



# The Heron

*Newsletter of Clinton County Conservation  
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## Clinton County Conservation Foundation Celebrates its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and Looks to the Future

*by Dave Stedwell, CCCFB Chairman*

Help us celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Clinton County Conservation Foundation by looking back on our efforts of carrying out our mission, “to support the programs and facilities of Clinton County Conservation with an emphasis on promoting environmental education through community outreach to school children and adults.” The all-volunteer board is comprised of community leaders, conservation staff and conservation board members. As we reflect on our past, we are constantly looking forward to new mission-focused opportunities and projects.

### Foundation Historical Highlights:

- The Foundation board was instrumental in raising over \$2 million through donations, grants and fundraisers to build the Mississippi River Eco Tourism Center located at Rock Creek Marina and Campground. Subsequent fundraising efforts added the educational turtle island area with live animal displays, interactive nature experiences and murals celebrating the diversity of Iowa’s natural environment.
- A busing scholarship program, which began in 2009, continues to cover transportation costs to make it possible for school field trips to travel to our parks and nature centers for day-long, outdoor environmental education experiences.



- In 2002, the Foundation was instrumental in raising funds to purchase the Blue Heron Eco Cruise pontoon boat. The 24-passenger boat continues to offer free cruises to the public on a weekly basis during the cruise season. You can explore the Mississippi backwaters and main channel during special cruises. These cruises include bird

watching, history of the river, sunset viewing and fall foliage. Cruises are led by a CCC naturalist who provides a narrative of wildlife and river features.

### Recent Foundation Highlights:

- The foundation engaged in a fundraising effort to build an addition to the Eden Valley Nature Center. The multi-purpose room provides meeting space and much-needed indoor classroom space for school field trips in bad weather.
- We are in the midst of a fundraising effort for a necessary needed remodeling of the Eden Valley Nature Center display area to make it a more effective environmental education learning space for school groups and visitors to the park.
- We continue to fund projects in and around Rock Creek. We recently funded the replacement of the two outboard motors on the Blue Heron to keep it in operation for our school groups and free public cruises.
- Rock Creek was hit hard by flooding and derecho winds. The Foundation worked with CCC and the DNR to fund the planting of flood resistant trees to replace more than 200 trees that had to be cut down. That project improves the safety and appearance of our park facilities for our campers and visitors.
- Through memorial gifts, the Foundation has worked to seek ways to honor the donors and to combine gifts to fund appropriate and meaningful projects that will benefit persons of all ages for years to come.
- Through diligent account management practices, the Foundation has carefully positioned its funds for growth and to provide working funds for a variety of projects that are appropriate to our mission. We are keenly aware that our efforts benefit not only the residents of Clinton County, but also visitors, school groups and travelers from areas across Iowa, Illinois and beyond.





You can help us celebrate and support the future of environmental education by attending our special 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary fundraising banquet on Saturday, November 4<sup>th</sup>, at the Mississippi River Eco Tourism Center. Proceeds from the event will be used to fund the renovation of the nature center at Eden Valley and for the continued support of environmental education opportunities for kids and adults.



## Help Us Celebrate!

To reserve tickets, please email [ClintonCCF@yahoo.com](mailto:ClintonCCF@yahoo.com), or call 563-847-7202. With your generous, tax-deductible support, environmental education programs and hands-on nature experiences can continue to thrive.

## From Seasonal Worker to Supervisor: My Homecoming Journey

by Karri Rutenbeck, West District Park Supervisor

It is a great pleasure to introduce myself as the new Park Supervisor for Clinton County's western district. For me, it's a homecoming that feels long overdue, a return to the parks that helped shape my beginnings in conservation. I am thrilled to share my story of returning to manage Walnut Grove, Eden Valley and Sherman Park campgrounds.

While pursuing a degree in conservation management from Upper Iowa University, I spent five unforgettable summers working as a seasonal employee within the very landscapes I now have the privilege of managing on a full-time basis. Being a native of Clinton County, the call to return and serve my community and to give back to the land that shaped me was an irresistible one. After a span of eight years living and working in the Muscatine area for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, first as a seasonal fisheries aide and later as a full-time natural resources technician at Wildcat Den State Park, I found myself drawn back to Clinton County.

