



The Heron

Newsletter of Clinton County Conservation
Volume 40 Number 3 September - December 2018

CCCB Bans Lead Shot, Fall 2019

by Walt Wickham, Executive Director

Five years ago, I wrote an article for *The Heron* on the dangers associated with lead ammunition. At that time, there was a growing body of evidence that showed that lead ammunition was harmful not only to wildlife and the environment, but to people as well. The most significant hazard to wildlife is through direct ingestion of spent lead shot, bullets and related fragments, or through consumption of wounded or dead prey containing lead shot, bullets or fragments. Despite the fact that there was a national ban on the use of lead for waterfowl hunting in 1991, lead is still legal to use to hunt other game animals such as pheasants, rabbits, turkeys and deer on private land as well as most federal, state and county controlled public lands.

Currently, lead shot is banned on Clinton County's Ringneck Marsh Wildlife Area and the Wheatland Wildlife Area. There are 35 states that ban the use of lead in at least some situations. Many of Iowa's state and county public hunting areas also have some sort of ban on the use of lead. Iowa hunting regulations (www.iowadnr.gov) lists state-managed wildlife areas that prohibit lead for all hunting except for deer and turkey hunting. Non-toxic ammo is even required for target shooting in many state and federal wildlife areas.

At the July 10th meeting of the Clinton County Conservation Board (CCCB), Conservation Board members were given an enlightening presentation on the hazards of lead ammunition. Ed Britton of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Ronald Lindblom of Northeast Iowa Community College and Grace Trencamp, a concerned student, each spoke with the Board. They told of the dangers not only to wildlife that accidentally ingest lead, but to humans who consume wild game killed with lead ammunition. Science shows that very small amounts of lead can be harmful to health. Because of this, lead has been banned from gasoline, paint, pipes and solder as well as other items. Did you know that fragments of lead from a deer slug can be found as far as 18" from the entrance wound path and that the fragments are nearly impossible to find while processing the meat? In a North Dakota study, lead fragments were found in 60% of the ground venison at food pantries that were sampled. How many people are unknowingly ingesting this lead on a regular basis? You? Your family?

It is well known that waterfowl often ingest lead pellets when feeding on marsh bottoms. Ingesting as few as 3 pellets is enough to kill a bird as large as a trumpeter swan.



This photo is of one of the 43 trumpeter swan carcasses found at a western Clinton County pond in January, 2018. See page 3 for more information.

The 1991 lead shot ban was put into place to help prevent waterfowl from ingesting lead yet 27 years later you can still hunt pheasants and other game with lead shot on the same wetlands, potentially causing accidental poisoning of waterfowl.

At the end of their presentation, the Board agreed that action needed to be taken. In a unanimous vote, the Board approved to "require non-toxic shot, as defined by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, in CCCB public hunting areas, effective September 1, 2019". See the lands in [blue text](#) on the map on page 8 indicating CCCB managed lands. A list of approved non-toxic shot can be found at www.fws.gov/birds/bird-enthusiasts/hunting/nontoxic.php

At this time, no ban has been placed on the use of lead slugs or other commonly used ammunition such as .22 caliber bullets. That decision was made largely due to the limited availability and high cost of these types of ammunition at this time. The Board does, however, recommend that hunters consider their use when purchasing ammunition.

As with all things, as demand increases, availability will increase and prices will drop. Most hunters also consider themselves to be conservationists. They tend to be people who care about wildlife and have a love for all the outdoors. Doesn't it make sense that hunters should be willing to make a small sacrifice and switch to non-toxic ammunition so they can help to protect all wildlife, the environment and even their own health?

The ultimate test of a man's conscience may be his willingness to sacrifice something today, for future generations whose words of thanks will not be heard.... Former US Senator, Wisconsin, Gaylord Nelson, Founder of Earth Day.

Unmasking the Northern Water Snake

by Erin Toohey, Seasonal Naturalist

When working along the backwaters of the Mississippi River, one tends to find a slew of critters.

