



# The Heron

Newsletter of Clinton County Conservation  
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## Pollinators: What's All The Buzz About?

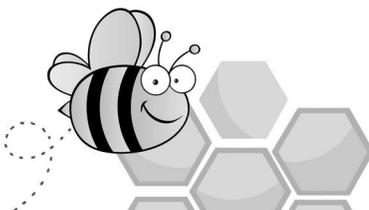
by Darin Voss, Natural Resource Technician

In recent years you may have noticed that pollinators have been gaining more and more attention. In the past decade the populations of many pollinators have been on the decline. Most notable, the honey bees and monarch butterflies have really been on a downward spiral and have received the most attention. But let's not forget about the hundreds of native bees and insect species to Iowa that are also important pollinators. This is a scary trend considering the importance of pollinators for many food crops and other ecological benefits. It is said that pollinators have a \$20 billion dollar economic impact in the U.S. alone. There are many factors that have played a role in population decline. No one factor is to blame, but more of an accumulation of things, "a death by a thousand cuts". Factors include: climate/weather events, parasites/disease, pesticide use and loss of habitat. I would like to address habitat loss, what is being done locally and things we can all do to make a difference.

In the past couple of decades the agricultural landscape has changed. With the advancement of genetic engineering and technologies such as Roundup Ready and many other traits, you no longer have the occasional weedy fields that you had in the past. Milkweed is one of those "weeds" that you used to see in fields and is critical for monarch butterflies to be able to complete their life cycle. Other flowering weedy plants provided forage for bees and other pollinators throughout the growing season. Today's clean fields and mono-stands of corn and soybeans provide very little habitat or food for pollinators. Soybeans are not dependent on pollinators, but recent studies have shown that yields can actually increase when pollinators are present. We have also lost many Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres in the past decade.

Another habitat loss that I didn't put much thought towards, and one that I know I'm a little guilty of, is well-manicured lawns. I recently attended a pollinator conference in the Quad Cities and was surprised to learn that there are 50 million acres of turf grass compared to 90 million acres corn and 84 million acres of soybeans. I found that to be a staggering number. Well maintained turf grass also provides no benefit to pollinators. Maybe a few dandelions and some clover in the yard isn't such a bad thing!

So what can be done? We can all help the cause by



planting attractive pollinator habitats whether it be large scale such as CRP plantings, or small scale such as backyard plots (Read *Flutter On My Friends* on page 7). Or we can just change a few of our habits such as the timing of pesticide applications or avoiding applications when not necessary.

While in the planning phase of a pollinator plot it is important to remember to have diversity and chose native plant species to your area. At minimum, you want at least 3 species that bloom in the spring, 3 in the summer and 3 in the fall. However, the more diverse the better. Keep in mind that native flowering shrubs and trees in your landscape are also important. A few other things to keep in mind as you are establishing a plot is seed or plug bed preparation, soil types and weed control. These will all be key factors in a successful pollinator plot.

This past year I have been involved with several pollinator plantings. They have ranged from 200 square feet up to 33 acres in size on landscapes from backyards and parks to CRP fields. It is really exciting to see more interest in such habitat and to see the transformation. Recently, I was looking at a planting that I did 2 years ago and was amazed with the amount of bumble bees that I was seeing. There was at least one on every wild bergamot plant that I was near. Those are the sites and moments that are gratifying to me and make all the time and effort spent well worth it.

We are also planning on seeding several pollinator plots on our Conservation Board areas late this fall and next spring. We were fortunate to get a donation from the Clinton County Chapter of Whitetails Unlimited to purchase two acres worth of a native pollinator seed mix. A small plot will be put at Malone Park in the southeast corner near the entrance and another one near the entrance of Killdeer Recreation area. These will both be a ¼ acre in size. Another plot will be seeded on the Lost Nation Public Hunting area. This plot will be 1½ acres in size. We hope that these sites will not only provide critical pollinator habitat but also serve as demonstration plots for the public and help motivate others to use such plantings on their own landscape.

Now, get out there and BEE a part of the solution and help turn the downhill slide in pollinator populations around. Don't be intimidated by not knowing exactly what to plant or how to plant it. You do not need to be an expert to make a difference. There is a lot of information out there on establishing habitats. Feel free to contact me at 563-847-7202 at the Conservation Board Office with any questions.

# Lyme Disease ~ One Tough Path

by Chuck Jacobsen, Interpretative Naturalist

According to the Mayo Clinic "Lyme disease is the most common tick-borne illness in North America. Lyme disease is caused by the bacterium *Borrelia burgdorferi*. Deer ticks, which feed on the blood of animals, can carry the bacteria and spread it. You're more likely to get Lyme disease if you spend time in grassy and heavily wooded areas where ticks live. Ticks can also transmit other illnesses, such as *babesiosis* and *Colorado tick fever*."