Returning to county parks is more than just a professional move; it has been a deeply personal one. Reuniting with former colleagues and friends after nearly a decade has been a welcoming experience. Walking through the familiar trails of Eden Valley and seeing Old Stone Face smiling

from the bluffs, I am filled with nostalgia and excitement. I eagerly anticipate the days I can guide my nieces to the swinging bridge and tower, just as my father did when I was a child. The proximity to my family, the chance to contribute to the betterment of the county's parks and the ability to share the hard-earned skills and experiences I've learned in my tenure with the DNR all contributed to my decision to further my career.



I'm privileged to have the opportunity to help create lasting memories for families, friends and nature enthusiasts who visit our natural areas. Whether it's a serene walk along a wooded trail, the crackling of a campfire under a starlit sky, or the joyous laughter of children as they explore the wonders of nature – these are the moments that remind me why conservation is not just a job, but a calling.

## My Summer of AmeriCorps

by Kathryn French, AmeriCorps Naturalist

Hello! My name is Kathryn French, I grew up in Clinton, Iowa. I am currently working towards a Bachelors degree in Environmental Sciences at The University of Iowa! This past summer, I had the wonderful experience of serving at the Clinton County Conservation site. Growing up outside has helped me gain respect for nature and its inhabitants. This internship gave me opportunities to not only learn about the plants and animals of Iowa but to teach others the knowledge I gained.



Although my summer was filled with fun times and great people, a few moments stick out in my mind. Spending time with the Red-Tailed Hawk and Barred Owl was a highlight for me. I have never seen birds of prey up close before. Over the course of my time here, I learned how to not only care for them, but improve their socialization through handling

and providing enrichment. It took time for them to get used to me. At first, the hawk would tilt its head and the owl would clack his beak at me whenever I entered the room. In no time, they got used to me feeding them. Watching the hawk carefully watch me and her lunch was so interesting. Watching the kids' reaction as the owl's head swivels 270° is something that I will always remember.

As a service member, I was able to provide extra summer camps for CCCB. I was able to create and put my own twist on programming, specifically in pond study. I got to take kids out to the side pond at Rock Creek Marina, with a bunch of nets and get MUDDY. We would scoop up mud, grass, anything that can fit in a net and examine it. We would find so much!! Frogs, tadpoles, fish and crawdads. With every frog found there was a shoe lost in the muck. Just being there to watch these kids really see the little things found all around us, was wonderful to see. It reminded me of my time on the river as a kid.

It has been a great summer with great people, whether it be campers or my coworkers who were there for it all. Although I won't be there to see it in person, I hope the fall is just as awesome. I will be cheering on the rest of Clinton County Conservation from the sidelines!!







# Nature's Palette: The Crucial Role of Water in Changing Fall Colors

by Brittany Costello, AmeriCorps Naturalist

As summer's warmth starts to fade and the days get shorter, nature's gears start turning, setting the stage for one of the coolest transformations out there – the arrival of those stunning fall colors. Trees shedding their



summer greens for a vibrant mix of reds, oranges, yellows and browns – it's like nature's putting on its own firework show. But this isn't just some random occurrence; it's a well-choreographed dance of seasons, pigments, water and even the quality of that water, all coming together.

In the midst of this amazing show, water is like the unsung hero. It's crazy how we often don't give it the props it deserves in our daily lives. While the trees are putting on their color concert and the world is changing around us, water's doing its thing right under our noses. To really get what's going on, we've got to dive into how water's playing a bunch of roles in making this autumn display happen.

During spring and summer, trees and the sun do this coordinated dance, thanks to a pigment called chlorophyll. This stuff's like the star of the photosynthesis show, helping trees turn sunlight into energy that keeps them growing. Guess what? Water's the VIP here. It gets drawn up from the soil through the tree's roots, traveling through these crazy intricate paths called vascular highways, just to get to the leaves and power this whole photosynthesis party.

As the days get shorter and the sunlight gets weaker, trees are like, "Hey, winter's coming, we need to conserve energy." So, they ease up on the chlorophyll production. This is when the other pigments – the ones that've been chilling behind the scenes – get their moment. Carotenoids, the pigments that give us those warm yellows and oranges, have been around all year, but chlorophyll was stealing the spotlight. With chlorophyll taking a break, carotenoids pop up and cover the scene in these cozy shades.

