



The Heron

Quarterly Newsletter of Clinton County Conservation
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Ringneck Marsh gets a One-Hundred Acre Addition

by Walt Wickham, Executive Director

Outdoors lovers now have some new ground to explore! 100 acres of land has been added to the Ringneck Marsh Wildlife Area. Ringneck Marsh lies in the Wapsipinicon River floodplain and is just three miles northwest of Calamus at the intersection of 150th Ave. and 215th St. With this new acquisition, Ringneck Marsh has grown to encompass over 260 acres of wetlands, prairie grasses and wildlife habitat! The addition is the culmination of over two years of planning, grant writing and fund raising that was headed up by our West District Park Officer, Chip Brown.

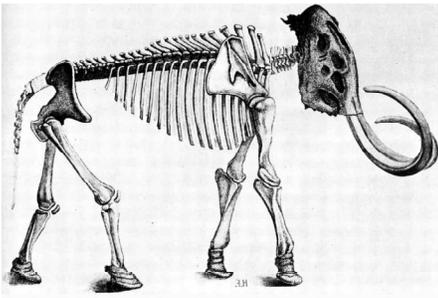
A big part of what has made this particular acquisition possible is the fact that the property had been enrolled in the federally funded Wetland Reserve Program, or WRP, by the previous landowners. By enrolling the property in WRP, they placed a permanent conservation easement on the land. The easement means the property is no longer available for crop production or development of any kind. The easement sets the land aside as a permanent wetland area for the sole purpose of water quality protection and wildlife habitat. Because of the property's limited use under the WRP easement, the Clinton County Conservation Board was able to purchase the parcel at a discounted price and make it available to the general public for hunting, bird watching and other compatible outdoor activities.

Funds for the project have come from a number of conservation and community-minded groups. The list includes the Clinton County Community Development Association, Clinton County Conservation Foundation, Clinton Area Whitetails Unlimited, Wapsi Bottoms Whitetails Unlimited, Mississippi Valley Sportsmen Chapter of Waterfowl USA, the Wildlife Habitat Stamp grant program (a hunter funded grant program administered by the Iowa DNR), Clinton County REAP (Resource Enhancement and Protection) funds, and North American Waterfowl Conservation Act funds, a federally-funded wetland conservation program. A special thank you also goes to the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation. They helped by holding the prop-

erty until the Conservation Board could secure all the funds from the various donors and complete the purchase.

The habitat restoration work that was planned and paid for as a part of the WRP easement is now complete. Several shallow wetlands have been created on the property. This past spring, the Conservation Board's Natural Resource Technician, Darin Voss, seeded the land to a mix of native grasses and wildflowers. Due to this past summer's drought, the wetlands are not as wet as we might like. The prairie seeding is having a tough time taking root - but give it a couple years to develop, and the vegetation will grow and the wetlands will flourish. This will create an ideal area for waterfowl ranging from mallard ducks to trumpeter swans and wildlife species like ringneck pheasants, whitetail deer, herons, amphibians, reptiles and a plethora of others that will call it home. We've already spotted several species of waterfowl and shorebirds utilizing the shallow wetland excavations as well as raccoons, opossums, leopard frogs and painted turtles. This is an area that will only get better with time. We all owe a big thank you to everyone who helped make it possible.





Mammoth Effort

by Mark Roberts, Education Coordinator

Fourteen feet at the shoulder, weighing in at nearly ten tons with spiraled tusks that could grow up to sixteen feet long and weigh five hundred pounds. The Columbian mammoth was a savanna and grassland inhabitant, similar to the modern African elephant and it probably had little hair. It is named in honor of Christopher Columbus and is a uniquely North American animal. It lived here from just over one million years ago until as late as 7,800 years ago. The Columbian mammoth ranged from Alaska, across the midwestern United States and south into Mexico and Central America. The word mammoth is based on a Russian word for earth, because mammoth bones were found buried in the earth leading to the belief that the animals lived in burrows underground.

On August 30, 2012 a small team of inexperienced Paleontologists from Clinton County Conservation was given a “once in a lifetime” opportunity. They were invited to help dig up the remains of a Columbian mammoth near Oskaloosa, Iowa. Administrative Assistant, Karen Brix, Naturalists Jessica Steines, Chuck Jacobsen, Mark Roberts and volunteer, Karma Roberts packed into a Toyota Prius at 5:30 AM to begin their journey back in time. After a three-hour drive, we arrived at the farm where the mammoth dig was taking place. Once there, we met up with friend and fellow naturalist, Pete Eyheralde and two researchers from the University of Iowa.

The dig started last April and is being accomplished using largely volunteer help. On weekend digs, over forty people are often on hand moving soil and sifting thru samples. The best part for us was that we were able to go on a weekday, so we had the site very much to ourselves. This meant WE were the ones down in the pit making the new discoveries!

The pit had about two feet of water in the bottom and the first thing we had to do was bail out the bottom using a five-gallon bucket. The result was a very mucky hole where each step sunk you calf-deep in the goo. I was stepping along the side of the pit trying to remove some upper layers to expand the diameter of the hole with Pete and Chuck. My bare foot (no way to keep shoes from being sucked off!) stepped on something hard about a foot below the surface. I swam my hand down to the object and felt a hard, flat object about two and a half inches wide but only a half inch thick. A mammoth rib immediately popped to mind. Not wanting to look foolish by shouting out my possible discovery, I just knelt down in the boot sucking mud and started digging with my bare hands. When I had a small section exposed and I was more certain I had really found something, I called over Jim, from the University and he confirmed my suspicion that it was indeed a rib.

He suggested I try to exposed the entire rib but be careful not to remove it. It need to be documented in place and carefully removed from the pit. The mammoth bones are not fossilized or “turned to stone”. They are far too young for that. They are still bone and can be fragile. In other words.... Be Careful! As I was

digging out and around the three-foot long rib, I found two others as well, a partial broken rib and the end of a rib sticking out of the side of the pit, still buried under four feet of wet, blue clay.

I was not the only one of our group to strike paleontological gold, Karen Brix found a large foot bone. She spent an hour carefully digging around the bone then cleaning it so it could be identified. Karma Roberts spent an equally long time carefully digging around a large object only to ultimately find out it was a piece of granite about the size of a volleyball! While using a probe to test for other possible buried treasure, she found two very important specimens; a large fragment of a leg bone and a piece of wood buried right along with the mammoth



Karma with a mammoth leg fragment.

bones next to a partially exposed tusk, found by an earlier team. This piece of wood will be very important to date the mammoth through radio carbon dating. The piece of wood is likely part of a spruce tree that lived fourteen thousand years ago!

Karen and Jessica also had the privilege of removing a full, intact rib from the pit that was discovered by an earlier group. To think that you are holding part of an animal buried for one hundred and forty centuries is an awesome feeling! Chuck had less luck. He did the dirty work of expanding the pit, along with Pete, by shoveling layers of soil off the top edge of the pit. Since bone has been found throughout the ten-foot deep hole, Chuck and Pete needed to use a time-consuming technique where they had to slice off one-inch layers, breaking through the pieces with bare hands, to make sure they were not tossing out any bones or artifacts with the soil. Their greatest hope was to find human artifacts along with the mammoth. While they did not find the “smoking gun”, a few days after we left the site, a large stone spear point was unearthed right where Chuck was digging!



