



CONSERVATION NEWS



A Publication of the Muscatine County Conservation Board

Volume 28 No. 3 Fall 2011

It's Trout Time

Trout will once again be released in Discovery Pond at Discovery Park in Muscatine. The release will be November 5, 2011 at 10:30 am. One hundred trout will be tagged and anyone who catches a tagged trout on November 5th by 4:00 p.m. will receive a \$10 gift card from Blain's Farm and Fleet, and be placed into a drawing for a \$100 gift card.

This will be the third stocking in Discovery Pond with 1000 fish expected to be released. This stocking is part of the Iowa DNR's Urban Trout Fishing Program. One of the goals of the program is to give people a chance to try their hand at trout fishing close to home, with hopes that they will make a trip to the trout streams of Northeast Iowa.

Trout fishing is new to this area and with previous releases we have found that some of the rules particular to trout fishing were unclear to fishermen. Hopefully the following explanations will help.

- Iowa residents and nonresidents who are required to have a fishing license must pay the

Trout Fee (\$12.50) to fish for or possess trout. Exception: Iowa residents and nonresidents under 16 years old may possess or fish for trout without having paid the Trout Fee if they fish with a properly licensed adult who has paid the Trout Fee and together they limit their catch to the one person daily limit of five (5) trout. Children under 16 years old have the option to purchase their own trout privilege, which allows them to fish without a properly licensed adult and keep their own daily limit of five (5). (2011 Iowa Fishing Regulations)

- Daily limit is five (5) trout. Possession limit is ten (10) trout. "Party fishing" is not allowed. Persons fishing for trout are to catch and possess their own trout.
- Fish that you catch cannot be sorted. Once a fish you catch goes onto a stringer or into a basket, bucket or other container it is yours and counts as part of your daily and possession limit.

The trout releases in Discovery Pond are a unique opportunity for Muscatine. Normally in the Urban Trout Stocking Program trout are released in larger ponds or small lakes where the trout would have more places to hide and find shelter. In Discovery Park our small pond concentrates the fish, and at least in theory makes them easier to catch. Most people still have to work for their trout in Discovery Pond, but experienced fishermen may have greater success. The rules regarding daily and possession limits are not intended to hinder fishing opportunities, rather they aim to provide more people a fair chance to catch trout.



2011 MYCC

The Muscatine Youth Conservation Corps finished work on July 29. The eight kids and two crew leaders worked for six weeks on projects for the Conservation Board and the City of Muscatine.

Some of the projects the crews worked on for the City were building a footbridge at Weed Park and pouring a cement sidewalk in the rose garden. Projects done for the Conservation Board were building a fishing dock at Discovery Park, building hand rails on the stairs at Jack Shuger Memorial Park, and mulching trees and shrubs.

The crews also banded geese with the Iowa DNR and took a canoe float trip down the Cedar River.

The 2011 MYCC program was made possible by the financial support of the following local city and county governments, businesses, industries, and organizations. Thank you for your support!

City of Muscatine
Muscatine Foods Corporation
Muscatine Chapter of the Izaak Walton League
Central State Bank
First National Bank
Community Bank
Muscatine County
HNI Charitable Foundation
Kiwanis Club of Muscatine
H.J. Heinz Company
SSAB of Iowa



Installing the deck on the Heron Hideaway Pond fishing dock.

Volunteers Needed

Lots of volunteers are needed for a big event like the Halloween Hike on Friday & Saturday, October 21 & 22. If you love the spotlight we can give you a part as one of the crazy characters, or we have jobs for trail guides, trail maintenance,



pumpkin carving, and other behind-the-scenes duties. We'd love to have you help on one or both nights. Contact Michelle, (563) 264-5922, if you are interested in volunteering.



Pouring a sidewalk at the Weed Park Rose Garden



Dakota Even helps a DNR employee band a Canada goose.



Thank You

Thank you to everyone who donated time, funding, and materials in support of our projects and programs. We sincerely appreciate your generosity.

Carol Christophersen - getting the summer newsletter ready for mailing.