The bite will appear as a small red bump but this is normal with any bite. However the redness may expand forming a rash in a bull's-eye pattern. The rash is one of the most common symptoms of Lyme disease. Some people develop this rash at more than one place on their bodies, others never do. Fever, chills, fatigue, body aches and a headache may accompany the rash. You may develop bouts of severe joint pain and swelling. The pain can shift from one joint to another. Long after you were infected, you may experience inflammation of the membranes surrounding your brain (meningitis), temporary paralysis of one side of your face (Bell's palsy), numbness or weakness in your limbs and impaired muscle movement. Several weeks after infection, some people develop heart problems, such as an irregular heartbeat. These rarely last more than a few days or weeks. You may also experience eye or liver inflammation (hepatitis) and severe fatigue.

Only a minority of deer tick bites lead to Lyme disease. The longer the tick remains attached to your skin, the greater your risk. If you think you've been bitten and experience symptoms of Lyme disease, particularly if you live where Lyme disease is prevalent, contact your doctor immediately. Treatment for Lyme disease is most effective if begun early.

It's important to consult your doctor even if signs and symptoms disappear because this doesn't mean the disease is gone. Left untreated, Lyme disease can spread to other parts of your body even years after infection causing arthritis and nervous system problems.

If you're treated with appropriate antibiotics in the early stages of the disease, you're likely to recover completely. In later stages, response to treatment may be slower, but the majority of people with Lyme disease recover completely with appropriate treatment.

Lyme's is present in Iowa and many have undergone treatment. I myself experienced first hand the effects of this illness and feel compelled to share those with you.

Throughout the winter and spring of 2013, my family and close friends had been badgering me about my energy level. I had just turned 55 the previous fall and told them to "lay off, I'm just not as young as I once was!". But they persisted and so I made an appointment with our family

doctor.

During my appointment I found my doctor to be ill-informed concerning the prevalence of Lyme's in Iowa. The doctor believed it was not present in Iowa. When I assured the doctor that it was and that I do not restrain my outdoor activities to Iowa and am under nearly constant exposure to the outdoors in my career her response was, "Have you seen a target-shaped rash?" When I said no, the reply was, "You're probably just run down from an earlier illness". I asked for a blood test but had to order it myself and doing so it was not covered by my insurance. The test came back negative but I soon learned there is a 60% false negative response. So the test is hardly worth the \$150 cost unless it comes back positive. Great!

At the end of May I began to experience high fevers in the evening but would wake to feeling normal each morning.

We were having our roof done so we decided to get a motel room to escape the noise and visit friends. I spent Friday night in our room as I didn't want to expose any others to whatever it was. But I felt good by Saturday and decided to do some fishing. That all went well enough so we accepted our friends' invitation to stay the night. Shortly after dinner I fell back into a fever that lasted more than an hour.

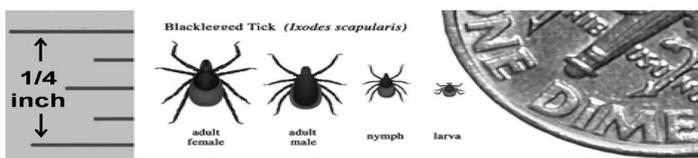
The next morning I had another very high fever. I was convinced to visit a convenient care facility. I remember shaking violently as I sat in the waiting room. The nurse practitioner I visited put me through fluid tests and a scan. When everything came back negative she agreed with my assumption that it was Lyme and provided me with enough antibiotic to see me through until I could get back to my regular doctor.

Over the next three days my condition improved markedly but my doctor refused to continue the treatment. In two days I experienced a new symptom, migraine like head aches on my left side. The pain was severe enough that my wife drove me to University of Iowa Hospitals. She had kept an accurate log of all I had been through. The doctor read this and told me she could put me through the million dollar battery of tests, including a spinal tap, or give me a round of antibiotics. I held out my hand, "pills please?"

The next couple of weeks passed with me working, though I was a bit shaky. By the 26<sup>th</sup> of June I was again disabled. The headaches, joined by joint pain on my right side. One morning I looked in the mirror to find I was suffering from



**FACT: Five members of Clinton Conservation's Board, Staff or Families family have contracted lymes disease. Statewide, many conservation workers have had the disease and nearly all are "High Risk".**



Bells palsy. That was followed by double vision and another trip to the ER for more medication.

It wasn't until July 23<sup>rd</sup> that I was able to return to work. I don't remember much else about that summer. Mainly the hours of sitting in my lounge chair in a darkened room with one hand over an eye so I could read or watch television. Taking alternating pain meds of several kinds to allow myself to sleep for two out of every three hours.

I have never returned to my family doctor. Instead I drive the extra miles to Iowa City. I blame the loss of that summer on the doctor that refused to treat me and the influence

of insurance companies on medical treatment.

I'm often asked how I'm feeling now. I lost some of the feeling in my toes, probably the site of the bite. The most difficult effect is the frustration over finding medical help.

