



# CONSERVATION NEWS



A Publication of the Muscatine County Conservation Board

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## Citizen Scientist Project Spotlights

by Michelle Berns

What is citizen science? Scientific research that is done by citizens, like you and I, who do not have special training in that specific area. Most of the programs relate to science in one way or another such as the natural world or even gene science.

There are hundreds of citizen scientist programs across the United States for the average person to get involved with so how do you choose the perfect one for you? Go to the web of course! SciStarter is the first place to start. This website can be found at <https://scistarter.com/finder> and will give you many options to choose from and narrow down the best project for you. Below I have picked out a few of my favorites. Check out the websites and see if they might be of some interest to you!

### Project BudBurst

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

This science project requires no special training and is free to participate in. The goal is to evaluate the seasonal changes that plants go through, starting with plant leafing, flowering, and even fruiting. There are two options to report with one being a single observation and two being regular reports. The plant groups that are observed are deciduous trees and shrubs, wildflowers and herbs, evergreen trees and shrubs, grasses, and conifers. The program has been going on since 2007 and is a program of the National Ecological Observatory Network (NEON.)

### eBird

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

eBird began in 2002 with a partnership between the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society. This program is a way for birders to create data, checklist style, to access all kinds of bird information worldwide! The data is amazing. You can search photos and sounds, explore a region or hotspots, look at species maps, and bar charts, look at arrivals and departures, and even get high counts of species for a region. There is a ton of useful information right at your fingertips. I recommend eBird if you are keeping track of birds!



### Monarch Watch

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

One of my favorites for sure. Every year we participate in this citizen scientist project. We tag monarchs on their way south to Mexico in September. At our latitude the peak for migrating monarchs is the middle of September. The tagged monarchs are then sometimes found in February or early March. With this information we can find out

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exactly how far they traveled. Of the monarchs we tagged last September, one made it to Mexico and was found in Cerro Pelon, Mexico on February 22.

In addition to tagging you can get involved with monarchs by creating a waystation. Add some larval host plants, the milkweeds. Then add some adult nectar sources and voila- you have created a monarch waystation, a place for monarchs to stop over and lay eggs and fuel up on nectar.

## Bumble Bee Watch [www.bumblebeewatch.org](http://www.bumblebeewatch.org)

Bumble bees are important pollinators but many are at risk for extinction. Bumble Bee Watch is a citizen scientist project that gets you involved with your camera! Pictures are taken of bumble bees in your area, you ID them and then upload them, and then they get verified by the experts. There are different options for recording your data! You can record a bumble bee sighting or a nest sighting. There are even options for learning more about a specific species. Maps and resources are available to help you compare your data with others across the U.S. and Canada.



So get on the web and find an awesome way to spend your summer, as a citizen scientist.

## Welcome Dave S.!

Hello. My name is Dave Schuler and I have been given the opportunity and the privilege to work for the Muscatine County Conservation Board out here at the Discovery Park Learning Center with a group of very knowledgeable and dedicated Conservationists and Naturalists. I have enjoyed my experiences to this point and look forward to what lies ahead.

As a youth growing up, I traveled across the country because my father was in the U.S. Air

Force. I was born in Germany and lived for three years in England also. However, when I was old enough, I began spending summers on my uncle's farm in north central Iowa. I still enjoy spending time on a farm and working with the animals.

I attended Iowa State University, and yes, I am a Cyclone fan through and through. I majored in Childhood Development with a Special Education emphasis, because children are another deep love of mine. This is where I met my wife, Nancy, who was also a Childhood Development major. She grew up on a farm outside of Dewitt, Iowa, so my wish of marrying an Iowa farm girl was fulfilled.

After graduation, I moved to Muscatine and worked for three years as a preschool handicapped teacher for the Mississippi Bend Area Agency. The Muscatine School District took over that program so I was now working for the Muscatine School District in the same capacity. I then went back to school at Western Illinois University and got my Master's Degree in Counseling. I began counseling at Jefferson, Colorado, Madison, and Grant elementary schools for the next twenty nine years until my retirement.