Roberta Gabbard - getting the summer newsletter ready for mailing.

Julie Herold - instructing the Polliwog Playtime classes and books for the environmental education program.

Riley Eichelberger - books for the environmental education program.

Early Childhood Professionals - monetary donation for our environmental education program.

Fred Campbell - fishing rods, reels, and tackle.

Stern Family - deer bones.

Brian Steele & Family - monarch eggs, caterpillars, and butterflies.

Michelle Bovenkamp & Family - monarch eggs and caterpillars.

Thanks Instructors

Thanks to the following who took time out of their busy schedules to help with one or more of the five Hunter Education classes held in Muscatine County in 2011.

Jim Amlong

Larry Britton

Ron Bushell

Ryan Friederich

Gene Hammons

Curt Koele

Cathy Orr

Todd Stammer

Warren Bishop

Bruce Bryant

Ray Dietrich

Dave Gregg

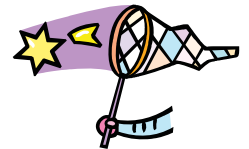
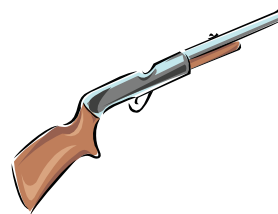
Kathy Hundoble

Mark Rutherford

Larry Orr

Bill Sterner

Also, thanks to the West Liberty Gun Club for the use of their facilities for the live firing part of the Hunter Education classes, and the Wilton and West Liberty high schools for use of classroom facilities.



Thanks Volunteers

Thank you to all who took time from their busy schedules to help with summer nature camps. We really appreciate all your help. Our apologies if we missed anyone.

Jan Forbes

Karol Cochran

Al Wagner

Shawna Trosen

Kurt Schlawin

Janice Smith

Ari Bakke

Steve Forbes

Julie Herold

Kally Boyer

Andy Trosen

Tom Trego

Dan Fasse

Programs and Special Events

CANOE & KAYAK TRY-IT!

Come out to Saulsbury and give canoeing and kayaking a try! This activity is family-friendly, although children must weigh at least 30 pounds in order to participate. Basic instruction will be offered and all equipment will be provided. See you there!

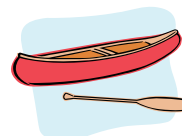


Sunday, October 2

3:00-5:00 p.m.

Saulsbury Bridge Recreation Area-Chicken Creek

Free



FURHARVESTERS EDUCATION

This hands-on, outdoor class is for anyone who wants to learn more about Iowa's furbearers. Topics covered include Ethics & Responsibility, Pelt Preparation, Hunting with Hounds, Trapping, Predator Calling, Laws, and more. Students should bring rubber boots and a flashlight. Food and drink will be provided.

Saturday, October 8 1:00-9:00 p.m.

Saulsbury Lodge-Saulsbury Bridge Recreation Area

Free - Preregistration required on-line at www.iowadnr.gov/training

REAP ASSEMBLY

The Region 9 (Muscatine and Scott counties) REAP Assembly is scheduled to be held in Muscatine. For more information about the REAP program see page 7.

Monday, October 10 5:30-8:00 p.m.

Environmental Learning Center

23RD ANNUAL HALLOWEEN HIKE



Come join our cast of crazy characters for one of our most popular family events, the 23rd Annual Halloween Hike. The theme this year is *State Symbols*. Meet the Goldfinch, Oak, Geode, and Wild Rose, who will all share their stories of why they were chosen to represent Iowa, plus a few characters who think they should be chosen to represent our state.

Friday, October 21 and Saturday, October 22

7:00 p.m. with a new hike starting every 10 minutes until 8:00 p.m.

Discovery Park

\$4.00 per person, under 5 years of age free

Tickets are required and may be purchased beginning October 1 at the Learning Center.

Programs and Special Events

TROUT RELEASE

The Iowa DNR will release 100 tagged rainbow trout in Discovery Pond. Fishing can begin immediately after the release. Tagged trout caught before 4:00 p.m. that day may be turned in for a prize. All state fishing regulations apply including requirement of a trout stamp.



