

The W.R.E.N.

Wapsi River Environmental News

Fall 2006

Scott County Conservation Board's Environmental Education Newsletter

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, WRC Director

Fiscal Year Attendance

Attendance for the 2006 fiscal year (July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006) was 26,066. We anticipate an increase over the 2007 fiscal year due to the return of several all-school field trips which happen every other year, plus the addition of some non-traditional field trips (i.e. providing a field trip for a German exchange student group). Several new and exciting public programs and workshops are being offered over the next few months, so be sure to check out the calendar of events.

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 760 individuals participated in 24 field trips compared to last year's attendance of 628 and 23 field trips.

Fall School Field Trips

Quite a few field trips have already been scheduled for this fall; however, several dates are still available. 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 interested in scheduling a field trip or getting 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!*



New Winter Hours!!!

Winter hours are 1-5 P.M. Saturdays, starting on October 7 (instead of November) through March 31. **Don't forget – the Wapsi Center will be closed to the public during the deer hunt, Dec. 2-6.**

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

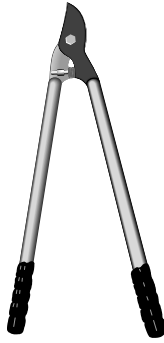
The last two months have been very hectic at the Wapsi Center. The West Lake Park maintenance crew has taken over most of mowing and some of the maintenance and development work at the Center. In addition, several of the large projects that needed to be done have been contracted out. Some of the projects are preventive maintenance and appearance projects and others were done to improve visitor services and educational programming. The Eagle View Eco Center has been re-shingled and new soffits installed. It is also being repainted and a new concrete entrance porch is being created. New carpet was also installed in the assembly room, lobby and north wing. Ceramic tile was installed in the live animal room, assembly room kitchen, serving area around the kitchen and hallway. The ceramic tile will be so much easier to keep clean and not as susceptible to stains.



Redtail Lodge and Kestrel Cabin will also get a new coat of paint. All the buildings, except for the house which recently received a fresh coat of paint, will have the same color scheme. As the shingles on the rest of the buildings need to be replaced, they will be replaced with architectural shingles matching the Eagle View Eco Center and the Owl's Nest Dormitory.

The windows in each of the dormitory's rest rooms were replaced with doors which open onto the deck. Installing these doors and putting locks on the doors between the rest rooms and sleeping area allow the rest rooms to be used by groups without having to walk through the dorm, saving a lot of wear and tear on the carpet. Being able to use the dorm rest rooms for field trips will also save a lot of time during bathroom breaks.

During the August volunteer workday, the black locust trees and autumn olive shrubs blocking the view of the prairie and astronomical observatory were cut down and chipped. A massive undertaking! The black locust and autumn olive are very invasive and were continually encroaching into the prairie. The area cleared will be planted to prairie this fall. During the September volunteer workday, additional cabinets were hung in the Osprey Aquatic Lab, new landscape chips were put down around the dormitory, and the autumn olive that was closing in on some of our hiking trails was removed or cut back.



The Wapsi River Center was one of the United Way Day of Caring Volunteer projects. United Way volunteers finished pruning and cleaning up along the trails that were cleared during the previous volunteer workdays and removed more autumn olive on the prairie.



We have always had a problem with the road washing out along the edges. The entrance road was widened and rocked so the water would run off the edge instead of running down the road. Part of the road was widened enough for additional parking. The new parking strip will be a place to push snow during the winter instead of having to pile snow up on the grass and then having to rake the rocks out of the grass in the spring.

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 hunt last year had limited success. There was only one hunt during the regular season early last December, and only two deer were taken. Due to the low

number of hunters interested in hunting at the Wapsi Center, the guidelines for the hunt have changed. A common comment from the hunters was that there were not enough hunters at one time, so the deer just kept walking around them. We have also heard from numerous hunters that they would be interested in hunting at the Wapsi Center, but did not like the hunt being a part of the regular season. Plus, they would have to use their regular license to shoot an antlerless deer first and possibly pass up an opportunity to shot a large buck.