But wait, there's more. Anthocyanins are like the rockstars of fall – they're the ones responsible for those vivid reds and purples. They come to life because of temperature changes and sunlight, and here's the kicker, water's in on this too. The amount of water a tree gets decides how intense these colors get. Trees that are water-rich strut those deep reds and purples like nobody's business. On the flip side, trees that are struggling for water might end up with more muted tones.

When fall is in full swing and the temperatures drop even more, the trees are prepping for the chilly days ahead. Water's still in the picture, too. As the water supply to the leaves slows down, special cells form at the base of each leaf's stem. These cells basically cut the leaf off from the

tree and that's when the leaves do their gentle dance to the ground, waving goodbye to their time in the spotlight.

But here's the thing: for this entire breathtaking performance to unfold as it should, the quality of water plays a crucial role. Water that's laden with pollutants or imbalanced in its composition can disrupt the delicate equilibrium that brings out those vivid colors. Trees, like many living things, depend on clean and healthy water to thrive. Therefore, maintaining good water quality isn't just about our daily needs; it's also about supporting the beauty and rhythm of the natural world around us.

So, as you're standing there, mesmerized by this year's mesmerizing fall foliage, don't forget the real unsung hero here – water. It's doing some seriously important stuff behind the scenes, making sure this nature show goes off without a hitch. Water has its role in photosynthesis, helping out with pigments and keeping the whole balance of nature in check. It's like this perfectly orchestrated performance where water is one of the essential players.

While we're soaking in all this seasonal magic, let's give a shoutout to water for stepping up and being part of this whole color symphony. Just like it keeps life going all year round, it's also adding its own flair to the autumn canvas, making us feel even more connected to the world around us. Nature's pretty awesome, isn't it?





# You Really Autumn Know...

*Note on Blue Heron Cruises.* Sign-up for each cruise will begin one week before each trip. Check the forecast, gather your friends and sign-up! 563-259-1876. Note: The Blue Heron does not go out if winds are 20+ MPH, lightning is (or is forecasted) within 10 miles or the river stage is 17+ feet (Camanche River Gauge).

## September Events

**Sunset Cruises ~ 6 PM in September & 5 PM in October.**

**1<sup>st</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup> ~ Eden Valley Nature Center Season Finale! ~ 10 AM - 2 PM**

**7<sup>th</sup> ~ Sunset Eco Cruise ~ 6 PM ~ Rock Creek ~** Thursday evenings there will be naturalist-guided Mississippi River cruises aboard the Blue Heron pontoon. Call 563-259-1876 to reserve a free spot one week in advance for all Sunset Cruises.

**9<sup>th</sup> ~ Youth Outdoor Skills Day ~ 8:30 AM ~ Clinton Izaak Walton League ~** Looking for opportunities for your child to try different outdoor activities? Come to Youth Outdoor Skills Day to try archery, kayaking, trap shooting and more! Registration required.

**10<sup>th</sup> ~ Monarch Catching ~ 1 PM ~ McAndrews Wildlife Area ~** Help us catch Monarchs for a lesson the next day. We will catch and release some on the spot to see how it is done and why we do it! Please let me know you are coming by texting/calling 563-212-0955 because we will carpool to one of the most scenic Clinton County properties, the Peterson Wildlife Area.



**12<sup>th</sup> ~ Education Animal Meet and Greet ~ 3 PM - 6 PM ~ Rock Creek ~** Come get up close and personal with some of the animals that call Rock Creek home! Discover what it feels like to touch a snake or hold a turtle and learn what makes these animals so amazing!

**13<sup>th</sup> ~ Creating an Angler ~ 5:30 PM ~ Malone Park ~** Providing new experiences in nature for children helps build an appreciation for the outdoors at a young age that they may carry on throughout their life. We have worms, poles and tackle...let's just catch the fish! Experience and licenses are not required unless you plan on doing the fishing yourself. We will teach you how to encourage your angler even if you're not an angler yourself. This is a free event and open to the public.