Many kids this summer came ready to catch those critters, either wielding their own nets or borrowing ours. Their daily catches would range from diving beetles to crayfish to bullfrogs. There was one creature, though, that many kids were on the lookout for- snakes!

There are twenty-seven species of snakes in Iowa, all of which are carnivorous, covered in scales, and lacking limbs, eyelids and ear openings.

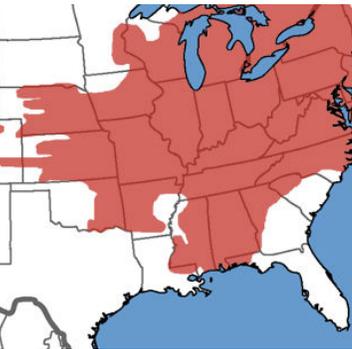
One of the snake species commonly seen around Rock Creek Marina and Campground is the northern water snake. With all the flooding we had, as well as the abundance of amphibians and small fish, the water snakes were easy to find this summer. They quickly became the goal of many kids' critter hunts.

As their name suggests, they live around water, such as ponds, wetlands and river backwaters. This makes the habitat around Rock Creek perfect for them.

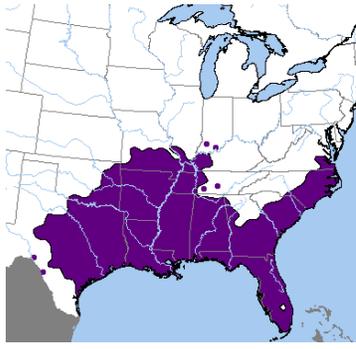
Northern water snakes are a small to medium-sized snake that can range in color. They often have brown blotches on their backs, and always have red, half-moon shaped spots on their belly.



They are often mistaken to be the venomous water moccasin, also known as the cottonmouth, a southeastern U.S. snake. Many times, that is the species people first think of when they see a snake in the water. However, there are no water moccasins found in Iowa and although they often will bite when threatened, northern water snakes are not venomous!



Northern water snake map



Water moccasin map

Although all snakes can swim, these snakes thrive in the water. It's where they hunt for their food. They are active hunters, which means they hunt down their food instead of sitting still and waiting for it to get close enough to strike.

One family this summer called me over and we observed a hunting water snake as it swam through a school of minnows, separating them and making it easier to snag a few.



Along with fish, they eat a wide variety of critters that live in and around the water, such as amphibians, baby turtles and worms. They swallow their prey alive and whole. They can do this by unhinging their lower jaw for large prey.

We had a few regular critter catchers this summer that had run-ins with the northern water snake. Laken Reed came often with his grandmother and always reported to us what he caught. These reports usually included a northern water snake or two.

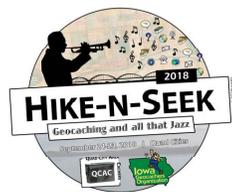
One of the most rewarding parts of this job is seeing people interact with nature. It was great to have kids come to the Eco Tourism Center and participate in activities, such as catching critters. I was able to teach them the importance of everything in the natural world, including the animals we may not always like.



Future Herpetologist, Laken Reed holding a northern water snake he caught all by himself!
Not to worry, it was released right after this photo.

New Hidden Treasure Awaits You!

by Jill Schmidt, Interpretive Naturalist



The modern treasure hunt, described as “Geocaching” has been around since May of 2000. It started off as a simple hobby but has evolved into a trail of discovery world wide. It is defined by Wikipedia as an outdoor recreational activity, in which participants use a global positioning system

(GPS) receiver or mobile device and other navigational techniques to hide and seek containers, called “geocaches” or “caches”, at specific locations marked by coordinates all over the world. Caches can range from something as small as an old film canister with a sign-in log inside for proof of discovery to a large treasure chest like a container filled with random items to give and take. They are hidden from sight in things such as rotten logs, under bridges and up trees. If the fear of difficulty keeps you from trying it, you need to know that each cache is unique and it is rated to provide information before you begin your search. The difficulty and terrain are rated 1-5 with 5 being the most challenging and the size of the cache is also provided to give you an idea of what you will be looking for. In most cases, other attributes are provided such as parking availability, how long it will take to find it, wheelchair accessibility and if it includes private property.



