

# The W.R.E.N.

## Wapsi River Environmental News

### Fall 2005

Scott County Conservation Board's Environmental Education Newsletter

[www.scottcountyiowa.com/conservation/wapsi.html](http://www.scottcountyiowa.com/conservation/wapsi.html)

The Wapsi River Center is owned, managed and operated by the Scott County Conservation Board with programming and development assistance from the Clinton County Conservation Board.

## Wapsi Center Happenings

by Bob Bryant, Director

### Center Attendance Down

Attendance for the 2005 fiscal year (July 1, 2004 - June 30, 2005) was 28,619. A high percentage of the decline is due to the two large schools which come every other year. There also has been a decline in public program attendance.

### Outdoor Adventures

Attendance was approximately the same this summer for the Center's "Outdoor Adventures" program. The program provides one-day field trips for city youth programs, daycare centers and other summer youth programs. Over 628 individuals participated in 23 field trips compared to last year's attendance of 623 and 25 field trips.



### Fall School Field Trips

Quite a few field trips have already been scheduled for this fall. We encourage teachers to call early and take an active role in planning and conducting their field trip. The Wapsi Center has a field trip planner, which is very helpful. If you are a teacher and want to schedule a field trip or get a copy of the field trip planner, give us a call at (563) 328-3286. Don't forget: *The Wapsi River Center is a place for all seasons.*

### Rental Facility Use Up

So far this calendar year, we have had 20 dorm rentals, compared to 17 last year at this time. Full dorm rental is \$300 per night. Partial rental options start at \$80. For more



information on the dorm and the Center's other rental facilities (meeting rooms, lodge and cabin), call the Wapsi Center at (563) 328-3286. The

Center's cabin rental is also running about the same. The cabin rents for \$30. Meeting rooms with kitchen are also available. Rental is \$50 for the room and \$15 for the kitchen. If you are renting the dorm and need a meeting and dining room, there is no charge for the kitchen.

### Winter Hours

The Eagle View Eco Center and its displays are open to the public on Saturdays and Sundays, 1-5 P.M., through October 30. Winter hours are 1-5 P.M. Saturdays, starting on November 5 through March 25. **Don't forget - the Wapsi Center will be closed to the public during the deer hunt, Dec. 3-7.**

### Bald Eagle Viewing

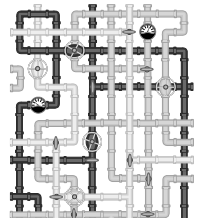
Eagles start showing up in November, but the best time for viewing has been December through early March. **Bald Eagle viewing in December will be limited due to the deer hunt.** The area surrounding the bald eagle night roost will be closed to hunting to prevent any disturbance to eagles using the night roost. On most occasions, the eagles start returning to the night roost one to two hours before dusk. Spotting scopes will be available when the Eagle View Eco Center is open.

### Development and Maintenance Projects

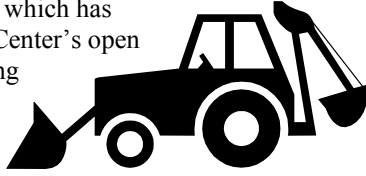
The past 5 weeks have been very busy at the Wapsi Center. The new 74 ft. X 42 ft. deck for the Owl's Nest Dormitory will be finished this month. The deck is attached to the back of the dorm and will have a raised stage. The deck will have 10 picnic tables and will be handicapped-accessible.

West Lake Park workers are helping with maintenance and development projects at the Center. Three of the old washstands, leftover from the Center's days as a Scout camp, were placed on a new concrete pad and hooked up to the Center's water supply and sewer system. The washstands have proven to be a big timesaver with large school groups. Eighteen kids at a time can wash their hands now.

A new water line was run to the men's restroom. A trenching machine was used to put in the new line. The trenching machine's small backhoe was used to wage war on the autumn olive again along our trails. Autumn



olive is a very invasive shrub which has taken over large parts of the Center's open grasslands. We will start using heavier endloader/backhoes this fall to wipe out as much autumn olive as possible.



In August, we hosted an AmeriCorps workday at the Wapsi Center. As in past years, we worked on the old swimming pool. The old pool and shower house have been converted into a frog pond and aquatic lab. This year's project was starting construction on a stream and waterfall system to help circulate the water in the frog pond and make it more natural and aesthetic-looking. Two concrete pads were also poured for benches.

### ***December Deer Hunt Scheduled for the Wapsi River Center***

For the past several years, the Scott County Conservation Board has used hunting, a biologically accepted management technique, to control the deer population at Scott County Park. The objective of the plan is to maintain a deer population in balance with the plant and animal life in the park. These special hunts are proving to be effective in lowering the number of deer in Scott County Park and the gradual recovery of the park's plant community.

The Wapsi River Center's hunts were moderately successful last December. There were two hunts during the regular seasons, and 8 deer were taken by hunters. The number of hunters (14) was split between the two seasons. A common comment from the hunters was there were not enough hunters and the deer knew where they were and just kept walking around them. We only averaged 3-4 hunters per day. Even though not as many deer were taken as we hoped, it did decrease the amount of deer damage at the Center.

The deer hunt at the Wapsi Center will not be a special hunt designated by the DNR like at Scott County Park. The Wapsi River Center's hunt will be conducted during the first regular deer season only. This season's dates are December 3-7. During these dates, the Wapsi River Center will be closed to the public, except for those 12 hunters with permits to hunt at the Center. We hope that increasing the number of hunters during only one hunt will increase the number of deer taken, and we will only have to close the Center to the public for 5 days, compared to 2 weeks last year.

Those wishing to hunt at the Wapsi Center must apply to the Scott County Conservation Board and meet the same requirements as at Scott County Park. However, those hunting at the Wapsi Center will not receive special deer licenses; they will purchase deer licenses through the normal process. For more detailed information on the application process, see the guidelines below.

