

# The Heron

Quarterly Newsletter of Clinton County Conservation  
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## Iowa's Water and Land Legacy (IWILL)

by Walt Wickham, Executive Director

On November 2<sup>nd</sup>, the voters of Iowa will see something unusual on their ballots—the proposed *Iowa Water and Land Legacy* amendment. While we at the Clinton County Conservation Board can't and won't tell you how you should vote, we can pass on information that will help you to make your own informed decision about this conservation measure.

The ballot item is the result of years of research and legislative work. An advisory committee was created in 2006 to look into the future needs and possible sources of funding for conservation. Because all Iowans benefit from natural resources, the committee recommended funding the Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreational Trust Fund through sales tax revenues, which come from all Iowans. (In Iowa, many essential items such as groceries and prescription medications are exempt from sales tax.)

The study committee identified that at least \$150 million more is needed annually to meet Iowa's water quality and natural resource needs; because 3/8 cent of sales tax would provide about \$150 million annually, they recommended devoting the first 3/8 cent of *any future sales tax increase* to the trust fund. It is important to note that this vote will not increase sales tax. It will take a vote of the legislature to do that. It only dedicates a portion of any future increase to conservation. In Iowa, a constitutional amendment needs to pass two different General Assemblies before it can go to the vote of the people. In both 2008 and 2009, Iowa legislators overwhelmingly voted in favor of the issue. Ninety percent of legislators voted yes! Now, Iowans have the opportunity to vote on the amendment that would create a sustainable source of funding for conservation.

If passed, this amendment establishes the Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund. Trust funds can be used to support only *voluntary* initiatives, and not regulatory or enforcement actions. The funding would have a tremendous impact on several conservation programs. Among these:

- **13% to REAP (Resource Enhancement and Protection).** \$20 million additional funds to meet the demands on REAP. This would provide \$40 million from current and future sources and could mean an increase of \$25,000 to Clinton County.
- **13% to Local Conservation Partnership Program.** \$20 million for habitat protection and conservation, infrastructure needs, conservation education, and nature interpretation at the local level. \$12 million would be made available to County Conservation Boards, \$5 million to nongovernmental organizations and \$3 million to cities.
- **14% to Watershed Protection.** \$20 million to improve

and encourage a watershed approach to solving water quality environmental problems.

- **7% to Lakes Restoration.** \$10 million additional for lake restoration needs.
- **10% to Trails.** \$15 million for the addition of new hiking, walking, biking and water trails in addition to maintenance of existing trails.
- **23% to Natural Resources Management.** \$35 million additional to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources for identified needs in state parks, state preserves, wildlife areas, state forests, wildlife habitats, wildlife diversity program, access for hunting and other recreational activities, technical assistance from forestry, fisheries and wildlife biologists through private landowner programs and incentives, water trails, river and streams programs, natural resources outreach including natural history interpretation in the parks and natural areas, angling opportunities, conservation law enforcement, recreational safety programs, etc.
- **20% to Agriculture and Land Stewardship.** \$30 million additional to the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship to meet the identified demand for the soil conservation and watershed protection programs the Department administers.



You'll find this proposed amendment to Iowa's constitution near the end of the ballot, after all the candidate choices. Voters simply select "yes" or "no".

**Shall the following amendment to the Constitution be adopted?**

Yes

No

**Summary: Adopts Iowa's Water and Land Legacy Amendment which creates a dedicated trust fund for the purposes of protecting and enhancing water quality and natural areas in the State including parks, trails, and fish and wildlife habitat, and conserving agricultural soils in this State.**

For more information go to ([www.iowaconservation2010.org](http://www.iowaconservation2010.org).) Please take some time to learn all the facts and then cast your vote on this historic amendment.

# Trumpeter Swans In Clinton County

by Brad Taylor, Park Officer, East District

When I was a kid growing up, the possibility of seeing one of the world's largest flying bird, the trumpeter swan, was only something you could do in a zoo. With the restoration of the trumpeter swan in Iowa the chances are much greater. This has much to do with the Iowa DNR and county conservation boards. It wasn't that many years ago and there was only a small population of trumpeter swans found in all of North America. In the early 1930's only 69 existed in the continental United States with all those occurring in Red Rock Lakes National Wildlife Refuge in southwest Montana.

With a lot of work, Iowa now has 42 confirmed nesting pairs in the state in 2010. In 1994 Clinton County Conservation teamed with the DNR on raising young swans. The program works by taking a nesting pair of swans that are flightless. The birds are allowed to breed and the young are relocated to other parts of the state and allowed to range freely and hopefully migrate on their own. With any kind of luck these young birds will return to Iowa and find a mate of their own. Prior to 1998, the last wild nesting trumpeter swan in Iowa occurred in 1883 on the Twin Lakes Wildlife Area southwest of Belmond, Iowa in Hancock County. In 1998, three cygnets were hatched by a wild nesting trumpeter pair in Dubuque County.

My work began with swans when I was a freshman at Kirkwood Community College. The DNR had 12 swans that were kept at a wintering pond near Cedar Rapids. It was the job of Natural Resource Majors to take care of them over the winter. Since the birds were flightless it was our job to make sure they had food and stayed healthy. The pond had an aerator on it so the swans always had open water. In the spring we spent more time at the pond and tried to pick out the breeding pairs. Swans are monogamous, meaning they typically only mate with a single swan for life, so it was important to pick out the males and females that wanted to be together. After the match making was done, it was time to gather the swans and take them to other marshes throughout the state.

Most swan roundups (think wild goose chase) start with a plan that sounds really good on paper but hardly ever works the way you want it to. These birds are flightless so catching these 25 to 35-pound birds should be easy. The plan on this 11-acre lake was to drive the swans to shore with several canoes. Once the swans were on land, the people hiding in the bushes would come into action and catch them with big fishing nets. On land you can run them down and catch them, on water it proves to be a little trickier. Unfortunately the swans know this plan also and all but a few made it back to the safety of the water. Once they are back in the water the work starts all over again. Chasing a swan in the water in a canoe is next to impossible. The water in April is also very

cold as I found out the hard way when my canoe tipped over. We eventually abandoned the idea of canoes and resorted to a motor boat to gather the remaining swans. The swan roundup continued to be a yearly routine and every year we got a little better with our technique.

Since working with Clinton County I have been on several swan roundups. This fall was no exception. Our task was to gather five cygnets, (young swans) on a pond, band them with a leg band, clip their wings and return them to the pond to over winter. The reason we clip the wings is so they don't try to migrate this fall. Young birds have a hard time making the migration and it has been found that they do much better if they are allowed to migrate the following year when they are bigger and stronger. Our plan was a simple one, find an area where the swans are used to getting out of the pond, put up a large soccer net, and slowly push them up the bank with a boat and into the waiting net. Once in the net they can't get out. Our plan seemed to fool the young birds and all were caught with very little effort. After being removed from the net they were banded with a USFWS band for identification, their feathers were clipped so they couldn't fly, then they were released. The plan with these young birds is to come back in June or July before they molt, recapture them and relocate them to other marshes around Clinton County. After the birds molt they will be able to fly and hopefully migrate next fall.



The Iowa DNR has decided that there are enough wild breeding pairs of trumpeter swans now in the state to maintain a sustainable population that they will no longer be continuing the swan program. With four captive breeding pairs in the county we feel it is important to continue this program on a local level. The Conservation Department is adopting the program, making sure the birds stay healthy, produce young and find homes for the cygnets in the years to come.

