less white-tailed deer. Are they in decline? In some areas but it is not widespread. Although the IDNR dropped the number of doe tags by 2,500 statewide, this will not affect the number of antlerless tags in Iowa County.

Why are the numbers dropping? Several reasons. The main one is Epizootic Hemorrhage Disease (EHD). EHD has hit midwest deer head the past several years. Many midwestern states have reported large deer kill numbers. EHD is commonly thought of as Bluetongue, but it is not, they are two different diseases. EHD is not spread from deer to deer. An infected fly must bite a deer. It's caused by an infection of a virus mainly by the biting midge fly. The only place where the skin is thin enough is by the nose. When bucks are in certain stages of velvet, they can be bitten on the velvet and the virus can get into the bloodstream. This is why it seems to really hit mature bucks hard. EHD can be fatal but not always.



Photo by Larry Reis

Another reason for deer decline is over harvesting of antlerless deer. Most years you can shoot that many doe, but when the herd is dramatically reduced you can't keep on the "normal" herd management. I have friends and family in Illinois that are hunting large low pressure farms and not seeing the deer they used to see. They have been sitting on bean food plots in the snow and not seeing deer. Usually there would be dozens of deer foraging at these late season food sources.

Most areas where EHD is found have a high density of deer. It is one of nature's way of thinning out the herd. A deer herd needs to be managed and kept at that optimum number of animals, for both the habitat and hunters. That's why 10 years ago we started a doe management hunt here at Lake Iowa Park.

Deer numbers in Iowa County are pretty stable, and here at Lake Iowa Park the numbers are strong. On average we harvest about 25 does a year. The doe management hunt here has been going on since 2007. Lake Iowa Park is over 600 acres, most of which is good deer habitat. The park consists of a mix of native grass with forbs, oak/hickory timber, hillsides covered in shrubs and food plots. We offer antlerless, archery, and late muzzleloader tags. How can I get involved you ask? You must attend a safety orientation meeting where we go over all rules and regulations, then you must sign a waiver. For archery hunters, you must qualify. You must shoot 3 out of 5 arrows in a 9" circle at 20 yards. If at first you don't succeed, you can reshoot after a 30 minute period with a max of 3 attempts. Hunters who harvest 3 does in 1 season (bow or muzzleloader, not a combination) are eligible to get an either sex tag for the next years season. An either-sex tag is for harvesting mature bucks, we do not allow the harvest of young bucks. If you have questions please call me at 319-655-8465.

Quality Deer Management Association is a great resource. They are a non-profit organization that puts out educational materials about deer management through print and TV. Check out their website [qdma.com](http://qdma.com). The white tailed deer is one of my favorite game animals to watch and eat. With proper management they will be around for generations. Good luck, enjoy your time in the outdoors.

## 4th Annual ICOA Was a Success! By: Shelley Berger



On a beautiful day in June we excitedly welcomed nearly two hundred fifty children to Lake Iowa Park for the 4th annual Iowa County Outdoor Adventure. We offered them new experiences like meeting a owl at a live raptor station and an interactive stream ecology station. In exchange they gave us grins that spanned from ear to ear.

All of our 75+ volunteers agree this is the main reason they come out and help. It's all about the smiles. Our volunteers are pretty passionate about showing kids there are so many things to do outside! They may be die hard conservationists or avid hunters or maybe they drive a bus or can grill up 500 hotdogs to feed the hungry horde but the one thing

they have in common is a love of passing on their knowledge to the next generation and inspiring kids to get outdoors.



After trying their hands at paddling a canoe, using a GPS unit to locate hidden treasure, or carefully balancing on a slack line strap each child earned a punch on their card. Children who learned about 10 of the 14 stations could bring their punch card back to the registration tent and get sworn in as a Junior Ranger. After promising to learn how to protect our air, land and water and remembering to put safety first they received a badge and a certificate signed by one of the two park rangers who swore them in. Our rangers heard all about how much fun the kids had trying archery for the first time or learning to call a turkey or throwing a spear called an Atlatl at a big hairy mammoth target.



**We hope we have instilled a love for being outdoors and trying new things in every child at Lake Iowa Park on that beautiful day. We know when you ask any of the hundreds of kids who attended Outdoor Adventure about what they learned they will show you a big smile before answering!**

# THANK YOU!



**We are truly lucky to have the support of many organizations and businesses in Iowa County as well as neighboring county conservation departments and Iowa State University. Without them we wouldn't have the funds, manpower or materials to put on an event of this size.**

**Special thanks to:** Iowa County Pheasants Forever, Friends of Iowa County Conservation Foundation, National Wild Turkey Federation, Benton County Conservation, Johnson County Conservation, Iowa County Transportation, Iowa County Ambulance, Raptology, Iowa Trappers Association, Benton County Pheasants Forever, Burr Oak Land Trust, Iowa Learning Farms, Holden Mere and his slacklining team.