The deer hunt at the Wapsi Center this year will be a special hunt designated by the DNR like at Scott County Park. The Wapsi River Center's hunt will still be conducted during the first regular deer season only, but will only be for antlerless deer. 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. This season's dates are December 2-6. The special permits will not count against the number of regular permits a hunter may purchase. Hunters will be able to hunt the second season with their regular second season permits. Those hunting for the first time at the Wapsi Center or Scott County Park must attend a mandatory orientation class and pass a shooting proficiency test.



My Retirement Announcement

After 31 years with the County Conservation Board system, I have decided to retire. For the last 15 years, I have been with the Scott County Conservation Board as Director of the Wapsi River E. E. Center. My last day as Center Director will be December 29. I have informed the Board's Executive Director of my decision, and will be working with him to determine the direction the Center should be going in the future. The position has gradually grown into more of an administrative position, and we will be reviewing the Center's Director's job description. I have always been more of a hands-on field person instead of a pure administrator. Many of the challenges facing the new director will be different than those I faced turning a former Boy Scout Camp into an education center and establishing an environmental education program. My wife and I have purchased a house in Davenport, and I will continue to be involved with area conservation activities. In the next issue of "The W.R.E.N.," I will take the opportunity to reflect on my conservation career.

Congratulations, Kyle Ray!

Kyle Ray of Bettendorf, has completed another fun- and nature-filled year of the Iowa Junior Naturalist Program. Congratulations on a job well done!

Becoming an Iowa Junior Naturalist

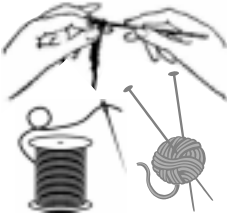
The Junior Naturalist Program promotes awareness of natural and cultural resources of Iowa through a variety of conservation programs aimed at children ages 6-12. This program is offered each calendar year and encourages children to attend programs offered by local county conservation

boards, Iowa Department of Natural Resources state park units, local libraries, YMCA camps, 4-H and nature centers. In addition, the program encourages participants to work on independent activities.

When all requirements are completed, the participants will receive an official Iowa Junior Naturalist patch and certificate of achievement. If you are interesting in participating in 2007, contact the Wapsi River Environmental Education Center for your program flyer, (563) 328-3286.



Stitchers' Weekend Planned



This new two-day, overnight workshop will be held from 8:00 A.M. Saturday, October 28, through 4:00 P.M. Sunday, October 29. The workshop will take place at the Wapsi River Environmental Education Center located 2 miles northwest of Dixon, Iowa. Novice stitchers are welcome, but beginners need a fundamental knowledge of their craft and to be able to perform basic techniques efficiently.

Various topics and activities being planned include: nature-based programs related to your chosen craft, first-ever Stitchers' Jeopardy, a community-based project, fun make-&-take projects, and maybe a little free time to work on those UFOs – UnFinishedObjects).

Cost for the weekend is \$50 per person which includes lodging at the Owl's Nest Dormitory and select meals. Consider bringing a friend, but call early as space is limited. To register, call (563) 328-3286; ask for Lisa.

Walnut
Lower
Wapsipinicon
River Cleanup
Project

GROVE - to - GROVE

Allen's

What's in Your Water? Nearly 6 Tons of Trash Removed by Wapsi River Cleanup Volunteers

The first annual Lower Wapsipinicon River Cleanup Project, a canoeing- and camping-based river cleanup event, took place August 25-27, 2006.

"We wanted to bring people together, get them involved, and let them know they can do something to improve the health and beauty of the river," stated coordinators Melisa Petersen and K. J. Rebarcak. "We knew the Wapsi needed cleaning, but when our volunteers were coming to shore with canoes sometimes loaded as high as their heads, we were simply floored." Twenty-five volunteers removed 5.8 tons of trash from 22 miles of the Wapsipinicon River.

The Lower Wapsipinicon River Cleanup Project is a grassroots organization with a two-fold purpose: to remove trash from the river and dispose of it in an environmentally responsible manner, and to educate the public about the environment and the importance of caring for natural resources. They will be cleaning up a different section of the Lower Wapsipinicon each year in late August. For further information, or to get on a mailing list for next year, please write to LWRCP, P.O. Box 333, Long Grove, IA 52756, or visit <http://showcase.netins.net/web/kjr/cleanup.html>.