To feed these swans throughout the winter, takes a lot of corn and protein. If you would like to help feed these swans you can send a check to the Clinton County Conservation Foundation, PO Box 68, Grand Mound, Iowa 52751. With this program, sightings of these large beautiful birds in the county will hopefully become the rule rather than the exception.

## We Have New Winter X-country Ski & Snowshoes

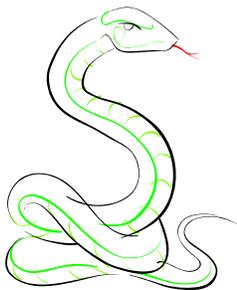
We have purchased a lot of new winter time equipment to use in our programs. There will be 24 new sets of cross country skis and poles to use this winter along with 27 new pairs of boots. This is particularly exciting because they are the New Nordic Norm variety that make it easier for the user to get in and out of while controlling the skis easier. In addition to the new skis and boots there will be 30 pairs of snowshoes available to the public these are also an improvement because these snowshoes are made of lightweight aluminum and durable polyethylene. We are interested in finding (buy inexpensive or donated is even better!) a reliable snowmobile that could be used for grooming our many cross country ski trails in the winter. The snowmobile does not have to be pretty, only in good working condition and have a reverse gear. Please contact Clinton County Conservation at 563-847-7202.

# Say What?!!!

by Chuck Jacobsen Interpretive Naturalist

In my job, and many times off duty, I often hear stories that will raise the hair of even the most seasoned outdoors enthusiast. Recently on an extended vacation with my family, we were subjected to several such tales.

Our first stop was the Current River in the Missouri Ozarks. It's designated as a National Scenic Riverway; part of our National Parks System and under the care of the Department of the Interior. The best campgrounds along its banks are National Park Campgrounds and so visitors see the people working there as expert authorities on that particular area. One evening I was told by the campground host that it was dangerous to walk the roadways at night as they can be covered with snakes. Apparently people are bitten. Just a month earlier a young teenager was rushed to the hospital. Some credibility is lent to the statement when you consider that pavement absorbs a lot of heat on a sunny day which then takes some time to dissipate, leaving the roads warm for some time past sundown. This warm surface would be ideal for a cold-blooded animal to warm itself up for an evening of foraging for food. So now I'm excited and after dark I'm out on the roads looking for snakes. Sadly, the entire four nights we camped in these campgrounds I never found a single snake. But the tales didn't stop there. We heard from others wearing uniforms that there were a large number of snakes in the area and the locals in the shops we visited did the best job of story telling. It was all I could do to keep my head from wagging from side to side. We did see one snake while visiting there. A copperhead very casually slithered right past my wife. Even when I followed close behind, trying to be sure to correctly identify it, the snake never swerved from its course, treating me as though I wasn't even there.



We left the Ozarks and headed to the Alabama Gulf Coast. We were able to stay at a condominium that was no more than 800 feet from the surf. I rise earlier than the rest of my family so I would sneak out to the beach just as the eastern sky was beginning to brighten. The constellation Orion would be shining brightly overhead and I would walk towards the rising sun until the sky was too bright to bear then I would turn and head back west looking for shells and other things of interest. I came across a woman staring into the surf. She quickly pointed out the rays or skates venturing close to the shore. They were probably feeding on mollusks exposed by the churning action of the waves. Later I came across a gentleman that was telling those around him that these were stingrays. He also stated he had seen a shark just minutes earlier and that anytime you were in the water there would be a shark within 500 feet of you. I told the small gathering that there were many kinds of rays, a dozen or more in fact, and stingrays are just one possible variety. And when you consider the vastness of our earth's oceans it's a long stretch to



think sharks could be that common and that many species are not dangerous to humans at all.

What is it that drives some people to make nature something scary or dangerous? I suppose many just want to make an impression on their audience. Do they somehow feel elevated by this sort of behavior? Whatever the reason, my profession is left battling these misleading propagators of myth and old wives' tales. Here are others to be wary of.

I've been told that opossums hang by their tails. This probably started due to the fact that opossums use their prehensile tails to grasp branches as they climb trees. But they do not hang by their tails; an adult is simply too heavy.

Ever been told that touching a toad will give you warts? Toads have bumps on their skin that look like warts. Some people could very easily think the bumps are contagious. But a dermatologist will tell you that a human virus, which is *not* transmitted by toads, causes warts. But the parotid glands behind a toad's ears do contain a poison that irritates the mouths of some predators. So it's probably not a good idea to eat them. It's my guess that some mom came up with this as a way to get their child to stop bringing these animals into the house!

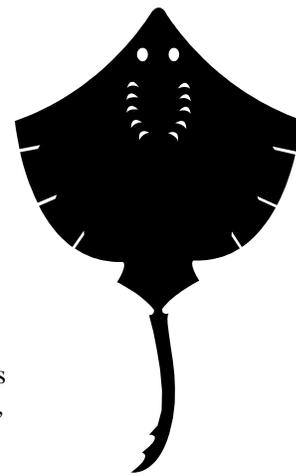
I've often heard that mother birds will reject their babies if humans have touched them. The tale may have been invented to keep people from handling young birds. Most birds have a poorly developed sense of smell and won't notice a human scent. Vultures are an exception as they sniff out dead animals for dinner.

Then there's Groundhog Day. It's the only mammal to have a day named after it. Legend goes, every Feb. 2, it emerges from hibernation. If it sees its shadow, six more weeks of winter lie ahead and if not, spring is on the way! In reality they prepare for six months of hibernation by eating up to one-third of their weight on a daily basis through the month of October. Do the math and you'll know that they are completely unaware of this February responsibility.



Are bats really blind? This assumption probably developed because bats use a form of sonar to navigate through dark areas, locate prey and avoid obstacles. However, their eyes, while small, are completely functional. They also have excellent hearing and sense of smell.

Remember it is important to do your research or call an expert before believing what may be just a tale or a good story. So the next time you hear something incredible about our local wildlife, keep in mind it might well be...or maybe not.



# Rocky, The Flying Squirrel Found Dead ~ Boris Badenov Suspected

by Jessica Steines, Interpretive Naturalist

It was early May and naturally there was a field trip at Rock Creek. This particular day we had Calamus-Wheatland 3rd grade doing a GPS (Global Positioning System) scavenger hunt, pond study and the Blue Heron Pontoon Cruise. During the scavenger hunt, kids were wandering around using the GPS units and I was wandering amongst them making sure everyone was getting along all right. Then two girls came running to me shouting excitedly, "Jessica, Jessica, come look this furry animal we found." Then they took off before I was able to ask any questions. Afraid it was a raccoon, I took off running behind them. When I got there, I was relieved it was not a masked bandit but a furry little behind and a flat tail hanging out of a rotting tree. I thought to myself, could it be? "I think it is a flying squirrel," I said to the girls. I was hesitant to pull it out of the tree, thinking that if it is alive, it is going to bite me. In the time I was thinking about going to get a stick, a boy, that was attracted by the commotion, came over and pulled the dead squirrel out by its tail. I guess that solved that problem.

When I saw the whole body, I couldn't believe what the girls had found, I was so excited. It was a flying squirrel! The flattened tail, extra skin on its side (patagium), long whiskers and big eyes made it easy to identify. It didn't seem to have been dead that long and it had a little bit of blood on its nose. It was a female and it looked like it might have had a litter. Maybe we have a viable population at Rock Creek! That would be great because they are on the special concern list for Iowa, mostly because they are not widely studied. They are active at night and their habitat is not widely distributed. It is unfortunate that it had to die, but it is remarkable that it was found and now we know that they reside at the campground. We do not know how it died, but would it be out the question that it landed wrong and accidentally crash landed? I call that survival of the fittest!

