



Conservation News



A Publication of the Muscatine County Conservation Board

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Answering the Call of the Wild *by Luke Hart*

An incredible opportunity, and a middle-aged moment of clarity collided—and, “Voila! I’m here!” Hello, Muscatine County. My name is Luke Hart, and I’d like to introduce myself as your newest Conservation Board Naturalist. It is truly an honor to serve as one of your devoted environmental educators and advocates. Let me tell you a just little bit about myself.

To begin, I hail from Lowden, IA, a small town of no consequence—except maybe for those happy enough to have lived there. Never too far from the woods, or rivers, or fields, it was easy to fall in love with nature and spend ample time exploring it. Indeed, I feel fortunate that as a kid I had nothing better to do with my free time than just be outdoors. If you would have asked me then what I wanted to be when I grew up, I would have told you, “an oceanographer.” It really didn’t seem like such a far-fetched dream for a landlocked kid to have; and, though my career has been steered a bit off course



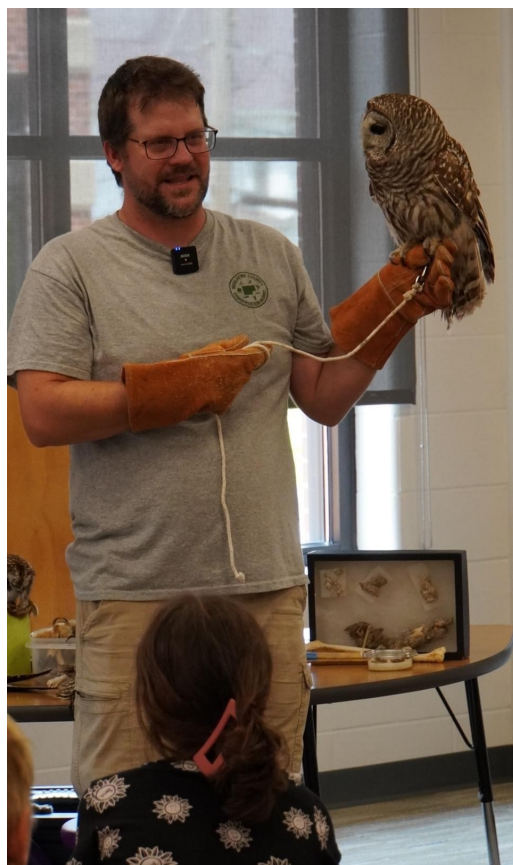
from that seven-year-old’s dream, two things have stayed true: firstly, I am absolutely fascinated by nature; and secondly, I want to spend my life learning and teaching about it.

I attended the University of Iowa and graduated in 2010 with my biology degree. At the time I was earning my degree, a great friend (and now fellow naturalist) encouraged me to get involved with a wildlife group for which she worked. I joined up as a project assistant at Macbride Raptor Project (MRP), when and where I began my journey into nature interpretation, with a heavy focus on birds of prey—as the name would imply. This was also the time I dove into wildlife rehabilitation—another great passion of mine.

I’ve been working with birds since 2007, and I’ve been asked many times, “when did you first become interested in raptors?” My answer, “from the first moment I held a wounded one in my arms.” Realizing that human hands are as frightening to that wild animal, as they were necessary to its survival, was both humbling and inspiring. I didn’t choose raptors; they didn’t choose me; but, we needed each other. I realized along the way that rehabbing, educating and advocating were always my calling. I just needed a medium with which to begin my journey. With that said, I want to thank you, Mary Bulger, for getting me into this.

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Fifteen years of experiences later, a rare opportunity presented itself to me: there was a naturalist position opening up at Muscatine County Conservation Board. The rest is—as they say—history. I can't express fully in words how much this opportunity means to me. You'll certainly find me at Discovery Park. Or perhaps you'll see me out and about in the wilds of Muscatine County. If you do, don't be shy. Say "hello," and know that I'm a resource to you for anything and everything Nature. 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.

Brent McGreer - Black Bear hide for the Environmental Education Program

Craig and Pat Bieber - 10 Youth Life Jackets for the Environmental Education Program

Todd Stammer - Volunteered for school field trips and summer nature camps

Mike Chaplin - Hornet's nest



Memorials

A Red Oak tree was adopted in Discovery Park *In Memory of Jacey Mae Samuelson.*

A Burr Oak tree was adopted in Discovery Park *In Memory of Otto Richard 'Dick' Maeglin.*

A Crabapple tree was adopted in Discovery Park *In Memory of Cynthia Ann Timm Maeglin.*

A Crabapple tree was adopted in Discovery Park *In Memory of Cody Terpenning.*



Holiday Closings

The Conservation Board offices and Environmental Learning Center will be closed on Monday, September 4 and Friday, November 10.