My wife Nancy and I have one son, Joshua, his wife Jackie, and one daughter, Jennie who shares my love of nature and flowers. I also have a golden Labrador, Toby, who we rescued last year.

I enjoy the outdoors and working, as my wife would say. I also enjoy sports, gardening and helping others. I coached the Muscatine High School Boys soccer team for sixteen years, coached many youth club soccer teams and little league baseball, and still referee soccer games for leagues and tournaments. I get up to my brother-in-law's farm occasionally to help him so I still get to experience the great Iowa farmland.

As I said earlier, I am so grateful to work here. I look forward to the many adventures that lie ahead, getting to work with an outstanding staff, and helping to maintain this beautiful Iowa landscape that all of us have the privilege to enjoy.

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## Memorials

A Redbud tree was planted at Discovery Park *In Memory of Ed & Donna Hogan.*



## Honorariums

A London Planetree was planted at Discovery Park *In Honor of Carson Schulte.*

## Thank You

Thank you to all those who generously gave time, talent, funding and/or materials to help make our programs, projects, and areas better than ever.



**Bob Kling** - assistance with mapping the lakes at Deep Lakes Park.

**Colorado Elementary School** - monetary donation from their annual craft fair.

**Bob Schaapveld** - bird seed wreathes.

**Mrs. Arnold's 7th Grade Honors Class at Central Middle School** - bat houses, game, & book.

**Dustin Hullinger** - monetary donation.

**Julie Herold** - instructing the Polliwog Playtime classes and helping out with spring fieldtrips.

**Linda Stoddard** - helping out at the front desk and with nature camps.

**Chris Hall** - a fur for the environmental education program.

**Central Middle School** - youth life vests.

## Fishing Seminar & Derby

Thank you to all the volunteers, Iowa DNR staff, and Conservation Board staff who made the 37th Annual Kids Fishing Seminar & 10th Annual Kids Fishing Derby a big success.

**Julie Herold**  
**Marnee Acker**  
**Vance Polton**  
**Dave Schuler**  
**Dave Bakke**  
**Michelle Berns**

**Linda Stoddard**  
**Joe Fourdyce**  
**Garrett Blair**  
**Ryne Brimeyer**  
**Curt Weiss**  
**Jill Ziegenhorn**

Thanks to the following for their donations to the event.



**Fred Harroun - Muddy River Bait & Tackle**  
**Lloyd & Dorothy Deahr**  
**Muscatine Chapter of the Izaak Walton League**  
**Amy Bakke Design Creative**  
**Blain's Farm & Fleet**  
**Walmart**  
**Monsanto**  
**Iowa Department of Natural Resources**  
**Muscatine County Conservation Board**

## Fishing Derby Winners

Congratulations to the following fishing derby winners.

### Preschool, Kindergarten, First Grade

**Brogan Axtell** - shortest fish  
**Ethan Poppe** - longest fish  
**Garrick Fillmore** - first fish

### Second & Third Grade

**Junie Gutierrez** - shortest fish  
**Owen O'Neil** - longest fish  
**Jason Shaw** - first fish

### Fourth & Fifth Grade

**Brian Remour** - shortest fish  
**Clarissa McNally** - longest fish  
**Isaac Bravo** - first fish



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# Programs & Special Events



## HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

The Environmental Learning Center will be closed on Tuesday, July 4 and Monday, September 4.



## HUNTER EDUCATION

Anyone born after January 1, 1972 who wants to purchase a hunting license in Iowa must have successfully completed a Hunter Education course. The minimum age for certification is twelve. Each class is limited to 50 students.

Classes are free but, you **MUST** register on-line at [www.iowadnr.gov](http://www.iowadnr.gov). After registering you **MUST** pick up a handbook at the Environmental Learning Center. The chapter review questions at the end of the handbook **MUST** be completed prior to coming to class. Students who show up with a blank book **WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO ATTEND THE CLASS**. Students will also need to bring a sack lunch.

An optional live fire will be held the day following each class at the West Liberty Gun Club from 9:00-11:00 a.m.

