



Up and Down the River

JACKSON COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD WINTER 2015

Coming Soon: Reserve and Register Online!

This spring, you will be able to reserve campsites and preregister for programs and events from anywhere! This online system will allow you to pick, reserve, and pay for your campsite at Spruce Creek Park & South Sabula Lake Park in advance for your convenience. More details to come - stay up to date at www.jacksonccb.com.

IHAP Program

Information from the Iowa DNR website

www.iowadnr.gov/Conservation/Wildlife-Landowner-Assistance/Habitat-Access-Program

Imagine your land turned into wildlife habitat with very little effort and no out-of-pocket expenses while you receive annual rent payments. Iowa DNR private lands wildlife biologists will help you turn suitable land into better wildlife habitat and costs will be covered by the Iowa Habitat & Access Program (IHAP). In return, you allow public hunting on your land. Hunters are now able to hunt on almost 9,000 acres of private lands in Iowa, thanks to landowners who participate in the IHAP program.

Currently, Iowa is 49th in the nation in public lands available for hunting.

While having one of the most altered landscapes in the nation, making efforts to expand natural habitat for wildlife and water quality are critical. IHAP properties showcase wildlife habitat and diversity for the hunting public to enjoy. The Iowa DNR received a 3-yr grant from the USDA as part of the 2008 farm bill to fund this pilot program for habitat improvement. In addition, \$1.00 collected from each wildlife habitat fee from Iowa hunters will go to IHAP. Walk-in public hunting through IHAP is available September 1—May 31. Areas are posted with signs and are regularly patrolled by Iowa DNR conservation officers. IHAP tracts are for hunting **ONLY**. Other activities such as target shooting, camping, horseback riding, hiking or professional dog training are prohibited.

Jackson County has three properties currently enrolled in this program. 160 acres located 6.5 miles S of Bernard on Y31. 183 acres located 2 miles N of Bellevue on Hwy 52. The third property, 283 acres located 1.5 miles N of Sabula, was donated by Paul Papke to the county in 2015. The conservation department will take over management of the Papke farm in 2019! Until then, it is open to public hunting only.

For more information about the program or to enroll your property, go online and find the Iowa DNR private lands biologist in your area. Maps of IHAP properties are provided on the IADNR website.



Welcome to Eating Wild

By Jennifer Meyer, Naturalist

Why eat wild? It's the ultimate in fresh and local. You get all the pleasure of harvesting and preparation. Keep invasive species in check. You gain a stronger connection to your home area.

Basics to keep in mind:

Only harvest and consume if you are certain of the identity. There is no shame in staying safe. There are a multitude of apps, books, videos and people you can ask for verification. My favorites are the 'old style' black and white line drawings because I am forced to learn the different growth habits and subtle variations of each species. Color photos are great but



that is such a narrow representation of how it could look. For example, a single oak tree can have over 4 different variations of leaf shape. Relying on common names is risky business since they change seemingly by the township. Latin names are your buddy as are companion growers – like nettle and jewelweed are frequently found together.

Take only what you need. If you don't have a clear idea of how you are going to prepare or store it, only harvest a small portion. All too often I'm sent a photo asking to verify the identity of a species and it is of a whole table full of something. For many of our native species, survival is already difficult so over harvesting an area can have serious repercussions on that population. Limit to 10%.

Try just a bite. Not all of us are going to fall in love with the flavor or preparation the first time. Give yourself a full day to process something new, not all reactions are immediate. Research your allergies. If you are highly allergic to cashews or poison ivy, please stay away from sumac products since they are closely related. Mushrooms can be heavenly or send you to heaven, use caution folks.

Get permission and know the rules. On public lands you are allowed to collect (in moderation) fruits, nuts, seeds, leaves and mushrooms. As long as you practice leave no trace principles, leave roots and parent plants intact and common sense respect you should be fine. On private lands, let the owner know what you are collecting and where it was located. Using good manners makes it fun for others; it is infuriating to see an entire patch of may apples (tasty fruit!) flattened by morel hunters who also left cigarette butts lay.