As a novice geocacher, I enjoy exploring new areas in attempt to find hidden treasures. My kids enjoy receiving small trinkets as well as leaving new trinkets for the next

geocacher to find and I like spending time in new areas, it’s a win-win.

When I was asked by a friend to help with the placing of new caches along the water trail of Lost Lakes Loop in the backwaters of the Mississippi River, I quickly learned there is a whole world of Geocachers out there that are extremely adventurous as well as competitive!

For the past 14 years, geocachers from all over Iowa participate in an annual event called “Hike-n-Seek.” It is the largest geocaching event in the state and is hosted in different locations across Iowa. This year’s event is hosted *Lost Lake Loop water trail* in Scott County Park Sept. 21-23rd. In connection to this event, local geocachers Justin and Kendra Long, 2018 Hike-n-Seek Committee members, will be releasing 10 new caches along the water trail by Rock Creek on Saturday, Sept. 22nd. Participants will be able to explore the backwaters via canoe or kayak, while attempting to locate these new caches. In order to be a part of this event, you **must be a registered geocacher** but by no means have to be experienced. Visit www.hikenseek2018.com to find all information regarding this three-day event and to sign up. Hopefully we will see you on the water trail!



2018 Clinton County Trumpeter Swan Mass Mortality: A Few Facts and Many Questions

- ◆ 43 dead trumpeter swans & 3 dead Canada geese
- ◆ Discovered January 30th, 2018, dead an estimated three weeks +
- ◆ One full carcass recovered, two partial carcasses
- ◆ Remainder picked clean to bones, feathers, feet and bills
- ◆ 5 lead pellets in full carcass digestive tract, 1.5x lethal lead level
- ◆ Avian bird flu and avian cholera tested negative or inconclusive
- ◆ Water levels low due to drought in fall/winter 2017
- ◆ 69 swans counted on December 20th during Christmas Bird Count
- ◆ Also 1,000 geese (mostly Canada) and 100 ducks (mostly mallards)
- ◆ No water tests, sediment or soil testing done or planned
- ◆ Story appeared in over twenty news sources from Washington to Virginia (picked up by AP), including US News and World Report.
- ◆ DNR report: official cause of mortality :*Unknown*
- ◆ How many scavengers died?
- ◆ How many birds flew away and died?
- ◆ How many were picked up and carried away by coyotes or dogs?
- ◆ What prevents a repeat in the future?
- ◆ **What do you think?**



Autumn's Activities

Eco Cruise Reservations. *Due to people reserving seats way ahead and then not showing up, the CCCB made a policy change mid-summer. Reservations can no longer be made until one week prior to each Eco Cruise event. 24-hour notice, prior to Eco Cruise, of cancellation or seat number change is also required. Call the Eco Center at 563-259-1876 to make free reservations.*

September

6th ~ Sunset Eco Cruises ~ 6 PM ~ Rock Creek

8th ~ Youth Outdoor Skills Day ~ 9 AM - 3:30 PM ~ Clinton Izaak Walton League ~ Looking for a way to open your child's eyes to a life of adventure in the great outdoors and gain experience with outdoor skills? Kids, ages 11-17, will learn about safety and skills at stations staffed by various conservation organizations such as Whitetails Unlimited, Pheasants Forever, Wild Turkey Federation, Clinton Ikes, Clinton County Sportsmen, Iowa DNR and Clinton County Conservation. All stations will involve hands-on activities designed to give kids experience while keeping safety at the forefront. Parents and younger siblings are encouraged to attend. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Cost is \$10. Participants receive a T-shirt & lunch. Call 563-242-6939 to sign up.



11th & 15th ~ Hunter Education Course ~ 7-9 PM (Tue.) & 8 AM-4 PM (Sat.) ~ Wapsi Valley Ikes, DeWitt ~ <http://register-ed.com/programs/iowa> for required sign-up.