**Special thanks to our sponsors:**

Marengo Memorial Hospital, Wade's Golf and Mow, Iowa County Conservation, Pheasants Forever, Corridor Hardwood, Marengo Ready Mix, A8 Restaurant, Elite Sports, Eagle Eye Tactical, National Wild Turkey Federation, Marengo Body Shop, Marengo Farm & Home, Grinnell Mutual Insurance, Victor Lumber, Cooperative Telephone Company, Green Top Lawn & Landscaping, Big G Foods, Freeman Foods, Williamsburg Foods, Whitetail Legends Taxidermy, & Marsha White.

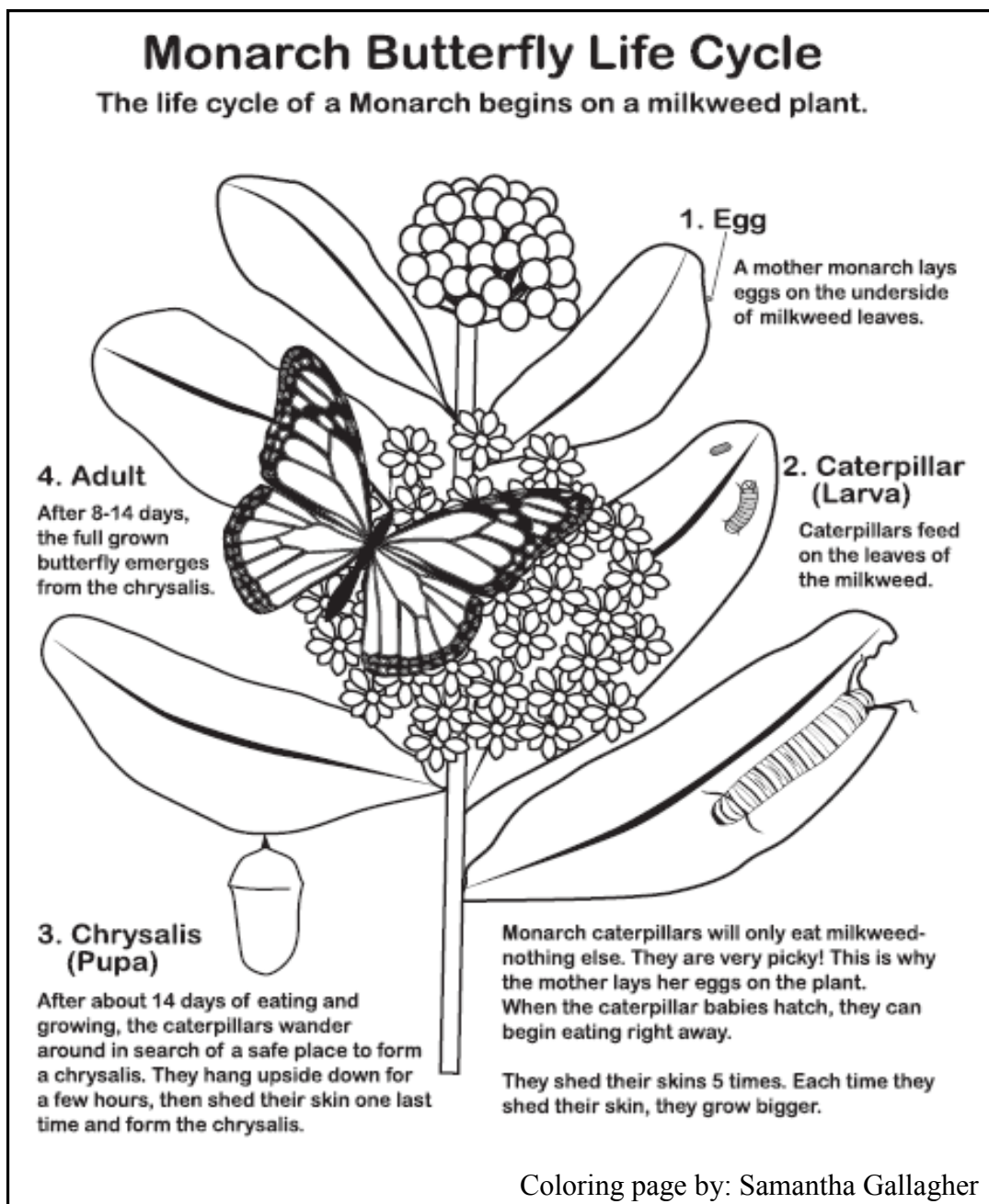


## **The Monarch Butterfly**

The great monarch migration has begun. Did you know the monarch butterfly migrates more than 2,000 miles from Iowa to central Mexico? If you would like to learn more about the monarch butterfly, see real live caterpillars, and tag a butterfly join us at one of our upcoming Monarch tagging programs.