There are two species of flying squirrels in North America. Southern flying squirrels are smaller than their northern cousins but more aggressive and tend to dominate where their ranges overlap. Northern flying squirrels prefer the northern coniferous

forest whereas the southern prefers the eastern deciduous forests. Both need mature woodlands for mass producing nut trees with cavities for nesting, hiding and caching.

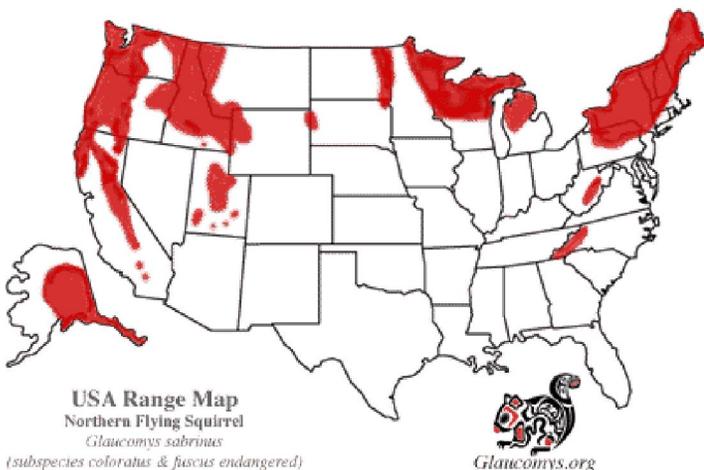
Even though they are named flying squirrels they do not fly, but they can occasionally stretch a glide to over 50 yards. The loose, furred skin membrane that connects its front foot to the back foot on each side of its body is called a patagium. Most of the time it is held out of its way until it needs to glide to a different location.

To glide, they climb high up in a tree, bob their head up, down and side to side, then launch and spreads their limbs straight out from the body.

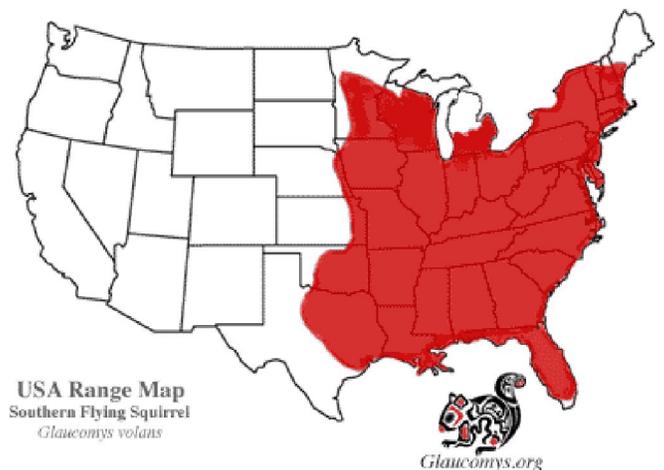
Upon landing head up, the squirrel then scurries to the opposite side of the tree to elude any predators that may be following. Other gliding animals from around the world tend to be nocturnal too, like the flying squirrels, due to the higher risk of attracting more attention of potential daytime predators. It is also at risk to predation when it is on the ground foraging due to the cumbersome patagium. Interestingly, the fur on the patagium is shorter than the fur on the rest of its body for less air resistance when it is gliding. The flat tail is used for balance when it is gliding through the air and walking in the trees. It could also be used as a brake much like an airplane uses an airfoil when landing. The tail is also used for communication among other flying squirrels. You know how lizards will lose their tail if grabbed by a predator; the flying squirrel also has a break-away tail for the same reason. I guess it is better to lose part of your tail than all of your life.



Boris Badenov, Bad Guy



Northern flying squirrel United States range. Courtesy of [www.flyingsquirrels.com](http://www.flyingsquirrels.com).



Southern flying squirrel United States range. Courtesy of [www.flyingsquirrels.com](http://www.flyingsquirrels.com).

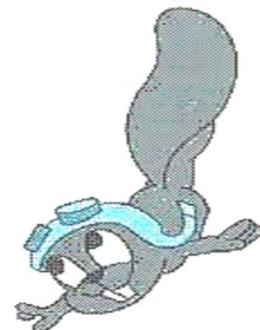
The fur on their body consist of guard hairs that protect the shorter and thicker insulating fur but they also have sensory fur we usually call whiskers. The North American flying squirrels have the longest facial whiskers for its body size than all other squirrels. They are so long because they are nocturnal (active at night) creatures and need the extra sensory for navigating, not only in dark holes and crevices, but also for landing since they seem to close their eyes before impact. They have more whiskers, with two sets around their eyes, that are not fully understood but are probably there for eye protection. There is also a set under its chin and forepaws (probably for handling food, nesting material, etc.). The females have one by each mamma for nursing.

Southern flying squirrels are around eight to ten inches long. They have creamy white fur on their underside whereas their backside is gray to brownish. They have a black ring around each eye and along the edge of the patagium. They also have large eyes and ears compared to other squirrels because of its nocturnal nature. If conditions are favorable they will have broods twice a year. The first one in February/March and then in May to July. After a gestation of 40 days, a litter usually of three to four (up to seven) is born hairless. It takes 84 days to be able to live independently. They do not hibernate but congregate to stay warm in the winter. Like other animals, they will stay in their nests till harsh weather clears. Flying squirrels are primarily

vegetarians eating nuts, seeds, fruit, berries, mushrooms, buds, flower blossoms and tree bark but will eat animal items like insects, bird eggs, hatchlings, small mammals and carrion. In the wild they will live to around five years old. Their limiting factors include predators (domestic cats, owls, hawks, snakes, raccoons, fox, bobcats and weasels), internal (protozoans and nematodes) and external parasites (lice, mites and fleas) but most of all is the destruction and lack of habitat.

The best way to know if there are flying squirrels in your area is to listen at night. Flying squirrels produce several vocalizations including a high pitched "tseet" and other chirping sounds. Some vocalizations are above the frequency range of the human ear, perhaps for navigation, somewhat like the echolocation that bats use. You can find an audio of their calls on the internet. Another place you can listen is at Eden Valley Refuge, where they have been seen entering a tree cavity and have been caught by a past ranger's domestic cat. In fact, you can visit the Eden Valley Nature Center on Saturdays (1-4 PM) and see it on display.

Oh yeah, the whole Rocky, The Flying Squirrel thing was just a hoax. Rocky is cartoon squirrel!



## Great Experience

by Karri Rutenbeck, Intern Park Ranger, West District

As the summer and camping season is coming to a close, unfortunately, so is my Park Ranger internship with Clinton County Conservation. Having previously worked for Jones County Conservation for the past two summers, I was slightly apprehensive about starting over again at a different county, but I quickly learned, however, that my fears were unfounded. The beautiful parks, passionate co-workers and friendly campers welcomed me into the system. In the process of keeping the parks clean and productive, I learned a lot more than I originally anticipated.