They say I'm clear of the disease now though I had another bite last summer and this time detected the bulls-eye rash. I went back on meds and never experienced any other symptoms. I still wander through the leaves and try to keep an eye out for those little devils. If something kills me in the end, let it be something from the natural world.

## It's Nice To Have A Friend Like Brenda Jacobs

by Jessica Steines, Interpretive Naturalist & FORC Liaison

As a naturalist, I get the opportunity to meet great people all the time but as the Friends of Rock Creek (FORC) Liaison, I have really gotten to know a nice group of people. One person I have been honored to work with is Brenda Jacobs of Camanche and I would like you to get to know her as well. You may recognize her from helping at events held at Rock Creek or around the community as she is an Assistant Librarian for the Camanche Public Library.

In the last three years, I have learned that she has a great attitude and a zest for volunteering; she is willing to help where ever needed. She is able to work with people of all ages and animals of all kinds, along with many other attributes and talents that make her a great FORC volunteer.

I remember the first time I met Brenda. She came to a FORC meeting to recap a new fundraiser named the Holiday Jubilee. She loved the event, but had suggestions on how to improve it for the future. She, along with her mother and fellow FORC member, Sherry Sharp, came to voice their opinion and offer suggestions. They continued to attend meetings and were more than eager to help with future events. Anyone that has that tenacity has my utmost respect.

Brenda became a FORC member because she "loves nature and she wishes to preserve the environment. She enjoys helping others through volunteering and sharing her love of animals, especially the snakes!"

Brenda is similar to me, she has an affinity to the slithery underdogs known as snakes. This spring Brenda came to the rescue to teach over 100 1<sup>st</sup> grade students from DeWitt Central's Ekstrand Elementary about the Eco Center's live animals. Without her, the students would not have had the opportunity to see, touch and/or hold the animals that call the Eco Center and Iowa home. She did not hesitate when I

gave her the call, in fact she exclaims, "I absolutely LOVE getting to handle the snakes at the Eco Center and share them with others. It is fun to see the curiosity of young people as they touch the snake or hold it for the first time. It is also entertaining to see how many adults react to the snakes....usually not in a positive

way!" Though after the shock value of seeing Brenda wearing a 6-foot western black rat snake like a scarf, Brenda's infectious laugh calms nerves and people come around to combat their fears.

When I asked what her most favorite activity at Rock Creek was, other than the animals, she said, "the Blue Heron Eco

Cruise. Every single time I go out on the boat it is an adventure. Each of the naturalists has their favorite places they like to point out during the cruise and that makes it a different experience every time. I am so grateful to them for providing this experience!"

When I asked her what she wanted people to know about Rock Creek, she said, "I'd love for people to know about all the great things going on at the Eco Center. I am always surprised at the number of people that have never been there and don't know what is there is to offer! It is such a great facility and a wonderful place for people to explore and get a hands-on experience with the animals!"

Though Brenda likes working with the animals, there is something for everyone. She describes the FORC as "a wonderful group of individuals that are dedicated to helping others through education, information and exploration of nature and their surroundings. We do a lot of the "behind the scenes" work at the Eco Center. We plant flowers, put up flags, help with special activities and fundraisers, etc. There are many unique opportunities for volunteering at the Eco Center and I'm so proud to be a "Friends" member!"

Thank you Brenda and the other FORC members for helping Rock Creek with your time and talents, you all are a valuable asset.

If you would like to become a FORC member, there are meetings at the Eco Center every fourth Tuesday of the month at 6 PM. We would love you to get to know you too!



Brenda with the Western Black Rat Snake.



# Events Calendar - Free Family Fun in the Outdoors!

"In the end we will conserve only what we love." Baba Dioum, 1968.

**Sunset Cruises** ~ As many of our readers know, the County Board of Supervisors cut many budgets this year, including Conservation. As a result, we had to cut back our Blue Heron Cruise schedule, amongst other things. The ones we do have scheduled are full at this time, but we do have cancellations. Call 563-259-1876 to check on availability. Currently scheduled Sunset Cruises: Aug. 6, 20, Sept. 3, 10, 24 and Oct. 8, 22.

## August Events

**1<sup>st</sup> ~ Millin' Around ~ 11:45 AM-4:30 PM ~ Sawmill Museum, Clinton** ~ Starting July 11, every Saturday in July & August will be a one-of-a-kind community event.

Tour the Sawmill Museum, the Fulton Windmill and the Mississippi on the Blue Heron, all for FREE. Arrive at the Sawmill at noon, buses will take you to the Windmill and the dock. Only 54 spots are available per weekend, register in advance by going to CVB's online calendar, <http://www.thesawmillmuseum.org/milling-around.html>. Also August 8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> ~ **Millin' Around ~ 11:45 AM-4:30 PM ~ Sawmill Museum** ~ <http://business.clintoniowatourism.com/events/calendarcategid/3>

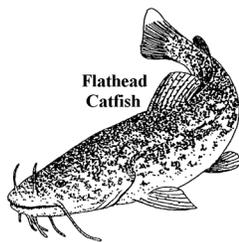
**1<sup>st</sup> ~ Nature Center Open ~ 1-4 PM ~ Eden Valley** ~ Come tour the varied exhibits of this gem of a nature center. Native American, early settlement and natural artifacts fill the center and the live animal exhibits are always a hit with the youth.

