



CONSERVATION NEWS

A Publication of the Muscatine County Conservation Board

Volume 32 No. 2 Summer 2019

Pollinators

They're the Bee's Knees'

We have bees in Discovery Park! Well, we've always had wild bees, but now we have two bee hives. On a cold and rainy day in late April Mike Hagerty, with the Muscatine Pollinator Project, set two hives in a grassy field near the Muscatine Arboretum. Around 15,000 – 20,000 bees were placed in the boxes with a queen for each box. Food was added to sustain the bees until blooming flowers and trees could provide a nectar source. Mike says that the bees aren't a threat to park users. Though you may see them flying around the hives, the bees are most interested in visiting blooming flowers! These bees will support the pollinating work already being done by native bees!



And if you're wondering, do bees really have knees? Technically, no bees don't really have knees although the back legs do have a bend in them that makes it look like they have knees. So, just what does the phrase 'the bee's knees' mean? It's an old expression referring to something as "it's all that," "cool" or "awesome". It's a reference to the fact that bees carry pollen in sacks on their back legs, so the expression refers to that concentrated goodness (pollen) that's necessary for plants to reproduce.

Polliwogs Plant for Pollinators

On June 3rd our Polliwog Playtime kids, ages 18 months to 3 years old (with help from parents and grandparents) planted over 100 pollinator-friendly plants near the Environmental Learning Center in Discovery Park. The flowers planted will provide nectar sources for bees and other pollinators throughout the summer. The little ones raked mulch out of the way, dug holes, planted and watered these small plants. And what a fantastic job they did!

The plants were provided by the Muscatine Pollinator Project. This group works to teach people the value of pollinators in our community and around the world. Part of their mission is to plant flowers, especially native flowers, that are attractive to pollinators.



Towards this end they raise native flowers from seed, sell some, and use others to support local planting projects. Our thanks to them for helping with our planting project, and to Hannah Howard who brought the plants and helped us plant them.

Playground Volunteers

Thanks to everyone who came out in early May to help construct the new playground in Discovery Park.

Kevin Schaper
Tim Thompson
Matt Reimers
Sally Flatland
Craig Riesenberg
Jeff Prier
Deb Elliott
Mario Flores
Michael Flores
Danielle Mally
Melanie Kenyon
Dave Cooney
Paul Brooks
Wes Walker
Brian Brunson
Rebekah Brunson

Randy Hunter
Nic Millage
Stuart Arkon
Curt Shellabarger
Diana Tank
Nancy Streu
Keith Elliott
Brandon Gamon
Vicki Flores
Connie Jean
Joni Axel
Ed Lampe
John Wunder
John Haskins
Alma Brunson



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.

Brian Steele - raptor food

Steve Greene - two canoes

Georgia Snyder - milkweed seed

Levi Strause - bear hide

Mueller Family - monetary donation

Durant Preschool - monetary donation

Community Bank & Trust - monetary donation from their Blue Jeans Friday event

Jefferson Elementary PTO - monetary donation

Tim Edwards - monetary donation for an AED

Charlie & Jean Harper - bike fix-it station for Deep Lakes Park

MHS Class of 1955 - monetary donation for picnic table, information kiosk & bike rack at Deep Lakes Park

Major & Woodson Whitacre - book for the environmental education program

Kim Bullock - monetary donation

Keystone Federation of Women's Clubs - environmental education supplies

Central Classic Club - monetary donation

Muscatine Pollinator Project - bee hives and pollinator plants for Discovery Park

Thank You,
Thank You,



Volunteers

Julie Herold - instructing our Polliwog Playtime classes

Jim Wester - teaching our Polliwog Playtime participants about bees

Hannah Howard - helping out with spring fieldtrips

Marla Kurriger - helping out with spring fieldtrips

Lana Artz-McComb (Louisa County Conservation) - instructing the Orienteering 101 class

Dave Layton (The Prairie States Mushroom Club) - instructing the Mushroom Foray class

Liz Sebo (The Nature Conservancy) - helping out with summer nature camps



Honorariums

A tree was adopted in Discovery Park *In Honor of Maggie Tiecke.*

Fishing Seminar & Derby

It was a beautiful sunny June day for the 83 kids who participated in the fishing seminar and 56 kids who participated in the fishing derby. Thank you to all the volunteers, Iowa DNR staff, Corps of Engineers staff, and Conservation Board staff who made the 39th Annual Kids Fishing Seminar & 12th Annual Kids Fishing Derby a big success.

Julie Herold
Linda Stoddard
Amy Bakke
Spencer Keske
Cathy Jackson
Vance Polton
Derrick Slutts
Cooper White
Cindy Klebe
Dave Schuler
Dave Bakke
Michelle Berns
Ryne Brimeyer



Thanks to the following for their donations to the event.

Lloyd & Dorothy Deahr - The Country Store
Muscatine Chapter of the Izaak Walton League
Walmart
Bayer
Blain's Farm & Fleet
Muscatine County Conservation Board

Fishing Derby Winners

Congratulations to the fishing derby winners.