Safety first. Be sure that landowners know you are there, wear bright colors. Harvest from areas that are not exposed

to pesticides, sewage, heavy traffic exhaust, unsafe water or pet waste. Get to know the safe parts, proper preparation and harvest times for each species (remember how rhubarb stems are tasty but the leaves can be hazardous). Get to know the plants in our area to avoid such as hemlock (toxic), teasel (painful barbs) or parsnip (tasty roots but leaves have an oil that can leave burns when exposed to sunlight). Let someone know where you'll be and when to expect you back.

Some Winter Edibles:

- ◇ Cattail roots and shoots – shoots can be steamed or sauté like bamboo or asparagus, roots turned into flour
- ◇ Pine needles- stave off illness with this tea or nourish your skin with a bath
- ◇ High Bush Cranberries – just like bog cranberries they'll need sweetening

Recipe for White Pine Tea:

High in vitamin C and beta carotene, it can help fight winter colds!

Identify White Pine by looking for bundles of 5 needles (see photo).



To make a cup of a refreshing tea:

1. Collect a small bundle of green needles, the younger the better. A small handful will be plenty.
2. Remove any of the brown, papery sheaths that may remain at the base of the needles; they pull right off.
3. Chop the needles into small bits, about 1/4 to 1/2 inch.
4. Heat about a cup of water to just before boiling.
5. Pour the hot water over about a tablespoon of the chopped needles.
6. Allow to steep (preferably covered) for 5-10 minutes, until the majority of needles have settled to the bottom of the cup. Enjoy your delicious tea!

Stay tuned folks. In the next newsletter I'll be discussing mushroom identification and spring edibles!

This tax season... **Check it & Protect it!**

Help protect Iowa wildlife by donating to the Fish and Wildlife Fund, also known as the Chickadee Check-off, on your Iowa Tax Form 1040.



TEAMING WITH WILDLIFE
a natural investment



Winter/Early Spring Calendar

Dubuque Bald Eagle Watch

Saturday, January 16 from 9:00—4:30

Grand River Center, Port of Dubuque

Exhibitors, vendors, children's activities all day. Minnesota Raptor Center live animal program at 9:00, 12:15, 3:00. Audubon Center of the North Woods live animal program at 11:00, 1:45. Eagle viewing at Lock & Dam #11 all day. Make sure to stop at the Friends of Jackson County Conservation booth for some fun activities!



Sweetheart Night

Friday, February 12 between 6:30-8:30

Hurstville Interpretive Center

With over a mile of trails to stroll in our restored prairie, you can take time to be with your loved one this Valentine's day. Our naturalist staff has fun activities lined up for the little ones inside, so you can enjoy a peaceful evening under the stars. Light refreshments provided.

Cabin Fever Day

Monday, January 18 from 1:00—3:00 pm

Hurstville Interpretive Center

Make this a long weekend to remember! Get out of the house for an afternoon of critters, snow creations (weather depending), crafts, and cocoa! Parents can stay and play or drop off children (2nd grade and up, please) for an afternoon of new friends and new nature adventures. This program is free and open to all ages.

Group Snowshoeing, Cross Country Skiing & Ice Skating Every Wednesday in February February 3, 10, 17, 24 from 4:00-5:30 pm Hurstville Interpretive Center



Let's get outside this winter! A naturalist will be on hand to loan out snowshoes and teach you the basics of snowshoeing. Feb 3, Ann Burns will join us to teach basic cross country skiing techniques. Enjoy snowshoeing and skiing around the prairie and marsh. Ice skaters are welcome both on the marsh & pond (no instruction provided). A minimum of 4" of snow is required for snowshoes & cross country skis (4" ice for skating). Snowshoes are provided; participants must provide their own skis & ice skates.

Block Party

Friday, February 5 between 4:00—7:00 pm Roshek Building—Dubuque

The Friends of Jackson County Conservation will be joining the arena for the annual Block Party hosted by the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque. Over 60 non-profit organizations in the area will be promoting their institutions to community members. Come experience the costumes, treats, games and fun with Friends of JCC.