**1<sup>st</sup> ~ Saturday Night At the Movies ~ Dusk ~ Eden Valley** ~ The campground at Eden Valley will show family movies on the big screen for campers/park visitors.

**8<sup>th</sup> ~ Sixth Annual Rock Creek Catfish Classic ~ 7 AM ~ Rock Creek** ~ The Clinton County Conservation Foundation is hosting this tournament to raise funds for the Mississippi River Eco Tourism Center displays. Costs are \$50/boat and \$10 for the Big Fish Pot. Prize money is determined by the number of entries with a minimum 70% payout guaranteed to the top 3 boats. Check-in will begin at 6 AM and weigh-in at 1 PM sharp. A limit of 10 channel cats, at a 12" minimum length, will be weighed per entry. Sign up and rules at [www.mycountyparks.com/County/Clinton/Events](http://www.mycountyparks.com/County/Clinton/Events).

**8<sup>th</sup> ~ Nature Center Open ~ 1-4 PM ~ Eden Valley**

**10<sup>th</sup> ~ Shores of Clinton County ~ 9 AM ~ Allen's Grove Park ~ North of Donahue, IA** ~ We'll meet and be ready to shuttle to Sherman Park by 9 AM. This 10-mile section of the Wapsipinicon will offer moss, fern and lichen covered bluffs and caves, sand beaches, quiet and swift stretches of river and some fairly challenging maneuvering. You must register by calling 563-259-1876 by August 3<sup>rd</sup>. Conservation watercraft can be rented at \$15.



**11<sup>th</sup> ~ Shores of Clinton County ~ 9 AM ~ Gambriel Access ~ South of Dewitt, IA off Old HWY 61** ~ We'll meet and be ready to shuttle to Allen's Grove Park by 9 AM. This 11-mile section of the Wapsipinicon will offer forested river banks, sand beaches, quiet and swift stretches of river and some fairly challenging maneuvering. You must register by calling 563-259-1876 by August 4<sup>th</sup>. Conservation watercraft can be rented at \$15.

**13<sup>th</sup> ~ A Nature Story ~ 10 AM ~ Rock Creek** ~ Preschoolers and their parents can enjoy a free nature-related story followed by a craft or nature activity.

**14<sup>th</sup> ~ Night Hike ~ 8 PM ~ Eden Valley** ~ Join a naturalist on a relaxed hike into the darkness of the back valley. We'll interpret the sights and sounds of the early evening, check out the night sky and visit the geological, pre-historic and historic past of this special place.



**15<sup>th</sup> ~ Care Day ~ 9 AM ~ Soaring Eagle Nature Center** ~ The center is operated by the Eagle Point Nature Society, a volunteer group, and relies on volunteer efforts to maintain its buildings, grounds and trails. Join those who care for a couple hours of soul-renewing activity to help maintain this important resource.

**15<sup>th</sup> ~ Nature Center Open ~ 1-4 PM ~ Eden Valley**

**15<sup>th</sup> ~ Riverside Jam ~ 2 PM ~ Rock Creek** ~ Musicians gather to blend their talents and make good, live music happen. So bring your voice, instrument, favorite tunes or just come to enjoy the sounds. This is fun for the whole family and all are welcome.

**15<sup>th</sup> ~ Hayrides ~ 6 PM ~ Rock Creek** ~ Join us aboard a wagon for a leisurely ride around our park. All children must be accompanied by an adult.

**16<sup>th</sup> ~ Bonnie's Scenic Fishing Tournament ~ 6 AM ~ Rock Creek** ~ Contact Paul Seiler at 563-219-1538 with any questions or to sign up.

**18<sup>th</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> ~ Hunter Education Course ~ 7-9:30 PM (Tue.) & 8 AM-4 PM (Sat.) ~ Wapsi Valley Ikes, DeWitt** ~ Visit [www.iowadnr.gov](http://www.iowadnr.gov) for required sign-up.

**21<sup>st</sup> ~ Creek Stomp'n! ~ 4:30 PM ~ Eden Valley** ~ Wear an old pair of shoes and let's explore Bear Creek! Nets, buckets and I.D. books will be provided as we catch some critters, look for fossils and check out the banks of this amazing creek. Be prepared to get wet!



**22<sup>nd</sup> ~ Eco Center Crafts ~ 9 AM ~ Rock Creek** ~ Join us in the camp store for a story and make/take craft.

**22<sup>nd</sup> ~ Nature Center Open ~ 1-4 PM ~ Eden Valley**

**25<sup>th</sup> ~ Friends of Rock Creek ~ 6 PM ~ Rock Creek**

**28<sup>th</sup> ~ Vapor, Liquid, Ice Cream! ~ 6 PM at Eden Valley, 7:30 at Walnut Grove** ~ Let's do some fun water experiments and make an individual serving of your own homemade ice cream.