11th ~ Building Better Birders Eco Cruise ~ 6:30 AM ~ Rock Creek ~ World Class birder, Kelly McKay, will lead this free class for people wanting to improve their bird watching skills. Call 563-259-1876 to sign up!

13th ~ Sunset Eco Cruises ~ 6 PM ~ Rock Creek

15th ~ Enabled Hunting Starts ~ Ringneck Marsh ~ Call Mark at 563-847-7202 for information on this opportunity for people with disabilities. 12 hunting seasons available.



15th ~ Building Better Birders Field Eco Cruise ~ 6:30 AM ~ Rock Creek ~ Call the Eco Tourism Center at 563-259-1876 to sign up for our Season Finale!

15th ~ The Mighty Monarch ~ 10:30 AM ~ Rock Creek ~ Small but mighty, the monarch migrates thousands of miles every fall to its wintering grounds in Mexico. With all the struggles they face along the way, monarch numbers are down and researchers strive to save them with the help of the general public tagging and documenting their movements. Join us in the fun by learning about the butterfly and tagging some monarchs (if available) for release!



15th ~ Voyageur Season Finale ~ Noon ~ Rock Creek ~ It's the last voyage of the year in the big canoes on the backwaters of the Upper Mississippi River Wildlife & Fish Refuge. After the trip stick around for some hot drinks, stick roasted meat/treat and music Voyageur style. Make your reservation by contacting our office at 563-847-7202 by noon on September 14th.

15th ~ Riverside Jam ~ 2 PM ~ Rock Creek ~ Come enjoy the music of local musicians and vocalists as they present old time, folk, country, bluegrass and rock & roll tunes. Bring your own instrument and join in, sing along, dance or just sit and enjoy. There is no fee all are welcome.

20th ~ Sunset Eco Cruises ~ 6 PM ~ Rock Creek

20th ~ Harvest Moon Music Cruise ~ 7:30 PM ~ Rock Creek ~ It's the last music cruise of the year. We'll run out to the channel, cut the engines and drift along under the full moon while local musicians and vocalist fill the air with their music. Musicians interested in playing must call 563-357-0759 a week in advance to reserve their seat. Passengers call 563-259-1876 as always.

22nd ~ Hawk Watch ~ 8 AM - 4 PM ~ Eagle Point Park, Clinton ~ Join our Hawk Watchers as we attempt to count every migrating bird of prey passing by the North-end Mississippi Overlook at Eagle Point. Special Guest-Biologist, Kelly McKay is spearheading the watch. We will have scopes set up and binoculars to lend.



22nd ~ IGO Hike-n-Seek 2018 ~ 8:30 AM - 5:30 PM ~ Rock Creek ~ Registered cachers can participate in the release of new geocaches located throughout the water trail of Lost Lakes loop in the backwaters of the Mississippi River. Visit www.hikenseek2018.com for more information on the full event as well as to register.

22nd ~ Half Price Canoes ~ 9-11 AM ~ Rock Creek

25th ~ Friends of Rock Creek ~ 6 PM ~ Rock Creek ~ Join this small fun group that makes a big difference.

25th, 27th, October 2nd, 4th ~ Fly Tying ~ 7-9 PM ~ Rock Creek ~ The Hawkeye Fly Fishing Association wants to teach you how to tie flies for fishing. No special talents needed, you don't even have to be an angler! These classes will focus on making larger flies that you would use to panfish. Depending on class ability, we will try to tie two different flies every class. The class fee is only \$5/night. Space is limited, register on www.mycountyparks.com.



27th ~ Sunset Eco Cruises ~ 6 PM ~ Rock Creek

29th ~ Public Open House, Jens-Wendt Observatory ~ 7 PM ~ Sherman Park, North Entrance ~ A moon presentation will precede the star viewing. Always check www.qcas.org before driving out to the park for updates.

October

4th ~ Fall Color Eco Cruise ~ 5 PM ~ Rock Creek

5th-7th ~ Halloween Weekend ~ Rock Creek ~ Adults must accompany children during activities. All activities originate at the Eco Tourism Center.