Getting to know my new co-workers was both interesting and educational, to say the least. Nate Keeney and Kaleb Ebeling are both college-aged students, like myself, who are pursuing careers in the natural resource field. We would usually work together to accomplish tasks such as cleaning fire rings, cutting and splitting firewood and weed-eating the parks. Being the only female working in the West District did have its challenges, but it actually made the job more enjoyable at times. I happily played along with innocent joking and worked my hardest to prove I was just as capable as the two guys. Ray Wiese was responsible for many things including mowing the parks, being the center of many jokes and complaining about the "uneven" terrain on which he was forced to mow with a Kubota lawnmower (mainly because it was not a John Deere). I was able to learn a lot from simply watching Dave Schneden, who is very knowledgeable about many trades including electric work, plumbing, block laying and cement work. The Park Officer for the West District, Chip Brown, was a very easy-going boss and I enjoyed his sense of humor and hearing him passionately explain everything he has accomplished for the parks since taking the position.

While working in the parks on Saturdays, I had the privilege of talking to the campers and camp hosts at the parks and hearing

their opinions, comments and concerns about anything else they had going on. I was pleasantly surprised at the respect that the campers had toward the parks and Chip. I enjoyed getting to know everyone I had the opportunity to talk with and I had fun assisting some campers with pranks they wanted to play on their families. I also enjoyed having the opportunity to host the Nature Center and gave my best attempt at answering questions the visitors had about the displays.

Besides getting to know some memorable co-workers and campers, I learned new skills and operated new equipment I hadn't used in the past such as a skid loader, miter saw, mortar striker, and cement edger. I really enjoyed participating in the many development projects we accomplished this summer such as the new sign at the Grand Mound office, building the information booth at Walnut Grove and improving the parking lots at McAndrews and Ringneck Marsh. Also, through battling the stubborn water puddles at Eden Valley, I learned a lot about how tiling works. How to make cement forms and pour cement was learned by working on the signs at Grand Mound Headquarters and Walnut Grove Park.



All of the new knowledge I gained this summer brings me one step closer to reaching my career goals and the life-changing experience will never be forgotten. I'm looking forward to continuing my education at Iowa State and hope to some day accomplish half as much as each of the passionate workers of Clinton County Conservation. I would like to thank Chip, the campers and the Clinton County Conservation Board for giving me the opportunity to work in the parks and for making my summer both enjoyable and educational.

# Autumn Outdoor Adeventures

## October

**7<sup>th</sup> ~ Eco Cruise ~ 5 PM ~ Rock Creek** ~ Take a 1.5 hour Eco-Cruise on the Mississippi River. Cruisers will hear information about wildlife, commercial use, navigation and recreational use of the big river. Call 563-847-7202 to reserve a spot. There is no fee but a freewill donation to the Rock Creek Education Fund will be collected.

**7<sup>th</sup> ~ Music in the Loft ~ 7 PM ~ Soaring Eagle** ~ Come and enjoy the homespun music of local players and singers. You'll hear the music of many different artists and styles. Refreshments will be served.



**9<sup>th</sup> ~ Nineteenth Annual Ecology Day ~ 9AM - 7 PM ~ Wapsi Center** ~ Bring the whole family, invite a friend and plan to attend this nature-oriented event. This year's theme is "Art in Nature". Please call if you are planning to attend any of the day's events; 563-328-3286.

- **9AM - 1:30 PM ~ Syracuse to Sherman Park Canoe Float ~ Syracuse Landing to Sherman Park** ~ Join us for a tour on the Wapsipinicon River via canoe. Space is limited, so participants must pre-register to reserve a spot (3 per canoe). Please bring sturdy shoes and a sack lunch in a waterproof container.
- **2 PM ~ Earth-Friendly Art Kits** ~ Learn how to use natural and recycled materials to create your very own art kits. Participants are asked to bring only a shoebox; as other supplies will be provided.
- **3 PM ~ Precious Pottery** ~ Learn how to create animals and pots out of clay, and then fire your creations in a trash can kiln.
- **4 - 6 PM ~ Nature Printing & Framing** ~ Learn how to use leaves, sticks and seeds to make beautiful designs with paint and various printing techniques. Then create a recycled frame to hold your creation.
- **4 - 6 PM ~ Digital Nature Photography 101** ~ Calling all nature buffs! Join Bob Bryant and Julie Malake, to learn about the world of digital nature photography. Bring your own digital camera (a tripod if you have one) and learn the techniques and tips to becoming a better outdoor photographer. Technical topics to be covered: digital versus film, camera types, camera resolution, camera accessories and gear, camera shooting modes, lighting and exposure, composition, image storage and editing. Close-up photography will be emphasized. Landscape and wildlife photography will also be covered.
- **6 PM ~ Supper** ~ Join us for a delicious supper provided by the Friends of the Wapsi River Center, Inc.



**9<sup>th</sup> ~ Blue Grass Jam ~ 12 PM - 9 PM ~ Eden Valley** ~ On the 8<sup>th</sup> of October we will have a big jam around the fire all afternoon and evening and then the stage show on Saturday the 9<sup>th</sup>. This will be the 28<sup>th</sup> year and it keeps getting better each year. Please bring your own lawn chairs and there will be a potluck dinner.

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

**9<sup>th</sup> ~ 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 funds to local landowners and agencies for the establishment of wildlife habitat. Call Kevin McDougall 563-212-4806 for tickets.

**9<sup>th</sup> ~ Eastern Iowa Star Party ~ Dusk ~ Wapsi Center (Monsignor Menke Observatory)** ~ Join representatives from the Quad Cities Astronomical Society and astronomy clubs from all over the Midwest to view the heavens above.

**14<sup>th</sup> ~ Fall Color Eco Cruise ~ 5 PM ~ Rock Creek** ~ Call 563-847-7202 to reserve a spot. There is no fee but a freewill donation to the Rock Creek Education Fund will be collected.

**15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> ~ Girls' Night Out ~ 6 PM (Fri.) - 4 PM (Sat.) ~ Rock Creek** ~ Women of all ages (10-17 year olds must be with a female chaperone) are invited to attend this fun forest foray.

There will be activities including a fall-color cruise on the Blue Heron pontoon boat, survival skills, orienteering, tree ID, All About Apples, solar & canning jar cooking, creatures of the night hike and stargazing. There is a \$30/person fee to cover cabin rental, food and workshop materials. Space is limited, call 563-847-7202 to register.



**15<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup> ~ 2 Nights Out Float ~ 4 PM ~ Walnut Grove** ~ Meet at Walnut Grove Park and car pool to our put-in at Jungletown Access south of Hale, IA. We plan to return by midday on Sunday having paddled 17.4 miles on the Wapsi or about 9 hours total; camping on sandbars along the way. Pack your food, water, and gear into airtight containers (30 gal. bags or packs). We will have time for wading, swimming, fishing, etc. Call 563-847-7202 to register and/or reserve equipment; packs, tents, meal kits, cook stoves, boats, paddles or PFD's.

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

**19<sup>th</sup> ~ North American Bison ~ 7 PM ~ Wapsi Center** ~ Come learn about the majestic bison and how the Native Americans used this valuable resource.



**21<sup>st</sup> ~ Fall Color Eco Cruise ~ 5 PM ~ Rock Creek** ~ Call 563-847-7202. There is no fee but a freewill donation to the Rock Creek Education Fund will be collected.

**23<sup>rd</sup> ~ Nature Center Open ~ 1 PM ~ Eden Valley** ~ This will be the last weekend of the season we will be open. We will reopen April 23, 2011.