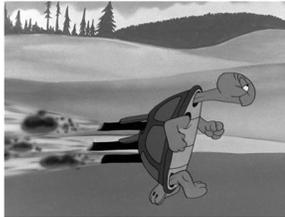
**29<sup>th</sup> ~ Nature Center Open ~ 1-4 PM ~ Eden Valley**

**29<sup>th</sup> ~ Movie Night ~ 6 PM ~ Rock Creek** ~ Join us in the Eco-tourism Center for a camping-themed movie. Snacks are available for purchase in the camp store. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

**29<sup>th</sup> ~ Jens-Wendt Observatory Open House ~ Dusk ~ Sherman Park** ~ Starts at dusk (must be clear skies) in Sherman Park, park in the north parking lot. View the skies through a 20-inch telescope. Courtesy of the Quad City Astronomical Society, [www.qcas.org](http://www.qcas.org)

**30<sup>th</sup> ~ A Turtle Sunday ~ Rock Creek** ~ Let's celebrate the opening of the Eco Center's Turtle Island and other displays with these fun activities.

- **9:30 AM ~ Turtle Races** ~ Lets race some turtles!
- **11 AM ~ Turtle Talk** ~ Let's talk about the Eco Center's different kinds of turtles.
- **12:30 PM ~ Turtle Sundaes** ~ Mmmmm, delicious.



## September Events

**1<sup>st</sup> ~ Mussel Beach Cruise ~ 6 PM ~ Rock Creek** ~ The Blue Heron will take participants out to learn about and wade for the 15 species of freshwater mussels that live there. Call 563-259-1876 for reservations.

**5<sup>th</sup> ~ Eco Center Fun ~ 9 AM ~ Rock Creek** ~ Join us in the Eco Tourism Center for a nature activity.

**5<sup>th</sup> ~ Nature Center Open ~ 1-4 PM ~ Eden Valley**

**10<sup>th</sup> ~ Sunset Eco Cruises ~ 6 PM ~ Rock Creek**

**11<sup>th</sup> ~ Nuclear Fishing ~ 6:30 PM ~ Rock Creek** ~ Jeremiah Haas, Fisheries Biologist with Exelon Corporation's Quad City Nuclear Power Generation Station, will demonstrate the electroshocking boat he uses to survey and collect brood stock fish on the river.



**12<sup>th</sup> ~ Youth Outdoor Skills Day ~ 9 AM - 3:30 PM ~ Clinton Izaak Walton League** ~ Looking for a way to open your child's eyes to a life of adventure in the great outdoors and gain experience with a variety of outdoor skills? We have just the thing! Clinton County kids, ages 11-17, will learn about safety and skills at various stations staffed by various conservation organizations such as *Whitetails Unlimited, Pheasants Forever, Harvester Bass Club, Wild Turkey Federation, Clinton Ike's, Clinton County Sportsman's Club, Iowa DNR and Clinton County Conservation*. All stations will involve hands-on activities designed to give kids practical experience while keeping safety at the forefront.



Parents and younger siblings are encouraged to attend. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Cost is \$10 and you will receive a T-shirt. Call 563-242-6939 to sign-up.

**12<sup>th</sup> ~ Nature Center Open ~ 1-4 PM ~ Eden Valley**

**14<sup>th</sup> ~ A Nature Story ~ 10 AM ~ Rock Creek** ~ Preschoolers and their parents can enjoy a free nature-related story followed by a craft or nature activity.

**16<sup>th</sup> ~ Monarch Tagging ~ 6 PM ~ Malone Park** ~ At the very peak of the Monarch's migration to Mexico, we will be tagging and releasing monarchs. Learn by doing!



**19<sup>th</sup> ~ Care Day ~ 9 AM ~ Soaring Eagle Nature Center** ~ The center is operated by the Eagle Point Nature Society, a volunteer group, and relies on volunteer efforts to maintain its buildings, grounds and trails. Join those who care for a couple hours of soul-renewing activity to help maintain this important resource.

**19<sup>th</sup> ~ Nature Center Open ~ 1-4 PM ~ Eden Valley**

**19<sup>th</sup> ~ Riverside Jam ~ 2 PM ~ Rock Creek** ~ Musicians gather to blend their talents and make good, live music happen. So bring your voice, instrument, favorite tunes or just come to enjoy the sounds. This is fun for the whole family and all are welcome.

**21<sup>st</sup> ~ Cave Exploring ~ 6:30 PM ~ Eden Valley** ~ Join County Naturalists at Eden Valley for a caving trip into Werden's Cave. The cave is on private land so we will meet at the Nature Center and carpool to the site. Wear very old clothes and bring a flashlight. Hardhats will be provided, or bring your own, but all must wear one. Call 563-847-7202 to sign-up. Space is limited.