Great Annual Backyard Bird Count February 12—15, 2015

Join in on this annual four-day event that engages bird watchers in counting birds across the continent. Count birds for at least 15 minutes. Log your results at www.birdsource.org/gbbc/. Its fun, free, fast, and easy.

Cabin Fever Day

Monday, February 15 from 1:00—3:00 pm

Hurstville Interpretive Center

Make President's day a long weekend to remember! Get out of the house for an afternoon of critters, snow creations (weather depending), crafts, and cocoa! Parents can stay and play or drop off children (2nd grade and up, please) for an afternoon of new friends and new nature adventures. Free and open to all ages.

Owl Prowl

Friday, February 19 at 6:00 pm

Eden Valley Refuge, south of Baldwin

Join naturalist Jess Wagner in learning about owls of Iowa and their adaptations that make them great nighttime hunters. Following the program inside at the nature center, we'll head out on the trails to call the owls with the help of Bob Walton. Dress for the weather and be prepared to hike up to 2 miles. All ages welcome.

Winter Fun Day

Saturday, February 20 from 1:00—3:00 pm

Hurstville Interpretive Center

Winter is winding down so we're making the most of it! Join us for an afternoon of winter activities, experiments and play! Warm up with cocoa and games inside. Winter Fun Day is free and open to all ages.

Program Cancellation Policy— In some circumstances, weather or otherwise, we may have to cancel a program. Anyone who preregisters for a program (whether required or not) will be contacted if the program is canceled. We will send cancellation information to KMAQ 95.1 and post it on the Hurstville Center's Facebook page.

Special Needs— Our public programs are designed for enjoyment and education for all ages and varying abilities. If you have special needs, please contact our office prior to an event.

Pre-registration— Some programs require pre-registration. To sign up for a program, please call us at (563) 652-3783.

Cost— Programs are free of charge unless otherwise noted. Donations are accepted.

Lunch & Learn—OWL Event
Attracting Butterflies in Iowa
Thursday, March 3 at Noon
Central Park, Jones County

Thanks to the wonderful work of pollinators, we can all enjoy many tasty foods! Come and learn how you can enhance your yard or land to attract butterflies from Dennis Schlict, author of the book *Butterflies of Iowa*. Optional lunch (\$ TBD) at Noon. Presentation (free) at 1:00.

OWL—Older Wiser Livelier

Adult Program Series in partnership with Dubuque & Jones County Conservation We have some great programs and events scheduled for 2016! OWL Events are posted on our website and at: olderwiservivelielivier.weebly.com

Leopold Reading
Sunday, March 6 at 3:00 pm
Hurstville Interpretive Center

The words Aldo Leopold wrote in 1948 still strike a note today: "There are some who can live without wild things, and some who cannot." These words are the start of Leopold's famous book, *A Sand County Almanac*, one of the best-loved conservation classics of all time. Come and listen to members of the community read aloud essays and take part in the discussions about the responsibility people have to the land we inhabit.

Duck Waddle
Saturday, March 19 At 7:00 am
Green Island Wildlife Refuge

Join Dubuque Audubon in their annual spring duck and waterfowl count. Great for beginning birders to learn from seasoned bird watchers and for anyone wanting to freshen up on waterfowl identification.

Egg-ceptional Egg-travaganza
Thursday, March 24 from 10:00—11:30 am
Hurstville Interpretive Center

Join a naturalist in learning about animals that lay eggs. All ages are welcome to explore with us through fun games, activities, experiments and more relating to eggs.

Woodcock Walk
Friday, April 1 at 7:00 pm
Whitewater Canyon

The woodcock mating ritual is truly a remarkable sight. This small, camouflage, timber nesting bird has a few strange attributes and will amaze hikers with its aerial acrobat moves! Dress for the weather and be prepared to hike up to 1 mile. Whitewater Canyon is located 5 miles NE of Cascade off Curoe Rd.