**23<sup>rd</sup> ~ Fall Fest ~ 3 PM - 8 PM ~ Soaring Eagle** ~ Family fun for everyone flows through all the activities planned for the evening. Face painting, pumpkin carving, hayrack ride and hike will keep your group excitedly busy.

**28<sup>th</sup> ~ Creatures of the Darkness Hike ~ 6 PM ~ Wapsi River Center** ~ Come learn about nocturnal creatures residing at the Wapsi River Center. Spiders, owls, and bats will be just some of the creatures discovered on this “spooky” hike. Please bring sturdy shoes, a flashlight, and call to register; 563-328-3286.

**30<sup>th</sup> ~ 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](http://www.qcas.org), after 4 PM on the day of the party.

## November

**3<sup>rd</sup> ~ Wild Cats and Dogs ~ 2 PM ~ Children's Discovery Center** ~ This program is for elementary school age children. This presentation is on wild cats (cougar, bobcat and lynx) and dogs (wolf, coyote and fox), including real furs and skulls to see and touch, story and snack are also included. The Children's Discovery Center is located at 332 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue South in Clinton, near Hy-Vee. This event is free of charge.

**4<sup>th</sup> ~ Music in the Loft ~ 7 PM ~ Soaring Eagle** ~ Come and enjoy the homespun music of local players and singers. You'll hear the music of many different artists and styles. Refreshments will be served.



**5<sup>th</sup> ~ Wild Cats and Dogs ~ 10:30 AM ~ Children's Discovery Center** ~ This nature program, which builds on awareness of the environment, focuses on our young county residents, three to five year-olds, but all ages can come! This presentation is on wild cats (cougar, bobcat and lynx) and dogs (wolf, coyote and fox) including real furs and skulls to see and touch, story and snack are also included. The Children's Discovery Center is located at 332 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue South in Clinton, near Hy-Vee. This event is free of charge.



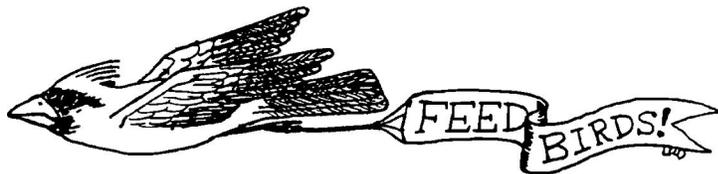
**6<sup>th</sup> ~ Bald Eagle Eco Cruise ~ 1 PM ~ Rock Creek** ~ This will be the public's last opportunity this year to take an Eco Cruise on the Blue Heron Pontoon Boat. The American bald eagles are starting to congregate along the Mississippi for the winter, and we hope to see several of the birds, plus many other species, during the cruise. Before freeze-up, the bald eagles are spread out along the river and the best way to see them is to go to them via boat. Call 563-847-7202 to register.

**6<sup>th</sup> ~ Fall Tree Hike ~ 11 AM ~ Wapsi Center** ~ Enjoy a fall stroll at the Wapsi River Center to explore our local trees. Learn how to identify them by leaves, bark, seeds, nuts and fruits. Bring a friend, a picnic lunch and stay for the afternoon program as well!

**6<sup>th</sup> ~ Rustic Residents ~ 1 PM ~ Wapsi Center** ~ Learn how seeds, nuts and twigs can be “magically” transformed into people and creatures. Fun for the whole family! Supplies are limited, so please pre-register at 563-328-3286.

**20<sup>th</sup> ~ Bird Feeder Workshop ~ 1 PM ~ Soaring Eagle** ~ Prepare yourself for a season of fun by fixing up that old bird feeder or creating new ones. Learn the dos and don'ts of backyard bird feeding and how you can get involved in yearly bird counts

from the warmth of your own home. Materials will be available to get your old feeder going again or you may order kits to create new feeders. Prices range from \$2 - \$20 or you can bring in a used bottle or carton and fashion a free feeder from that. Call 563-847-7202 to order your kit and register.



**20<sup>th</sup> ~ Winter Bird Feeding ~ 10 AM ~ Wapsi Center** ~ Learn how you can attract and feed our common, feathered friends on any budget. Simple supplies can get you started right in your own backyard.

**27<sup>th</sup> ~ 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](http://www.qcas.org), after 4 PM on the day of the party.

## December

**2<sup>nd</sup> ~ Music in the Loft ~ 7 PM ~ Soaring Eagle** ~ Come and enjoy the homespun music of local players and singers. You'll hear the music of many different artists and styles. Refreshments will be served.

**4<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> ~ Park Closed ~ All Day ~ Wapsi Center** ~ The Wapsi River Environmental Education Center and its facilities will be closed for a controlled deer hunt.

**8<sup>th</sup> ~ Birds of Prey ~ 2 PM ~ Children's Discovery Center** ~ This program is for elementary school age children. This presentation includes live birds of prey and a lot of bird things to see and touch. The Children's Discovery Center is located at 332 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue South in Clinton, near Hy-Vee. This event is free of charge.

**10<sup>th</sup> ~ Birds of Prey ~ 10:30 AM ~ Children's Discovery Center** ~ This nature program, which builds on awareness of the environment, focuses on our young county residents, three to five year-olds, but all ages can come! This presentation includes live birds of prey and a lot of bird things to see and touch. The Children's Discovery Center is located at 332 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue South in Clinton, near Hy-Vee. This event is free of charge.

**11<sup>th</sup> ~ Cross Country Ski Tour ~ 9:30 AM ~ Wapsi Center** ~ Come learn the basics of cross country skiing and explore the wintery open spaces of the Wapsi River Center. All experience levels welcome. Please call 563-328-3286 to register for equipment; please provide gender, height and shoe size of each participant.

**18<sup>th</sup> ~ Winter Tree Identification ~ 10 AM ~ Wapsi Center** ~ Come explore the winter woodlands of the Wapsi River Center via snow shoe. Learn how to identify trees by only looking at their twigs. Call to reserve your equipment at 563-328-3286.



**18<sup>th</sup> ~ Snowshoe & Ski Equipment Hike ~ 1 PM - 4 PM ~ Soaring Eagle Nature Center** ~ The trails will be tracked and extended into Eagle Point Park. This gives you an excellent chance to use our New Nordic Norm ski system and snowshoes for an afternoon of exploration and recreation on the final weekend of autumn.

**Winter Sneak Peak ~ more events to come in winter newsletter due out in early January , 2011.**

## January

**6<sup>th</sup> ~ Music in the Loft ~ 7 PM - 9 PM ~ Soaring Eagle Nature Center** ~ Come and enjoy the homespun music of local players and singers. You'll hear the music of many different artists and styles. Refreshments will be served.

**7<sup>th</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup> ~ Quad Cities Bald Eagle Days ~ QCCA Expo Center, Rock Island** ~ This huge, annual event showcasing our national symbol, the American bald eagle, also involves various wildlife artists, information booths and live animal presentations. The event is held at the QCCA Expo Center, 2621 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Rock Island, from 4 - 8 PM on Friday, January 7, 10 AM - 8 PM on Saturday, January 8 and 10 AM - 5 PM on Sunday, January 9. Come see us at the Wapsi River Environmental Education Center's booth.



**8<sup>th</sup> ~ Bald Eagle Watch ~ 8 AM - 2:30 PM ~ Clinton Community College** ~ The program is dedicated to the understanding, appreciation and protection of our national symbol. Naturalists and volunteers will be on hand to share their enthusiasm and knowledge of these and other natural wonders. Programs will feature lectures, videos, songs, stories, and live birds of prey. The exhibit hall will feature wildlife exhibits, children's activities, door prizes, food and drink.