Discovery Pond in Discovery Park
Saturday, November 5
10:30 a.m.

NATIVE AMERICAN TALES

Many years ago Native Americans told stories that were meant to teach a lesson as well as stories just for fun. Dave Bakke and other guest storytellers will share some of these stories from long ago.



Saturday, November 19
7:00 p.m.
Environmental Learning Center
Free

HOLIDAY NATURE CRAFTS

Join us for some holiday craft making. We'll use items from nature as well as some recycled items. All materials will be provided.

Saturday, December 3
10:00 a.m.
Learning Center
Free



POLLIWOG PLAYTIME

ages 18 months through 3 years **\$4.00/class** **maximum 12/class**

Join us at the Environmental Learning Center and Discovery Park for activities designed to help toddlers explore nature. Children must be accompanied by an adult. All classes meet on a Thursday from 9:15-10:15 a.m.

October 13	"Fall Happenings"	January 12	"Owl Moon"
November 10	"Tails"	February 9	"Terrific Turtles"
December 8	"Snow Way"	March 8	"Busy Bees"
		April 12	"Animal Babies"

KNEE-HIGH NATURALISTS

4-5 year olds **\$4.00/class** **maximum 12/class**

Join us at the Environmental Learning Center and Discovery Park for nature activities such as games, crafts, stories, and exploration. Children must be accompanied by an adult. All classes meet on a Saturday from 10:00-11:00 a.m.

October 8	"Fall Happenings"	January 14	"Owl Moon"
November 12	"Tails"	February 11	"Terrific Turtles"
December 10	"Snow Way!"	March 10	"Busy Bees"
		April 14	"Animal Babies"



Michelle's Creature Feature

American Kestrel

There isn't a week that goes by that I don't see this bird perched on a post while driving. I bet that most of you have seen this bird but maybe just don't know the name. The American Kestrel was formally known as the "sparrow hawk" but was changed to its current name because it is actually part of the falcon family. This colorful bird also has been called the killyhawk for the call they make and the windhover for the way it hunts.

Kestrels are the one of the smallest birds of prey in North America, about the size of a blue jay, and are also one of the most common birds seen perched along highways on utility wires or fence posts. They use these perches to spot favorite foods such as insects, small mammals, reptiles, and even birds. Kestrels catch prey with their feet and then deliver a fatal bite to the head. They are fast flyers at forty mph and their diving speeds can reach sixty mph.

Kestrels are very adaptable birds living in many places close to humans. Their preferred habitat includes open areas such as farm fields, grasslands, and even city parks. They are found throughout North, Central, and South America. The most northern populations migrate but in our area Kestrels are found all year round.

In most birds of prey, the female is larger than the male, and Kestrels are no exception. Generally females are 9-11 inches in body length and have a wingspan of 22-24 inches, while males are slightly smaller, with a body length of 8-10 inches and a wingspan of 20-22 inches. As with other birds, males are more colorful than females. Males have more blue-gray on their wings while females have more of a rusty brown color on their wings. Males have a rusty brown back and tail with a black tip while females have a rusty colored back with a brown barring on the tail. Both males and females have two black marks vertically positioned below and behind the eye.

Kestrels are aggressive birds that will even run off a bird larger than themselves. They use their calls while flying and to warn other birds from coming to close to them. The most common call is a piercing and sharp "killy-killy-killy."

Kestrels are monogamous birds that will form a strong bond. Courting takes place in April and in Iowa eggs are usually laid in late April or early May. They nest in cavities and do not make their own cavities so they often use old woodpecker cavities. Kestrels will readily use man-made nesting boxes. Four to five white and speckled brown eggs hatch into featherless young twenty to thirty days later. The young are cared for by both parents. For the first seven to ten days the female stays with the chicks while the male brings them food. Twenty to thirty days after hatching the young leave the nest (fledge). For the next two to three weeks the young learn how to hunt with their parents and siblings. After their training, the young kestrels are independent. Kestrels can have young after their first year.