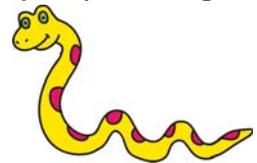
<b>Saturday, August 26</b>	<b>9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Environmental Learning Center</b>
<b>Sunday, August 27</b>	<b>9:00-11:00 a.m.</b>	<b>West Liberty Gun Club</b>
<b>Saturday, September 9</b>	<b>9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Environmental Learning Center</b>
<b>Sunday, September 10</b>	<b>9:00-11:00 a.m.</b>	<b>West Liberty Gun Club</b>

## AMPHIBIANS & REPTILES

Come meet some live amphibians and reptiles, and find out why they are so special!



**Saturday, July 22**      **7:00 p.m.**  
**Saulsbury Lodge**  
**Free family event**



## ARCHERY

Come learn the basics of archery and do some shooting.



**Saturday, August 19**      **6:00 p.m.**  
**Chicken Creek Shelter at Saulsbury**  
**Free, but must be at least 8 years old**

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# Programs & Special Events



## COMMUNITY FUN BLOCK PARTY

Join local non-profit groups from Muscatine to celebrate an evening of family fun. There will be food, games, prizes and so much more, and it's all **FREE!**

**Friday, September 8            5:00-7:30 p.m.**  
**Discovery Park**  
**Family event, children must be accompanied by an adult**  
**Free**

## RAPTORS

Come learn about these predators of the sky, and meet some live ones.



**Saturday, September 16   7:00 p.m.**  
**Saulsbury Lodge**  
**Family event, children must be accompanied by an adult**  
**Free**

## 29<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL HALLOWEEN HIKE

Come join our cast of crazy characters for one of our most popular family events, the 28th Annual Halloween Hike.

**Saturday, October 14**  
**6:30 p.m. with a new hike starting every 10 minutes until 8:30 p.m.**  
**Saulsbury Bridge Recreation Area**  
**\$5.00 per person, under 5 years of age free**



**Tickets are required and may be purchased beginning October 1 at the Environmental Learning Center. We're only doing one night this year so get your tickets early, they'll go fast.**



Lots of volunteers are needed for a big event like the Halloween Hike on Saturday, October 14. If you love the spotlight we can give you a part as one of the crazy characters, or we have jobs for trail guides, trail maintenance, pumpkin carving, and other behind-the-scenes duties. We'd love to have you help. Contact Michelle, (563) 264-5922, if you are interested in volunteering.

## Become a Friend

Donations to the Muscatine County Conservation Foundation support the development and enhancement of environmental education and conservation projects in Muscatine County.

The names of all donors go into our donor book and those who donate \$250 or more receive a plaque on our donor wall. Please include the form below with your donation and become a “Friend” today.

## Camping at Saulsbury

The Saulsbury Bridge Recreation Area campgrounds will open in mid April. Camping fees will be as follows.

- Main Campground \$20/night
- River Campground \$17/night
- Tent Only Area \$10/night
- Permanently Handicapped \$15/night



You can save on camping in the main campground with a coupon book for \$100—that’s six nights for the price of five. Available at the Environmental Learning Center or from the park ranger and campground host.

We will also continue with the “Free Wednesdays” and the “Two-for-One” camping specials.

### A Gift For the Conservation Foundation

I would like to become a Friend,  
please accept my donation.

- Sponsor \$10—\$49
- Partner \$50—\$99
- Patron \$100—\$249
- Guardian \$250—\$499
- Steward \$500—\$999
- Benefactor \$1000 +
- I would like to donate my time.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for your support!**

Please make checks payable to:  
Muscatine County Conservation Foundation  
PO Box 109, Muscatine, IA 52761

### TWO-FOR-ONE

Camping Weekends

Camp the first night in any of the campgrounds at Saulsbury and stay for the next night FREE on the weekends listed below.

July 7-8 & July 21-22  
August 4-5 & August 18-19  
September 15-16  
October 20-21



**FREE Wednesdays**

Camp in any of the campgrounds at Saulsbury on any Wednesday in April-October for free.