A few years ago, the Scott County Conservation Board implemented a plan to manage the deer at Scott County Park. The Iowa Department of Natural Resources designated Scott County Park a Special Deer Management Zone. **The following information is in regards to this year's controlled hunt:**

- ▶ The hunt will consist of one, 3-day hunt ~ December 3-5.
- ▶ 50 hunters will be selected.
- ▶ Applications will be available August 27 at the Scott County Park south entrance station and West Lake Park campground office (Gate 5) from 8:00 A.M. - 10:00 P.M. daily, and Wapsi River E. E. Center from 8:00 A.M. - 4:30 P.M. (M-F). Applications must be received by 4:30 P.M., September 30, for a lottery drawing that will be held the first week in October. All applicants will be notified by mail of the results.
- ▶ The license fee is \$26.00 for the first antlerless tag and \$11.00 for the second or subsequent antlerless tag. License fees will be paid directly to the designated vendor (B&B Shooting Supplies) **after** the selection process and completion of proficiency testing.
- ▶ First-time hunters selected for this special hunt must pass a safety/orientation class and demonstrate shooting proficiency before a license will be issued. The class and test will be offered November 5 at the Davenport Police Department Training Center. Only one chance is permitted to pass the test.

#### **The Wapsi River Environmental Education Center's controlled-hunt guidelines follow:**

- ▶ The hunt will consist of one hunt during the State's shotgun seasons ~ December 3-7.
- ▶ 12 hunters will be selected.
- ▶ Applications will be available August 27 at the Scott County Park south entrance station and West Lake Park campground office (Gate 5) from 8:00 A.M. - 10:00 P.M. daily, and Wapsi River E. E. Center from 8:00 A.M. - 4:30 P.M. (M-F). Applications must be received by 4:30 P.M., September 30, for a lottery drawing that will be held the first week in October. All applicants will be notified by mail of the results.
- ▶ Hunters will not receive special deer licenses; they will purchase deer licenses through the normal process and license fees will be paid directly to any state vendor. The first deer harvested MUST be antlerless.
- ▶ Selected hunters must pass a safety/orientation class and demonstrate shooting proficiency. The class and test will be offered November 5 at the Davenport Police Department Training Center. Only one chance is permitted to pass the test.

# Plant Profile: New England Aster

by Greg Wolf, CCCB Interpretative Naturalist

Autumn is here, which means the trees are changing color, the birds are migrating and our autumn flowers are blooming. One of the most colorful autumn flowers is the New England aster (*Aster novae-angliae*). These flowers are popular in our prairies, roadsides and even in our backyards.

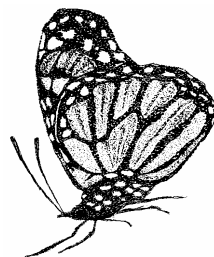


New England aster is a common autumn flower found all over North America. They grow best in full- to partial-sun and moist, rich soil, but are sometimes found in sandy, loamy or clay soils. This native perennial blooms in mid-September through October. This showy aster can reach heights of about six feet. The leaves are long and narrow,

measuring two to nine inches long. The leaves, when crushed, release an aroma similar to turpentine. The most common color of the flowers tends to be deep purple to lavender; on occasion, it can be a pink to almost white in color. At the top of the plant, there will be a bunch of flowers in a cluster with a rounded head shape. Each individual flower is one-and-a-half inches wide, with an average of forty petals surrounding a yellow disk. There can be a dozen of these flowers per plant, which makes it a beautiful sight in a prairie of golden grass and yellow goldenrods. The plant can bloom up to two months.

New England aster is one of 200 species of aster found in North America. The genus *Aster* comes from a Greek and Latin word meaning "star," which is in reference to the general shape of the flower and its bracts. The species name, *novae-angliae*, means "of New England." New England asters are called different common names depending on the geographic region you might be located in. Michaelmas daisy, starwort and frost flower are a few other common names used.

New England asters attract many different insects to its flowers and other parts. Many butterflies drink the



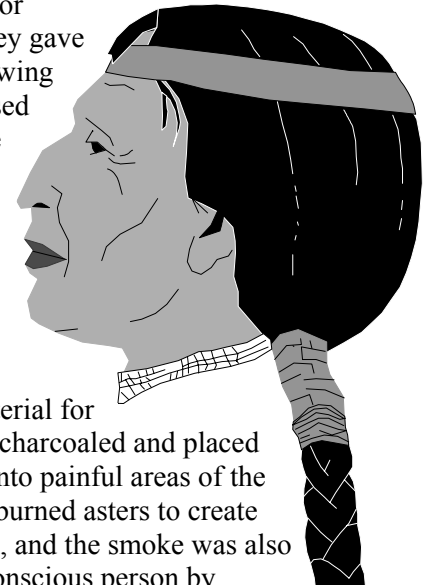
nectar for an energy source, especially the monarch. The asters are a good source of food during the monarch migration. In fact, it is one of their main sources of food in the autumn.



The other insects that utilize this plant are bumblebees, honeybees, miner bees, large leaf-cutter bees, other butterflies, moths and syrphid flies. These insects are important for cross-pollination and seed development. The tarnished plant bug, four-lined plant bug, chrysanthemum lace bug and potato aphid eat other parts of the plant. Wild turkey, white-tailed deer and livestock occasionally eat the seeds of the aster, while rabbits will nibble the leaves.

This plant can become stressed in hot, dry weather such as this summer. It will often drop the lower leaves, while the remaining leaves turn yellow and brown. Another problem is that the stem will flop over in the absence of supportive vegetation. In the cool, moist weather of fall, powdery mildew often afflicts the leaves.

Native Americans used aster plants for several medicinal uses. The Blackfeet tribe used asters as an enema for babies with gas pains or intestinal trouble. They gave it to the babies by blowing the aster down a greased eagle wing bone. The Cheyenne used the aster to relieve earaches by making a tea of the dried stems and dropping some into the ear.