Farewell Maizie

Maizie, our Corn snake, recently passed away from old age. She was born in 2002 and came to us in January of 2003 as a tiny little snake. As she got bigger we began using her as an educational snake. From the beginning she was very gentle and over the past 20 years put up with countless kids handling her.

We'll miss you Maizie!



Hello,

I'll be the new Office Manager here at the Muscatine County Conservation Board Office, as Jill will be enjoying her well-deserved retirement.

Born and raised in Muscatine, I truly love this little river town. The great outdoors is my favorite place to be! I'm excited to start this new chapter in my career and look forward to meeting all the new people as well as reconnecting with past acquaintances that I'm sure I will be seeing .

I hope to see you soon!

Lori Dietrich

Become a Friend

Thank you 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.



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

Larry & Judy Carter

Jean L. Scott

Ivan Lenz

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
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- 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

Programs and Special Events

Bug Hike

Come discover some of the busiest animals in nature—BUGS! We will be scanning the prairies at Discovery Park for incredible invertebrates and collecting for a closer observation. Come one, come all for a great morning of bug hunting.



Saturday, August 19 10:30-11:30 a.m. Environmental Learning Center
Free family event, children must be accompanied by an adult

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 30 students.

The class is free but, you must register on-line at www.gooutdoorsiowa.com. After registering you must pick up a workbook at the Environmental Learning Center. The chapter review questions at the end of the workbook should be completed prior to coming to class.

Students will need to bring their completed workbook and a sack lunch.

Saturday, August 26 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Environmental Learning Center

Wild Edible Foraging Hike



Start the holiday weekend off right with a wild edibles hike through Wildcat Den State Park. Bring some paper bags for collecting and hopefully we'll find a bounty to boast about.



Saturday, September 2 10:00-11:30 a.m. Wildcat Den (upper picnic shelter)
Free family event, children must be accompanied by an adult

Community 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 5:30-7:00 p.m. Discovery Park
Free family event, children must be accompanied by an adult



Programs and Special Events

Polliwog Playtime

ages 18 months through 3 years \$5.00/session maximum 12/session

Join us at the Environmental Learning Center and Discovery Park for activities designed to help toddlers explore nature. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Registration form available at the Environmental Learning Center or www.muscatinecountyconservation.com

September 9	9:00-10:00 a.m.	Butterflies
October 14	9:00-10:00 a.m.	Bulbs & Flowers
November 11	9:00-10:00 a.m.	Turkeys & Other Birds



Knee-high Naturalists

4-5 year olds \$5.00/session maximum 12/session



Join us at the Environmental Learning Center and Discovery Park for nature activities such as games, crafts, stories, and outdoor exploration. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Registration form available at the Environmental Learning Center or www.muscatinecountyconservation.com

September 9	10:30-11:30 a.m.	Butterflies
October 14	10:30-11:30 a.m.	Bulbs & Flowers
November 11	10:30-11:30 a.m.	Turkeys & Other Birds

Learning Center Before Hours

Free, for families with a member needing a low sensory experience

For a low sensory experience come visit the Environmental Learning Center before the doors open to the public. Spaces are limited. Email michelle.berns@muscatinecountyiowa.gov to sign up.

September 9	11:30 a.m.-12:00 noon
October 14	11:30 a.m.-12:00 noon
November 11	11:30 a.m.-12:00 noon



Halloween Drive-thru

The campers are going all out and decorating their campsites for Halloween. Visitors can drive through to view the decorated campsites. The first 500 kids receive a treat bag. There is suggested donation of \$10.00 per car that will be donated to the Muscatine Humane Society and the Muscatine Food Pantry.

Saturday, October 14 6:30-8:00 p.m. Saulsbury Bridge Recreation Area
Free family event

CAMPERS: If you want to camp and decorate a site for the Halloween Drive-thru. Forms will be available to fill out **in-person** starting September 5 at the Environmental Learning Center.

Shelter Rentals

The Conservation Board has picnic shelters at Discovery Park, Saulsbury Bridge Recreation Area, and Jack Shuger Memorial Park that may be reserved. Contact the Conservation Board office at conservation@muscatinecountyiowa.gov or (563) 264-5922 or for more information. Reservations may be made no earlier than one year in advance.

Discovery Park

Discovery Pond Shelter (#1) \$20 (no electricity)

Learning Center Shelter (#2) \$40

Saulsbury Bridge Recreation Area

Chicken Creek Shelter (#1) \$25

Boat Ramp Shelter (#2) \$25

Jack Shuger Memorial Park

Shelter \$25



Saulsbury Lodge Rental

The Saulsbury Lodge is available for rent. This enclosed building is air conditioned and has the capacity to seat around 75 people. It's a great setting for a family reunion, small wedding reception, graduation or birthday party. Prices vary depending on the day of the week and type of event. Contact the Conservation Board office at (563) 264-5922 or conservation@muscatinecountyiowa.gov for more information. Reservations may be made no earlier than one year in advance.