Spear point found at mammoth site.

What really makes the find significant is that the remains of the animals' environment also were found with the ancient bones. The bones were found with remains of trees, such as spruce and fur, that existed here when the mammoths lived and the species continue to grow today, although not in Iowa. Researchers have dug about ten to twelve feet down and uncovered the bones and remains of the mammoths' environment.

The identification of a woolly mammoth at the site is unusual in Iowa and the Midwest, according to paleontologists. Combined with the confirmation that a femur previously uncovered at the site belongs to a Columbian mammoth, finding two species of mammoth in one spot “is a first for our state,” says Sarah Horgen, education coordinator at the Iowa Museum of Natural History and leader of the excavation.

The identification of a woolly mammoth comes from the team’s latest find of skull fragments and two teeth. Woolly mammoths usually preferred colder climates and wide expanses. But there were exceptions, as it appears in this case, says Chris Widga of the Illinois State Museum, who is examining the distribution of mammoths across the Midwest and is consulting on the Iowa dig.

“In recent years, we’ve come to the realization that woolly mammoths were not necessarily the open-land, tundra dwellers we always thought they were,” Widga says. “Rather than following tundra habitat to the north as the glaciers receded, many mammoths stayed put in the Midwest, eventually going extinct as local populations.”

Woolly mammoths are popularly known thanks to the “Ice Age” movie series, their long tusks and their iconic linkage to the last glacial period in North America and Eurasia, when these huge beasts roamed the frozen plains. Their Columbian brethren are less well-known even though these animals were larger (measuring fourteen feet at the shoulder compared to eleven feet for woolly mammoths) and had long, spiraled tusks. Both species largely died out when the Ice Age ended roughly 11,000 years ago, due to a rapidly changed climate and hunting by humans.

The discovery of separate species at the same site has raised a host of questions, including whether the species lived together, at the same time or years apart. Horgen and her team hope that further analysis of the teeth samples and bones will shed more light on the creatures and their circumstances. “The wonderful preservation of bones and other biological remains at the site such as plants and invertebrates could offer a detailed snapshot of the landscape this mammoth lived in before it died—and may even offer clues to how and why they went extinct,” Horgen says.

The dig began in April, about three years after a local farmer stumbled upon what looked to be a bowling ball, which turned



The CCCB Mammoth Digging Team: From left, Mark Roberts, Jessica Steines, Karen Brix, Karma Roberts and Chuck Jacobsen.

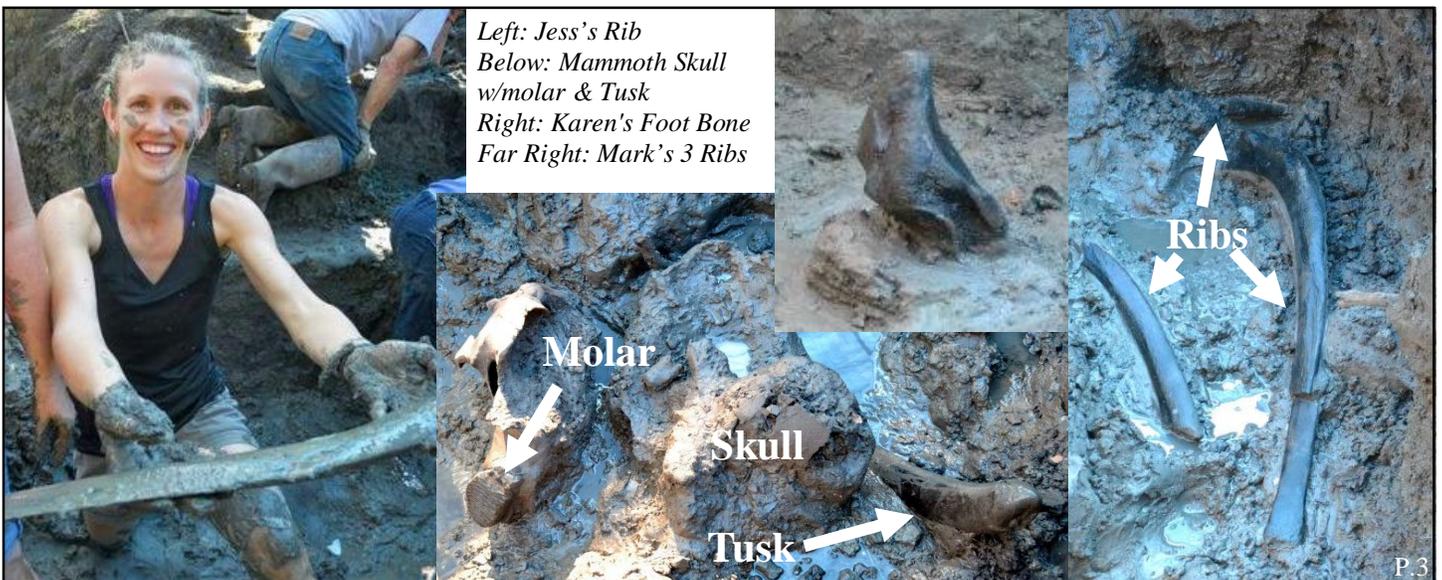
out to be a massive bone, sticking out of an eroded riverbank. What he discovered was an approximately 4-foot-long femur that belonged to a Columbian mammoth that called Iowa home at least 10,000 years ago. The team will return to the site periodically to expand the excavation and recover more bones. To date, at least seventy bones have been found.

Art Bettis, with the University of Iowa Department of Geoscience, says that a piece of organic material, like a tree, survives the ages “because it remains wet.” Bettis says that the discoveries buried at the site have been preserved because they have been saturated with water. “When we get into these really saturated environments, the microbes that are there aren’t very efficient at decomposing organic matter.” Bettis says that it’s possible to last a million years in such an environment.

Bettis called the site, “The perfect storm of organic preservation.” Scientists and students from all around the state are taking the opportunity to learn more and experience a dig such as this one. What makes this dig so interesting isn’t necessarily the number of bones, but “is the fact that we know they were living right here. These animals were living right here.”

Our little team of five left the mammoth dig after only three and a half hours on the site. We were immensely tired. We were immeasurably dirty. We were extremely happy. We were irrevocably changed.

Epilogue: My wife Karma spent all that time digging out a nice, round, smooth rock. That rock now resides in the flower garden at our home. It is a reminder of a great experience. It is not a pretty rock, but it tells a story. Those are the best kinds of rocks.



