

# The W.R.E.N.

**Wapsi River Environmental News**

**Summer 2012**

**Scott County Conservation Board's Environmental Education Newsletter**

[www.scottcountyjowa.com/conservation/wapsi.php](http://www.scottcountyjowa.com/conservation/wapsi.php)

*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 & Scott County News

*by Dave Murcia, Wapsi River Center Director*

### EDIWILD 2012

This year's EDIWILD (educators in the wild) workshop reached 24 educators in an effort to *Live the Golden Rule* by emphasizing environmental stewardship. Participants learned about: the Duck Creek watershed, renewable energy, local flora/fauna, water & air pollution, Prairies for Schools, green school initiatives/grants, team building, toured compost/water treatment facilities, and took a Mississippi River eco cruise. This year was no exception to a fun time, camaraderie and good food was again created by Lisa and Mary!

This interdisciplinary workshop allows educators to learn how to facilitate the incorporation of environmental education into their schools' curriculum. Both graduate as well as staff development credit is available. Please contact the office at (563) 328-3286 with questions regarding next years' workshop!

### Programs of the Wapsi River Center

During the 2011 - 2012 season, 66 school field trips with 4,702 students, teachers, parents and grandparents were conducted at the Wapsi River Center. Forty-eight field trips, with 3,042 in attendance, were conducted at various satellite areas. The Wapsi River Center facilitated 50 public presentations with 576 in attendance. Various satellite areas hosted 48 public presentations with 3,142 in attendance.

If you would like to schedule a field trip, please schedule as far in advance as possible and visit our website to view/download our **Field Trip Planner**. School

programs are not scheduled for Mondays so that staff may work on administration and resource management. Don't forget – *The Wapsi River Center is a place for all seasons*. We would like to see more schools take advantage of fall and winter field trips. So, consider a new season this year!

### Wapsi Center Youth Deer Hunt

Once again the SCCB will offer a managed deer hunt, including a mentored youth deer hunt at the Wapsi Center for the 2012 - 2013 season. Please call (563) 328-3280 for more information on obtaining an application from either West Lake Park or Scott County Park.



### SOP 2012 - LET'S PADDLE!

The Scott County Conservation Board has joined the **Summer of Paddling 2012** Mississippi River Connections Collaborative campaign to promote recreational and stewardship events throughout the nation including *America's Great Outdoors*. Local agencies, including Scott and Clinton Counties, have offered and will continue to offer paddling events which can be found at: [www.sop2012.org](http://www.sop2012.org). Whether you are a beginner or have more experience, you are welcome to learn about this low-impact recreation and enjoy the fun!

## SCCB Awarded QC Wild Places Grant

The Wapsi River Center has been awarded a QC Wild Places grant in an effort to promote nature-based recreation. The grant will help fund a **dock system** at the waterside educational platform located at the restored pond. This dock system will help promote and assist in conducting aquatic stewardship programming. Please visit [www.riveraction.org/qcwp](http://www.riveraction.org/qcwp) to "explore" our QC area wild places. Thank you to our partners in environmental education at **River Action!**

## Watershed Festival Makes a Splash



In cooperation with local partners, including host city – Davenport, the Wapsi River Center conducted a **Birds of Prey**

program and hosted a booth in support of watershed stewardship. At the 4<sup>th</sup> annual festival, the Wapsi staff and volunteers (Lucia, Bill, Jerry & Connie) shared information about healthy water, including low-impact recreational opportunities such as paddling, birding and fishing. Thank you all for your support.

## Facebook is Here!

Hey, all you Facebookers, check out our conservation

page at: [www.facebook.com/scottcountyconservation](http://www.facebook.com/scottcountyconservation) to see what is happening at our sites, news, scheduled events and even wildlife!



## In Appreciation of Your Support of the Wapsi River Center

 Rose Bebb  
 Jerry Wala  
 Dave Huber  
 Bill Robbins  
 Carol Rogers  
 Connie Huber  
 Mary Johnson  
 Lucia Dryanski  
 Erma Wiszmann  
 Ingrid Bogdanowicz  
 Orion 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade  
 Hillcrest 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade  
 Jill Schmidt - Eco Cruise  
 Rock Island Math & Science  
 Friends of the Bettendorf Library

## The Friends of the Wapsi Center, Inc. Seeks New Members

The purpose of the Friends of the Wapsi Center, Inc., is to support the ongoing activities of the Wapsi River Center. We do this by volunteering to help with school groups, interpretive activities throughout the year, donating maintenance skills and in hosting the Eagle View Eco Center. We operate a gift shop housed at the Eco Center which offers a wide variety of items ranging from books and other educational materials to home decorating items.



As a tax-exempt organization, we can raise funds which the Wapsi River Center uses for special projects and environmental education

material purchases. The Friends Group also pitches in to help with special events like the Volunteer Workdays, Ecology Day, Bald Eagle Days and various workshops.

The Friends are an enthusiastic group of citizens just like you. Will you join us? You are invited to attend our monthly meeting on the third Thursday at 7:00 P.M. The Eagle View Eco Center is the site for meetings during the months of March thru October, and Gander Mountain is the site for meetings November thru February. Drop-ins are welcome! Call the Wapsi Center for more information, (563) 328-3286. Join by sending the form below to: Carol Rogers, Treasurer ~ 1103 E. Garfield ~ Davenport, IA 52803.