**22<sup>nd</sup> ~ Friends of Rock Creek ~ 6 PM ~ Rock Creek**

**24<sup>th</sup> ~ Moonlight & Music ~ 7:30 PM ~ Rock Creek** ~ Enjoy an evening of home-spun music beneath the waxing Moon aboard the Blue Heron Eco Cruise Boat. The cruise is free of charge. For reservations call 563-259-1876.



**26<sup>th</sup> ~ Nature Center Open ~ 1-4 PM ~ Eden Valley**

**26<sup>th</sup> ~ Public Open House, Jens-Wendt Observatory ~ Dusk ~ Sherman Park** ~ View skies through a 20-inch telescope, if the skies are clear, [www.qcas.org](http://www.qcas.org).

## October Events

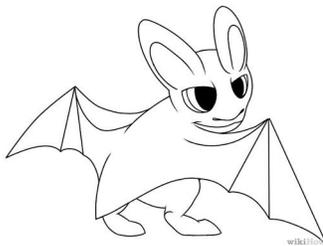
**3<sup>rd</sup> ~ Shores of Clinton County ~ 9 AM ~ McCausland Access ~ North of Donahue, IA** ~ We'll meet and be ready to shuttle to Gambriel Access by 9 AM. This 8-mile section of the Wapsipinicon will offer forested river banks, sand beaches, quiet and swift stretches of river and some fairly challenging maneuvering. You must register by calling 563-259-1876 by September 25<sup>th</sup>. Conservation watercraft can be rented at \$15.

**3<sup>rd</sup> ~ Clinton County Chapter of Pheasants Forever Banquet ~ 5 PM ~ Millennium Ballroom, Goose Lake** ~ Pheasants Forever's Clinton County Chapter is holding its annual Fundraiser. The group provides local wildlife habitat. Call Brad Taylor at 563-357-0465 for tickets.

**4<sup>th</sup> ~ Shores of Clinton County ~ 9 AM ~ Rock Creek ~** We'll meet and be ready to shuttle to the McCausland Access by 9 AM. This 12-mile section of the Wapsipinicon will offer forested river banks, sand beaches, quiet and swift stretches of river, some fairly challenging maneuvering and will lead us out of the Wapsipinicon and onto the Mississippi. You must register by calling 563-259-1876 by September 26<sup>th</sup>. Clinton County Conservation watercraft and gear can be rented at \$15.

**8<sup>th</sup> ~ Misunderstood Animals ~ 6:30 PM ~ Rock Creek ~**

The inside of the Eco Center will be decorated for Halloween with lit pumpkins of various misunderstood animals. There will be a presentation of these animals with plenty of things to see and touch, including some live animals.



**9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> ~ 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Old-time Bluegrass Gathering ~ (Sat) Noon - 9 PM ~ Eden Valley ~** October 9<sup>th</sup>, we will have a big jam around the campfire all evening and then more on Saturday the 10<sup>th</sup>. Once you attend, you will never want to miss it again! Call Mary McAndrews 563-343-7002 for more information. FREE.

**10<sup>th</sup> ~ Nature Center Open ~ 1 PM ~ Eden Valley**

**9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> ~ Halloween Weekend ~ Rock Creek Friday:**

- ◆ **Decorate your campsite** ~ We will be awarding prizes to the most spooktacularly decorated site. Judging will be on Saturday evening during the hayrides.

**Saturday:**

- ◆ **Pumpkin Carving ~ 10:30 AM** ~ Come carve your pumpkin at the Eco Center! We will supply all the carving tools and a place to make a mess! We will have a limited supply of pumpkins on a first-come, first-served basis, otherwise bring your own!

- ◆ **DIY Household Halloween Crafts ~ 12:30 PM** ~ There are many spooktacular crafts to be done with household items! Make an ornamental spider out of egg cartons or a haunted Halloween luminary for the trick-or-treaters! All materials will be provided for this free event, donations appreciated! All children must be accompanied by an adult.

- ◆ **Face Painting ~ 2 PM** ~ Complete your costume by getting your face painted by the talented Krystal Shaff of *The Painted Dragon*. \$3 dollars for small, \$5 for large designs.

- ◆ **Animals of the Witches Brew ~ 2:30 PM** ~ See the ingredients (live snakes, turtles and amphibians) to this witch's magical brew.

- ◆ **Shrunkin' Heads ~ 4 PM** ~ Make your own shrunken head out of an apple.

- ◆ **Trick or Treat! ~ 5 PM** ~ We invite our campground children to get dressed in their Halloween attire to trick or treat through the campground. We ask that our campers please pass



out candy to our little ghouls and goblins.

