



# CONSERVATION NEWS

A Publication of the Muscatine County Conservation Board

Volume 31 No. 2 Summer 2018

## Bon Voyage!

Don't worry! No one is leaving our office anytime soon, but you can step back in time the third week of July and try your hand at some old time canoeing.

The Conservation Board is borrowing two 29-foot "voyageur" canoes from the Clinton County Conservation Board. We will have the canoes from July 18-24, 2018. Public hours will be held each evening, but groups can request specific times to come and try out the canoes.

Historically these canoes were paddled by 8-12 men. The canoes were used to transport trade goods, and sometimes passengers, into the Canadian wilderness. They then returned to their base camp in Montreal or Hudson Bay months later loaded down with wild animal pelts. These pelts were then shipped back to England or France.

The men (and it was always men) who paddled these large canoes and traveled into the wilderness and traded with the native peoples were tough people. Not only did they paddle hard all day, but they would sometimes stop to carry the canoes on the shore if the river was too swift or had dangerous rapids. The canoes weighed about 300 pounds and the men also had to carry as many as 40 packs of goods weighing 90 pounds each, as well as 5-6 packs of food, and then their personal items! It was a hard life, and dangerous. Not all the men could swim so some would drown if they fell into the river or lake. Just the hard work caused sprains, broken bones, hernias and

arthritis. Sickness also killed some of the men. Living and working outside all the time made people more tired and it was harder for them to fight off illnesses.

So, we will not make you paddle all day, or carry 90 pound packs, or sleep out in the rain, but we will give you and your friends a chance to try paddling a 300 pound 29-foot canoe around Lake Chester at Deep Lakes Park. Bring friends and family because these boats will seat 10 adults including the 'gouvernail' who steers from a standing seat in the rear of the canoe. Making these canoes move is all about teamwork and thinking ahead. The canoes are lots of fun, and since we have two, feel free to challenge the other canoe to a friendly race!



Each evening from the 18th through the 23rd you can come to the boat ramp at Lake Chester between 6:00 and 8:00 p.m. Groups will receive basic instruction, wished "Good Luck!" and sent out to paddle. A "group" can be an organized group of people such as a club, organization, coworkers at your business, church group, or *continued on page 2*

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small groups that come out to paddle and join other smaller groups of folks wanting to try something new. We will have volunteers paddling in kayaks or canoes nearby to offer advice or help as needed. Time allotted for each group may vary. If there are numerous people waiting to paddle your group may have 20 minutes to paddle, if less crowded you may have all the time you want. Visitors are welcome to enjoy the beach while waiting for a turn to paddle or bring your own kayaks or canoes to paddle.

If you are interested in being available to paddle canoes or kayaks and offer assistance to those in the “voyageur” canoes please call our office at (563) 264-5922 and ask for Dave Bakke. If you would like to help but don't have a canoe or kayak call anyway, we will provide one for you.

## Meet our Newest Resident

In the middle of February our newest resident moved in, Ciqala, a Saw-whet owl. Saw-whets are a tiny species of owl. Ciqala, whose name is a Native American word meaning ‘little one’ weighs in at about 2.5 ounces. Ciqala came to us from the RARE (Raptor Advocacy, Rehabilitation, and Education) group located in Iowa City.

Ciqala was brought to RARE after he was most likely hit by a car or involved in a collision with something. Both eyes were injured and he lost vision in the right eye and has partial vision in his left eye. In the wild, having only one eye makes hunting difficult and would put Ciqala at risk of being preyed upon by larger owls and other predators.

Ciqala has been spending some time sitting on a perch in the office so he can get used all the sights and sounds he will encounter now that he is an educational bird and is used in programs. Most noises such as closing doors, a ringing telephone, kids playing in the next room, or people walking

by don't seem to bother him much. However, the vacuum cleaner was not well received.

Saw-whet owls are found only in North America in deciduous, coniferous, or mixed forests and like dense vegetation for roosting during the day. They nest in tree cavities and may also use a nest box.