*Left: Jess’s Rib
Below: Mammoth Skull w/molar & Tusk
Right: Karen’s Foot Bone
Far Right: Mark’s 3 Ribs*

Droughts, the Necessary Evil

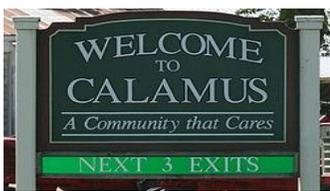
by Jessica Steines, Interpretive Naturalist



Nearly every day this summer, I would wake up and know the forecast. Dry, sunny and hot! For a person that is forever cold, I enjoyed those days. You knew that your plans would probably not be spoiled by some rain. Mowing the grass was the last thing on my mind until the weeds made it obvious it needed a trim. In spite of my happiness for all the things, the lack of rain was on everyone's mind. Pray for rain at church, drought events on the news, "Think we'll get some rain soon?" was a typical conversation. I think I was ready to crack. I didn't think it was all too bad except I had to be especially diligent at watering my potted flowers. Yeah, I know farming is not my livelihood and that this year's crop or possibly lack there-of, will affect my pocketbook in the grocery store and elsewhere. I personally didn't care and was tired of the how-bad-the-drought-is conversation. Then along came a post on Facebook, from a blog on Story County Conservation's page, finally a positive outlook! It pretty much summed it up saying, just as a forest or prairie fire's results look devastating, a drought is ecologically necessary and, in the long run, beneficial to an ecosystem.

Here in Iowa, when the first settlers arrived, they saw a sea of grass. Over thousands of years of hot, dry summers with thunderstorms, grass dominated over trees. The long, fine fibers of roots filled the soil below, making the best use of prolonged periods of no rain. When the fires came in the early spring and late summer, it only strengthened the grass's dominance. Only a hundred years after of the first settlers, nearly all of the drought-resistant prairie is gone, but its deep, dark soil remains, making Iowa the best farmland in the world! Unfortunately, the shallow rooted soybeans and corn can't take the heat or the lack of rain.

Along with the grasses, there were wetlands dotting the landscape, today we call them prairie potholes. These, of course, were important for the plants and animals that called them home. In fact, once upon a time there used to be a wetland plant named calamus that was so prevalent in the area, that the town of



Calamus was named after it. I have lived around this town for a number of years now and I still have not seen it! Wetlands were conveniently spaced for animals, like the now threatened Blanding's

turtle, to roam between and for plants like calamus to spread their seed and grow. Now we have less prairie potholes. If you look carefully, you can see where they used to be in the fields, often with a tile line sticking up out of them. It helps prove if the normal ebb and flow of an ecosystem is not respected, important things will disappear.

Wetlands are important not only for the unique plants and animals that live there year round. They are also important resting and feeding spots for migrating birds. Many of their journeys start up in the Artic Circle and end at the Gulf of Mexico. People rely on wetlands too. Wetlands are a great place to hunt and trap.

Probably more important and less recognized is the fact that wetlands are a nutritional sink; think of it as a big sponge. They collect run off from fields in the form of soil and fertilizer. It keeps it there until the sediment settles and the nutrients are

cycled through. Sometimes fertilizers create a wetland void of oxygen. As nutrients are collected in the wetland, plants like duckweed and algae flourish, but after this initial burst, the plants die and use up oxygen to decompose. So all plant and animal matter collect on the bottom of wetland until it dries up and oxygen is available to continue decomposition.

In large, deeper wetlands, plants can not grow in water because the lack of sunlight is not able to penetrate the deeper water. Plants that live under and poke through the surface to the air are called emergent vegetation. They add oxygen to the stagnant water and create food and hiding spots for animals.

As my daughter and I walked around a 12-acre wetland that has shrank to a good-sized puddle, I started to think how this is going to affect everything that uses this resource. I thought of years past and the migrating waterfowl that use this wetland. Most years it is pretty good, but I have always thought that it is not what it could or should be. There may be a couple hundred birds but not a big mass that you might see at other places. Then I thought of it as it was shrinking. It amazed me at the amount of the ducks, at one time I counted twenty egrets and ton of shorebirds, picking at cracks and crevices. I have never seen that many birds there during the summer!

So my first thought was less wetland equals less space for animals, equals more competition, equals less resources and more taxing on wildlife. This will end in the populations decreasing this year. Most animals can get up and move, but where to? Where there is more water, so rivers and lakes. Down south, are they in a drought too? For animals such as birds, getting up and moving is not so bad. But for animals like turtles and frogs it is a tougher ordeal. Not only is surface space valuable, vertical space is critical! If a wetland is not deep enough and freezes through, so will the animal, ending in its death.

For the silver lining, there are some benefits that come out of a wetland drying up. As I was walking on the wetland, there were six-inch deep cracks in the soil. The layers of the light organic matter made it feel like you were walking on a sponge. My daughter never felt that before and was unnerved and didn't like it thinking that she would fall through like quick sand or into water below. The cracks allow the ground to breathe again, decomposition begins, nutrients are released, seed banks are opened and seeds can germinate and emergent vegetation spreads. Quickly the dominoes fall into place. I have already seen the bootjack plant is making a stand in dried-up beds, so beware when you are walking around this fall, they are going to be fierce.



Again, thinking back to the plethora of summer residents at the dried-up waterhole makes me think that, for the waterfowlers, the populations are going to be concentrated this year. So if you can stake a claim to a hunting spot, it may be a good year, but there may not be as many birds, next year, due to the this year's hardships. But just remember when the water starts to flow again, the advantages will be made apparent just like after a prairie fire in the spring.

A Season of Paddling

by Chuck Jacobsen, Interpretative Naturalist

With the last fleeting days of summer passing, I'm already looking back on the strokes I've made and those still to come. My paddling year begins well before summer though not as early as others I know. Heck some of them never stop! But I'm not as well equipped or possibly as fanatic as others. Even so, paddling can't be contained in any one season for most of us. Some might think of me as a cold-blooded paddler; I don't get moving until the water and air warm up. This is measured by the combination of the air and water temperatures and a minimum of 110 degrees total of the two. If it comes up less than 110, you'll need special gear like a wet or dry suit, neoprene gloves and boots. But I am a warm-hearted paddler. I love paddling and have luckily found a job that allows me to exercise my passion and introduce the sport to others. Getting paid for it is simply the icing on the cake.

I was alone for my first paddle of 2012 surveying the Lost Lakes Loop water trail in the Upper Mississippi Wildlife and Fish Refuge adjacent to Rock Creek Marina & Campground. My next few trips were leading area students into this surprisingly wild looking area. Just a few easy strokes and you're gliding along the narrow bayous of the Wapsipinicon River's delta. Frogs can be seen along the muddy shorelines, while snakes and turtles are spotted in the water and basking on snags and the overhanging branches. Song birds and waterfowl are abundant. Beaver activity is evident by the many gnawed-upon trees and remaining stumps. A beaver dam had created a wide wetland near the end of Shaff-ton Creek though its builders seem to have been considered unwelcome pests and were disposed of. Was it the beaver who first demonstrated the usefulness of a paddle? I'll miss them and hope that if others return, we will be more tolerant. The plant life is also worth exploring from the arrowhead which the Meskwaki called *Waabizi* (duck potato); the namesake of the Wapsi River, to the pink turtle head and the cardinal flower. Some of my favorite trips into these waters happen after sunset. Imagine a string of canoes bearing white center lamps moving silently over the black water under a dark, yet sparkling, sky; the moon rising through the trees. This may be the perfect place to start and possibly end a lifelong career of paddling.