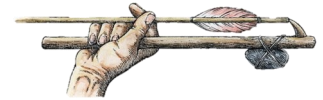
**14<sup>th</sup> ~ Sunset Eco Cruise ~ 6 PM ~ Rock Creek**

**16<sup>th</sup> ~ Go Fish! Youth Fishing Clinic ~ 9 AM ~ Lake Malone ~** At this event, join the Cal-Wheat FFA members to learn about tackle, boat safety, fish identification and more fishing skills! Children ages 9+ are welcome. To register, visit the Cal-Wheat FFA page or email natalie.schroeder@cal-wheat.net.



**16<sup>th</sup> ~ Enabled Deer Hunting Starts ~ Ringneck Marsh ~** Call Jill at 563-847-7202 for information on this opportunity for people with disabilities. The blind is set in the oak forest along the Wapsipinicon River.

**17<sup>th</sup> ~ Atlatls and Tomahawks ~ 1:30 PM - 3:30 PM ~ Rock Creek ~** Throughout time the techniques used to hunt have adapted and evolved significantly.



To learn about the historic ways used and to try your own hand at these techniques, join a Naturalist to try them out! Children must be 8 years old to participate and must be accompanied by an adult.



**20<sup>th</sup> ~ Everything Elderberry ~ 5:30 PM ~ Rock Creek ~** Can you believe a plant that grows on the roadside and edges of woodlands can fight off viruses? Well, at this workshop, we are going to explore these possibilities, talk about the toxicity of the plant and make a couple of safe concoctions to help

you and your family this winter for only \$20! Please register using [mycountyparks.com](http://mycountyparks.com).

**21<sup>st</sup> ~ DeWitt Farmer's Market ~ 3:30 PM - 6:30 PM ~ DeWitt ~** While picking up some locally grown produce and handmade items, visit the Naturalists' table of animal artifacts at the Farmer's Market!

**21<sup>st</sup> ~ Sunset Eco Cruise ~ 6 PM ~ Rock Creek**

**24<sup>th</sup> ~ Rock Hunting Boat Cruise ~ 9 AM - 11 AM ~ Rock Creek ~** Enjoy the 1<sup>st</sup> day of Fall on the Mississippi River where we are on the search for crushable rocks on sandy areas to make pigments for the WILDNESS Art Project. Bring snacks and drinks if you want to. Must call 563-259-1876 to reserve your spot.

**24<sup>th</sup> ~ Fall Scavenger Hunt ~ 10 AM - 2 PM ~ Eden Valley ~** Come celebrate the new season by completing a scavenger hunt through the beautiful trails of Eden Valley! See if you can find changing leaves, fallen seeds and other signs of fall. Refreshments will be provided at the Nature Center following the search.



**27<sup>th</sup> ~ Creating an Angler ~ 5:30 PM ~ Malone Park**

**28<sup>th</sup> ~ Sunset Eco Cruise ~ 6 PM ~ Rock Creek**

## October Events

**4<sup>th</sup> ~ Voyageur Canoe Paddle ~ 5 PM ~ Bulgers Hollow ~** Join us in our 29-foot voyageur canoes for an evening paddle around the widest part of the Mississippi River! We'll get a chance to see the beautiful fall colors along the bluffs and hopefully some migratory birds in the area! This is a family friendly event and all ages are welcome! Space is limited so registration is required. To sign-up, please call/text 563-349-0956.







**5<sup>th</sup> ~ Fall Color Eco Cruise ~ 5 PM ~ Rock Creek  
Halloween Weekend at Eden Valley & Walnut Grove!**

*Adults must accompany children during activities.*

**Friday the 6<sup>th</sup>**

~ **Decorate Your Campsite** ~ Get into the holiday spirit by decorating your campsite for Halloween. We will be awarding prizes for the most creative Halloween campsites.



~ **Frightening Family Movie Night ~ 7 PM - 9 PM** ~ Come in your pj's and bring your favorite blanket for a Halloween family-friendly movie near the playground.

**Saturday the 7<sup>th</sup>**

~ **Nature Center Open ~ 10 AM - 2 PM ~ Eden Valley** ~ Come and see the nature center decorated for Halloween Weekend!