Pawnee claimed that asters are the best material for moxa. The stems are charcoaled and placed in strips and burned onto painful areas of the skin. The Meskwaki burned asters to create smoke in a sweat bath, and the smoke was also used to revive an unconscious person by forcing the smoke up the nostrils. The Pottawattamie used the aster to cure severe headaches by steeping the leaves, then rubbing the solution on the head.

New England asters are one of many species of asters found in Iowa, but it is one of the most visible and propagated flower for backyards. Autumn brings different colors to life, and the asters are no exception with their bright purple blooms in our prairies and roadsides. Enjoy the colors of autumn and relish in the New England aster's beauty.



# Wildlife Profile: Brown Recluse

by Michael Granger, Naturalist

“Spider!” The mere mention of the word normally evokes a wide range of negative human emotions. How many of you, upon seeing a spider, have followed an involuntary impulse which leads to a harmless spider’s untimely death? Not to worry; you’re not alone.

All spiders, however, benefit us immensely. Ask any child and they will promptly tell you that spiders eat flies. All spiders are predators and they play an important role in maintaining the balance of nature. They are also preyed upon by larger animals (wasps, for instance). Spiders do not damage the inside of your house, but may serve to rid the house of other more serious pests. Many people do not appreciate spider webs inside as much as outside the house.

Approximately 2,500 species of spiders exist in North America. Spiders belong to the phylum *Arthropoda*, which includes the insects, crustaceans, millipedes and centipedes. Spiders have 2 body parts and 8 legs. Out of all of the different species of spiders in the United States, only a few of them pose a real threat to humans. While I have never seen a black widow, *Latrodectus mactans*, (found in the lower half of the United States) there have been several recent occurrences of the brown recluse, *Loxosceles reclusa*, in eastern Iowa. In Iowa, the spider is considered to be rare. This fall, the Wapsi River Center staff positively identified 5 of the spiders. Because of this fact, this issue’s wildlife profile is dedicated to the description of the species, its habits and its affect on humans.

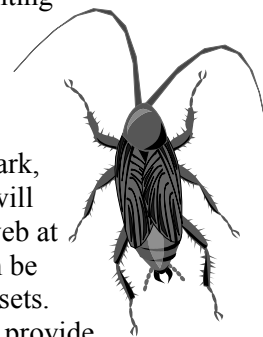


The brown recluse is fairly easy to identify. The body of the spider is relatively small, reaching only 1/2 an inch (not much longer than the length of a dime). The abdomen is smooth, round and light-colored. The legs are long and thick, adults having a leg-span about the size of a quarter. The spider will often rest with the front four legs bent forward, while

the back pairs stretch outwards. The spider’s body is light tan or light brown. The most distinguishing feature of the brown recluse is a dark violin- or fiddle-shaped mark on the cephalothorax (fused head and thorax). It is easy to see why the spider is sometimes referred to as the fiddleback or banjo spider. This mark is very prevalent in adults, but may be faint in juveniles. A final

characteristic is that the brown recluse has six eyes, 3 pairs arranged on the cephalothorax.

The name “recluse” refers to the secretive habits of the spider. The spider is nocturnal, hunting small prey items (silverfish, cockroaches and other insects). It is also believed that the brown recluse will feed on dead insects as well. The spider will hide in any dark, secure location. Often, the spider will spin a filmy thin, yet very sticky, web at their hiding spot. Indoors, they can be in attics, cellars, basements and closets. Clothes piles, boxes and shoes also provide shelter. They often prefer to hide in boxes, which has led to rare sightings of single specimens found well out of its normal range. In the wild, the brown recluse will hide under rocks, logs or crevices. If the habitat has suitable prey available, the spider may be found in large numbers.



A female brown recluse will lay 50 eggs enclosed by a silken sac 2/3 of an inch in diameter. Each female will lay several egg sacs over several months. It takes one month for the spiderlings to hatch out, and one year to mature to adults. Adult spiders may live 1-2 years. It has also been observed that a spider can go without food or water for 6 months!



While the brown recluse is normally shy and non-aggressive, bites do happen. Most bites occur when a spider is disturbed. This can happen while a person is cleaning storage areas or handling infested items. While the spider’s venom helps the spider subdue its prey, it can cause necrosis (tissue damage) to humans. Importantly, some people show little reaction to a brown recluse bite, which is dependant on the amount of venom injected and the sensitivity to it. In fact, some 80% of suspected bites are misidentified as brown recluse bites. A bite usually begins as a small white blister forming within 6-12 hours at the bite site. Some recipients complain of a stinging sensation, fever, chills, or even exhibit shock. In severe cases, the telltale sign of a brown recluse bite is a blue-white or blue-gray lesion surrounded by a red swollen area which is referred to as the “red, white and blue sign.” Within the next 2 weeks, the sore can grow to several centimeters wide and requires surgery to repair. It normally takes 6-8 weeks for a bite to heal.

If you suspect you have been bitten by a brown recluse, visit your doctor or go to the emergency room. If you can collect the spider, do so, even if it has been crushed – that involuntary impulse thing. This will help in identification. In areas where the spider is more common, (see distribution map) people have learned to live with them. By eliminating household clutter and



cleaning up unwanted yard debris, many of the hiding spaces will be eliminated. People have found glue traps can effectively capture the spiders.

Simply vacuuming up the spiders and their egg sacs and disposing of the sealed bag in a container outdoors also works. In reality, no drastic

measures need be taken unless a brown recluse has been positively located and identified.

Once again, it is important to remember that spiders are beneficial creatures and serve an important role in nature. Often they are mislabeled as pests and killed outright.

By educating ourselves, man and nature can coexist and an appreciation may be developed, nurtured and handed down to future generations.