In early September, most of my family headed for the Boundary Water Canoe Area. This included my wife, 4-year-old daughter and myself accompanied by six good friends. It was my 4th trip into the BWCA, my first occurring, in the early 90's, second in 2006 and third in 2009 (my daughter's first). How do you take a one-year old into the wilderness? Carefully, from the choice of route to handling soiled diapers that must be packed out. I'll never forget that trip and a visit we had with a loon. We hadn't been on the water more than an hour when we spotted the bird. Ma-cailah watched it dive and resurface over and over again as we drew closer. On one of its last submersions, it decided to surface no more than a couple of feet from the boat right in front of her. She turned to me with an expression of pure enjoyment and simply said "More?!" My reply was "I hope so."

But my paddling goes beyond the surreal and fringes upon the impossible. Each summer for the past nine years I have served amongst an ever-growing community of paddlers who pick, dig, comb, pull and load tons of refuse into paddle craft to float, push, drag and haul it down river to the Project AWARE (A Watershed Awareness River Expedition) staff who pick, pull, drag and haul

it from the boats to be sorted, recycled and properly disposed of. This project has grown so that I've begun to feel overwhelmed by its 150-plus volunteers and all it takes to get and keep them moving safely along. Luckily for me, there are plenty of smaller weekend clean-ups going on all over the country such as the



Project AWARE volunteers tackle the big stuff!

Lower Wapsipinicon River Clean-up Project (LWRCP) which, throughout seven years, has covered the Wapsi from Anamosa to the Mississippi and some of "Big River's" backwaters. This year's LWRCP brought its volunteers back to the Walnut Grove to Sherman Park stretch originally tackled in 2006. What will we find after 6 years of floods and the continued abuse by a few?

I have at least one more trip planned for the season. I'll be leading a group on a tour of discovery along the entire length of the Mississippi's Pool 14 from above Fulton, Illinois to just below LeClaire, Iowa. We will lock through L&D 13 and 14 if we suffer no delays. I hope to reach Princeton Beach by late afternoon the first day (18 mi.) and camp there. We can supply newcomers to wilderness camping with tents, mess kits, dry bags, etc. I would like to be finished by mid-afternoon the second day (11 mi.) depending on the weather, paddling abilities and the fitness of the group. Much of the trek is in somewhat protected water until we pass Princeton. I only hope the winds are favorable. This will be a challenge to be attempted only by experienced and determined paddlers.

Recently I visited a large outdoor gear shop and found myself trying on a 3/4 body wet suit. Seeing that I sized right at the upper range of a large I stepped into a fitting room and packed myself into the thing. After tugging on it here and there I determined it was a bit snug and began attempting to take it off. I was at first afraid I would have to ask for help but my embarrassment and stubborn effort paid off. I wondered if I should have applied some grease before the attempt but supposed that would have caused me to loose my grip. So it's the XL for me even though I plan to loose a few more pounds. I'll be asking for this for Christmas so I can begin my paddling season even earlier next season.

We hope you'll come and join the adventure if you feel you have what it takes. We have a trip tailor-made for you, whoever you may be. Take care and paddle safe.

Autumn's Family Fun Conservation Events

October

3rd ~ Music in the Loft ~ 7 PM ~ Soaring Eagle Nature Center, Clinton ~ Local talents will provide entertaining instrumental and vocal offerings of a wide variety of music. Participants with musical talents are invited to call 563-357-0759. This is a free event but donations to the center are always welcomed.

4th ~ Fall Color Blue Heron Cruise ~ 3:30 & 5 PM ~ Rock Creek ~ Call 563-259-1876 for free reservations.

6th & 7th ~ Overnight on Pool 14 ~ 8 AM ~ Lock & Dam 13 ~ 4999 Lock Road, Fulton, IL ~ Paddle campers will meet at L&D 13, load boats and depart downstream by 9 AM. The group will cover 15 miles of the Mississippi River's gentle, mainly backwater, currents and travel through its largest island. We will camp near the Wapsipicon River and continue on Sunday morning to L&D 14, LeClaire. We have a limited number of paddle craft, 2 person tents, dry bags, cook sets and mess kits to loan. Call 563-847-7202 to register/reserve county equipment.



6th ~ Saturday at the Arb - Aldo Leopold ~ 10-11AM ~ Bickelhaupt Arboretum ~ History of Aldo Leopold, the author of "A Sand County Almanac" and considered the father of wildlife management. Each student will build a "Leopold Bench", a simple, strong bench to take home and enjoy in the garden. Donation \$40. Call 563-242-4771 and reserve a spot.

6th ~ Clinton County Chapter of Pheasants Forever Banquet ~ 5 PM ~ Millennium Ballroom ~ Pheasants Forever's Clinton County Chapter is holding its annual fund-raiser at the Millennium Ballroom in Goose Lake. The group provides local wildlife habitat. Call Brad Taylor at 563-357-0465 for tickets.

6th & 7th ~ Fall Festival @ Heritage Canyon ~ 10 AM-4 PM ~ 515 N. 4th Street, Fulton, IL ~ Visit with the Early American Crafters as they portray pioneer living. Mark Twain interpreter Saturday at 2 PM, native teepee on display, produce and hand-made period items for sale.

6th ~ 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.

11th ~ Fall Color Blue Heron Cruise ~ 3:30 & 5 PM ~ Rock Creek ~ Call 563-259-1876 for free reservations..

12th & 13th ~ Bluegrass Jam ~ Noon - 9 PM ~ Eden Valley ~ On the 12th of October we will have a big jam around the campfire all afternoon and evening and then the stage show on Saturday the 13th. This will be the 30th year and it keeps getting better each year! Once you attend, you will never want to miss it again!



12th - 14th ~ Eastern Iowa Star Party ~ Dusk ~ Wapsi Center ~ Each year the Quad City Astronomical Society is host to this event. Clubs from all over the midwest are invited and represented at this event. The location is at the St. Ambrose Menke Observatory at the Wapsi River E.E. Center. The public is invited.

13th ~ Halloween at Rock Creek ~ Noon to 9 PM ~ Rock Creek ~ Campers are asked to decorate your campsites and we will be enjoy them throughout all of our weekend activities.

- ◆ **Halloween-themed Movies ~ 12 PM** ~ We will be playing in the theater room of the Eco Tourism center. We provide the popcorn & movie. Drinks can be purchased.
- ◆ **Pressing Apples ~ 2:30 PM** ~ Come and help make some homemade apple juice with samples available. Please bring a bag of fresh apples for grinding and pressing!
- ◆ **The Mysterious & Misunderstood ~ 4 PM** ~ Take a look at some Iowa animals that sometimes give us the willies. There will be a live owl and a live snake along with some animal artifacts to make them not so mysterious and misunderstood.
- ◆ **Trick or Treat at Rock Creek! ~ 5 - 6 PM** ~ All the little goblin and ghouls campers are invited to trick or treat through the campground. Stop in the camp store for a treat from us.
- ◆ **Owl Calling Cruises ~ 6:30 PM** ~ We will be taking short pontoon boat rides out every hour to call in some barred owls and see the Halloween displays via water.
- ◆ **Lighted Hayrack Ride ~ 7 PM** ~ We will wrap up the weekend of Halloween fun enjoying a relaxing ride and looking at the lighted and decorated campsites.

13th ~ Nature Center Open ~ 1 PM ~ Eden Valley

18th ~ Fall Color Blue Heron Cruise ~ 3:30 & 5 PM ~ Rock Creek ~ Call 563-259-1876 for free reservations..