Collisions with wires and windows, illegal shooting, predation by larger raptors, and pesticide poisoning are a few of the dangers that kestrels face. Kestrels can live up to eleven years in the wild although most don't live past two years with all of the dangers.

If you want to help Kestrels out, build some nest boxes and place them in open areas where they can find their favorite foods. They are active during the day, so keep your eyes open along stretches of highway for our smallest raptor.



Male American Kestrel

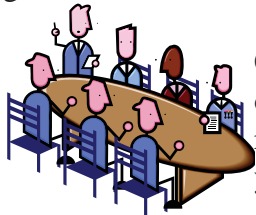
Teachers

Call us at (563) 264-5922 or email us at conservation@co.muscatine.ia.us to schedule a classroom visit from one of the naturalists and/or to schedule a fall, winter or spring fieldtrip to Discovery Park and the Environmental Learning Center or Saulsbury.



Meeting Space

Just a reminder that the Environmental Learning Center classroom is available for your business or organization to rent for meetings.



Call the Conservation Board office, (563) 264-5922, for rental rates or to schedule your event.

Discovery Park Picnic Shelter

The large picnic shelter, located just east of the Environmental Learning Center parking lot, at Discovery Park has proven to be a very popular picnic spot with seating for up to 100, lots of parking and a modern restroom next door.

It's not too soon to start making reservations for next summer. Reservations are already coming in for 2012 summer events. The fee is \$35.00 to rent the shelter for a day.



Please call the Conservation Board office at (563) 264-5922 to reserve this shelter.

REAP Assembly

Now is the time to act. For clean water and places for healthy outdoor recreation ... saving crucial topsoil and helping wildlife flourish ... helping Iowans of all ages learn conservation essentials ... helping communities to protect their cultural treasures. It's formal name is the Resource Enhancement and Protection program. Most of us know it simply as REAP. Any way you say it, it's central to keeping our Iowa home at its best.



Please plan to attend your local REAP Assembly and voice your support for REAP and its current broad spectrum of conservation benefits.

The Region 9 REAP Assembly which covers Muscatine and Scott counties will be held on Monday, October 10 at the Environmental Learning Center, 3300 Cedar St., Muscatine. The open house, which includes displays, runs from 5:30-6:30 p.m. with the assembly running from 6:30-8:00 p.m.

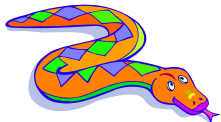
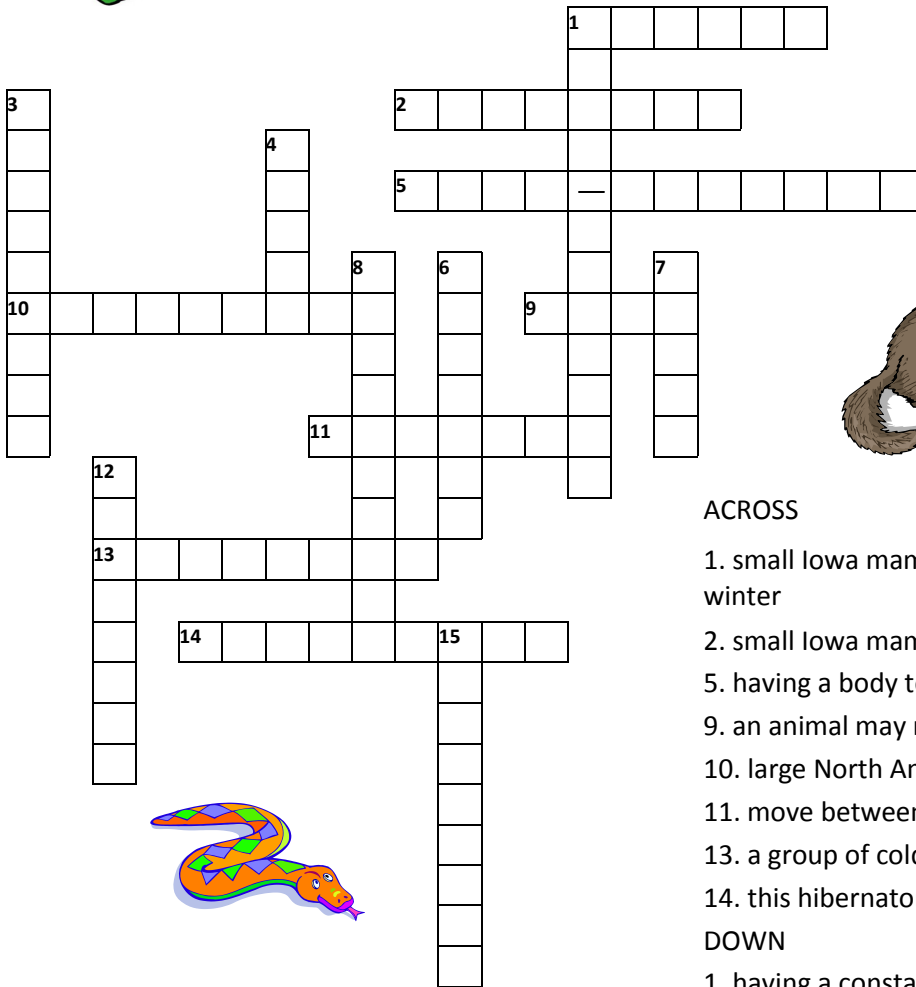