Friday the 5th

~ 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.



Saturday the 6th

~ Pumpkin Carving ~ 11:30 AM ~ Come carve your pumpkin at the Eco Center! We will supply all the carving tools and a place to make a mess! We will have a limited supply of donated pumpkins on a first come and first serve basis, participants are encouraged to bring their own.

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

~ The Witch's Brew ~ 3 PM ~ See this live animal presentation that makes up the witch's brew.

~ Trick or Treat! ~ 5-6 PM ~ We invite all our camper ghouls and goblins to trick or treat through 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. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Campsite judging will take place at this time.

10th ~ Great River Road Trip, NE Iowa & SW Wisconsin ~ 7 AM-7 PM ~ \$15 ~ We will transport participants on an all-day adventure! We will meet at CCCB Headquarters, Grand Mound for the 7 AM departure. We will be seeing sights such as Effigy Mounds National Monument, Pikes Peak State Park, Driftless Area Education Center. Bring your own sack lunch to enjoy in one of the parks. There will be some optional hiking and beautiful fall colors. On the way back home we will stop at Potosi Brewery & Whispering Bluffs Winery for dinner on your own (about \$15). Space is limited, register at www.mycountyparks.com.

11th ~ Fall Color Eco Cruises ~ 5 PM ~ Rock Creek

12th - 13th ~ Thirty-Seventh Annual Bluegrass & Old-time Music Gathering ~ (Sat) Noon-7 PM ~ Eden Valley ~ October 13th, we will have a big jam around the campfire all evening and then more on Saturday, the 13th. Once you attend, you will never want to miss it again! Call Mary McAndrew 563-343-7002 for more information. FREE!



13th ~ Clinton County Chapter of Pheasants Forever Banquet ~ 5 PM ~ Millennium Ballroom, Goose Lake ~ Clinton County's PF chapter will be hosting their annual fundraising banquet to raise money to provide local wildlife habitat as well as hunting and educational outdoor skills opportunities for people of all ages. This banquet will serve the Millennium's famous buffet and will include many prizes to be won! Call Brad Taylor at 563-357-0465 for tickets.

13th ~ Public Open House, Jens-Wendt Observatory ~ 6:30 PM ~ Sherman Park, North Entrance ~ Galaxies is this month's theme. www.qcas.org.

16th ~ Painting Class with "Fresh Paint" ~ 6 PM ~ \$35 ~ Rock Creek ~ This is a "Paint and Sip" class (BYOB). It's a 2-hour event...step by step painting instructions on a 11x14 canvas with Fresh Paint by Christine Boeve. Autumn themed & all materials provided. Space is limited, register at www.mycountyparks.com.

18th ~ Fall Color Cruise ~ 5 PM ~ Rock Creek ~ Finale!

23rd ~ Friends of Rock Creek ~ 6 PM ~ Rock Creek ~ Join this small fun group that makes a big difference for.

27th ~ Fall Fest & Jam ~ 4 PM ~ Soaring Eagle Nature Center, 3923 N. 3rd St., Clinton ~

Bring the family out for hot dogs, chips and s'mores at the fire, pumpkin carving and face painting in the Nature Barn, a freaky-fun night hike and hayrack ride around the north end of Eagle Point Park. The Riverside Jammers will be playing after 6 PM. Donations will be welcomed at this free event.



29th & 30th ~ Eco Center Closed ~ Rock Creek ~ The Eco Center will be closed for scheduled maintenance.

31st ~ Winter Hours Begin ~ Rock Creek ~ We will be returning to our winter hours. The Eco Tourism Center will be open Thursday ~ Sunday, 8AM-4PM, through the winter. A naturalist will have the Nature Center portion of the building open Monday ~ Wednesday, 10 AM-2 PM.