20th ~ Nature Center Open ~ 1 PM ~ Eden Valley ~ This will be the last weekend of the season we will be open.

21st ~ "Souper" Sunday Speaker ~ 1 PM ~ Rock Creek ~ Join us for a Sunday afternoon and enjoy soup and a speaker at the Mississippi River Eco Tourism Center! Iowa Department of Natural Resources Fisheries Biologist Scott Gritters will be sharing his knowledge on the most endangered organism on the planet, fresh water mussels! Take a closer look at this mysterious creature under the water surface! Soup will be provided. The speaker will start just after 1 PM, lasting about an hour. Programs are geared towards older children and adults.

23rd ~ Friends of Rock Creek Meeting ~ 7 PM ~ MRETC, Rock Creek ~ Become a conservation volunteer!

25th ~ Season Finale: Fall Color Blue Heron Cruise ~ 3:30 & 5 PM ~ Rock Creek ~ Call 563-259-1876 for free reservations.

27th ~ Fall Fest ~ 4 PM ~ Soaring Eagle Nature Center, Clinton ~ Bring the family out for hot dogs, chips and s'mores at the fire, pumpkin carving and face painting in the Nature Barn, a spooktacular night hike and wagon ride around the north end of Eagle Point Park. A free-will donation is appreciated.



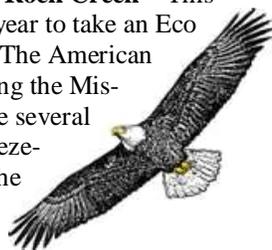
27th ~ **Jens-Wendt Observatory Open House ~ Dusk ~ Sherman Park** ~ Join the Quad Cities Astronomical Society at Sherman Park's north end to explore the night sky. Star parties are dependent on the weather. To confirm a party will be held, check www.qcas.org, after 4 PM on the day of the party.

29th ~ **Rivers by Canoe ~ 6 PM ~ Windmill Cultural Center, Fulton, IL** ~ Marion Johnson, Retired Professor, Mount St. Clare College, will speak at this free event.

November

1st ~ **Music in the Loft ~ 7 PM ~ Soaring Eagle Nature Center, Clinton** ~ Local talents will provide entertaining instrumental and vocal offerings of a wide variety of music. Participants with musical talents are invited to call 563-357-0759. This is a free event but donations to the center are always welcomed.

3rd ~ **Bald Eagle Eco Cruise ~ 10 AM ~ 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.



4th ~ **"Souper" Sunday Speaker ~ 1 PM ~ Rock Creek** ~ Join us for a Sunday afternoon and enjoy soup and a speaker at the Mississippi River Eco Tourism Center! Soup will be provided. The speaker will start just after 1 PM, lasting about an hour. Program topics are geared towards older children and adults, please call 563-847-7202 for this Sunday's speaker and topic.

10th ~ **Saturday at the Arb - Orchids ~ 10 - 11 AM ~ Bickelhaupt Arboretum** ~ The Illowa Orchid Society members will present a program on how to grow and raise orchids in Iowa. Call 563-242-4771 to reserve a seat.

12th ~ **Old Movie Night "The River" ~ 6 PM ~ Windmill Cultural Center, Fulton, IL** ~ A 31-minute film made by the FDR administration about the importance of the Mississippi River.

14th ~ **Goodness Snakes ~ 2 PM ~ Children's Discovery Center, Clinton** ~ This program is for K-3rd graders with a hands-on presentation with live snakes. It also includes a story, activity and snack. This event is free of charge.

16th ~ **Goodness Snakes ~ 10 AM ~ Children's Discovery Center, Clinton** ~ This nature program is for children ages three to five. This event is free of charge.

16th ~ **Music of the Mississippi ~ 8 PM ~ Rock Creek** ~ Naturalist Chuck Jacobsen will lead his audience through a musical and pictorial history of the Mississippi River through the works of John Denver, John Prine and Peter Meyer. Admittance is free, donations will be gratefully accepted. Refreshments will be offered by the *Friends of Rock Creek*.

17th ~ **Building for Birds ~ 1 PM ~ Soaring Eagle Nature Center, Clinton** ~ Bring in a milk carton, pine cone and/or a plastic pop bottle and create a feeder for our feathered friends. Kits are available for \$5, for tray, suit or tube feeders. Call 563-847-7202.



18th ~ **"Souper" Sunday Speaker ~ 1 PM ~ Rock Creek** ~ Join us for a Sunday afternoon and enjoy soup and a speaker at the Mississippi River Eco Tourism Center! Education & Outreach Coordinator Sarah Horgen of the University of Iowa Museum of Natural History, will be sharing her personal experience digging up a mammoth in southeast Iowa (see *Mammoth Effort*, page 2). Take a closer look at what it takes to discover and unravel the story behind this large ice age mammal. Soup will be provided. The speaker will start just after 1 PM, lasting about an hour. Programs are geared towards older children and adults.

24th ~ **Jens-Wendt Observatory Open House ~ Dusk ~ Sherman Park** ~ Join the Quad Cities Astronomical Society at Sherman Park's north end to explore the night sky. Star parties are dependent on the weather. To confirm a party will be held, check www.qcas.org, after 4 PM on the day of the party.

27th ~ **Friends of Rock Creek Meeting ~ 7 PM ~ MRETC, Rock Creek** ~ Become a conservation volunteer!

December

1st ~ **Saturday at the Arb - Evergreen Wreaths ~ 10 - 11AM ~ Bickelhaupt Arboretum** ~ Make your own fresh evergreen wreath with trimmings from different conifers for the holiday season. Donation of \$25. Call 563-242-4771 to sign up.

2nd ~ **"Souper" Sunday Speaker ~ 1 PM ~ Rock Creek** ~ Join us for a Sunday afternoon and enjoy soup and a speaker at the Mississippi River Eco Tourism Center! Soup will be provided. The speaker will start just after 1 PM, lasting about an hour. Program topics are geared towards older children and adults, please call 563-847-7202 for Sunday's this speaker and topic.

6th ~ **Music in the Loft ~ 7 PM ~ Soaring Eagle Nature Center, Clinton** ~ Local talents will provide entertaining instrumental and vocal offerings of a wide variety of music. Participants with musical talents are invited to call 563-357-0759. This is a free event but donations to the center are always welcomed.

6th-9th ~ **Holiday Tree Jubilee ~ Rock Creek** ~ The Eco Center is going to be lit-up with beautiful holiday trees decorated and donated by area businesses to be bid on by YOU to take home after the event. The Center will be open for viewing and bidding Thursday - Saturday 8 AM - 8 PM and Sunday 8 AM - 4 PM.



♦ **Natural Ornaments ~ Thursday, Friday & Saturday at 6 PM** ~ A naturalist will teach making ornaments made with neat things from nature for your home Christmas tree.

12th ~ **Terrific Turtles ~ 2 PM ~ Children's Discovery Center, Clinton** ~ This program is for K-3rd graders with a hands-on presentation with live turtles! It also includes a story, activity and snack. This event is free of charge.

14th ~ **Terrific Turtles ~ 10 AM ~ Children's Discovery Center, Clinton** ~ This nature program is for children ages three to five. This event is free of charge.