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## Creature Feature

### Fireflies

Lightning bugs, fireflies, glow flies, or whatever you call them, bring back memories of warm summer nights and Mason jars. Fireflies are not really flies, they are a member of the winged beetle family.

Fireflies are common on every continent but Antarctica. Of the 2000 species found worldwide 124 species live in the U.S. and Canada, although not many are found in the west and many of those are active during the day and do not light up at all.

Fireflies need a moist environment to survive. Areas with standing water near forest and field edges, and marshes are ideal firefly habitat. They like warmth, humidity and long grass.

Fireflies are omnivores. The larvae eat snails and worms. Adults may eat pollen and nectar, but due to their short lives may not eat anything at all. However, adult females of some species will mimic the flash of a closely related species to attract and eat the unfortunate male who responds.

The lifespan of a firefly is not long. Larvae live for one year, from mating season to mating season, become adults and live long enough to mate and lay eggs. Eggs are laid in the ground where larvae grow into adults.

Most fireflies use bioluminescence (production of light by a living organism) to communicate with each other, attract mates, defend territory, and warn predators. In most species both sexes glow, but a few species have only one sex that glows. The eggs and larvae of some species glow as well. A few species do not glow at all, but use pheromones instead to communicate.

Fireflies have a special organ under their abdomen that produce the light inside special cells. The cells contain luciferin and when the firefly takes in oxygen it combines with the luciferin to produce light. Each species of firefly flashes light in a blinking pattern that is unique to that species.

Luciferin is used in the medical world to study diseases such as cancer, muscular dystrophy, diabetes, and AIDS. It can be injected into diseased cells to detect changes that may indicate some of those diseases. Luciferin used to be harvested from fireflies (and sometimes still is) to use in medical studies, but scientists found a way to create luciferin in the lab so it's no longer necessary to collect fireflies.

Research shows that firefly populations are in decline. Habitat loss, light pollution, and pesticides are all probable causes.

### Fun Facts

- Fireflies' lights are 100% efficient. No heat is given off. In comparison, an incandescent (the old-fashioned kind) light bulb gives off only 10% light with 90% of the energy given off as heat.
- Fireflies are called blinkies in Jamaica.
- Fireflies shed a bitter tasting blood if a predator tries to eat them.
- A couple of places in the world have fireflies that synchronize their flashing. One of those is Great Smoky Mountain National Park. For a couple of weeks each spring fireflies light up at the same time over and over putting on a spectacular show so popular that you have to purchase tickets in advance.
- Fireflies' lights can be yellow, orange or green.



# Topper's Page



They can be noisy like cicadas and crickets, or pesty like mosquitoes and flies. Some look like leaves or sticks and others are really beautiful like butterflies. They are quick like dragonflies or slow movers like praying mantids. Some are in trouble like bees. But, they are all insects and have several things in common. Take the quiz below to see how much you know about insects.

## What DO YOU know about insects?

1. Insects have \_\_\_\_\_ legs.
2. Insects have \_\_\_\_\_ body parts.
3. Insects have a head, thorax and \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Insects have 2 \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Some insects can bite or \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Insects have an \_\_\_\_\_.

### Word Bank

three  
exoskeleton  
antennae  
sting  
abdomen  
six

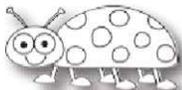
Name the insects



\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_

Help Topper color the kids catching fireflies.



MUSCATINE COUNTY  
CONSERVATION BOARD  
3300 CEDAR STREET  
PO BOX 109  
MUSCATINE, IA 52761

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Dave Schuler	Learning Center Assistant

**3300 Cedar Street, PO Box 109**

**Muscatine, IA 52761**

**P(563) 264-5922 F(563) 264-6097**

**conservation@co.muscatine.ia.us**

**www.MuscatineCountyConservation.com**

The Muscatine County Conservation Board meets the third Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. Meetings are held at the Environmental Learning Center, 3300 Cedar Street in Muscatine. The public is welcome to attend.

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If anyone believes he or she has been subjected to discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, or handicap, he or she may file a complaint alleging discrimination with either the Muscatine County Conservation Board or the Office of Equal Opportunity, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240



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