## The Story of a Wildlife Rehabber

by Vera Blevins, Director of Bat World Heartland

Wildlife in need and the people who find them are what rehabbing is all about. Habitat destruction through urban sprawl, ill-managed conservation and just plain indifference about the lives of our "wild neighbors" are what bring the injured, displaced and the orphans to the rehabber. Even in the big cities, wild animals have to share our space. The diurnal (active in the day) and crepuscular (mostly active at dawn and dusk) animals are more likely to be noticed than those who are nocturnal (active at night). And with the darkness, comes an air of mystery for what we cannot see or understand. That perhaps is one of the big reasons bats are feared and hated so much.

It was not until the third year as a state and federal licensed rehabilitator that I would be introduced to one of the world's most amazing mammals. Who would have ever guessed that an encounter with a tiny little creature weighing about half-an-ounce would be the catalyst that would make bats such an important part of my life.

It was at night when I answered my first bat phone call from a woman who had just found a bat on the ground, injured by the opening of a garage door. Unfortunately, the injuries were so serious the bat did not survive. However, its brief time with me had a lasting impact, compelling me to learn and do more to help these magnificent animals.

Most of the bats I deal with are those that accidentally find themselves in the living quarters of people's homes. In the winter when these bats cannot survive outside, the bats are safely captured with gloved hands (NEVER USE BARE HANDS TO HANDLE A BAT!!!) and wintered over at my home-based rehabilitation center until the spring weather allows them to be released. Most of the summer bats in these situations are juveniles and can safely be released by opening doors so they can make their exit. Sometimes pups are found on the ground, abandoned by mom because of storms, bird attacks or other dangers that pose a threat to her survival. Overcrowding may also cause a pup to fall and not be able to reunite with mom. Pesticides are fast becoming another reason bats need rehab. Fear and hatred drive some people to want to kill bats as a way to deal with unwanted guests. Often, after a swat with a broom, they see the injured bat in a different light and realize killing is not the solution to the problem. There have been times when bats have come to me after having been tortured by sadistic people trying to get their kicks in seeing an animal suffer. These injured bats are taken in to be cared for and are either released after healing, stay in the sanctuary of a safe captive environment and represent their species in education programs, or humanly euthanized.

Over the past twelve years, many bats have past over the threshold of my Bettendorf home, countless questions over the phone have been answered and education programs have been presented. In 2004, I attended Bat World Sanctuary's "Bat Boot Camp", an intense week of bat rehab, increasing my knowledge of bats and finding out the latest protocols. In December, I was invited to become a Regional Rescue Center as an extension of Bat World Sanctuary, Mineral Wells, TX, operated by Amanda Lollar. Now known as Bat World Heartland, I continue the rehabilitation of bats (also birds and other small mammals) and provide education programs to raise the public's awareness to do their part in conserving and sharing the space we all must share. The Center's operation efforts are not funded by the government or any other organizations. We operate at our expense and the generosity of your donations.

You may find out more about Bat World Heartland by logging onto [www.batworld.org](http://www.batworld.org) and then clicking onto rescue centers. Or I can be reached at (563) 355-7831 or e-mailed at [mvblevins@ael.com](mailto:mvblevins@ael.com).



## September

**26<sup>th</sup> ~ Calamus-Wheatland Invitational Cross-Country Meet ~ 5:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center** ~ The Wapsi River Center is the site for this annual high school event.



**29<sup>th</sup> ~ Sunset Eco Cruise ~ 6:00 P.M. ~ Rock Creek Marina & Campground** ~ Take an hour and a half Eco Cruise on the Mississippi with a Conservation Skipper. Cruisers will enjoy the autumn colors and learn about the Mississippi River. Call (563) 259-1876 for reservations. Cost is \$6/adult and \$3/child under 16.

## October

**1<sup>st</sup> ~ Fourteenth Annual Ecology Day ~ 9:00 A.M. - 9:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center** ~ Check special ad at the end of calendar for more details.

**1<sup>st</sup> ~ Nahant Marsh Workday ~ 9:00 A.M. ~ Nahant Marsh** ~ Our mission is to remove as many of the cottonwoods and willows invading the prairie as possible. Meet at the picnic tables in front of the Nahant Marsh Educational Center. The Educational Center has a limited number of loppers and hatchets, so bring one with you if you can. In preparation for the day, bring: raingear, loppers or a hatchet, bottle of water, bug spray,



sunscreen, snacks or even lunch if you want to stay the whole day and, of course, lots of energy! Contact Ginger Molitor for more information at (563) 235-0012. Nahant Marsh is located off Interstate 280, following Hwy. 22 to Wapello Ave. (toward Davenport), and then turning left before the railroad tracks.

**6<sup>th</sup> ~ Fall Color Eco Cruise ~ 5:00 P.M. ~ Rock Creek Marina & Campground** ~ Call (563) 259-1876 to reserve a spot. Cost is \$6/adult and \$3/child under 16.

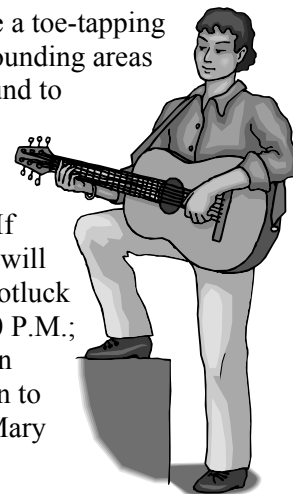
**8<sup>th</sup> ~ Wapsipinicon Canoe Float ~ 9:00 A.M. ~ Oxford Mills to Walnut Grove** ~ Meet at Walnut Grove and carpool to the put-in at Oxford Mills. This naturalist-lead expedition is an eleven-mile stretch passing through bottomland timber and farmland. The channel has a shifting sand bottom and winds past and through many fallen trees and sand/gravel beaches. Some experience is



helpful when dealing with obstructions and current. County canoes are available on a first-call basis and can be reserved by calling (563) 847-7202.