November

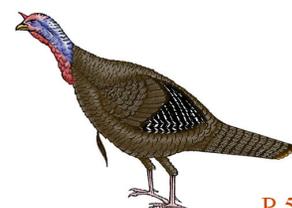
1st ~ Music at the Barn ~ 6:30 PM ~ Soaring Eagle ~ Local musicians will play, sing and lead you through a night of music, dance and fun. Musicians interested in playing, contact Chuck at 563-357-0759. All are welcome.

3rd ~ Bald Eagle Eco Cruise ~ 1 PM ~ Rock Creek ~ This will be the public's last opportunity this year to take an Mississippi Eco Cruise on the Blue Heron Pontoon Boat. The American bald eagles will start to congregate along the Mississippi for the winter and we hope to see several of the birds during the cruise. Call 563-259-1876 to register.

3rd ~ Fourth Annual Conservation Foundation Banquet ~ Doors open at 5 PM ~ Rock Creek ~ Come enjoy a night at the beautiful Eco Center to raise money to benefit education! There will be plenty of action including silent bids, raffles and live auction, plus a fantastic smoked prime rib dinner. Purchase tickets at the Mississippi River Eco Tourism Center or by calling Rock Creek at 563-259-1876.

10th ~ Public Open House, Jens-Wendt Observatory ~ 5 PM ~ Sherman Park, North Entrance ~ www.qcas.org.

16th ~ Turkey Talk ~ 10 AM ~ Discovery Center, Clinton ~ Did you know that turkeys can run up to 25 mph and fly as fast as 55 mph! Bring your kids to learn this and more with a hands-on animal artifacts and mount!



17th ~ **Fall Refuge Hike ~ 10 AM ~ Rock Creek** ~ Ever seen beyond the trees that line the banks across from the Mississippi River Eco Tourism Center? View wildlife and the habitat of the Upper Mississippi Wildlife & Fish Refuge on this naturalist-led hike. We'll use the Blue Heron to cross the chilling waters and hike the trackless wilderness using map, compass and GPS to guide us, all supplied by Clinton County Conservation. We'll have binoculars and a spotting scope along. This is a free event and you may register with Chuck at 563-357-0759.

17th ~ **Riverside Jam ~ 2 PM ~ Rock Creek** ~ Musicians interested in playing, contact Chuck at 563-357-0759. All are welcome.

22nd & 23rd ~ **Eco Center Closed ~ Rock Creek** ~ The Eco Center will be closed for the Thanksgiving Holiday.

27th ~ **Friends of Rock Creek ~ 6 PM ~ Rock Creek** ~ Join this small fun group that makes a big difference.

December

6th ~ **Music at the Barn ~ 6:30 PM ~ Soaring Eagle** ~ Local musicians will play, sing and lead you through a night of music, dance and fun. Musicians interested in playing, contact Chuck at 563-357-0759. All are welcome.



14th & 15th ~ **Fifth Annual Young Ladies Lock-in ~ (Fri. 6 PM - Sat. 10 AM) ~ Rock Creek** ~ Join Naturalists Jill and Jessica for a night full of fun at the Eco Tourism Center! This lock-in is for 5th & 6th grade girls and will be filled with "lock-in like" activities such as crafts, movies, games and a night hike. Visit www.mycountyparks.com required registration your child by December 10th. Cost is \$10/girl.

15th ~ **Reason for the Season ~ 12:30 PM ~ Rock Creek** ~ Ever wonder why we have some of the traditions surrounding the end of the year or how the animals deal with it. Come discover the roots of our customs and theirs by the

sun, in the woods and through the longest nights of the year. We'll have the Stellarium and Sun Scope up and running to help explain.

15th ~ **Riverside Holiday Jam ~ 2 PM ~ Rock Creek** ~ Local musicians will play, sing and lead you through a night of music, dance and fun. Musicians interested in playing, contact Chuck at 563-357-0759. All are welcome.

15th ~ **Public Open House, Jens-Wendt Observatory ~ 4:30 PM ~ Sherman Park, North Entrance** ~ Satellites and Iridium Flares Presentation, www.qcas.org.