Trash by the Numbers:

12 pounds cans and bottles - returned for five-cent deposit
220 pounds glass, plastic, aluminum - recycled
3,320 pounds (1.66 tons) tires - recycled
4,400 pounds (2.2 tons) of scrap metal - recycled
440 pounds of hazardous waste
3,200 pounds (1.6 tons) to the landfill
TOTAL: 11,592 pounds removed (5.8 tons)

7,952 pounds - recycled, 69%
3,640 pounds - not recycled, 31%



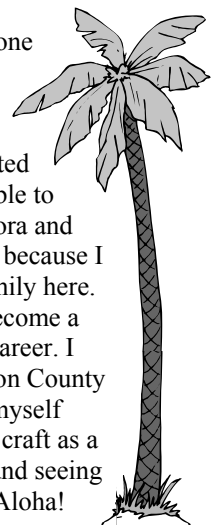
Hellos & Goodbyes

Jessica Steines ~ Aloha means Goodbye & Hello

Well, after two terms as an AmeriCorps volunteer and then as a seasonal naturalist for the Wapsi River Center (WRC), my two-year journey there has come to an end...sort of. What I mean by "sort of" is that I have joined the staff at the Clinton County Conservation Board as their permanent part-time naturalist. Luckily, in this position, I will still be able to collaborate with the staff, the public and the area.

I would like to thank the people associated with the WRC. First, the staff, there are a lot of memories and lessons learned that I will take with me. Second, the kids, you have taught me what no college classroom could. Third, the adults, thank you for bringing your children and yourselves out to meet me and continually reminding me what a cool job I have.

The WRC was a great place to start out my career in the environmental field. I graduated from Iowa State University in 2004, and I moved to Calamus, IA, to get married. Although I have lived in Iowa all of my life, I was unfamiliar with the eastern third of the state. So not knowing what to do with my new degree, one of the first places I went was the WRC. There I became a naturalist-in-training. As a naturalist, I was able to use a lot of what I learned in school and expand what I wanted to know more about. At the WRC, I was able to get familiar with the culture, landforms, flora and fauna of the area which is important to me because I plan on living, working and raising my family here. With the experience at the WRC, I have become a confident naturalist and have made it my career. I am excited about the position within Clinton County because I am allowed to further integrate myself with the people of the area and perfect my craft as a naturalist. I look forward to meeting new and seeing familiar faces at my upcoming programs. Aloha!



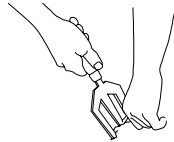
OCTOBER



5th ~ 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.

7th ~ Walnut Tree Harvesting Demonstration ~ 9:00 A.M. ~ Eden Valley Refuge ~ Bruggeman Lumber, Inc. of Sand Springs, along with the Walnut Council, will be putting on a demonstration. A veneer-quality tree will be felled, as well as a few low-quality hazard trees in the park. They will also be demonstrating a portable sawmill, skidder and tree grading. Call Ben Bruggeman at (563) 543-8293 for more information.

7th ~ Nahant Marsh Workday ~ 9:00 A.M. - Noon ~ Nahant Marsh ~ Participants are asked to meet at the picnic tables in front of the Nahant Marsh Educational Center. Contact Sheri Colman at (563) 786-8504 for more information.



7th ~ Fifteenth Annual Ecology Day ~ 9:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Mark your calendars and come join us for a wonderful learning experience for the whole family. This year's theme is prairie-related. See the special ad following the Calendar of Events for more details.



8th ~ 4-H Alumni Reunion ~ 2:00 - 6:00 P.M. ~ Eagle Point Lodge, Clinton ~ Come and enjoy the company of 4-Hers of the past, present and future. If you have any questions, contact Ashley Leibold, County Youth Coordinator, ISU Extension Clinton County, (563) 659-5125.

12th ~ 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.

12th ~ Fall Color Hike ~ 6:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Join Paula Mullin, AmeriCorps naturalist, on a hike along the winding woodland and river trails at the Wapsi River Center. We will be looking at fall forest changes and discovering why leaves change color.



14th ~ The ABC's of Birds: Art, Biology & Conservation Workshop ~ Drawn to Birds ~ Noon - 3:00 P.M. ~ Putnam Museum ~ The Wapsi River Environmental Education Center will present live birds of prey and discuss behavior, habitat requirements and conservation of these majestic creatures. This will be paired with a biological illustration workshop led by artist Bill Hannan. This is the fourth program in a series, so call the Putnam Museum at (563) 324-0059 to register.