**8<sup>th</sup> ~ Seed Program ~ 10:00 A.M. ~ Wapsi River Center** ~ Come explore the amazing world of trees and enjoy an autumn morning learning about the fruits that so many animals are going “nuts” about. Participants will be creating their own “nutty” collection and are asked to bring a cardboard shoebox lid to the program.

**8<sup>th</sup> ~ Eden Valley Bluegrass Jam ~ 1:00 - 9:00 P.M. ~ Eden Valley Refuge** ~ It will be a toe-tapping time as musicians from the surrounding areas gather to bring the bluegrass sound to listeners of all ages. The 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Bluegrass Jam will be held at the Eden Valley Refuge campground along Bear Creek. If inclement weather, the program will be held in the nature center. A potluck and chili dinner will start at 4:00 P.M.; bring table service and your lawn chair. This event is free and open to all. For more information, call Mary McAndrew at (563) 391-0114.



**8<sup>th</sup> ~ Clinton County Chapter of Pheasants Forever Banquet ~ 5:00 P.M. ~ Millennium Ballroom** ~ Pheasants Forever's Clinton County Chapter is holding its annual fund-raiser at the Millennium Ballroom in Goose Lake, IA. The group provides funds to local landowners and agencies for the establishment of wildlife habitat. Cost is \$45, which includes a one-year membership and dinner. Call Mark Roberts at (563) 659-2422 for tickets.

**8<sup>th</sup> ~ Star Party ~ Dusk ~ Sherman Park** ~ Join the Quad Cities Astronomical Society at Sherman Park's north end to explore the night sky.

**11<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup> ~ Hunter Safety Course ~ 6:30 - 9:00 P.M. (Tue) & 8:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M. (Sat) ~ Clinton Izaak Walton League** ~ Call Loren Zaruba at (563) 659-5383 for required sign up and more information.



# Events



**13<sup>th</sup> ~ Fall Color Eco Cruise ~ 5:00 P.M. ~ Rock Creek Marina & Campground** ~ Call (563) 259-1876 to reserve a spot. Cost is \$6/adult and \$3/child under 16.



**17<sup>th</sup> ~ Kinder Nature ~ 10:00 A.M. ~ DeWitt Community Center** ~ This premiere program that focuses on our youngest county residents, three- to five-year-olds, builds on awareness of the nature environment. The first of many classes will be on the largest rodent in North America, the beaver. The class will have hands-on activities and fun

learning experiences. Parents and guardians, bring your young one to the DeWitt Community Center located at 5112 10<sup>th</sup> Street in DeWitt, IA, right across the street from the library. Please register at the Clinton County Conservation Board office by calling (563) 847-7202; there will be a \$2 charge for supplies. Any further questions, call Greg at the conservation office.

**20<sup>th</sup> ~ Fall Color Eco Cruise ~ 5:00 P.M. ~ Rock Creek Marina & Campground** ~ Call (563) 259-1876 to reserve a spot. Cost is \$6/adult and \$3/child under 16.

**22<sup>nd</sup> ~ Apple Festival ~ 2:00 - 4:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center** ~ Join Jessica Steines, AmeriCorps naturalist, and Mike Granger, Wapsi Center naturalist, for an autumn afternoon of celebrating this favorite fall fruit. Bring the family and experience such activities as making caramel apples, crafting an apple necklace, playing “applicious” games and much more. Participants can come and go at their leisure over the course of the festival. All that’s asked is to bring a 5-lb. bag of apples (any variety is welcome) and register by October 18; (563) 328-3286.



**23<sup>rd</sup> ~ Fall Fest & Hocus-Pocus Hike ~ 3:00 - 8:00 P.M. ~ Soaring Eagle Nature Center** ~ Pumpkin carving, a weenie roast, campfire music and hayrack ride makes this annual event fun for the whole family. A monetary donation will be collected at the door. At 6:00 and 7:00 P.M., folks are invited to enjoy a “spooktacular” night hike, exploring the origins, legends and myths of Halloween. Discover the truths about several misunderstood nocturnal creatures.

**25<sup>th</sup> ~ Creepy Cave Creep & Campfire ~ 6:30 P.M. ~ Eden Valley Refuge** ~ Meet at the nature center and carpool to Werden’s cave for a naturalist-lead creepy-crawl-about. This will mark the end of our cave-tour season. Afterwards, bake the cave clay into your jeans around a warm campfire and enjoy hot dogs, chips, marshmallows and s’mores.

**27<sup>th</sup> ~ Creatures of Darkness Hike ~ 6:30 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center** ~ Learn how to make the most of your night vision, then take a festive and spooky stroll through Jack-o-lantern Woods. Along the way, participants will become better acquainted with creatures that go bump in the night. Participants are asked to meet at Redtail Lodge.



## November

**5<sup>th</sup> ~ Nahant Marsh Workday ~ 9:00 A.M. ~ Nahant Marsh** ~ Participants are asked to meet at the picnic tables in front of the Nahant Marsh Educational Center. From trash to tires, we’ll have a good time sprucing up this natural area. Gloves and bags provided! Coffee and doughnuts will wake you up! Contact Ginger Molitor for more information at (563) 235-0012. Nahant Marsh is located off



Interstate 280, following Hwy. 22 to Wapello Ave. (toward Davenport), and then turning left before the railroad tracks.

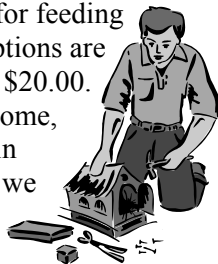
**5<sup>th</sup> ~ Shooting Sports Workshop ~ 9:30 A.M. - 3:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center** ~ A variety of shooting sports (shotgun, rifle, pistol and archery) will be covered during this all-day event. A variety of topics will be covered under each category, with an emphasis on safety, including hands-on experiences. There will be a \$10.00 registration fee per participant and the event is limited to 50. Participants must be 11 years old (and up) the day of the event and minors **MUST** be accompanied by an adult! We encourage family participation and no prior shooting experience is necessary. Pre-registration is required by calling (563) 328-3286 by November 2. Participants are asked to bring a sack lunch.