14th-15th ~ **Young Ladies Lock-in ~ (Fri. 6 PM - Sat. 10 AM) ~ Rock Creek** ~ This is geared for 5th - 6th grade girls to spend the night in the new Eco Center! The night will be filled with FREE, fun lock-in activities like movies, crafts, games and a night hike. Space is limited, so hurry and call Jill or Jessica at 563-847-7202 to pre-register by December 7th.

15th ~ Family Winter Fun ~ 1 PM ~ Soaring Eagle Nature Center, Clinton ~ The county's snowshoe and cross-country ski equipment will be available free of charge for fun in a late fall snow. Warm-up inside and enjoy hot drinks and a snack to the music of local talents. A snowshoe-making demonstration will also be provided and if you would like a set of your own, we'll take your order and help in getting you started.

18th ~ Friends of Rock Creek Meeting ~ 7 PM ~ MRETC, Rock Creek ~ Become a conservation volunteer!

21st ~ Winter Solstice Gathering ~ 11 AM ~ Sherman Park ~ We will deck the halls with yuletide treasure and tell the tales behind each tradition. While the sun is in the sky, we'll have a

scope set to display its reflection. You will be able to see the sun and its spots without burning your retinas. We'll offer up our families' holiday eats and you're welcome to offer some of yours too. If there's snow, the winter fun equipment will be available so you can ski, snowshoe or sled the gently rolling hills of the park. We'll light a fire and keep it going as long as there are visitors to enjoy it. You can also count on some home-spun music as well.

29th ~ Jens-Wendt Observatory Open House ~ Dusk ~ Sherman Park ~ Join the Quad Cities Astronomical Society at Sherman Park's north end to explore the night sky. Star parties are dependent on the weather. To confirm a party will be held, check www.qcas.org, after 4 PM on the day of the party.

The Federal Duck Stamp

by Brad Taylor, Park Officer, East District

As the summer light fades and cool weather begins to set in, it triggers the fall migration for many species of birds. Flocks of black birds are now a common sight. Geese are starting to flock up and feed heavily in preparation for their long journey south. Soon the waterfowl seasons will be in full swing with hunters waiting potentially for the big mallards to fly south from Canada to find the warmer climates in the south. These hunters will invest in the warmest clothes made, the warmest chest waders they can buy. The most lifelike decoys on the market. The biggest boat their wives will let them park in the yard for 10 months out of the year while they wait for duck season to start. All of these "necessities" can total into thousands of dollars. But the most valuable thing any waterfowler carries with them is their Federal Duck Stamp. This is a stamp that costs \$15 dollars that all hunters must possess when hunting migratory birds, such as ducks and geese, in addition to their hunting license.

Almost 80 years ago, with market hunting and over harvesting of migratory birds, some to the brink of extinction, the people of this nation realized that something needed to be done. They created what is one of the most successful conservation programs ever initiated. The stamp has generated over \$750 million and has protected more than 6 million acres of land, forever.

This is the only federally-mandated art contest in the nation. Artists submit their art work to be judged with the winning design becoming the next Federal Duck Stamp. In 1934, Ding Darling (from Des Moines) created the first Federal Duck Stamp. The annual stamp had a value of \$1 in 1934, jumped to \$2 in 1949, and to \$3 in 1959. In 1972 the price increased to \$5, then up to \$7.50 in 1979, \$10 in 1987, \$12.50 in 1989 and to \$15 in 1991. For every \$15 stamp sold, the federal government retains \$14.70 for wetlands acquisition and conservation, so very little



Wood Duck, 2012 Federal Duck Stamp.

gets lost in the system for administration. In 21 years, the price of the duck stamp has not increased. In Iowa, for example, the average land price in 1991 was \$1,219 per acre. In 2011 it was \$6,708. That is an 550% increase in land value over 21 years.

With land prices

increasing and hunters decreasing there is concern that the dollars won't go as far as they once did.

There are ways to increase the number of stamps sold in a year's time. While hunters make up the majority of the stamp sales, anyone can purchase them. Art enthusiasts and collectors buy them. Some duck stamp collections have sold for thousands at auctions. Some people just think they are a neat piece of art and history and want to collect them. Another group to purchase stamps are birders or other outdoor enthusiasts. While many people go to public land or refuges to watch birds, canoe, hike or any other outdoor activity, they don't realize how that land became public use. If these groups of people purchased stamps, they are helping preserve these areas for their enjoyment. Conservationists also buy stamps. These might be people that just like the outdoors and think it is important to protect the land. One third of the species that use a federal refuges purchased with stamp dollars are on the endangered species list. With people continuing to move into rural areas and farming practices of tilling and tree cutting, conservationists are trying to protect areas from human destruction.

Either directly or indirectly, the Federal Duck Stamp program has affected everyone to some degree. It might be the hunter harvesting the mallard duck, a birder watching a family of sandhill cranes during their migration south, or a canoeist paddling along the back waters of the Upper Mississippi River Wildlife Refuge. Protecting wetlands also helps protect drinking water and clean air. I would encourage anyone that enjoys the outdoors, or has kids or grandkids that enjoy the outdoors, to make a \$15 investment in the future of land and wildlife protection. Fifteen dollars is an inexpensive way to insure a place to spend time doing the things that you enjoy.

"Like winds and sunsets, wild things were taken for granted until progress began to do away with them. Now we face the question whether a still higher 'standard of living' is worth its cost in things natural, wild and free. For us of the minority, the opportunity to see geese is more important than television."
Aldo Leopold, Iowan, Author of "A Sand County Almanac".



The first Duck Stamp, 1934. Mallards by Iowan, Jay N. "Ding" Darling.

A Learning Process!

by Darin Voss, Natural Resource Technician

It all began at the end of March 2011, when Governor Terry Branstad signed the Dove Hunting Bill into law. This allowed the Iowa DNR to establish a mourning dove season for the first time since 1918. There was talk that such a bill may get passed but we weren't sure if it would happen in time for the DNR to set a 2011 season. It turned out that everything happened very quickly. The bill made it through the House and Senate and was signed before you knew it. The state didn't waste much time in setting a 2011 mourning dove season.

There was some opposition to this bill, but for many sportsmen it was very exciting. Iowa finally had a season to hunt one of the most populous game bird species in North America. Previously, Iowa residents would have to travel to a neighboring state and hunt as a non-resident. Iowans will now be able to stay close to home as well as spend their dollars locally rather than in another state. There was a little uncertainty on how popular dove hunting would be in Iowa at the onset.

As a manager of our public hunting areas it was time to start thinking about putting in food plots which would attract doves. The plots would have to be mature by the season opener which was slated to begin on September 1st of 2011. Already being late spring there was very little time to prepare for putting in the plots. I knew there would be some interest in hunting doves, but I just wasn't sure how much. I implemented a plan to put in a few smaller plots. I did not want to take too much away from my other plots targeted towards other wildlife.

I have to admit that I knew very little about mourning dove food plots when I first started out. I knew that sunflowers were one of the most popular plants used to attract doves, but beyond that I didn't know a lot. So, I did some quick research by reading articles and asking other professionals a few questions before setting to the field. I learned that other seeds and small grains including wheat, millet and even oats could be used as well as the sunflowers. I also learned different methods of managing the plots including mowing and lightly disking the plots before the season opener. The reason for this is that doves like to feed on the ground and they also like bare soil exposed.