Topper's Page



As the weather starts to cool down and the days grow shorter, animals in our area know that fall is time to start getting ready for winter. Some will start storing food for the long winter ahead, others will eat as much as they can to gain weight for hibernation. And others will migrate or move to a different area, maybe someplace with warmer weather or more food.

Help Topper color the Wood Thrush on the next page. He's already made the trip to his winter home in Central America.



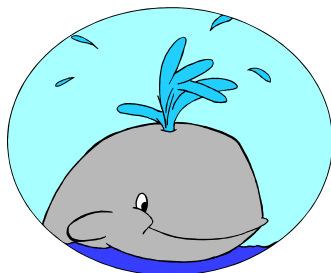
ACROSS

1. small Iowa mammal whose fur is brown in summer & white in winter
2. small Iowa mammal that store seeds & nuts for winter
5. having a body temperature that changes with the surroundings
9. an animal may migrate if there is a shortage of this
10. large North American mammal that hibernates
11. move between different areas at certain times of the year
13. a group of cold-blooded animals that hibernate in Iowa
14. this hibernator has its own holiday

DOWN

1. having a constant body temperature
3. during hibernation this slows way down
4. a large sea mammal that migrates
6. a butterfly that migrates as far south as Mexico
7. adjust to the environment
8. migrates 21,000 miles between the Arctic Circle & Antarctica farther than any other bird
12. red bird that stays in Iowa all winter
15. spend the winter sleeping

DOWN	ACROSS
1. warm-blooded	1. weasel
3. heartbeat	2. squirrel
4. whale	5. cold-blooded
6. monarch	9. food
7. adapt	10. black bear
8. Arctic tern	11. migrate
12. cardinal	13. reptiles
15. hibernator	14. groundhog





MUSCATINE COUNTY
CONSERVATION BOARD
3300 CEDAR STREET
PO BOX 109
MUSCATINE, IA 52761

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Jill Ziegenhorn	Office Manager
Mary Bulger	Learning Center Assistant

The Muscatine County Conservation Board meets the third Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. Meetings are held at the Environmental Learning Center, 3300 Cedar Street in Muscatine. The public is welcome to attend.

If anyone believes he or she has been subjected to discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, or handicap, he or she may file a complaint alleging discrimination with either the Muscatine County Conservation Board or the Office of Equal Opportunity, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240

3300 Cedar Street, PO Box 109
Muscatine, IA 52761
P(563) 264-5922 F(563) 264-6097
conservation@co.muscatine.ia.us
www.MuscatineCountyConservation.com



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