Programs are listed online at www.jacksonccb.com. With an online reservation system coming in 2016, participants will be able to pre-register and pay for our programs and events online!



Snowshoeing Just Got Easier!

If you can walk, you can snowshoe—yes its that simple! Snowshoeing is great cardiovascular exercise, but more importantly, it gets you outside enjoying the winter wonderland around you!



Don't have a pair? We have you covered. We are loaning out our snowshoes for FREE this winter during regular business hours if they are used around the Hurstville Nature Area. Stomp along the trails, through the prairie and even more fun, hike across the frozen, snow covered marsh! Want to borrow them for the weekend? For \$5 you can rent a pair of snowshoes from Friday-Monday (a deposit is required). A minimum of 4" of snow is necessary to use our snowshoes.

Now... Let it Snow!!!!



We are upgrading our snowshoe inventory from plastic sets to aluminum frames. To accommodate school groups, we are seeking monetary donations or used snowshoes to help increase our inventory.

Any help is appreciated! Thank you!

Swans at Hurstville

The end of November and beginning of December was a great time for birding at the Hurstville Marsh. A bevy of swans stopped over during migration. The high count on Nov. 27 was 15.



Migrating swans stop over at Hurstville Marsh this fall. Photo by David Updegraff

And yes, there are three swans in our captive area. We have again found ourselves with a young injured swan. The swan was found at a

quarry in Clinton County where it appeared it injured its wings on some dredging equipment when flying in or out of the pond. It will hang out with our captive pair Fred & Ginger for the next couple months and we will monitor it.

We're upgrading!

You will see some changes on our website this spring! In anticipation of our reservation system, we're moving to a mobile-friendly website that has online reservation capabilities! You can still find us at www.jacksonccb.com, we will just look a bit different.

Fall Fun with County Conservation!



Briggs 3rd graders helped tag and release monarch butterflies. We tagged a total of 175 monarchs this fall.



DeWitt 2nd graders learned about erosion, flooding and other impacts of water using our new stream table during their fall field trip to the Center.

Mr. Hurst aka Bob Koranda shared stories of Hurstville during our annual Halloween Hike.



Participants enjoyed geocaching and hiking on a beautiful fall morning at Prairie Creek this past November.



Kid's corner

Ice Wreath: use a round dish or bundt pan, fill it with water, add something from nature, freeze it over night.

If the weather keeps you indoors, bring nature inside with you! Collect sticks, pine cones and rocks along with any craft supplies you have (pipe cleaners, felt, googly eyes, yarn, paint) and have fun creating winter nature crafts!



Bird Feeder: cut a hole out of a milk jug, fill with seed, hang up outside with string and watch the birds!



Friends of Jackson County Conservation



Your Contributions Are Appreciated!

Thank you to everyone who made a donation this past year! We truly appreciate your support for conservation in Jackson County! Your donations help in many ways:

- * Fund bus grants for students to participate in nature related field trips,
- * Take in injured swans that we care for temporarily,
- * Sponsor special events, such as the BioBlitzes at Prairie Creek in 2015,
- * Improvements to our parks, such as additions to the outdoor natural playscape at the Center that kids and visitors of all ages love to explore!
- * Sponsor special projects, such as the Safari program
- * And much more!

Thanks again for your contribution!!

Are you interested in supporting parks and conservation education in Jackson County? Make a donation or become a member of Friends of Jackson County Conservation. Donations can be sent to FJCC, 18670 63rd St Maquoketa, IA 52060 or become a member by filling out the form on the last page of this newsletter. Potential donors can also consider making a donation to the endowment fund for lasting sustainability of our organization. Endow Iowa tax credits are available.