~ **Eco Printing on Silk Scarves ~ 10:30 AM ~ Eden Valley** ~ This is a contact dye technique using leaves and



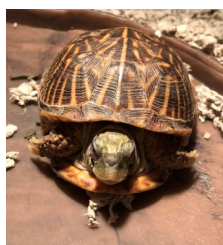
plants. After we bundle the scarves and leaves, the process, needs to simmer for a couple of hours. You can either stick around to take your scarf

home that day to wash and dry at home, or you can leave to have it processed and picked up at a different date. You must register for this \$30 class at [mycountyparks.com](http://mycountyparks.com).

~ **Trick or Treat! ~ 5 PM - 6 PM** ~ We invite all our camper ghouls and goblins to trick or treat the campground. We ask our campers to please pass out candy.

~ **Lighted Hayrack Ride ~ 6 PM** ~ Join us aboard our hayrack as we drive through the campground looking at the decorated campsites. Adults must accompany children.

**8<sup>th</sup> ~ Turtle Sunday ~ 9 AM - 12 PM ~ Rock Creek** ~



This fun event all about turtles will include an educational presentation, crafts, turtle races and turtle ice cream sundaes!

**8<sup>th</sup> ~ All about Fall! ~ 1:30 PM ~ Rock Creek** ~ Learn about all of the changes happening during the fall season. We will have a story, craft and possibly a short hike! Children must be accompanied by an adult.

**11<sup>th</sup> ~ Homeschool Field Day ~ 9:30 AM - 2 PM ~ Rock Creek Marina & Campground** ~ Spend the day on and around the Mississippi river! Homeschool aged children 5-18 are welcome to join us for a FREE field trip filled with outdoor and indoor activities. Activities for children ages 5-10 will include: pond study, Eco Center tour with live animals, nature games/monarch tagging (if available) and a ride on the Blue Heron. Activities for children ages 11-18 will include: archery, pond study/monarch tagging (if available), paddle craft and a ride on the Blue Heron. Registration is required via email, [jschmidt@clintoncounty](mailto:jschmidt@clintoncounty)

-ia.gov or by calling the Grand Mound office at 563-847-7202. Space is limited.

**12<sup>th</sup> ~ DeWitt Farmer's Market ~ 3:30 PM - 6:30 PM ~ DeWitt**

**12<sup>th</sup> ~ Fall Color Eco Cruise ~ 5 PM ~ Rock Creek  
Halloween Weekend at Rock Creek!**

*Adults must accompany children during activities. All activities originate at the Eco Tourism Center.*

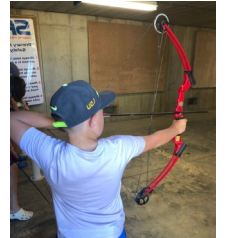
**Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>**

~ **Decorate Your Campsite** ~ Get into the holiday spirit by decorating your campsite for Halloween. We will be awarding prizes for the most creative Halloween campsites.

~ **Frightening Family Movie Night ~ 7 PM - 9 PM** ~ Come in your pj's and bring your favorite blanket for a Halloween family-friendly movie on the patio. Concessions will be available for some favorite movie treats. *Cash only please*, plan accordingly.

**Saturday the 14<sup>th</sup>**

~ **Outside Archery Range ~ 10:30 AM** ~ Test your hand at slaying wild animals that have been infected by zombies on our outside archery range. The event will include both safety and practical instruction. Participants must use our equipment and will be under the watchful eye of a range master. Children (9+) must be accompanied by an adult.



~ **Spooktacular Crafts ~ 1 PM** ~ Creepy crawly crafts will be provided for people of all ages under the deck.

~ **Pumpkin Carving ~ 2 PM** ~ Come carve your pumpkin at the Eco Center! We will supply the carving tools, stencils and a place to make a mess! Bring your own pumpkin!

~ **Creepy Critter Scavenger Hunt ~ 3 PM - 5 PM** ~ Follow some clues to find and learn about some interesting creatures hiding around Rock Creek!

~ **Trick or Treat! ~ 5 PM - 6 PM** ~ We invite all our camper ghouls and goblins to trick or treat the campground. We ask our campers to please pass out candy. *Note: the road to the back part of the campground will be closed 4:30 pm-6:30 pm to driving traffic.*



~ **Lighted Hayrack Ride ~ 6 PM** ~ Join us aboard our hayrack as we drive through the campground looking at the decorated campsites. Adults must accompany children.