19th ~ **Animals in Winter ~ 11:15 AM & 1 PM ~ Camanche Library** ~ Iowa's wildlife face many challenges throughout the cold months of winter, learn about their fascinating adaptations that help them survive!

21st ~ **First Day of Winter ~ 10 AM ~ Discovery Center, Clinton** ~ We will follow along with a young fawn's journey to prepare for winter with the book "First Snow of the Woods" by Carl Sams with finger puppets, a live painted turtle and animal artifacts to bring the story to life!



24th & 25th ~ **Eco Center Closed ~ Rock Creek** ~ The Eco Center will be closed for the Christmas Holiday.

25th ~ **Friends of Rock Creek ~ Happy Holidays!** No meeting this month.

January (Sneak-A-Peek)

1st ~ **Eco Tourism Center Closed ~ Rock Creek** ~ The Eco Center will be closed for the New Year's Holiday.

3rd ~ **Music at the Barn ~ 6:30 PM ~ Soaring Eagle** ~ Local musicians will play, sing and lead you through a night of music, dance and fun. Musicians interested in playing, contact Chuck at 563-357-0759. All are welcome.

Iowa DNR Turtle Study

by Colton Jones, Seasonal Maintenance

In 2009, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources formed the *Joint Committee on Turtle Harvest*. The Committee's primary goal is to ensure self-sustaining native wild turtle populations throughout the state. Biologists are concerned about recent trends in commercial turtle harvest and increases in demand. DNR teams have increased sampling efforts to collect more data on Iowa's turtle populations. All teams that were tasked with sampling are using Standard Operating Procedures for data collection, turtle identification, work-up of specimens and hands-on field training netting turtles in a variety of different habitats.

The Mississippi River Fisheries Research team out of Bellevue is one of the six fisheries teams that were tasked with turtle sampling. The plan is to net turtles for two weeks in July for five years (2019 being the fourth year of sampling) - targeting common snapping turtles for one week and softshell species the following week. July was chosen for three reasons: 1. July brings extended periods of hot weather, driving water temperatures up and increasing turtle activity; 2. commercial turtle harvesting has been

shown to peak in July for snapping and softshell turtle species; and 3. this period coincides with post-nesting season for harvesting turtles that DNR Biologists feel is necessary to protect our native species.

Using large ring nets, baited with cut carp and a can of sardines that were set for approximately twenty-four hours, our team captured about fifty snapping turtles (one of them being over 30lbs) at an undisclosed location near Dubuque, Iowa. Once the turtles are captured we did a series of measurements including weight, carapace length, plastron length and curvature of the shell. Turtles are then given an individual mark on their shell in different combinations on the twenty-four scutes (scales) in a ring around their carapace or top shell.



Colton Jones: A big, happy kid with an unhappy snapper!

Conservation Foundation's Recognizes Teachers

by Mark Roberts, Education Coordinator

In 2005 the Education Program for Clinton County Conservation started a Teacher's only newsletter called "In The Field". It comes out at the beginning of each semester with ideas for field trips, classroom visits and activities teachers could lead with their classes. It also provides information on the Clinton County Conservation Foundation's Busing Scholarship that has provided assistance to Clinton County School Districts since 2009 in funding field trip buses for class trip to CCCB Parks and Nature Centers. The scholarship has provided nearly \$22,000 to local schools since the scholarship inception in 2009.

In that very first issue in 2005, the Foundation recognized the very first "Teacher of the Semester Award". It's goal was to celebrate teachers that go the extra mile, in concert with our Education Program, to give students hands-on, eyes-on and feet-in experiences learning about our natural world.

The very first recipient was Sharon Leonard, a 2nd grade teacher from Ekstrand Elementary in DeWitt. Mrs. Leonard was the catalyst organizing 2-3 field trips per year as well as 5 classroom visits by CCCB Naturalists on a variety of topics. In all, the Foundation has given 26 awards out to individual teachers and grade level teams all across Clinton County. This fall's award winners are the 6th grade teachers from Calamus -Wheatland, Stacy VanderHeiden and Den Tulley. They continue a long tradition of outdoor education excellence in our county.