Preschool, Kindergarten, First Grade

Noah Bowie -shortest fish

Beau Garrett - longest fish

Gage Frantz - first fish

Annabelle Lee - most fish

Second & Third Grade

Molly Murphy - longest fish

Ben Harkness - first fish

Fourth & Fifth Grade

Kara Schlawin - shortest fish

James Garrison - longest fish

Matthew Vogt - first fish

Programs & Special Events



REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS

Join Conservation Board staff to learn about the reptiles and amphibians of Iowa, and meet some live ones!

Saturday, July 13 6:30 p.m.
Environmental Learning Center
Free for all ages, children must be accompanied by an adult



CANOE & KAYAK RENTALS AT DEEP LAKES PARK

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

July 13-14 July 27-28
August 3-4 August 17-18
Lake Chester Boat Ramp at Deep Lakes Park 12:00-4:00 p.m.
\$10/hour (cash or check only)



CANOE/KAYAK TRY-IT

Come to Saulsbury to try out canoeing and kayaking. Canoes and kayaks will be available to paddle around Chicken Creek. Life jackets provided for anyone 30 pounds and over.

Sunday, August 25 3:00-5:00 p.m.
Saulsbury Bridge Recreation Area-Chicken Creek
Free for all ages, children must be accompanied by an adult



HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

The Environmental Learning Center will be closed on Monday, September 2.

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. 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 24	9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.	Environmental Learning Center
Saturday, September 7	9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.	Environmental Learning Center

31ST ANNUAL HALLOWEEN HIKE

Come join our cast of crazy characters for one of our most popular family events, the 31st Annual Halloween Hike.

Saturday, October 12

6:30 p.m. with a new hike starting every 10 minutes until 8:30 p.m.

Discovery Park

\$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 12. 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

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.

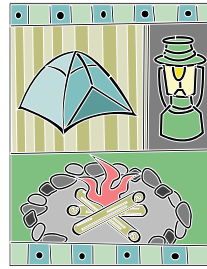
*Mr. & Mrs. Richard Sneddon
Jean L. Scott*

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 19-20

August 2-3 & August 16-17

September 6-7 & September 20-21

October 4-5 & October 18-19



FREE Wednesdays

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

Creature Feature

Eastern Spiny Softshell Turtle

The spiny softshell turtle is a rather unique turtle with a snorkel-like nose and flat leathery shell that looks like a pancake with a head, legs and a tail. They have webbed feet with three claws on each foot.

The carapace (top shell) is tan to brown to olive colored with dark spots that turn darker and more splotchy in the females as they age. The plastron (bottom shell) is white to a light yellow color. The spines, which are more like ridges, are located along the front edge of the carapace and more noticeable in males. Males can reach a length of 5-9 inches and are smaller than females who can be 7-18 inches.

Eastern spiny softshells are found in the Mississippi, Missouri, and Ohio River basins from the Gulf of Mexico to the Upper Midwest and to the east. They live mostly in rivers, but may also be found in large lakes. They like the water's bottom sandy or muddy with lots of gravel to hide in and will spend a lot of time there. Besides breathing through the mouth and nose they also breathe through their skin allowing them to remain underwater for up to five hours. You may also see them sunning themselves on a sand or gravel bar. In winter they hibernate at the bottom of a river or lake.

Spiny softshells eat any aquatic life small enough to catch, including crayfish, insects, fish, frogs, tadpoles, and some aquatic plants. They are fast swimmers and may actively hunt for food or bury themselves and wait to ambush prey who swim by too close.

Mating occurs at 8-10 years of age in the spring in deep water. Between May and August, the female can lay up to 40 eggs in a nest she's dug in the sand or gravel preferably in a sunny location. The more exposure the eggs have to the sun the quicker they develop and hatch. The young hatch between August and October. Unlike other turtles

whose sex is determined by temperature, the sex of softshell turtles is determined by genetics.

Adult spiny softshells do not have many predators other than river otters, alligators, and humans. Eggs and hatchlings are preyed on by herons, gulls, raccoons, foxes, and coyotes. The biggest threats to the turtles are habitat destruction and chemical pollution.

Spiny Softshell Facts

- They can live to be 50 years old.
- There are seven subspecies of spiny softshell turtles in North America, including the eastern subspecies.
- Their lack of a protective hard shell is made up with speed on both land and in the water.
- They have a nasty disposition and are quick to bite if handled.
- Southern folklore says if a softshell bites it won't release its grip until it hears a clap of thunder.



MUSCATINE COUNTY
CONSERVATION BOARD
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MUSCATINE, IA 52761

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Ryne Brimeyer	Park Officer
Jill Ziegenhorn	Office Manager
Dave Schuler	Learning Center Assistant

3300 Cedar Street, PO Box 109

Muscatine, IA 52761

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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.

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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