There are different methods to planting sunflowers. They can be drilled, broadcast or planted with a row crop planter. I chose to use a no-till drill and plug two out of every three rows to give me 24" spacing between rows. For weed control, I just sprayed the existing vegetation with glyphosate (Roundup®) about 14 days before planting.

To make a long story short, I ended up with food plots that were very weedy and overpopulated with sunflowers. The sunflowers were too close to one another in the rows. With so much competition the flower heads were very small. They still produced seed but not a lot. I still mowed my "weed patches" about two weeks before seasons to see what would happen. There were a few doves that used the sights but not nearly as many as I had hoped. The plots were hunted a couple of times but with very little success.

I knew it was time to go back to the drawing board for the 2012 growing season. I had to try again and needed to be more

successful with my plots because there was beginning to be more of a buzz about dove hunting in Iowa. This year I had the time to prepare and gather more information. Even more importantly, I learned a few valuable lessons from the 2011 season.

Overpopulation of seed and weed pressure were the largest contributors to unsuccessful food plots. I had a plant every couple of inches, but every 8 to 10 inches or greater is ideal. During the winter, with the help of Clinton County chapters of Pheasants Forever and Whitetails Unlimited, we were able to purchase a 38" 4-row corn planter. With this planter I planted a low rate of around 6 – 8 pounds of seed per acre. It almost looked as though I wasn't using any seed as I was planting! I also planted larger plots than the previous year. I have learned that larger areas make better dove plots and allow for more hunters to utilize the area at the same time. They were still fairly small at 2 -2 ½ acres, but larger than the one-acre plots from the previous year. For weed control, I put down a pre-emergent to suppress the weeds to help the sunflowers get established.

As a whole, the 2012 food plots were much more successful than those of 2011. The sunflowers had much larger seed heads which produced a lot more seed. Now don't get me wrong, there were still plenty of challenges along the way and not all of my plots were highly successful. One plot was a complete failure as far as dove hunting was concerned. The seedlings had been completely browsed by deer and possibly other animals...I won't be putting sunflowers in that plot next year. Another plot became infested by insects and had to be sprayed. A couple of areas were still a bit on the weedy side, but the sunflowers were able to get ahead of the weeds and they still did pretty well. I also made an operator error on half of my first planted food plot. I planted the seed too shallow. As we all know, mother nature decided to shut the rain off which resulted in a poor stand. However, I learned that it is better to be under populated than over populated.

Despite all of the challenges, I mowed the sunflower plots the week before the season opener. I was seeing a large number of doves already using the plots. It was really exciting that after using the experience from the previous year and the knowledge that I gained from other professionals, that I finally had some successful dove plots.

It turned out as we had speculated, the dove hunting did become more popular in the second season. It goes to show that if you create good plots the doves will find them and the hunters will follow. We had many more hunters using these areas and many were successful at harvesting a good number of birds. Although our dove food plots were much more successful in the second growing season, I am still learning and there is always room for improvement. I hope to expand some of the plots and maybe even add one or two for next year. There is nothing that suggests to me that the popularity of dove hunting in Iowa will slow down any time soon.

Mourning Dove



Drawing by Mary Cordell
Indiana State Parks & Reservoirs

The Science of Staying Warm to Survive

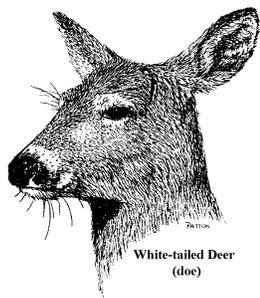
by Jill Schmidt, Interpretive Naturalist

As the days become darker earlier and the temperatures begin to drop, we as humans begin our preparation for winter. We cut and stack the firewood; we rake our leaves and clean out our gardens, and most importantly we pull out our warmer clothes and heavy jackets to protect us from the winter elements. Although it may seem like our whole world changes when winter hits, we are able to do these things to help prepare us for what's ahead. Iowa's wildlife faces the same winter snows and blustery temperatures and although they are unable to turn on a furnace to warm up their bodies, they are able to adapt to these drastic environmental changes through other methods.

The key to surviving Iowa winters for our wildlife is to be able to find their four basic needs: food, water, cover and space all while facing the harsh conditions. If this is not an option, then animals may migrate or hibernate to completely avoid these difficult months. Large portions of our animals have found ways to live here year-round and be active throughout the winter by physically adapting their bodies to survive. Two conditions, warmth and energy, are key components to surviving and go hand and hand. It is difficult to stay warm without using energy and you create heat the more energy you are using.

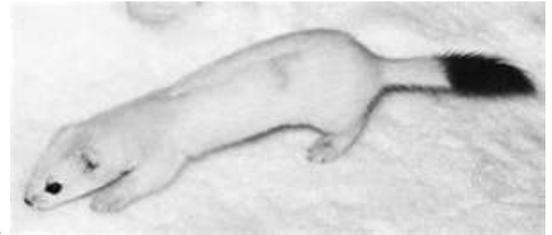
The Facts About the Fur

Active winter wildlife in Iowa adapt to the winter cold by adding fur to their body. The pelt goes from a thinner layer of hair in the summer to a nice and thick winter coat. Coyotes, fox, deer, bobcat and beaver are just a few animals that add on the extra hair. In addition to getting thicker, some of our wildlife have more specialized adaptations when it comes to their fur. The winter fur, or pelage, of a white-tailed deer has many specialized components. The multiple layers of the fur make a more thicker and darker



color in the winter. The long guard hairs of the fur turn from a reddish brown to a more drab, darker brown and the thickness increases. According to *Life in the Cold* by Peter J. Marchand, by December the guard hairs have reached the maximum length of 5 cm with a density of up to 1,000 per cm squared. The darker color of the guard hairs is able to absorb more sunlight, adding heat to the animal's body. This adapted form

of guard hairs is also hollow, which is different from the summer guard hairs. Each hollow hair increases the amount of air space and therefore the amount of insulation it provides. The soft, wooly undercoat of the fur is thicker than ever this time of year. This dense layer traps the animal's body heat close to the body, aiding in warmth as a form of insulation. Although the growth of the fur is extremely important for survival, the deer also has some behavioral adaptations that help utilize the fur to its advantage. When temperatures reach the record lows, white-tailed deer are able to fluff out their hair. When the hair is upright, the hair is thickened to its maximum potential. When faced with cold temperatures, humans do the same thing, only humans lack the amount of hair therefore this behavior creates goose bumps instead. (*Phantoms of the Forest, Whitetails* by Michael Furtman)



The ermine, Iowa's quick change artist.

The density of the fur is not the only thing that can change for some of our active winter

wildlife. Some animals adapt to the snowy land by completely changing the color of their fur from brown to white. The short-tailed weasel (otherwise known as an ermine while in their white color phase), is an Iowa example of such animals. These small mammals' adaptations allow them to blend in with their surroundings during the winter months, protecting them from the hungry predators. In the book, *Life In The Cold*, Marchand brings up the question, why do ermines need to have this white camouflage when they spend a large part of their waking hours hunting under the surface of snow? More research has been done in hopes to answer the question and some scientists now believe the winter white may not be so important as a camouflage, but for its insulating capacity. Not only a defensive aid, the hollow white hairs, without the pigment melanin, have more air spaces within the hairs and thus has greater insulation. Snowshoe hare's, (from lands to the north) white winter pelage has 27% better insulating qualities than the summer brown coat.