Teachers receive a modest \$50 award they can use to help buy educational classroom materials or to help with transportation. They also receive a framed certificate they can proudly display. We ask the teacher's to put into their own words why they choose to go above and beyond with the CCCB for their students. Those feelings are shared through "In The Field" to hopefully inspire their colleagues to get involved with the CCCB.

Over the years, the Clinton Co. Conservation Foundation has assisted with a variety of projects & events including:

- ◆ Funding and supporting the Hunters Safety Camp and Fishing Has No Boundaries.
- ◆ Establishing a School Bus program to fund local school field trips to our facilities.
- ◆ Since 2009 more than 35,000 area students have benefited and local schools have been reimbursed nearly \$22,000 for student field trip transportation.
- ◆ Assisting with the purchase of the Blue Heron pontoon boat in 2002 and continuing to assist with maintenance and fuel costs.
- ◆ Engaging in major capital projects, including the Mississippi River Eco Tourism Center.
- ◆ Raising \$2 million through donations and grants.
- ◆ Funding additional exhibits and educational features for the Turtle Island exhibit.
- ◆ Networking closely with other conservation and volunteer groups including White Tails Unlimited, Pheasants Forever, Friends of Rock Creek and the Iowa Natural

Teacher/Team	School, District	Grade	Semester
Mrs. Leonard	Ekstrand, Central	2nd	Spring '05
2nd Grade	Whittier Clinton	2nd	Fall '05
Mr. Moen	Cal/Wheat Elementary	6th	Spring '06
1st, 3rd & 5th	Camanche Elementary	1, 3, 5	Fall '06
Mrs. Dickman	Oxford Junct., Midland	6th	Spring '07
Mr. Jankowski	Prince of Peace	P.E.	Fall '07
Bluff 2nd	Bluff, Clinton	2nd	Spring '08
Clinton High	High Sch. Clinton	Biology	Fall '08
Mr. Behrens	Preston Elementary	6th	Spring '09
Mr. Enright	Middle Sch., Northeast	P.E/Bio	Fall '09
Mrs. McCloy	St, Joes, DeWitt	2nd	Spring '10
Ekstrand 5th	Ekstrand, Central	5th	Fall '10
Mrs. Jacobi	Cal/Wheat Elementary	P.E.	Spring '11
Mrs. Brown	Whittier, Clinton	1st	Fall '11
Ekstrand 1st	Ekstrand, Central	1st	Spring '12
Mrs. Clarke	Camanche Elementary	3rd	Fall '12
Mrs. Gnade	Oxford Junct., Midland	1st	Spring '13
Mrs. Wilwerth	Eagle Heights, Clinton	Kinder	Fall '13
Mrs. Todtz	Jefferson, Clinton	2nd	Spring '14
K, 1st & 2nd	Delwood Elementary	K,1,2	Fall '14
Mrs. Veenstra	Camanche Intermediate	5th	Spring '15
Mr. Becker	Midland Elementary	Kinder	Fall '15
Mrs. Dahl	Clinton Middle Sch.	8th	Spring '16
Kindergarten	Ekstrand, Central	Kinder	Fall '16
1st Grade	Jefferson, Clinton	1st	Spring '17
1st Grade	Camanche Elementary	1st	Fall '17
6th Grade	Cal/Wheat Elementary	6th	Fall '18

Heritage Foundation.

- ◆ Spearheading a current capital campaign to raise funds and secure grants to update, renovate and expand the Eden Valley Nature Center.

On Saturday, November 3rd the Foundation will hold it's Fourth Annual Fundraising Banquet in the Community Room at the Eco Tourism Center, Rock Creek. There will be plenty of action including silent bids, raffles and live auction, plus a fantastic smoked prime rib dinner. Purchase tickets at the Mississippi River Eco Tourism Center or call Rock Creek at 563-259-1876.

Please Join us!



Clinton County
Conservation Foundation P.7

Clinton County Conservation
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CLINTON COUNTY CONSERVATION

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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.

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

BOARD MEETINGS

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