Recap of Projects in 2015

- ◆ Received a \$2,000 grant from NEEF to host three BioBlitz events at Prairie Creek to learn more about the flora and fauna at the new park.
- ◆ Participated in Great Give Day through the Community Foundation and raised over \$4,000 for our endowment fund.
- ◆ Hosted a Volunteer Fair last spring at the Center to showcase volunteering opportunities with us as well as with other non-profits in the community.
- ◆ Provided funding for a summer naturalist intern to assist the staff with environmental programming.
- ◆ Raises funds to care for the live education animals at the Center, including box turtles, snakes, hissing cockroaches and trumpeter swans.
- ◆ Provided funding for our summer youth corps My Community My Future program.
- ◆ Held a native prairie seed sale.

Next Friends Meeting

Tuesday, January 12, 2016

2016 Quarterly Meetings will be held the 2nd Tuesday of January, April, June and October.

Schedule for Meetings: Friends Board meets at 6:00; Potluck at 6:30; Business Meeting at 7:00 pm.



Friends Board

Welcome new board member Julie Reuter!!

2016 Friends of Jackson Co. Cons. Board Members:

Jeremy Meyer, Chair

Julie Reuter, Vice Chair

Wendy Hainstock, Treasurer

Sandy Walton, Secretary

Kathi Atkinson, Volunteer Coordinator

Chris Cornelius, Conservation Board Representative

Jessica Wagner, Staff Representative

Get Involved!

Friends has various committees that members can serve on to help keep the organization running great! Email friends@jacksonccb.com or call our office if you are interested in helping with any of the following committees.

You must pay member dues to be on a committee.

- ⇒ Board (elections at June meeting)
- ⇒ Fundraising
- ⇒ Bus Scholarship
- ⇒ Annual Report
- ⇒ Membership
- ⇒ Advertising
- ⇒ Bookkeeping
- ⇒ Gift Shop
- ⇒ Strategic Planning
- ⇒ Prairie Creek Rec Area

Annual Report

The Friends of Jackson County Conservation Annual Report is available on our website or contact our office to request a copy.



BioBlitz participants learn about Iowa's turtle species after discovering a painted turtle at Prairie Creek.



A SPECIAL THANK YOU!

Jackson County Conservation would like to thank and acknowledge the following individuals, organizations and businesses for their continued support and donations. With your help, we have been able to do so much more!!!

Volunteered this fall: Maury Anderson, Brianna Arnold, Kathi Atkinson, Don Becker, Lou Behrend, Judy Bickford, Jenna Breitbach, Ann Burns, Solange Carpenter, Alice Gilmore, Dave Gossman, Linda Grobstick, Wendy Hainstock, Ray Hayes, Rusty Hayes, Mary Hayward, Chris Johnson, Ray Johnson, Andy Johnson, Dakota Jordan, Katie Kimmel, Bob Koranda, Dave Lauricha, Pete Maier, Karen Manning, Mary Ann McLaughlin, Mary Mether, Dean Nelson, Stephanie Schmidt, Bonnie Schwenker, Dave Shealer, Jeff Tampir, Chris Tubbs, June Wahl, Sandy Walton, Bob Walton, Don Wentworth, Jennie Wilcox, Family Dollar Employees, Green Iowa AmeriCorps Volunteers

Donations—Family Dollar of Maquoketa (supplies for Youth Outdoor Skills Day), Tom Lally (milkweed seed), Karen Manning (bird feeders), Paula Sufficool (carved bird), Jeff & Denise Swanson (misc toys, program materials), Teri Wiese (EE supplies, stream table, office supplies, curriculum)

Cash Donations—Steven & Christine Tubbs, Sam & Pam True, Diane Melatek, Wanda Cornelius, John & Jeanne Hoesley, Joseph Tollari, Anonymous, Ruth Casteel, Friends of Maquoketa Caves, William & Marlys Brown, Beth Norpel, US Bank

Donations made in memory or in honor of:

Dorothy Nabb



Board Members

Chris Cornelius, Chair	Andrew	563/672-3590
Randy Bender	Bellevue	563/872-5953
Kathy Wosoba	Monmouth	563/673-4551
Larry McDevitt	Maquoketa	319/541-6357
Don Yanda	Maquoketa	563/652-2706

Board Meetings

The Jackson County Conservation Board meets in regular session the third Tuesday of every month at 6:00 pm. Meetings are held at the Hurstville Center (unless stated otherwise). Meetings are open to the public.