**15<sup>th</sup> ~ GPS ~ 10 AM - 2 PM ~ Eden Valley** ~ Use GPS devices to find points set on the trail across from the nature center. Punch your card at each stop and try to get all the punches on your card!

**16<sup>th</sup> ~ Water shut-off begins ~ Clinton County Campgrounds**

**19<sup>th</sup> ~ Fall Color Eco Cruise ~ 5 PM ~ Rock Creek**





**25<sup>th</sup> ~ Creepy Critters ~ 5 PM ~ Rock Creek ~** Bats, spiders and snakes! Oh my! Come face your fears this Halloween season and learn about some under-appreciated creatures that call Iowa home.

**26<sup>th</sup> ~ Fall Color Eco Cruise ~ 5 PM ~ Rock Creek**

**28<sup>th</sup> ~ Bald Eagle Cruise ~ 11 AM ~ Rock Creek ~** Enjoy one final cruise of the season aboard the Blue Heron pontoon boat on the Mississippi River. We will hopefully be able to view several American Bald Eagles as they begin to congregate as winter arrives. Registration is required for this free event and is open now! To sign-up, please call 563-259-1876.



**28<sup>th</sup> ~ Fall Fest ~ 12 PM - 3 PM ~ Soaring Eagle Nature Center, Clinton ~** Free family fun for all!

## November Events

**4<sup>th</sup> ~ Clinton County Conservation Foundation Fall Fundraiser Banquet ~ Rock Creek ~** Join us for a night celebrating 25 years as an organization supporting environmental education!

**5<sup>th</sup> ~ Fall Fun Day in the Valley! ~ 11 AM - 3 PM ~ Eden Valley ~** Enjoy a beautiful fall day at Eden Valley Refuge with your friends and family. There will be a variety of activities going on at different times throughout the day, as well as throughout the park! At **11:00 AM** we will have atlatl throwing in the back valley near the swinging bridge. At **12:00 PM** we will start a variety of games near the lookout tower. At **1:00 PM** the crafts will begin at the Eden Valley Nature Center. At **2:00 PM** we will start our live animal presentation at the Eden Valley Nature Center! Throughout the day we will have hotdogs and s'mores for you to roast over the fire at the nature center as well! All ages are welcome to join!!



**8<sup>th</sup> ~ The Prairie Giant ~ Camanche Library ~ 2:15 PM ~** American Bison used to roam the prairie lands of Iowa many years ago. We will take a look at their magnificent size and learn about the many things bison provided to not only the Native Americans but the land itself!



**8<sup>th</sup> ~ Ice Rod Building Workshop ~ 5 PM ~ Rock Creek ~** Join local rod builders, Garry Land and Ryan Waltz to make your own ice fishing rod for only

\$50! For more information and to register, go to [www.mycountypark.com](http://www.mycountypark.com). If 5 o'clock is too early, just let us know when you can make it by txt/call Jess @ 563-212-0955. This project will take a couple hours to complete and the rod must stay overnight for the epoxy to harden on the spinners. Then it can be picked up in the future when the camp store is open or by special appointment.

**16<sup>th</sup> ~ Night Hike ~ 7 PM ~ Eden Valley ~** Which Iowa animals go bump in the night? Come find out on this hike through the woods after dark. We will explore how the different senses help nocturnal animals be adapted to being active at night. We will also see how well humans are adapted to being in the dark.



**17<sup>th</sup> ~ Turkey Talk ~ 10:30 AM ~ Children's Discovery Center, Clinton ~** Did you know that turkeys have a language all of their own? Not only do they gobble, they purr, yelp, cluck and more! Come to this event to use some real turkey calls and see how you size up to a taxidermized tom, feel the scaly feet, sharp heel spurs and smooth wings!

**19<sup>th</sup> ~ Fall Migration ~ 1:30 PM ~ Rock Creek ~** Fall brings all sorts of changes in the outdoors. Leaves are changing colors, animals are preparing for winter and many of the birds around us are starting their fall migration south! Come learn all about the migration that is happening around us. All ages are welcome and children must be accompanied by an adult.