Saw-whets have excellent hearing. Ears are at different heights, one pointing up and one down allowing them to locate prey in complete darkness by hearing alone. They also have excellent eyesight. They hunt at night eating small rodents, songbirds, bats, insects, and frogs and crustaceans if they live in a coastal area.



*Ciqala sits on his perch in the office.*



## Memorials

Monetary donation *In Memory of Babe Yocum.*

Monetary donations *In Memory of Chuck Lutrull.*



## 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.

**Lynn Tavener** - monetary donation to our environmental education program.

**Mike Lawrence** - food for our raptors.

**Monsanto** - monetary donation.

**Linda Stoddard** - potting soil and pots for our gardening class.

**Kim & Scott Warren** - monetary donation to our environmental education program.

**Taylor's Market** - plants for our gardening class.

## Thanks Volunteers

**Julie Herold** - instructing our Polliwog Playtime classes.

**Linda Stoddard** - helping out at the front desk and with the kids gardening class.

**Jim Wester** - teaching our Polliwog Playtime participants about bees.

**Paul Mayes** - helping out with spring fieldtrips.

**Hannah Howard** - helping out with spring fieldtrips.

**Cindy Miller** - helping out with spring fieldtrips.

**Duffy DeFrance** - instructing our kids gardening class.

**Sue McKinney** - helping out with the kids gardening class.

**Antoinette Golding** - helping out with the kids gardening class.

## Fishing Seminar & Derby

Thank you to all the volunteers, Iowa DNR staff, and Conservation Board staff who made the 38th Annual Kids Fishing Seminar & 11th Annual Kids Fishing Derby a big success.

**Julie Herold**

**Joe Fourdyce**

**Vance Polton**

**Dave Bakke**

**Michelle Berns**

**Linda Stoddard**

**John Giofreddi**

**Dave Schuler**

**Curt Weiss**

**Jill Ziegenhorn**

Thanks to the following for their donations to the event.

**Lloyd & Dorothy Deahr - The Country Store**

**Muscatine Chapter of the Izaak Walton League**

**Blain's Farm & Fleet Walmart**

**Monsanto**

**Babe Yocum Memorial**

**Muscatine County Conservation Board**



*Dave Bakke shows the kids how to get a fishing rod set up.*

## Fishing Derby Winners

Congratulations to the fishing derby winners.

### Preschool, Kindergarten, First Grade

**Kami Schlawin** -shortest fish

**Lilian Keefe** - longest fish

**Luke Lincoln** - first fish



*Kami Schlawin turns in a winning fish to Vance Polton.*

### Second & Third Grade

**Emrie Koch** - shortest fish

**Molly Murphy** - longest fish

**Declan McNally** - first fish

### Fourth & Fifth Grade

**Tobey Murphy** - shortest fish

**Claire Lincoln** - longest fish

**Joey Murphy** - first fish

**Kara Schlawin** - most fish

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# Programs & Special Events

## MONARCH REARING

Come learn all about the Monarch Butterfly and get tips on how to raise them at home.

**Saturday, July 14 10:30 a.m.**  
**Environmental Learning Center**  
**Family event, children must be accompanied by an adult**  
**Free**



## CANOE & KAYAK RENTALS AT DEEP LAKES PARK

Canoes and kayaks will be available for hourly rental on select weekends this summer (weather permitting).

**July 7-8**                      **July 21-22\***  
**August 11-12**              **August 25-26**  
**Lake Chester Boat Ramp at Deep Lakes Park 12:00-4:00 p.m.**  
**\$10/hour (cash or check only)**



\*July 22 from 12:00-4:00 will be a Canoe/Kayak Try-It!  
It's FREE. Come try them out.

## VOYAGEUR CANOES AT DEEP LAKES PARK



Come paddle these 29-foot canoes just like the one Marquette & Joliet used to explore in the 1600's. It takes teamwork and 10-12 people to paddle these canoes, so bring the family or a group.