**Eagle watching at Lock #13, Fulton, IL,** will take place from 8 AM - 3:30 PM. Naturalists will be on hand with spotting scopes

available to aid in viewing the bald eagles. Participants are encouraged to bring binoculars, spotting scopes and cameras. Participants are encouraged to wear warm clothing to the viewing sites. Due to limited parking and additional security, participants are encouraged to use the free courtesy bus service sponsored by local businesses and provided by the Municipal Transit Administration of the City of Clinton. The bus will travel between the viewing site and the college, departing and arriving every half hour beginning at 8:30 AM.

**12<sup>th</sup> ~ Nature Tails ~ 2 PM ~ Children's Discovery Center** ~ This program is an after school activity for elementary school age children. There will be a story, live animals, real furs and mounts to help explain the different uses of an animal's tail. After every presentation there will be a fun craft and snack. The Children's Discovery Center is located at 332 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue South in Clinton, near Hy-Vee. This event is free of charge.

**14<sup>th</sup> ~ Nature Tails ~ 10:30 AM ~ Children's Discovery Center** ~ This nature program, which builds on awareness of the environment, focuses on our youngest county residents, three to five year-olds. The activities start with book and continue with live animals, real furs and mounts. Almost everything will be hands-on to experience the different uses, textures, shapes and opposites using animal tails. After every presentation there will be a fun craft and snack. The Children's Discovery Center and is located at 332 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue South in Clinton Iowa near Hy-Vee. This event is free of charge.

**15<sup>th</sup> ~ Cross Country Ski Clinic ~ 1 PM - 4 PM ~ Emma Young Park, Clinton** ~ A short introductory discussion will start off this fun winter afternoon of fun in the winter sun. The park will be tracked and ready for the enjoyment of skiers and snowshoers alike. We'll have our new updated ski equipment featuring New Nordic Norm boots and binding systems, quite a step up from the old three-pin system. So even if you've tried it before you may want to give it another go and experience the difference.



## Rock Creek Reprise

by Ryan Waltz, Park Ranger, East District

During the past five years as Park Ranger at Scott County Park, I have gained an abundance of knowledge, experience and training in the conservation field I am very grateful for. It was great being part of a team that could accomplish even the most difficult of tasks. We could always put our heads together, do some research and come up with a solid solution to almost any problem. I'm going to miss working with my old team and the decision to leave wasn't easy, to say the least. It's was a difficult thing to do, but once you get the river in your blood, you can't seem to get it out.

My first stint at Rock Creek Marina and Campground lasted 9 years before I took the job in Scott County. I've been back at Rock Creek for about eight weeks now and it has been everything I had hoped for and more. Brad Taylor, the Park Officer, has a very similar work and conservation ethic that I have and is not afraid to tackle any problem. I think we are going to have a good working relationship at Rock Creek. I am also getting a welcome back by the river also. It is going to flood in October, who would

have thought that would happen. (hooray). That is the only part of the job part that I didn't miss. There is so much work that we need to get done in preparation for the rising water level. Docks have to be taken out or adjusted and extensions put on the pipes, picnic tables have to be taken to higher ground, just to name a few things. I love it down here!

I had no idea that I would have an opportunity to return to Rock Creek. It's been five years since I last worked here. When Walt Wickham called to offer me the position I was in Marcel, Minnesota on a family fishing vacation. Cell phone service is terrible in that neck of the woods. I wasn't sure if I would even be able to receive a call, let alone one of this kind. Shortly after we arrived and got settled in I got "The Call". I saw his name on caller ID. I was hoping it was good news. Listening in suspense, there was a little static, Walt offered me a position at Rock Creek. I was about to embark on a new adventure and revisit an old one at the same time.

# Food for Thought ~ Next Year's Wildlife Food Plots

by Darin Voss, *Natural Resource Technician*

It may seem like it's a little too early to start thinking about wildlife food plots for next spring, but in all reality this is the time to start thinking about them. As we all know, the past three winters have been exceptionally harsh. We have experienced large amounts of snowfall and bitterly cold temps. With winters like these, it is crucial to have standing food plots to help the wildlife survive the winter. Not only do the food plots provide food, but they also provide much needed wintering cover. This cover helps protect the wildlife from both winter conditions and predators. Game animals such as deer, turkey, pheasant, rabbits, squirrels and many other animals, such as songbirds, benefit as well. I encourage anybody who has a parcel of land on their acreage or farm that sits fallow to seriously think about putting in a plot.

I understand that with corn and bean prices being what they are, it may not be feasible to take several acres out of production. With that being said, I feel that there are plenty of areas out there that can be utilized as a food plot. A food plot does not need to be extremely large in size in order to be effective. In areas with existing wintering cover such as shelter belts or CRP fields (be sure to check with NRCS before putting a plot in existing CRP), one to two acre plots are typically sufficient. Larger plots of five or more acres should be planted if the existing wintering cover in the area is not adequate.

There may be several factors or obstacles that may prevent one from planting food plots. The most common, limiting factors that I see include cost of seed, lack of equipment and know how. These limiting factors can be overcome by utilizing local resources such as Clinton County Pheasants Forever, Clinton County Conservation, Iowa DNR and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office. Clinton County Pheasants Forever will offer food plot seed, free of charge, once again this spring. Most large seed companies have wildlife habitat seed programs. These programs allow wildlife groups such as Pheasants Forever and other conservation organizations to purchase the seed

at a lower cost. Many times the cost is to merely cover the bagging and handling of the seed. The main stipulation is that the seed must be planted for wildlife and it is not to be harvested. We typically order Roundup® Ready corn and grain sorghum. We already have 10 bags of Roundup® Ready soybeans ordered. To assure that the seed will be ready to pick up in a timely fashion this spring, we must order the Roundup® Ready corn and grain sorghum in October. If you are interested in food plot seed be sure to contact me at 563-847-7202 so I can reserve the seed that you will need. I want to make sure that I order enough seed. I will also order extra seed which will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis. The seed will be stored and can be picked up at the CCCB Headquarters next spring.

Equipment is also available at the Clinton County Conservation HQ. For the smaller food plots there is ATV equipment available, free of charge, courtesy of Clinton Co. Pheasants Forever and Clinton County Whitetails Unlimited. The ATV equipment includes chisel plow/cultivator, disc section, drop seeder, broadcast seeder and culti-packer. For larger food plots, the County Conservation Board has a six-foot and ten-foot no-till drill that leases for \$10/acre. For those who do not have the capability of planting food plots themselves, but are interested in putting one in, there is an option for you. As the Natural Resource Technician for the Conservation Department, I can come out to your property and plant the food plot for a set fee per acre.

I hope that this article gets everyone thinking a little more about food plots for this upcoming year. You may not have the land yourself, but maybe you know somebody who does. With a little encouragement and help, you may be surprised who may be willing to put in a food plot. I also encourage you to utilize the local resources provided to help your food plots be a success. If you are planning on planting food plots this spring, please contact me with the type of seed and quantity that you will need. Also, be sure to contact me with any additional questions.

## Hello, But I Must Be Going

by Aaron Askelson, *Intern Naturalist*

It has been an exciting few months for me while working for Clinton County Conservation. I have been working on several projects during my internship. I will be creating a background for the black rat snake display at the Soaring Eagle Nature Center, I have been working on signage for the Folletts Disc Golf Course and I will be painting our new sign at Headquarters.