**5<sup>th</sup> ~ Star Party ~ Dusk ~ Sherman Park** ~ Join the Quad Cities Astronomical Society at Sherman Park’s north end to explore the night sky.

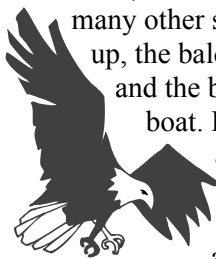
**8<sup>th</sup> ~ Birdfeeder Workshop ~ 6:00 P.M. ~ Soaring Eagle Nature Center** ~ Construct various simple bird feeders and learn some of the best tips for feeding our feathered friends. Several design options are available and range in price from free - \$20.00.

Kit choices will be supplied on a first-come, first-served basis. If you have a feeder in need of repair, consider bringing it and we will work on it. Register by November 5; (563) 242-9088.



**10<sup>th</sup> ~ Snowshoe-making Workshop ~ 6:30 P.M. ~ Soaring Eagle Nature Center** ~ Snowshoeing is a great way to get around in the winter. Whether you're a deer hunter or just want to escape the cabin, you will want a pair of handmade Ojibwa- or Alaskan-style snowshoes. We will walk you through the steps in crafting your own pair from a high-quality kit. Cost is \$75 per pair. Deadline for the snowshoe-kit orders is November 3; call (563) 847-7202 to order.

**12<sup>th</sup> ~ Bald Eagle Eco Cruise ~ 1:00 P.M. ~ Rock Creek Marina & Campground** ~ This will be the public's last opportunity this year to take an Eco Cruise on the Blue Heron Pontoon Boat. The American bald eagles are starting to congregate along the Mississippi for the winter, and we hope to see several of the birds, plus many other species, during the cruise. Before freeze-up, the bald eagles are spread out along the river, and the best way to see them is to go to them via boat. Later in the winter, the eagles gather around the Lock & Dams to take advantage of open water. Call (563) 847-7202 for reservations. Cost is \$6/adult and \$3/child under 16.



**19<sup>th</sup> ~ Homemade Birdfeeders ~ 10:00 A.M. ~ Wapsi River Center** ~ Fall is a great time to get set up for winter feeding. Join Adam Gimm, AmeriCorps naturalist, to learn how milk jugs, cartons and pop bottles can be magically transformed into useful feeders. Types of seeds, common winter inhabitants and homemade bird treats will be discussed. Participants are asked to bring clean milk jugs (paper or plastic) or 20 oz. - 2-liter pop bottles, and reserve your spot by November 16 by calling (563) 328-3286.

**19<sup>th</sup> ~ Pod Program ~ 2:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center** ~ Join Bob Bryant, Wapsi River Center director, and Jessica Steines, AmeriCorps naturalist, for a discussion on wildflowers and weeds in their final beauty. Using seed containers (the pods), participants will learn how to recognize species and learn to create a woodland, prairie or wetland centerpiece for their table. Participants can bring a container of their own to create the centerpiece in. An identification hike along one of the Wapsi River

Center's trails will also be included in the presentation, so please dress according to the weather conditions.

**27<sup>th</sup> ~ Christmas in the Village ~ Noon - 5:00 P.M. ~ Dan Nagle Walnut Grove Pioneer Village** ~ Begin your holidays early with a historic walk through the beautifully decorated village. While there, make and take crafts, enjoy refreshments, holiday music, demonstrations and a visit with Santa. Admission is free!



## December

**3<sup>rd</sup> ~ Brunch with the Birds ~ 9:00 A.M. ~ Soaring Eagle Nature Center** ~ Participants should dress for the weather and bring binoculars as we venture out in search of the various birds inhabiting the area. Participants are asked to meet at the nature barn. Refreshments will be served after the hike. Pre-registration is required by calling (563) 847-7202.

**3<sup>rd</sup> ~ Star Party ~ Dusk ~ Sherman Park** ~ Join the Quad Cities Astronomical Society at Sherman Park's north end to explore the night sky.

**3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> ~ Park Closed ~ All Day ~ Scott County Park** ~ Scott County Park will be closed for the controlled deer hunt. See special section if you are interested in participating in the hunt.



**3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> ~ Park Closed ~ All Day ~ Wapsi River Center** ~ The Wapsi River Environmental Education Center will be closed for a controlled deer hunt. See Wapsi Center Happenings for more details and the special section if you are interested in participating in the hunt.

**13<sup>th</sup> ~ Night Hike ~ 6:00 P.M. ~ Sherman Park** ~ Join Chuck Jacobsen, Clinton County naturalist, on a brisk hike through the winding trails of Sherman Park's north end, listening for winter avian residents. After the hike, participants will partake in roasting hotdogs and s'mores. The evening will conclude with stargazing for wintertime constellations, if weather conditions allow.



**17<sup>th</sup> ~ Cross-country Ski Clinic ~ 9:30 A.M. ~ Wapsi River Center** ~ Join Bob Bryant, Wapsi River Center Director, for this beginning skiers' class. He will teach about proper ski techniques, safety and what to look for in purchasing equipment. This clinic will take place with or without snow, as there will not be a ski tour (unless there is snow). Participants are asked to meet at the Eagle View Eco Center.



**18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> ~ Christmas Bird Counts ~ 6:00 A.M. - 6:00 P.M.** ~ Mark your calendars, songbird enthusiasts! The Quad City Audubon Society conducts these yearly censuses to keep tabs on our feathered friends. **18<sup>th</sup>** - Quad Cities, **19<sup>th</sup>** - Lost Nation (CCCB-sponsor). If you can help with any of these counts, either by joining a field party or watching your feeder, please call Kelly McKay at (309) 755-6731.



allowing for 30 participants; call (563) 847-7202 to register.