**Wednesday, July 18-Monday, July 23 6:00-8:00 p.m.**  
**Lake Chester Boat Ramp at Deep Lakes Park**  
**Free**

## FAMILY NIGHT

Join the naturalists for a fun evening of exploring Saulsbury. Activities may include canoeing, fishing, animal tracking, and shelter and fire building.

**Saturday, August 4 6:30-9:00 p.m.**  
**Saulsbury Bridge Recreation Area**  
**Family event, children must be accompanied by an adult**  
**Free, but preregistration is requested (563) 264-5922**



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# Programs & Special Events



## 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 should be completed prior to coming to class. Students will also need to bring a sack lunch.

**Saturday, August 25**                      **9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.**                      **Environmental Learning Center**

**Saturday, September 8**                      **9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.**                      **Environmental Learning Center**

## 30TH ANNUAL HALLOWEEN HIKE

Come join our cast of crazy characters for one of our most popular family events, the 30th Annual Halloween Hike.

**Saturday, October 13**

**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.**



Lots of volunteers are needed for a big event like the Halloween Hike on Saturday, October 13. 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.



## HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

The Environmental Learning Center will be closed on Wednesday, July 4 & Monday, September 3.

## Become a Friend

Thanks to all our “Friends” whose donations to the Muscatine County Conservation Foundation support the development and enhancement of environmental education and conservation projects in Muscatine County.

*Ivan Lenz*

*Mrs. Eugene Mathern*

*Mealy Family*

*Jean L. Scott*

*John & Kathleen Kuhl*

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 are open. Camping fees are 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 6-7

July 20-21

August 3-4

August 17-18

September 7-8

September 21-22

October 5-6

October 19-20



FREE Wednesdays

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

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## Creature Feature

### *Fox Snake by Jonathon Solt*

As the slow transition this year from the winter-spring mix we have been getting starts to occur, many of us will begin joining in on the outdoor activities we know and love like hiking and climbing and just enjoying nature. This is also true for one of Iowa's most common reptiles, the Western Fox Snake. These snakes are cold-blooded and when the earth starts to heat up again they begin their breeding and nesting process as well as hunting to replenish their energy needed to survive the winter. Fox snakes re-emerge from their period of hibernation around April and are active until mid to late October. During the hot summer months, fox snakes choose to move about at night, just like many other Iowa snake species.

Fox snakes are completely non-venomous and when faced with a possible threat such as a human will choose a passive option like fleeing rather than becoming aggressive. When handled, they usually do not strike or bite, but they may release a mild musk from their scent glands at the base of the tail. This defensive adaptation has a smell like that of a red fox, thus the reason for the common name. Another defensive mechanism of these snakes is that they will vibrate their tails producing a rattling or buzzing sound. This behavior often causes them to be misidentified as rattlesnakes and, because of their copper-colored head, copperheads. They are often killed because of this and it is important to know the difference between these species.

Fox snakes are valuable biological control organisms and account for the pest management of a variety of organisms like rodents, which make up the bulk of their diet. This snake uses its powerful muscles to constrict and suffocate its young rather than the venomous counterparts like the copperheads that live in the very southern extremes of Iowa. Some young fox snakes are known to feed on frogs or young mice. Adults have been known to eat birds and their eggs.

As far as the habitat of these snakes, they mainly occupy more moist habitats than other large Iowa snakes. They prefer areas where food and shelter is in abundance like woodland and woodland edges, prairies, lowland meadows, and rocky outcroppings near rivers. They are especially common in river and stream valleys. One of the reasons for this snake relatively high populations in Iowa is that they adapt more readily to human habitations and habitat disturbance. Often, they are found well within the city limits of even the largest Iowa cities. While this means you may see these species of snake in your backyard more often, you can rest easy knowing that this species is harmless and can be a good way of managing your local mice and other pest populations.



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

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Michelle Berns	Naturalist
Bob Kenyon	Operations Supervisor
Kent Kaufman	Park Attendant
Ryne Brimeyer	Park Officer
Jill Ziegenhorn	Office Manager
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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