- ◆ **Lighted Hayrack Ride ~ 7 PM** ~ Join us aboard a wagon for a lighted ride around the park to view the decorated campsites. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

**12<sup>th</sup> ~ A Nature Story ~ 10 AM ~ Rock Creek** ~ Pre-schoolers and their parents can enjoy a free nature-related story followed by a craft or nature activity.

**17<sup>th</sup> ~ Care Day ~ 9 AM ~ Soaring Eagle Nature Center** ~ The center is operated by the Eagle Point Nature Society, a volunteer group, and relies on volunteer efforts to maintain its buildings, grounds and trails. Join those who care for a couple hours of soul-renewing activity to help maintain this important resource.

**17<sup>th</sup> ~ Nature Center Open ~ 1 PM ~ Eden Valley** ~ This will be the last weekend of the season we will be open.

**17<sup>th</sup> ~ Riverside Jam ~ 2 PM ~ Rock Creek** ~ Musicians gather to blend their talents and make good, live music happen. So bring your voice, instrument, favorite tunes or just come to enjoy the sounds. This is fun for the whole family and all are welcome.



**27<sup>th</sup> ~ Friends of Rock Creek ~ 6 PM ~ Rock Creek**

**29<sup>th</sup> ~ Halloween Hike ~ 6 PM ~ Eden Valley** ~ Meet at the nature center to go for a night hike, the trail will be lit with pumpkins of some of Iowa's misunderstood animals.

## November Sneak Peek

**13<sup>th</sup> ~ Mighty Minnows ~ 10 AM ~ Discovery Center, Clinton, IA** ~ Naturalist Jess will share her love for animals by bringing a bunch of minnows for your child to see, touch and hold (if they want)! There will be a story, activity and snack. This event is free of charge.

**14<sup>th</sup> ~ Bald Eagle Eco Cruise ~ 1 PM ~ Rock Creek** ~ This will be the public's last opportunity this year to take an Eco Cruise on the Blue Heron Pontoon Boat. The American bald eagles are starting to congregate along the Mississippi for the winter and we hope to see several of the birds during the cruise. Before freeze-up, the bald eagles are spread out along the river and the best way to see them is via boat. Call 563-259-1876 to register.



**17<sup>th</sup> ~ Build an Ice Fishing Rod ~ 5 PM ~ Rock Creek** ~ Local rod builder, Garry Land will be on hand to help you build your very own, unique ice fishing rod for only \$30. Space is limited so register today at [www.mycountyparks.com](http://www.mycountyparks.com).

**21<sup>st</sup> ~ Holiday Jubilee ~ 10 AM - 2 PM ~ Rock Creek** ~ Come to this fun event for the whole family. The Eco Center will be decorated with holiday trees and wreaths to bid on, along with crafts for the kids and Santa.

# Flutter On, My Friends

by Jill Schmidt, Interpretive Naturalist

The topic of the Monarch butterfly continues to flood my radar through updates from *Monarch Watch* and other nature-related resources. It appears that the over-winter population of Monarchs rose slightly this past year, the total area of trees occupied by monarchs in Mexico (1.13 hectares) was less than expected but it was still an improvement over the all-time low recorded in the winter of 2014 (0.67 hectares). Although this information proves we are heading in the right direction, the concern that this butterfly may one day vanish from this planet haunts me.



Being an educator of natural resources I take every opportunity possible to share my knowledge of this magnificent insect with my children as we walk the country roads of Iowa. I want them to know it is up to us to keep this butterfly alive. It is our actions and decisions that can make or break this species. So how will we keep this butterfly fluttering on? How will we ensure the magnificent Monarch survival? We need to

take actions my friends!

According to Monarch Watch, in 2015, Monarch Watch Waystations reached two milestones: It was the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the program and they surpassed 10,000 Waystations! The need for milkweed is no secret when it comes to the reproduction of Monarch butterflies, but Monarch Waystations add more than milkweed. They add a true healthy habitat for all stages of this butterfly and other pollinators for that matter. A Waystation is a designated area specifically planted and maintained for the care of Monarchs. And you too can be a part of it all, YOU can plant a Waystation!

When you are deciding on a location for your Waystation site you need to take a couple of things into consideration: sunlight availability and drainage capabilities of your soil.



Buttonbush, *Cepalanthus occidentalis*



Butterflies and nectar-producing plants need a minimum of 6 hours of sunlight a day. And although many plants need efficient drainage, perennials such as the Buttonbush are an excellent nectar source of adult butterflies that require frequent watering and minimal drainage.

Once you have chosen a prime site for your Waystation, it is time to make a plan for the layout. You want to take into consideration the annuals vs. perennials as well as the characteristics of each plant. How tall do they grow? When does it bloom? You want to set your Waystation up so that the shorter plants are on the outside or front of your garden and work your way in or back on height. It is usually easier to manage a garden where the perennials are towards the back or a furthest away. Proper placement of the blooming plants will give the visual appearance of flowers throughout the entire growing season.