**26<sup>th</sup> - January 10<sup>th</sup> ~ Christmas Tree Recycling ~ Killdeer Recreation Area & Hagenson's Pond** ~ Looking for an environmentally sound fate for your Christmas tree? Drop it off at Killdeer Recreation Area or Hagenson's Pond (located south of Folletts), and Clinton County Conservation will use it for fish habitat! Please, **no** wire, bases or flocked trees.

**21<sup>st</sup> ~ Winter Solstice Celebration ~ 7:00 P.M. ~ Camp Miss-Elk-Ton** ~ Come for games, star viewing, a night hike and other fun around the indoor fireplace at one of eastern Clinton County's hideaways. A naturalist will lead a discussion of the forces that shape the seasons and the human response to them down through the ages. We will hike to a nearby field where knowledgeable folks will assist you with your viewing of the heavens through powerful telescopes. Bring your own choice of beverages (no alcohol) and we will have forks ready for your campfire treats. Parking is limited, so we are only

**To be announced ~ Snowmobile Safety Course ~ CCCB Headquarters, Grand Mound** ~ It is required by law that anyone ages 12 through 17 must possess a Snowmobile Safety Certificate before operating a snowmobile on public lands or lands purchased with snowmobile registration funds. The date has not been set yet, but is usually in early December. Participants **MUST** pre-register for this course; contact John Hoker, Eastern Iowa Sno-riders, at (563) 374-1348 or Steve at (563) 374-3160.



## Fourteenth Annual Wapsi River Ecology Day Saturday, October 1, 2005 ~ 9:00 A.M. - 9:00 P.M. Wapsi River Environmental Education Center

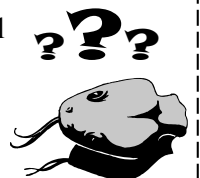
**9:00 A.M. - 12:00 Noon ~ Wapsi River Canoeing** ~ The day's events will begin with a canoe float down the Wapsipinicon River from Syracuse to Sherman Park. Those interested in canoeing need to call (563) 847-7202 to reserve a spot. Individuals will be eating at the conclusion of the float, so consider bringing a snack packaged in a waterproof container with the ability to be tied to the canoe. If you have a properly fitting lifejacket of your own, please bring it.



**1:30 - 2:30 P.M. ~ Exotic Snakes** ~ Joey Flynn, herpetoculturalist and owner of Flynn's Reptiles in DeWitt, IA, will share his knowledge of exotic snakes, especially the reticulated python. The life history of exotic snakes, as well as the husbandry and breeding of them, will be presented. He will bring a variety of snakes, including his 16-foot reticulated python, for participants to observe.

**3:00 - 4:00 P.M. ~ Native Iowa Snakes** ~ Greg Wolf, interpretive naturalist, will give participants the opportunity to see several species of Iowa snakes. Learn what habitats they live in and their special adaptations that help them survive.

**4:00 - 5:00 P.M. ~ Snake Jeopardy & Snake Crafts/Games** ~ These two, concurrent programs will provide entertainment for snake enthusiasts, young and old. *Snake Jeopardy* will give them the opportunity to put their recently acquired or extensive reptilian knowledge to the test. *Snake crafts & games* are designed for those younger individuals who'd like to create their very own "snake" as well as play some reptilian games.



**5:00 - 7:00 P.M. ~ Supper, Hayrack Rides, & Tour of the Osprey Aquatic Lab** ~ Supper will be provided by the Friends of the Wapsi Center. During this time, two hayrack rides will be taking place, as well as tours of the Osprey Aquatic Lab where visitors will meet some of the other reptilian inhabitants of the Wapsi River Center.

**7:00 - 9:00 P.M. ~ Eastern Iowa Star Party** ~ Join the Quad City Astronomical Society at the Monsignor Menke Astronomical Observatory during this annual event as they invite the public to join them for a celestial celebration.

# In Appreciation of Your Support of the Wapsi River Center

**George Thompson**  
**Carol Rogers**  
**Carl Gerwulf**  
**Lori Needom**  
**Cecilia Braam**  
**Ingrid Bogdanowicz**  
**Dottie Wala**  
**Jeanne Bryant**

**Carla Dacon**  
**Lucia Dryanski**  
**Bill Robbins**  
**Erma Wiszmann**  
**Darren Speth**  
**Bill Collett**  
**Our Savior Presbyterian's**  
**Vacation Bible School**



## Kids' Corner ~ Flight of Fancy Word Find



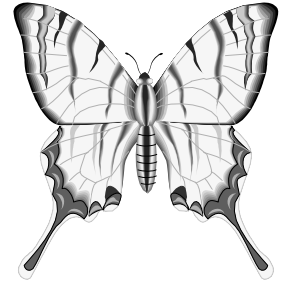
Butterfly buffs will be all aflutter with excitement over this colorful word find. Basking in the garden of letters below are 24 terms that naturally apply to butterflies. Just wing it by connecting letters up, down, diagonally and backward. Word find courtesy of *Country Woman* May/June 2005 magazine.