14th ~ 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 24th Annual Bluegrass Jam will be

AUTUMN



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.



14th ~ Fall Color Hike ~ Eden Valley Refuge ~ 2:00 P.M. ~ We will be going on a hike at one of Iowa's most beautiful places to look at the trees turning into vibrant colors for fall. Don't forget to bring your binoculars; fall is also a great time to peek at some of our favorite birds. Meet at the nature center.

14th ~ Clinton County Chapter of Pheasants Forever Banquet ~ 5:00 P.M. ~ Millennium Ballroom ~ Pheasants Forever's Clinton County Chapter is holding its annual fundraiser 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.



14th ~ Star Party ~ Dusk ~ Sherman Park ~ Join the Quad Cities Astronomical Society at Sherman Park's north end to explore the night sky. If cloudy or raining, there will be slide shows and talks in the observatory.

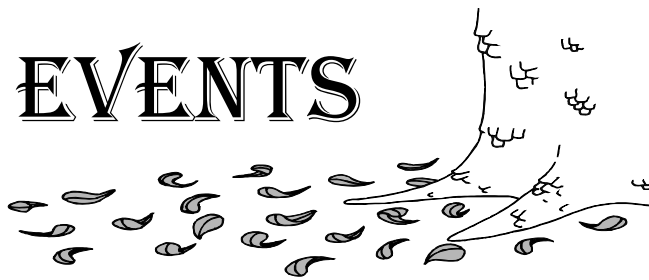
19th ~ Fall Color Eco Cruise ~ 5:00 P.M. ~ Rock Creek Marina & Campground ~ Call (563) 259-1876 to reserve a spot. Cost is \$6/adult and \$3/child under 16.

21st ~ Apple Festival ~ 2:00 - 4:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Join Renae Hanson & Paula Mullin, AmeriCorps naturalists, 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, apple crafts, 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 17; (563) 328-3286.



21st ~ Maquoketa River Overnight Canoe Float ~ 3:00 P.M. ~ Canton to Royerton ~ Meet at Royerton Access and carpool

EVENTS



to the put-in at the Canton Access. This naturalist-lead expedition is an eleven-mile stretch passing through bluffland timber and farmland. The channel has a shifting sand to pebble bottom and winds past many rock outcroppings and sand/gravel beaches. We will overnight at Buzzard Ridge Wildlife Area where we will demonstrate Leave-No-Trace-Camping and explore the areas trails. 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.



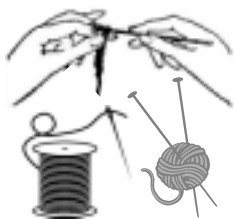
26th ~ Creepy Cave Creep & Campfire ~ 6:00 P.M. ~ Eden Valley Refuge ~ Meet at the nature center and carpool to Werden's Cave for a naturalist-lead creepy-crawl-about. This will mark the end of our cave-tour season. Afterwards, bake the cave clay into your jeans around a warm campfire and enjoy hot dogs, chips, marshmallows and s'mores. Call (563) 847-7202 to sign up.



27th ~ 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, and reminded to dress according to weather conditions.



28th & 29th ~ Stitchers' Weekend ~ 8:00 A.M. (Sat.) - 4:00 P.M. (Sun.) ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Are you a frustrated quilter, crocheter or knitter that has been looking for an opportunity to just get away and stitch? Then this 2-day, overnight workshop is for you! Novice stitchers are welcome, but beginners need a fundamental knowledge of their craft and to be able to perform basic techniques efficiently. Various topics and activities (i.e. nature-based programs related to your chosen craft, first-ever Stitchers' Jeopardy, a community-based project, etc.) are being planned, so mark your calendars and look forward to spending some time in a relaxing atmosphere with fellow stitchers. Space is limited, so call Lisa at (563) 328-3286 for registration information.



29th ~ 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.



NOVEMBER

9th ~ Fabulous Fungi ~ 6:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Come discover the fabulous world of fungi at the Wapsi River Center. Learn about the amazing life cycle of fungi. Participants will take an exploratory hike through the woods of the Wapsi Center in search of fabulous fall fungi, so please dress according to weather conditions.