Planting of your Waystation should occur after the fear of frost has passed. Seeds will have a range of soil temperature requirements for germination so keep that in mind as well as the temperature variation between full sun and shade and make sure your seedbed is a weeded, clump-free area to encourage germination as well.

*Monarch Watch* sells Waystation seed kits and include the following seed combination for our area:

## MILKWEED

- Butterfly Weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*)
- Common Milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*)
- Swamp Milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*)

## GENERAL NECTAR PLANTS

- Indian Blanket (*Gaillardia pulchella*)
- Purple Coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*)
- Joe Pye Weed (*Eupatorium purpureum*)
- Scarlet Sage (*Salvia coccinea*)
- Tithonia Torch, Mexican Sunflower (*Tithonia*)
- Zinnia, Dahlia Mix (*Zinnia elegans*)

All proceeds go towards the conservation of Monarchs so it is a great way to help in addition to your Waystation. But if you'd rather purchase locally you can put together a seed kit containing similar species. In addition to these plants, some annuals that will provide a good nectar source and attract other pollinators, as well as add habitat for the larvae are Lantana, Pentas and Salvia. These plant species have a variety of flower colors and grow anywhere from 10-36 inches tall. Perennials such as Garden Phlox, Ironweed, Sedum, Leadplant, Buttonbush, New England Aster and Wild Plum will extend your nectar source into the fall and attracts other wildlife.

Start planning your Waystation for next year! Visit [www.monarchwatch.org](http://www.monarchwatch.org) for more information to help the cause...flutter on my friends!

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**[www.clintoncounty-ia.gov](http://www.clintoncounty-ia.gov)**  
**[www.mycountyparks.com](http://www.mycountyparks.com)**

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[www.monarchwatch.org](http://www.monarchwatch.org)

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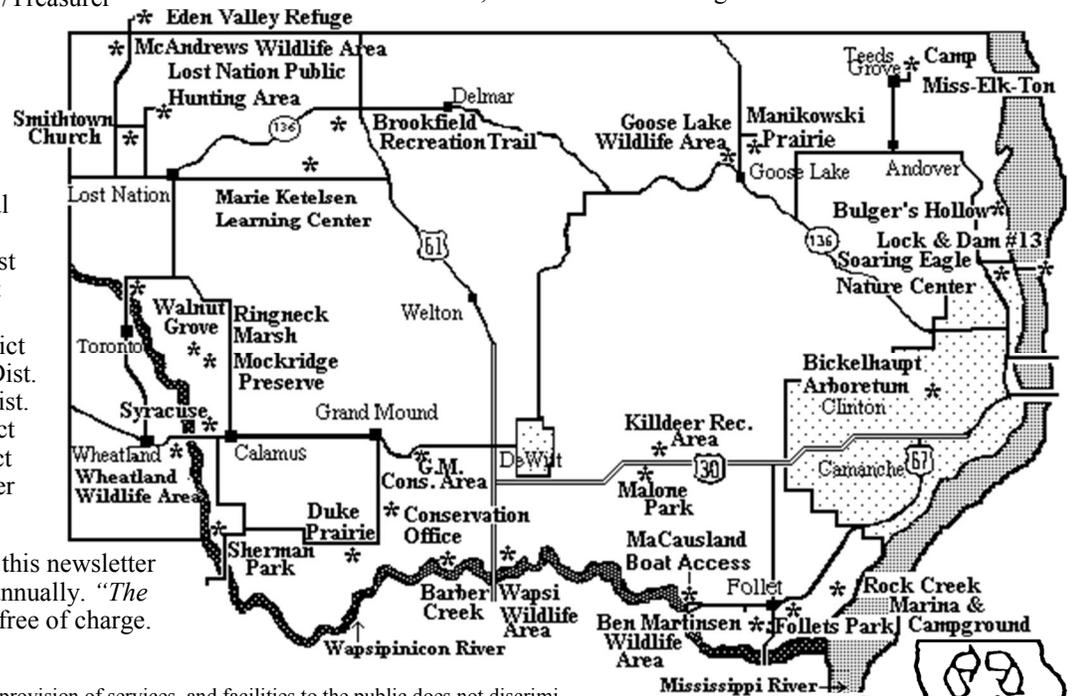
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**MAILING LIST**

Clinton County addresses can receive this newsletter at home, free. Others are charged \$5 annually. "The Heron" is on our website or emailed, free of charge.

**BOARD MEETINGS**

The Clinton County Conservation Board meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcome. The Board meets the second Tuesday the month, at 6 PM, in the Conservation Office, located 1 mile south of Grand Mound at 2308 255th St. Please note, this date can be changed.



The Clinton County Conservation Board in the provision of services and facilities to the public does not discriminate against anyone on the basis of race, color, sex, creed, national origin, age or handicap. If anyone believes he or she has been subject to such discrimination, he or she may file a complaint alleging discrimination with either the Clinton C.C.B. or the Office of Equal Opportunity, U.S. Dept. of Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.