Learning more about different kinds of environmental education programs has been a wonderful experience for me while gaining more valuable work skills alongside a group of talented naturalists. I have learned a lot in this short time and hope to use the knowledge I have gained to further my career in conservation.

The volume of people we run programs for at Clinton County was a little overwhelming at first, but it became routine after the first few weeks. The hard working people here try to provide exciting opportunities for school groups, the public and private organizations. I have enjoyed learning about animal care and have had my first exposure to caring for snakes. It has been rewarding to work in Clinton County and see all the different areas and

parks that are in the county.

Getting the opportunity to pilot the Blue Heron for Eco-Cruises and Moonlight Cruises has been a real thrill for me. I had never operated a motor boat before let alone a 30-foot long, twin engine pontoon boat on the Mississippi. It has offered exciting challenges also to learn more about the Mississippi River and its history along with learning to pilot the boat safely through one of the largest rivers in the world.

I also had the privilege of trying to save a bald eagle that was found along Hwy 61. We took it to the Raptor Clinic at Kirkwood Community College in Cedar Rapids and were able to stay for the entire exam. We even helped administer fluids to the eagle. Alas, it did not recover from its injuries.

When you help run programs with people from preschool age to senior citizens, you get quite a variety. This has kept the job interesting and entertaining. My internship will sadly be over in early November, so, hello, but I must be going.

# Purple Heart Hunting ~A Great Program Looking for a Good Home

by Mark Roberts, Education Coordinator

Purpose: To provide a high quality hunting opportunity that is easily accessible to US military veterans that have earned the Purple Heart and other combat commendations as well as Disabled American Veterans and POWs.

This is the basic premise behind an idea I had last winter. I was watching a TV program where a young American veteran who lost his legs in Iraq, hunted African antelope on a game ranch in Texas. The soldier was so emotional following the hunt that it really moved me. He was able to do something that he thought was forever beyond his reach. Hunt.

The experience was great but I thought, "What if that were a real hunt for wild Iowa whitetails. How much better would that be?" My wheels started turning and I started to bounce my ideas off of friends, co-workers, Conservation Board members and military folks.

With all input positive, I started to think about where I could put this idea into practice. I came up with what I thought was the perfect piece of property, Mockridge Wildlife Preserve near Calamus. It had all the characteristics I was looking for.

Mockridge Wildlife Preserve is:

- Currently not open to hunting.
- 75 acres of pine and hardwood forest with a well-developed trail system.
- No deed restrictions on use.
- Relatively flat, especially main trail into the center of the area.
- Excellent deer and turkey numbers.
- Low human use area.

Well, an angry mob descended on the September 14<sup>th</sup> CCCB's board meeting to protest EVERYTHING about this program. Comments about the location, to safety, to "Why do this for disabled vets, there are thousands of them", to "This is just a big hoax and a farce", were voiced.

It reminded me of the lyrics from "Ordinary Man", an early 80's rock song, by Triumph:

*Look in the mirror, tell me what do you see  
Can you lie to yourself, like you're lying to me  
Do you fall asleep real easy, feeling justified and right  
Or do you wake up feeling empty, in the middle of the night  
The more I get to see, the less I understand  
I'm just another ordinary man.*

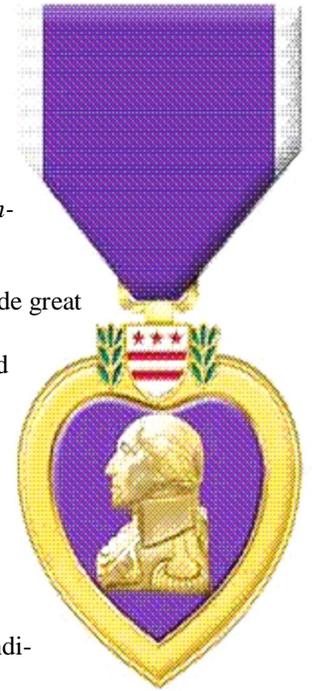
I left that meeting hurt and dismayed. I also left that meeting determined to find a home for "Purple Heart Hunting". Steel Tuff out of Low Moor is currently building a handicapped-accessible, ground blind for a disabled hunter and an assistant. Illowa Marine of Clinton is donating a custom camouflage paint job on the blind. Once we find a home, we can quickly place the blind so the hunt can go forward.

## Purple Heart Hunting Key Points

- This, I believe, will be the first of its kind in Iowa. There is

an area near Humboldt, Iowa, run by a private group called *Enabled Veterans Outdoors* ([enabledveteransoutdoors.org](http://enabledveteransoutdoors.org)).

- Recognizes heroes that have made great personal sacrifice.
- Disabled American Veterans and members of the military have been consulted.
- Endorsements from the Disabled American Vets, military branches, etc. would be sought.
- The DNR has been consulted.
- One permanent blind would be established and be ATV and handi-capped accessible.
- Hunters could hunt anywhere on the property.
- No special seasons or licensing. Standard DNR licenses and regulations apply.
- Program would hopefully kick-off sometime in the 2010-11 hunting season.
- The CCCB would offer eleven separate and distinct permits.
- After a one-year pilot, the program would be promoted to other CCCBs and the DNR around the state to encourage more *Purple Heart Hunting* areas.
- While the hunter is permitted, any legal game species in which the hunter possess a valid license may be taken in any legal manner (ex. small game, furbearers).
- The hunter may erect non-permanent blinds in the preserve providing they are removed on the last day of the permit.
- CCCB will provide improved parking and a graveled lane to permanent blind.
- CCCB will provide permanent blind and access ramp as well as handicapped parking at blind.
- The CCCB will partner with wildlife organizations for donations, assistance in developing the area & helping hunters.



## 2010-11 Possible Season Permits

1. Disabled Hunter Season Sept. 18-Oct. 3
2. October 4-31  
Deer Archery, Resident Early Muzzleloader, Turkey Gun/Bow
3. November 1-30  
Deer Archery, Turkey Gun/Bow
4. Shotgun Deer #1 Dec. 4-8
5. Shotgun Deer #2 Dec. 11-19
6. Late Deer Muzzleloader Dec. 20-Jan. 10  
Deer and Turkey Archery
7. Antlerless Deer Jan. 11-31
8. Spring Turkey Gun/Bow #1 April 11-14
9. Spring Turkey Gun/Bow #2 April 15-19
10. Spring Turkey Gun/Bow #3 April 20-26
11. Spring Turkey Gun/Bow #4 April 27-May 15

### Application Process

- Applicants must provide photocopy of Award Certificate, disability status, honorable discharge (unless on active duty).
- Applicants will choose which season(s) they wish to hunt with a random draw from qualified applicants for seasons.
- May only be drawn for one season per year.
- Must acquire all needed DNR licenses & follow all DNR hunting regulations.

### Permitted Hunt Procedure

- Successful applicant will be provided a laminated sign to hang at the gate when hunting is in progress.
- Hunter will remove sign each day at the end of the hunt.
- Hunter may use an ATV/UTV to retrieve game and to get to and from permanent stand.
- Hunter may use a passenger car/truck/suv to get to and from permanent stand.
- Hunter may have a non-hunting assistant along.
- The CCCB will work with the hunter to get volunteer assistance if needed.
- Hunter will provide pictures and a short written account of hunting experience to the CCCB for publicity purposes.
- Hunter will notify CCCB when his/her hunt is over (i.e. when tag is filled).
- Hunter will stay within established boundaries except to retrieve downed game.