Putting on the Pounds

In the fall, many wildlife species are putting on the pounds to prepare for the cold winter months ahead. The jumping mouse and woodland mouse are prime examples of the drastic increase of body weight. Jumping mice increase their body weight by six grams and the woodland mouse adds seven to eight grams to its normal weight of twenty grams within two weeks during the fall. The biggest cause of mortality in these two small mammals is the lack of brown fat added to their body. Brown adipose tissue otherwise known as brown fat is common in young animals, including humans, and increases in mammals as they put on the pounds during the summer and fall seasons. It is especially abundant in hibernating mammals and its primary function is to generate heat in animals that do not shiver to create body heat. An increased capacity for heat production without increasing muscular activity (non-shivering thermogenesis) has been seen in small mammals while adjusting to the cold temperatures. Brown fat is full of mitochondria (the engines in cells that convert food into energy) whose only function is to generate heat. It is capable of a higher rate of oxygen consumption and heat production than white fat, and because of that it is often found around vital organs. This tissue is so effective that temperatures measured just under the skin over deposits of brown fat are sometimes higher than core temperatures. Burning of brown fat requires the withdrawal of water from the bloodstream which can lead to major problems like dehydration, but on the contrary, burning of muscle adds water to the bloodstream, both of which happen to animals who hibernate. Brown fat is most commonly used in the arousal of hibernating animals because it acts as the heat generator for re-warming the animal. The brown bat will use 75% of its brown fat to wake up after hibernating all winter. The other 25% is used for the bat's life functions during hibernation.

Continued from previous page.

Our Feeder Friends

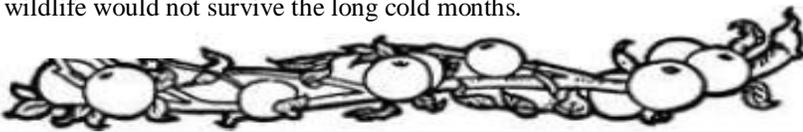
Like our mammalian species, our birds also must learn to live with the cold temperatures if they do not migrate to warmer climates. The American goldfinch is a species of bird often found at our feeders during the winter months. Like mammals, they too have extra layers of insulation by the increased number of feathers that cover their bodies. According to Marchand, this species of bird may increase total weight of feathers in winter by as much as 50% over their summer weight. In addition to the feathers, some birds also put on the pounds. The dark-eyed junco is about 14% heavier during the winter than their close relatives who live farther south because of increased fat reserves. These fat reserves are not made up of brown fat though; these birds depend on these reserves to make it through the night and possible 16-24 hours of fasting capability.



A dark-eyed junco, winter feeder favorite.

Signs of Spring

If I could read animals minds, I would think that the first signs of spring are what most of our wintering animals hope to see. The science of their bodies will once again adapt to the warmer temperatures and longer days and they cope with whatever comes their way the best they can. The changing of seasons provides the necessary triggers that set this science into motion. Without adaptations like thicker, warmer fur and brown fat, a lot of Iowa's wildlife would not survive the long cold months.



Purple Heart Hunting ~ Now Taking Applications

The Clinton County Conservation Board is offering permitted hunting in a portion Rock Creek Marina & Campground for US military veterans that have earned combat citations, been a prisoner of war or are a disabled American veteran. The area has a very nice handicapped-accessible hunting blind and trail and the CCCB provides a camouflaged electric golf cart to allow hunters to sneak into position with minimal disturbance.

This is the Conservation Board's way of saying thanks to veterans who have made great personal sacrifices for our country. It will also allow handicapped-accessible hunting to a group of people who need and deserve it. We are also willing to open up permits to severely handicapped non-vets or groups like the *Make a Wish Foundation* if we have seasons unused by veterans. There is no charge for hunting privileges, however the hunter is responsible for the purchase of all required licenses and tags.



Mississippi River Eco Tourism Center

Winter Hours
Oct 28-March 31st

Thurs, Fri, Sat, and Sun
8 a.m.-4 p.m.

- *Camping and Cabin Rentals
- *Ski and snow shoe rental (weather permitting)
- *Banquet Hall Rental
- *Food and Beverages
- *Bait

Rock Creek
Marina and Campground
563-259-1876

Reservations can be made online at mycountyparks.com



Rock Creek

A poem by Jacob Stearns, 5th Grade Camper Kid

Of all the places to love I love
 Rock Creek Campground the best.
 The wildlife is like music on the radio.
 The creek is running fast like my brother.
 The smell of leaves in the fire,
 the sound of soothing hunting calls,
 and the taste of deer jerky melting on my lips.
 Surrounded by old trees, dirty water
 and nice campers as far as the eye can see.
 "Can't wait til summer!" I think to myself.
 There is no place like Rock Creek.

Rock Creek is currently not open to public hunting, making the area safe for the single permitted hunter and raises the odds of hunting success. The CCCB has handicapped-accessible facilities on site (cabin, campsites, restrooms, & camp store). The CCCB has staff on site that can render assistance and make quick repairs to the trail or hunting blind. The hunting portion is closed to all persons except the permitted hunter during the hunt.

We are accepting applications currently for permits through the 2013 spring seasons. We will award permits on a first come, first served basis. We hope this will make the planning process easier on the hunters.

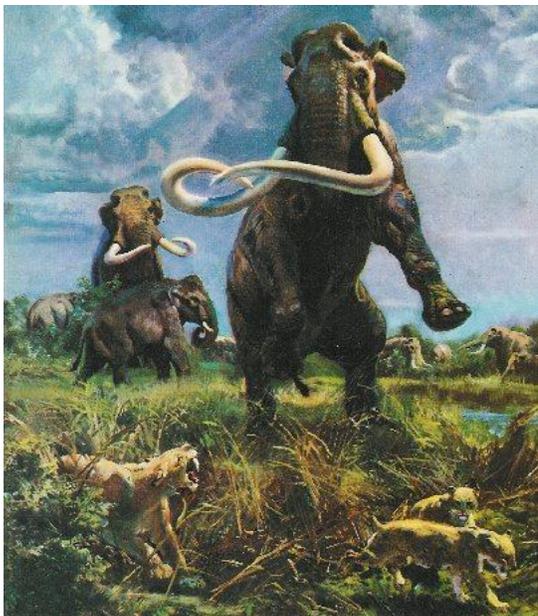
For information or an application for Purple Heart Hunting, email conservation@clintoncounty-ia.gov or call 563-847-7202.



Clinton County Conservation
P.O. Box 68
Grand Mound, Iowa 52751
Phone: 563-847-7202
Email: conservation@clintoncounty-ia.gov
Website: www.clintoncounty-ia.gov

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Columbian Mammoth vs. Sabers by Zdenek Burian

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

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.

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.

Mississippi River GREEN SEAL CERTIFIED

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