**29<sup>th</sup> ~ Iowa Owls ~ 5 PM ~ Rock Creek ~** Come learn about the silent flier of the night, the owl! We will talk about different species of owls that live in Iowa and what adaptations make them special. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

## December Events

**3<sup>rd</sup> ~ Bird Seed Ornaments ~ 10 AM - 2 PM ~ Eden Valley ~** Decorate the trees in your yard with these ornaments made out of bird seed and help out the local birds and even some other animals!

**10<sup>th</sup> ~ Handcrafted Decor with Three Doves Design ~ 2 PM ~ Rock Creek ~** Grab some friends and family and join Megan from Three Doves Design in creating your own personalized sign, just in time for Christmas! All materials will be supplied and registration is required along with a fee which will be dependent on the project of your choice! Participants must sign-up at least one week in advance to ensure that all materials are ready for the program! To sign-up, please visit [3dovedesigns.com](http://3dovedesigns.com). For any questions, please call 563-349-0956.



**15<sup>th</sup> ~ Turtle Time ~ 10:30 AM ~ Children's Discovery Center, Clinton ~** Around here, there are land and water turtles. Some are small and some are quite large. At this presentation, we will bring our largest, snappiest turtle to our smallest, land turtle with plenty of hands-on opportunities.

**17<sup>th</sup> ~ Animals in Hibernation ~ 1:30 PM ~ Rock Creek ~** Join a Naturalist to learn all about why animals go into a deep sleep during the cold winter months called hibernation! All ages are welcome and children must be accompanied by an adult.



**19<sup>th</sup> ~ Archery ~ 4 PM - 6 PM ~ Rock Creek ~** Whether you've done archery countless times or have never tried it, stop by the basement of Rock Creek to shoot compound bows. All equipment is provided. Children 9 years old and up can participate and must be accompanied by an adult.







# Made Possible by People Like You!

by Phil Visser, Executive Director

In Clinton County, we have been blessed to have an abundance of natural areas and parks that offer a wide range of recreational opportunities. Many of these areas are publicly owned and can be used by all residents and non-residents. Of these publicly owned areas, someone might ask, "What does it take to keep them running and in good condition?" I don't think that anyone would be surprised if the answer was "money", but there is so much more than that. Hard work and dedication from the conservation team, as well as strong support from the community, all play a crucial role in the maintenance and management of all our parks, wild-life areas and facilities.

Sometimes people will ask us, "Why don't you do this, or have that?" Often, it is not that we don't want to do more, it is simply an issue of allocating our resources. This can include funding, but also the time of our staff. With all our parks, we strive to be accountable for every dollar that we receive and that we spend, regardless of how the funding was received. There are also times where we may add something suggested as one of our "shovel ready projects." These are projects we are not currently able to do but are preparing to do in the future. They may also include projects that we are actively seeking funding for but have not received the full amount. This way, when the funding does



Example of an ADA playground.

become available, we are not scrambling to get permits and plans in place. We currently have several projects on the "shovel ready" list, like adding a new cabin at Eden Valley Refuge and adding a new playground at Rock Creek Campground.

The Clinton County

Conservation Board's annual operating budget is set by the County's Board of Supervisors. This is the same as the County Roads, Sheriff's and other department's. These funds go towards keeping the parks and other areas running smoothly. Without the support of the Board of Supervisors and the support of all county citizens, we would not be able to do all of the things we do to accomplish our mission.

For other major projects, like the renovations of the Eden Valley Nature Center, we also turn to local non-profit organizations to help with funding. We are very grateful for the support we receive from other groups in the community. I would be remiss if I did not mention the Clinton County Conservation Foundation. These volunteers are always looking for ways to keep our projects moving forward. Without their support, there is little chance that we would have many of our current facilities including the Mississippi River Eco Tourism Center and Pintail Cabin.

Other organizations have frequently stepped up to help support conservation, including Pheasants Forever, the Clinton County Development Association and the Eastern Iowa Conservation Alliance. We are always grateful for their support and for the support of private donors who want to see Clinton County reach its full potential. The Iowa Department of Natural Resources is also a major supporter of conservation in this area, on both areas owned and operated by the DNR and on other areas as well. Funding from the Resource Enhancement and Protection Program, or REAP, has also been a major assistance for our areas and programs.