**September 16 - 10-11:30a @ Gateway Park or 1-3pm @ Lake Iowa Park**

*Learn about and color the monarch life cycle coloring page below.*



## ***PUBLIC PROGRAM SCHEDULE***

Programs will meet at Lake Iowa Nature Center if location is not listed.  
**Pre-registration is required by calling Mary at 319-655-8466 or by email [mbulger@co.iowa.ia.us](mailto:mbulger@co.iowa.ia.us)** All are free (unless noted) and everyone is welcome.



### **Seed Harvesting Program**

**October 15th 1-3p**

**Lake Iowa Nature Center**



Join Iowa County Master Gardeners and Iowa County Conservation for joint program about harvesting prairie and other flower seeds.

We will start at the nature center with a short presentation about the history of the prairie in Iowa and the benefits of planting native plants. We will venture out to harvest seeds from our prairie planting, butterfly garden, and other spots in Lake Iowa Park. You will get to take some seeds home with you to start natives in your own yard! Please dress to be outside - long pants and closed toed shoes.

**This program is FREE, please RSVP to [mbulger@co.iowa.ia.us](mailto:mbulger@co.iowa.ia.us)**



### **Blacksmithing Demonstration**

**November 4th 2p**

**Lake Iowa Nature Center**

Join us for a blacksmithing demonstration where you will learn about the terminology of blacksmithing, fire management, hammer techniques and more all while watching useful items being made. There will be opportunities for you to step up to the anvil and swing the hammer a time or two if you like!



### **Holiday Nature Crafts Program**

**December 2nd 1-3p**

**Lake Iowa Nature Center**

Join us at Lake Iowa Nature Center for a fun and creative holiday natural crafts program. We will make crafts out of natural and recycled materials, just in time for gift giving. This is a free family friendly event and all materials will be provided.

**Please RSVP to [mbulger@co.iowa.ia.us](mailto:mbulger@co.iowa.ia.us)**



### **Winter Break Fun!**

**December 27th 1-3p**

**Lake Iowa Nature Center and Park**

Come out to Lake Iowa and celebrate winter break! We will do a variety of fun activities, including winter animal tracking, visiting the bird blind, snowshoeing (if there is at least 4 inches of snow). Dress to be outside in the elements. We will have hot cocoa and indoor activities to warm up afterwards. This is a FREE family friendly event.

**Please RSVP by December 22nd to [mbulger@co.iowa.ia.us](mailto:mbulger@co.iowa.ia.us)**

### **Visit us online at:**

***[www.iowacountyconservation.org](http://www.iowacountyconservation.org)***

***[www.mycountyparks.com/county/iowa.aspx](http://www.mycountyparks.com/county/iowa.aspx)***

***<https://twitter.com/LakeIowaPark>***

**Like "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**  
**Office Assistant**  
**Naturalist**

**319-655-8465 canderson@co.iowa.ia.us**  
**319-655-8465 pdejarnatt@co.iowa.ia.us**  
**319-655-8465 sberger@co.iowa.ia.us**  
**319-655-8466 mbulger@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 ICC, 2550 G Ave, Ladora, IA 52251**

*Conservation News* is a quarterly newsletter of Iowa County Conservation. You can sign up to receive the electronic or hard copy of the newsletter. There is no charge for the newsletter, although contributions to help defray printing and mailing costs are greatly appreciated. By changing your subscription from a hard copy to electronic, it helps us save on printing and mailing! 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!***

If you want to receive *Conservation News* electronically, go to [www.iowacountyconservation.org](http://www.iowacountyconservation.org) to sign up.

**OR**

If you would like to receive *Conservation News* by mail, send completed form to:

**Iowa County Conservation**  
**2550 G Ave**  
**Ladora, IA 52251**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

The Iowa County Conservation Board's programs and facilities are consistent with pertinent federal and state laws and regulations on non-discrimination regarding race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, and handicap. If anyone believes he or she has been subjected to discrimination, he or she may file a complaint alleging discrimination with either the Iowa County Conservation Board or the office of Equal Opportunity, U. S. Department of Interior, Washington D. C., 29240.