9th ~ Night Hike ~ 6:00 P.M. ~ Rock Creek Marina & Campground ~ Join us for a brisk hike through the winding trails of Rock Creek, listening for after-hours avian residents. Then sit down for a warming fire, hot dogs and s'mores. The evening will conclude with stargazing if weather conditions allow.

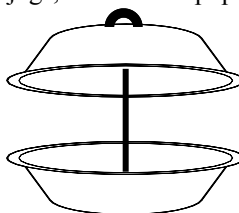


11th ~ Bald Eagle Eco Cruise ~ 1:00 P.M. ~ Rock Creek Marina & Campground ~ This will be the public's last opportunity this year to take an Eco Cruise on the Blue Heron Pontoon Boat. The American bald eagles are starting to congregate along the Mississippi for the winter, and we hope to see several of 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.

12th ~ Good Old-Fashioned Toys ~ 1:00 P.M. ~ Soaring Eagle Nature Center ~ Have you ever wondered what the pioneers did during the cold winter months without television or what they gave for gifts before Toys "Я" Us® existed? At this workshop, we will take a tour of the historic Flannery schoolhouse, experience some of the various toys and then construct an old-fashioned toy of your very own to take home.



16th ~ Homemade Birdfeeders ~ 6:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Fall is a great time to get set up for winter feeding. Join Renae Hanson, 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 13 by calling (563) 328-3286.



18th ~ Birdfeeder Workshop ~ 1:00 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 to \$20. If you have a feeder in need of repair, consider bringing it, and we'll work on it. Register by November 15 by calling (563) 242-9088

19th ~ Taste of Game Potluck ~ 2:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Running out of space in your freezer? Need new game recipes? Then this is the program for you! Bring a completed game dish to pass and any advice you can share to this first-ever event. Participants will sample each others recipes; get a "taste" for new ideas as well as a chance to win a prize for the best recipe. Call Paula at (563) 328-3286 by November 16 to register your dish.



26th ~ 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

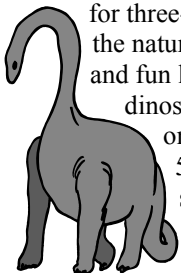
2nd ~ Snowmobile Safety Course ~ 9:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M. ~ Clinton CCB Headquarters, Grand Mound ~ It is required by law that anyone ages 12 through 17 must possess a Snowmobile Safety Certificate before operating a snowmobile on public lands or lands purchased with snowmobile registration funds. Participants **MUST** pre-register for this course by November 17; contact Heath Proesch, Eastern Iowa Sno-riders, at (563) 370-3543.



2nd, 3rd, & 4th ~ Park Closed ~ All Day ~ Scott County Park ~ Scott County Park will be closed for the controlled deer hunt.

2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th & 6th ~ 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.

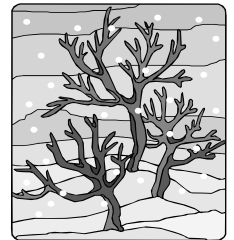
5th ~ Dinosaurs ~ Kinder Nature ~ 10:00 A.M. ~ DeWitt Community Center ~ This "dino-rific" program is just right for three- to five-year-olds. We will open our eyes to the natural environment by having hands-on activities and fun learning experiences with fossils and dinosaurs. Parents and guardians, bring your young one to the DeWitt Community Center located at 512 10th Street in DeWitt, IA, right across the street from the library. Register by calling Jessica at (563) 847-7202; there will be a \$2 charge for supplies.



7th ~ Turkey Talk ~ 6:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Don't let the fun end with the harvest! Learn how to make a turkey call from a wing bone and the techniques used for mounting the tail feathers into a fan. Call Paula for more information at (563) 328-3286.

7th ~ Snowshoe-making Workshop ~ 6:30 P.M. ~ Wapsi River 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 \$85 per pair, not including bindings. Deadline for placing orders is December 1, call (563) 847-7202 to order.

9th ~ Winter Tree ID Hike ~ 10:00 A.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Bring the whole family for a hike through the wintry woodlands. Participants will learn how to identify various trees by means other than leaves – like bark, silhouettes and leaf scars.



16th ~ 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.



16th ~ Winter Flowers ~ 1:00 P.M. ~ Soaring Eagle Nature Center ~ Winter leaves behind some of the most beautiful flower and grass displays. So come to collect your favorites and make decorative pieces out of them for your holiday table. Please bring an attractive container to hold your winter arrangement.