	S	J	E	M	Z	S	S	R	E	P	P	I	K	S	V	I	N	M	G
ANTENNAE	W	B	J	D	I	Z	K	P	H	N	O	L	B	S	N	D	E	K	Z
BUCKEYE	A	M	C	Z	S	G	H	C	O	C	V	V	P	S	S	T	T	K	C
CAMOUFLAGE	L	K	N	A	H	S	R	X	U	L	B	D	E	U	A	A	P	Y	U
CATERPILLAR	L	A	E	E	T	A	B	A	Y	E	L	C	W	M	P	M	F	D	D
CHRYSLIS	O	B	T	R	N	E	N	M	T	Z	T	I	O	O	Q	A	N	A	G
COCOON	W	S	U	O	U	T	R	P	D	E	U	R	N	I	C	E	I	L	K
FLITTING	T	B	M	C	E	H	G	P	P	V	P	V	I	A	Z	U	M	D	M
FLOWERS	A	E	O	N	K	L	P	R	I	H	A	D	I	T	T	S	V	E	K
INSECT	I	U	N	L	W	E	Y	L	O	L	C	W	N	T	R	E	Z	T	Z
LARVA	L	A	K	F	C	Z	Y	S	U	F	L	H	J	V	T	C	N	N	S
METAMORPHOSIS	E	V	U	L	G	O	I	E	L	S	G	A	R	H	T	E	Y	I	G
MIGRATE	F	R	N	S	R	S	C	O	H	X	N	B	R	Y	C	T	X	A	N
MILKWEED	R	A	P	E	Q	Q	W	O	T	J	I	L	Z	T	S	E	O	P	I
MONARCH	D	L	C	D	W	E	I	Q	O	H	T	L	A	Q	H	A	D	I	W
NECTAR	S	I	J	W	R	E	R	E	V	N	T	R	I	A	H	Y	L	F	A
NET	V	Y	P	S	D	E	E	W	K	L	I	M	T	U	M	B	V	I	V
PAINTED LADY	G	B	O	L	I	Q	L	M	X	X	L	E	B	D	L	F	D	L	S
POLLINATE	A	K	S	C	H	C	A	M	O	U	F	L	A	G	E	H	P	Z	H
PUPA																			
SKIPPERS																			
SULPHUR																			
SWALLOWTAIL																			
VICEROY																			
WINGS																			



## *From the President's Pen... by Dottie Wala*



Late in July, I sat watching the bird feeders in the back of the Wapsi River Center, hoping to see an iridescent blue bunting or to spot the woodpeckers and finches as I had earlier this summer. There were occasionally some finches and other birds, but what really caught my eye and engaged me were the large swallowtail butterflies flitting about the Joe-Pye weed growing adjacent to the window area.

Thus, I was afforded an intimate view of several eastern tiger swallowtails, bright in their yellow and black stripes. They were accompanied by a large, blackish swallowtail which sported a lot of blue tint on its hind wings.

Is it possible that I was seeing a male pipevine swallowtail, described as “a symphony of blues and blacks” (in the guidebook I found later at the library), and known to sometimes be deadly to birds? I found that the pipevine consumes wild ginger, Dutchman’s pipe and knotweeds, which in turn make them very distasteful to predators.

Or maybe it was a female spicebush swallowtail, which is known to be partial to blooming Joe-Pye weed? The spicebush, along with other black swallowtails, uses mimicry (similar color) in an attempt to trick predators into thinking they may be the distasteful pipevine. Spicebushes are attracted to lantana (butterfly bushes), jewelweed and honeysuckle. They love wooded areas, but are at home in gardens as well.

Or perhaps, it was a female eastern tiger swallowtail which can be black, rather than the typical yellow – another imitator of the distasteful pipevine. A lot of possibilities, but I believe it to be the female eastern tiger swallowtail.

I found that in the Philippines, a black butterfly is a sign of bad luck – an unfortunate custom. I felt myself lucky to see them at all! It will be your lucky day when you come out and enjoy the Wapsi River Center, for sure!

In addition to the wonderful wealth of books on butterflies and moths available at your local library, there are many web sites where you can learn more about butterflies:

**The Butterfly Web Site** ~ A wealth of information including a World Atlas of butterflies, gardening tips, list of public gardens, news and articles. [www.butterflywebsite.com](http://www.butterflywebsite.com)

**Butterflies of North America** ~ Discover what butterflies live in your state at this Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center site. [www.npwrc.usgs.gov/resource/distr/lepid/bflyusa/ia/toc.htm](http://www.npwrc.usgs.gov/resource/distr/lepid/bflyusa/ia/toc.htm)

**Children’s Butterfly Site** ~ Got a butterfly question? Check here for answers. It also has a beautiful photo gallery, coloring pages and links. [www.mesc.usgs.gov/resources/education/butterfly/Butterfly.html](http://www.mesc.usgs.gov/resources/education/butterfly/Butterfly.html)

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Will you consider joining our Friends of the Wapsi group? We strive to support the Wapsi staff by hosting the Center on weekends (where you can observe and learn about the natural world), assisting with workshops, volunteer workdays and the annual Ecology Day. We’d love to have you join our group! It’s a great way to form friendships with others who enjoy nature and the outdoors.

Please tear off the section below and mail with your contribution to: Carol Rogers ~ Treasurer, Wapsi E. E. Center ~ 1103 East Garfield ~ Davenport, IA 52803

---

Enclosed is my contribution \* to Friends of the Wapsi E. E. Center:

Name _____	_____ \$ 5.00 newsletter
Street _____	_____ \$15.00 contributing member
City _____	_____ \$25.00 supporting member
Phone # _____	
E-mail Address _____	

\* Contributions to the Friends are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

**WAPSI RIVER E. E. CENTER**  
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DIXON, IA 52745  
Tel: (563) 328-3286  
Fax: (563) 843-2845

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The Wapsi River Environmental Education Center is a joint project between the Scott and Clinton County Conservation Boards. "The W.R.E.N." is published quarterly by the Wapsi River Environmental Education Center and the Scott County Conservation Board.

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Leone Bredbeck              Gene Weis  
Carol Fennelly

Director:

Roger Kean

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Clinton County Conservation Board  
(563) 847-7202

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Mike Granger, Naturalist  
Lisa Gerwulf, Assistant Naturalist

Clinton County:

Mark Roberts, E. E. Coordinator  
Greg Wolf, Interpretative Naturalist  
Chuck Jacobsen, Interpretative Naturalist

**Mailing List**

If you would like to receive "The W.R.E.N." free of charge, please send a post card to the Wapsi River E. E. Center at the address above.

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