Deep Lakes Park Cabin Rentals

Visit www.muscatinecountyconservation.com to find out more about cabin rental at Deep Lakes Park. The cabins are open year-round. Reservations may be made up to one year in advance.

Camping at Saulsbury

The Saulsbury Bridge Recreation Area campgrounds are open. Camping fees are as follows.

- Main Campground \$20/night
- River Campground \$17/night
- Primitive Campground \$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.

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

TWO-FOR-ONE Camping Weekends

Camp the first night (Friday) in any of the campgrounds at Saulsbury and stay for the next night (Saturday) FREE on the following weekends.

July 21-22

August 4-5 & August 18-19

September 1-2 & September 15-16

October 6-7 & October 20-21



FREE Wednesdays

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

Green Creature Feature Milkweed by Michelle Berns

One of my most favorite plants is milkweed. Now a lot of people might be saying, “what!” But hear me out! It is a VIP (Very Important Plant) for one of my favorite creatures the Monarch Butterfly! It also provides nectar and pollen for a multitude of pollinators as well as creates a microhabitat for a variety of invertebrates (bugs and caterpillars). And, the blooming flowers rank right up there with the best smelling flowers! If you have never sniffed a milkweed flower, you are missing out! It reminds me of a lilac but much sweeter and the fragrance seems to carry in the wind.

In the United States there are 73 different species of native milkweed. Iowa is home to 18 different species of native milkweed. By far the most abundant is Common Milkweed, which is the one that is often found growing in ditches or disturbed areas. Milkweeds, which get their name from the sappy white substance that leaks out of the plant stems, is the only host plant for the larva of the Monarch Butterfly. It is best to have a variety of native milkweeds in your yard and lots of it! My favorite is Swamp Milkweed because it seems to be preferred by monarchs in my yard.

So, go explore your local milkweed patch. Grab a magnifying glass, a bug net, and a collecting jar. You can search for Monarch eggs, or if you want to take a closer look at the invertebrates, just sweep some up in your bug net, place them in your collection jar and see just how cool they are with your magnifying glass. Just make sure to be careful with those little inverts and let them go right where you found them.

If you don't have a milkweed patch near you, come on out to Discovery Park. We have a plethora of milkweed that we leave for the monarchs and other inverts out in our gardens and prairies. Happy Bug Hunting!



Fun Facts

- There are milkweed bugs and milkweed beetles, both feed on the milkweed plants.
- Cardiac glycosides in the milkweed sap are what the monarch caterpillar and butterfly build up in their bodies that make them poisonous to other animals that may try to eat them.
- Seed pods form after the flowers bloom and are mature when the pods ‘pop’ open.
- Milkweeds are perennial species and will come back year after year.





Topper's Page

Butterfly Word Search

Try to find all of the hidden Butterfly words in the word search puzzle below.
(Words can be spelled forwards, backwards, diagonally, up, or down.)

O	O	T	F	K	J	C	D	E	W	O	K	N	J	E
W	C	Y	F	D	L	F	B	L	Z	D	S	A	V	Z
F	C	L	M	O	N	A	R	C	H	L	R	O	O	C
N	L	A	R	V	A	Y	K	E	G	A	E	M	J	Z
N	I	R	X	C	C	T	E	R	N	Y	W	Z	M	A
G	J	Y	L	E	H	B	C	N	A	W	O	P	B	M
A	N	S	O	B	R	R	E	E	I	Y	L	L	F	B
R	E	B	T	S	L	T	Y	N	S	W	F	W	N	B
D	C	K	H	N	N	F	G	S	X	N	E	A	E	P
E	T	M	M	A	A	S	N	K	A	C	I	M	C	H
N	A	T	Z	G	B	L	L	V	M	L	E	N	G	H
D	R	U	N	Q	J	G	P	K	A	R	I	L	L	X
F	N	B	E	Q	Y	O	C	L	G	B	Z	S	T	H
A	Y	J	K	C	L	U	M	E	U	R	Q	M	D	H
J	I	P	T	A	F	S	I	P	C	Q	Y	B	W	F

Word List

ANTENNA	FLY	MONARCH
CHRYSLIS	GARDEN	NECTAR
EMERGE	INSECT	PLANTS
FLOWERS	LARVA	WINGS



MUSCATINE COUNTY
CONSERVATION BOARD
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Julie Jindrich	Member

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, gender, 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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Contact us at:

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