17th & 18th ~ 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. **17th** - Quad Cities, **18th** - 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.



21st ~ Winter Solstice Celebration ~ 7:00 P.M. ~ Sherman Park ~ Come for games, star viewing, a night hike and other fun around the fire. 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 view the winter sky from nearby telescopes with knowledgeable folks. Bring your own choice of beverages (no alcohol) and we will have forks ready for your campfire treats. Call (563) 847-7202 to register.





Fifteenth Annual Wapsi River Ecology Day

Saturday, October 7, 2006 ~ 9 A.M. - 5 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. At the conclusion of the float, individuals are invited to eat lunch at the Wapsi River Center. If you have a properly fitting lifejacket of your own, please bring it.



11:00 A.M. - 12:00 Noon ~ Prairie Treasure Chest ~ For those not interested in canoeing, come to the Center and begin the day with a hands-on discussion of the tallgrass prairies in Iowa.

12:30 - 1:00 P.M. ~ Lunch will be provided by the Friends of the Wapsi Center and feature the ever-popular walking taco bar.



1:00 - 2:00 P.M. ~ Fall Prairie Hike ~ Bob Bryant, Wapsi Center Director, will lead a guided tour of the Center's restored prairie. Topics to be discussed during the hike will include prairie flora & fauna, endangered & extirpated species, and pod & seed collection & identification.



2:00 - 3:00 P.M. ~ Buffalo Bill Cody's Alive! ~ Dan Mays, Buffalo Bill impersonator, will make an appearance at the prairie and discuss his impressions of the prairie during his lifetime.

3:00 - 4:00 P.M. ~ Prairie Pod Centerpiece, Prairie-themed Nature Games & T-shirt Silkscreening ~ During this time, those interested in creating a dried floral arrangement from the collected pods meet at Redtail Lodge. Children interested in learning about prairie survival are invited to the ring-of-pines for prairie-themed nature games. Anyone interested in silkscreening a light- or bright-colored T-shirt (you provide) with the ecology day logo can do so on the deck behind the Owl's Nest Dormitory.

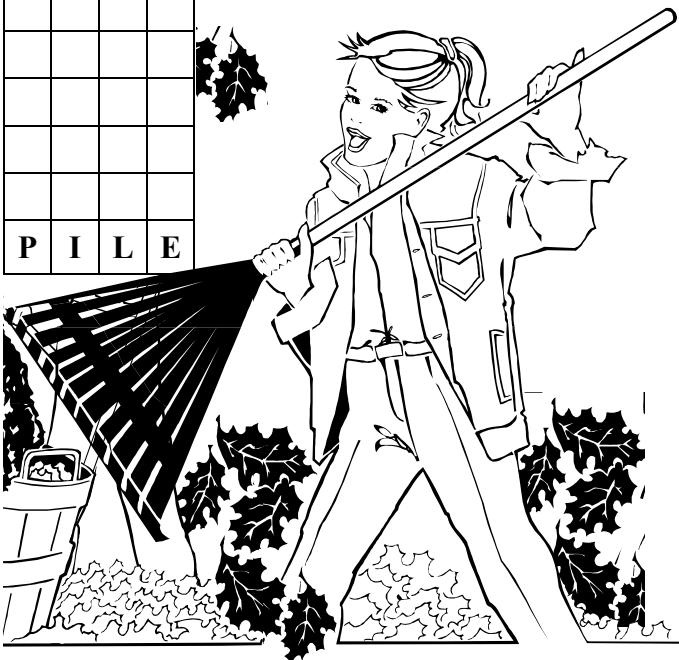


4:00 - 5:00 P.M. ~ A Pioneer Woman's View of the Tallgrass Prairie ~ To wrap up the day's events, join Renne Lietz out at the prairie and listen in as she discusses the trials and tribulations a pioneer woman faces on a daily basis.



Kids' Corner: In this word puzzle, you are trying to change a leaf into a pile. To do this, you can only change one letter at a time and each change must form a new word. It's a challenge! Answers are found on the back page.

L	E	A	F
P	I	L	E



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Answers to Kids' Corner ~ LEAF - LEAD - LOAD - TOAD - TOLD - TOLE - TILE - PILE