Office Address & Contact Information

18670 63rd Street Maquoketa, IA 52060

Phone: (563) 652-3783

Fax: (563) 652-2191

Spruce Creek Shop (563) 872-3621

E-mail jacksonccb@jacksonccb.com

Websites: www.jacksonccb.com

www.MyCountyParks.com/County/Jackson.aspx

www.facebook.com/HurstvilleInterpretiveCenter

Conservation Staff

Daryl Parker	Executive Director
Jessica Wagner	Environmental Ed. Coordinator
Ryan Owen	Park Ranger
Jeannie Collins-Heer	Park Ranger
Jerry Widel	Operation Technician
Pam True	Office Manager
Jennifer Meyer	Naturalist
Emily Highnam	Naturalist

Seasonal Conservation Jobs

The Jackson County Conservation office will be hiring seasonal staff for next summer. Tentatively we will be hiring two conservation workers, a naturalist intern and a youth corps co-leader. Jobs will be posted sometime in February and will close in March. Work will take place May-August. Seasonal conservation workers assist with the care and maintenance of our county parks. The naturalist intern aids the environmental education staff with programs and conservation education. The youth corps co-leader helps lead the summer My Community My Future program.

Jobs will be posted online at www.jacksonccb.com and www.mycountyparks.com/Jobs/Default.aspx

NATURE AROUND US BY SCOTT PATTON

AS YOU TRAVEL ACROSS THE COUNTRYSIDE ON ANY HIGHWAY, KEEP AN EYE ON THE NEARBY POWER LINES. SOONER OR LATER YOU WILL PROBABLY SPOT AN AMERICAN KESTREL, OUR SMALLEST FALCON. LOOK CLOSELY AND YOU MAY SEE THE BLUE-GRAY WINGS (OF THE MALE), CONTRASTING RUSTY BACK AND TAIL, AND SPOTTED BELLY THAT IDENTIFY THIS DIMINUTIVE RAPTOR. FROM ITS HIGH PERCH IT SCANS THE DITCHES, LOOKING FOR SMALL ANIMALS TO EAT. THE MILES OF OPEN GRASSY ROADSIDES PROVIDE IDEAL HABITAT FOR THE KESTREL, ESPECIALLY WHEN NESTING BOXES ARE PRESENT.



Jackson County Conservation
Hurstville Interpretive Center
18670 63rd Street
Maquoketa, IA 52060

PRE SORTED STANDARD
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Renewal or New Membership

Renew your membership now! Friends of Jackson County Conservation membership run from **July 1—June 30**. Clip the form below and mail in with a check.



Friends of Jackson County Conservation Membership Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone number: _____

Email Address: _____

Type of Membership (Please check one per form and make checks payable to FJCC)

Student \$5

Regular \$10

Senior Citizen \$5

Family \$20

Sustaining \$50

Individual Life \$500

Amount Enclosed..... _____

Please send memberships to:

Friends of Jackson County Conservation
18670 63rd Street
Maquoketa, Iowa 52060

Printed on recycled paper

Hurstville Interpretive Center

Offices for Jackson County Conservation

Hours Monday—Friday 9:00 am—4:00 pm

Closed Weekends January– March

Open Weekends April—December

No Admission Fee!



Holidays:

OPEN Martin Luther King Jr. & President's Day

Environmental Ed. Wish List

Gently USED items are OKAY!

- ◇ Snowshoes (adult & youth size)
- ◇ Black oil sunflower seed or Theisen's gift card for seed
- ◇ Monetary contributions for a sound component for our prairie and wetland dioramas at the Center for visitors to learn more about sounds and calls of local wildlife.
- ◇ Portable fire pit
- ◇ Markers, crayons, colored pencils
- ◇ Help fund a new set of binoculars for student and public programs.