Only a small part of this passion comes from the Conservation Board team. Even though we are passionate about what we do, it is for the people we serve. Without the support of the people, we would not be able to accomplish our goals and do our part to help the area grow. So, thank you for everything!

Imagine you are eight years old and you have never caught tadpoles at the water's edge, or been in a kayak or canoe. Today you are bursting with excitement because your



school field trip is to the Mississippi River Eco Tourism Center. Your first activity is an adventure in a fourteen-passenger, super-sized canoe that you and your classmates will paddle into the backwaters of the Mississippi River. This is just one of many educational opportunities offered to area students and organiza-

tions. The Clinton County Conservation naturalists provide year-round nature experiences at the county's parks and in school classrooms. There are also opportunities for adults and families to enjoy the outdoors and learn. It could be a spring woodland flower

walk, bird watching aboard the Blue Heron pontoon boat, an evening owl program, lesson on snowshoeing or ice fishing. The nature displays at the Eco Center, located at Rock Creek Marina and Campground in Camanche, Iowa, are free to the public. There you can see native fish swimming in an 8,000-gallon aquarium, crawl through a clear tube under swimming turtles at Turtle Island and see snakes and other reptiles up close and personal.

With your generous tax-deductible support, environmental education programs and hands-on nature experiences like these will be able to continue and thrive.

The Mississippi River Eco Tourism Center, Eden Valley, Malone Park and all the other Clinton County Parks are **your** precious resource and places where this generation and the next will learn and grow in their respect for nature.

Thank you for your generous gift. Thank you for sharing our vision and enabling our success.

- Clinton County Conservation Foundation P.7





**Clinton County Conservation**  
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**Email: [conservation@clintoncounty-ia.gov](mailto:conservation@clintoncounty-ia.gov)**  
**Web: [www.mycountyparks.com](http://www.mycountyparks.com)**

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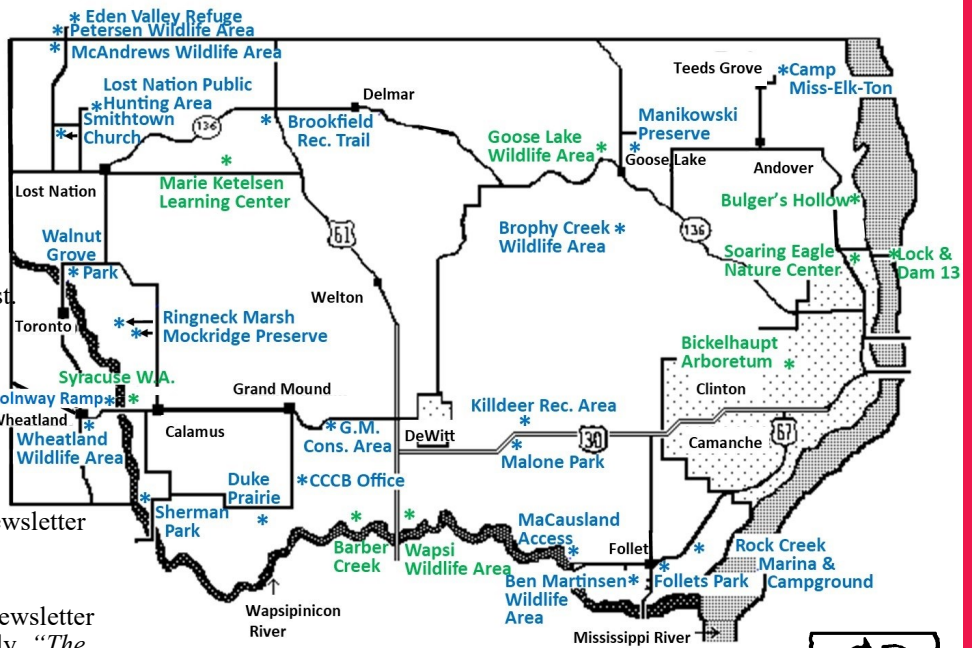
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**MAILING LIST**

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

**BOARD MEETINGS**

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



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



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