This program 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.

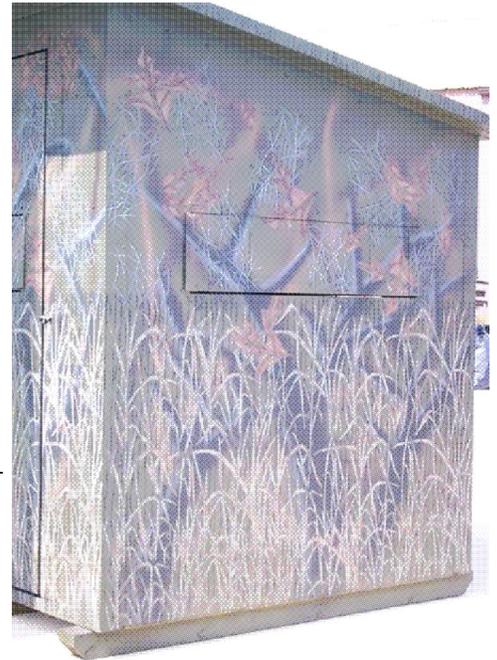
We are currently looking at our options on public land and are also interested in hearing from private landowners that would be

willing to volunteer their land for this program. Ideally, we would be seeking a long-term (5+ years) agreement for exclusive hunting rights to a suitable piece of forested land. My feeling is there are folks out there willing to help that just want to do right by our nation's military heroes, without any ulterior motives.

I hope the majority of people will agree this is a worthwhile project. I would welcome the opportunity to talk with supportive folks to discuss concerns and suggestions either in person or on the phone. Feel free to contact me or Walt Wickham, Executive Director, at 563-847-7202 during regular office hours. Letters of support are also welcome.

If you are interested in making a donation to help with expenses, make a check out to the Clinton County Conservation Foundation, PO Box 68, Grand Mound, Iowa 52751.

If you are a veteran and feel you would qualify and are interested in getting your name into one of the early drawings, call Mark at 563-847-7202. If all goes well we may be set up by November!



Handicapped-accessible ground blind by *Steel Tuff* and *Illowa Marine*.

## West District's Summer Fun

by Chip Brown, Park Officer, West District

This summer has been full of maintenance projects and new improvements. As everyone knows spring and summer is our time to catch up and make things happen. Some of this year's accomplishments include:

- Finished showers and had dedication at Walnut Grove Park.
- Finished Ringneck Marsh's north parking, & had dedication.
- Planted 18 – 20 acres of outstanding food plots at Lost Nation and McAndrews Public Areas.
- Constructed a new fence south of the tower at Eden Valley.
- Installed drinking and hand washing station at Eden Valley.
- Upgraded all electric pedestals at Sherman and Eden Valley.
- Repainted Eden Valley showers.
- Painted buildings at Eden Valley and Sherman.
- Volunteers donated time and materials to install a sand volleyball court at Walnut Grove Park.
- Increased the size of McAndrews parking for horse trailers.
- Horse trails signed, mapped and opened for riding.
- Installed landscaping and stone sign at main office.
- Increased the size of the overhead door and new siding on the east side of the main office shop.

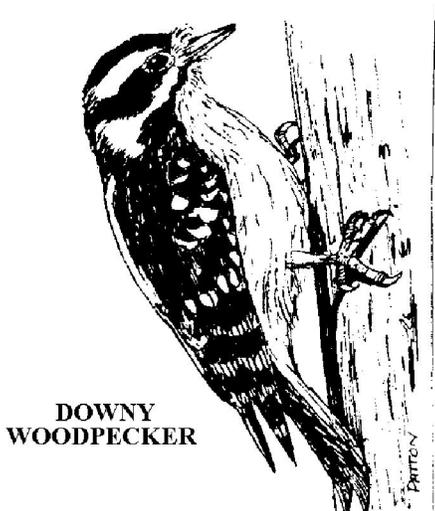
- Fixed all drainage tile at Eden Valley.
- Cleared and reopened Mockridge trails.
- Constructed a new information booth at Walnut Grove Park.
- Started construction of 12 new electric and water sites at Walnut Grove Park.
- New bathroom fixtures in the Eden Valley shower house.
- 600 new trees at McAndrews & Lost Nation Wildlife Areas.
- Dealt with flooding most of the summer at Walnut Grove and Sherman Parks.
- Yearly park maintenance and upkeep (mowing, trimming, garbage, custodial and more).

With the help of seasonal staffing, the West District was able to achieve the most projects ever in one summer. The use of seasonal staffing allows full-time staff the time to focus on new projects and major improvements and renovations. Seasonals get the chance to assist us and learn new skills throughout the summer as they perform the daily maintenance activities. This has been a great summer with lots of campers and people driving through. If you are out and close to a park in the West District, stop in and check out the improvements.

**Clinton County Conservation**  
**P.O. Box 68**  
**Grand Mound, Iowa 52751**  
**Phone: 563-847-7202**  
**Email: [conservation@clintoncounty-ia.gov](mailto:conservation@clintoncounty-ia.gov)**  
**Website: [www.clintoncounty-ia.gov](http://www.clintoncounty-ia.gov)**

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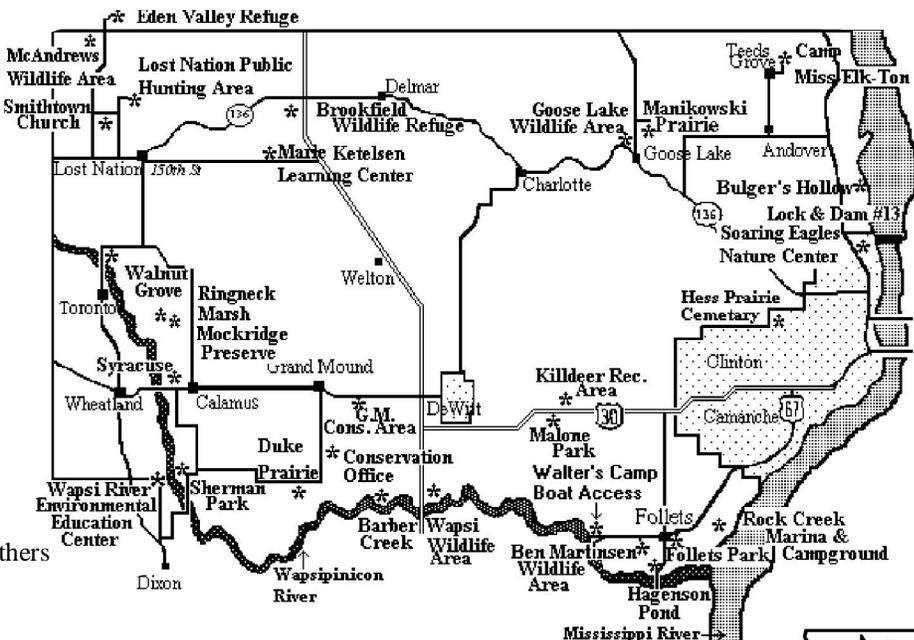
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 Robert Schaefer, Maintenance, Central

**MAILING LIST**

If you'd like to get "The Heron" contact the CCCB. It is mailed to County addresses free. Others are charged \$5 annually or 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, 6 PM, in the Conservation Office, located 1 mile south of Grand Mound at 230th Ave. and 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 County Conservation Board or the Office of Equal Opportunity, U.S. Dept. of Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.