**YES! I want to join the Friends' Group.** Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ \$ 5.00 newsletter  
 \_\_\_\_\_ \$15.00 contributing member  
 \_\_\_\_\_ \$25.00 supporting member

# Kids' Column - Fridge Pack Folder

Snag that pop case before it gets to the recycle bin! A pair of scissors, ruler, butter knife and duct tape is all you'll need to create a fridge pack folder.

1. Start with a fridge pack pop carton.



2. Trim off end tabs.



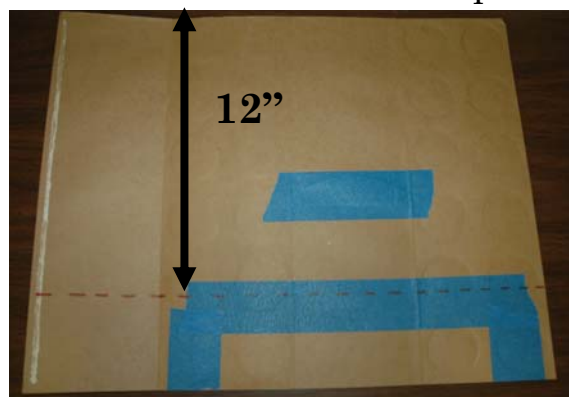
3. Split along side seam, and trim off tab.



4. Tape handle closed and reinforce can-dispensing perforations with duct tape.



5. Using the ruler and butter knife, score a fold line 12" from top.



6. Trim curved T-shape at center fold.



7. Fold pocket and tape side seams.



8. Viola! A sturdy, school-ready folder.



# JULY

**30<sup>th</sup> - August 3<sup>rd</sup> ~ Young Pioneers Day Camp ~ 9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. Daily ~ Mark Twain Week ~ Dan Nagle Walnut Grove Pioneer Village**  
~ Explore and learn what life was like for Samuel Clemens aka Mark Twain. Enjoy paddle-boating at West Lake Park and a tour at Lock & Dam15 on the Mississippi. Hike trails and do many crafts and activities! Go fishing at Scott County Park's Pride Lake. This day camp is geared for children 6-11 years of age. Call (563) 328-3283 for more information.

# AUGUST

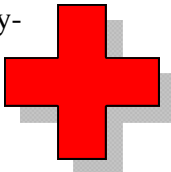


**2<sup>nd</sup> ~ Canoe/Kayak Experience ~ 1:00 - 3:00 P.M. ~ Scott County Park ~ Pride Lake (South Entrance)** ~ Come learn kayaking basics and tour around

the Pride Lake. Pre-registration is required by calling (563) 328-3286.

**6<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> ~ American Red Cross Lifeguard Class ~ 8:00 A.M. - Noon Daily ~ Scott County Park ~**

The purpose of the American Red Cross Lifeguarding course is to provide entry-level lifeguard participants with the knowledge and skills to prevent, recognize and respond to aquatic emergencies and to provide care for breathing and cardiac emergencies, injuries and sudden illnesses until emergency medical services (EMS) personnel take over. Youth 15 years of age and older are eligible for training and upon successful completion of the written and water skills test you will become a certified lifeguard. Cost of the class is \$130 and includes the book. Register for class at Scott County Park's entry station or by phone (563) 328-3282 #5.



**8<sup>th</sup> ~ Canoe/Kayak Experience ~ 1:00 - 3:00 P.M. ~ West Lake Park ~ Lake of the Hills (Gate # 1)** ~ Come learn kayaking basics and tour around the Lake of the Hills at West Lake Park. Pre-

registration is required by calling (563) 328-3286.

# Summer

**11<sup>th</sup> ~ Monsignor Menke Observatory Open House ~ Dusk ~ Wapsi River Center** ~ Join Dr. Mitchell, Director of the Monsignor Menke Observatory for a tour of the night sky. Please call (563) 333-6141 on the day of this event to find out if weather conditions will permit viewing.

**15<sup>th</sup> ~ Muddy Boots Nature Club ~ 3:00 - 4:30 P.M. ~ Carp Lake** ~ Join the Wapsi River staff at

Carp Lake for a lesson on fishing. Participants will meet at 3406 S. Concord St. in Davenport. To register and for more information, visit [www.nahantmarsh.org](http://www.nahantmarsh.org) and search the calendar of events or call (563) 323-5196.



**16<sup>th</sup> ~ Canoe/Kayak Experience ~ 1:00 - 3:00 P.M. ~ Scott County Park ~ Pride Lake (South Entrance)** ~ Come learn kayaking basics and tour around the Pride Lake. Pre-registration is required by calling (563) 328-3286.

**16<sup>th</sup> ~ Friends of the Wapsi Center, Inc. Meeting ~ 7:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center** ~ Join us to learn about the latest news and happenings at the Wapsi River Center.

**18<sup>th</sup> ~ Hunting the Woolly Mammoth ~ 10:00 A.M. ~ Wapsi River Center** ~ Come join Aaron Askelson as we explore how the people of the ice age would have hunted the mega fauna of their time. You will get the opportunity to throw an atlatl and test your skills at bringing down a giant beast. Registration required by Thursday, August 16.



**18<sup>th</sup> ~ FLOATZILLA 2012 ~ Mississippi River/Quad Cities** ~ Join 2,000 paddlers on the Mississippi River for River Action's 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual

# Events

**FLOATZILLA!** Guided floats on the Mississippi & Rock Rivers plus an advanced float through Lock & Dam 15 are part of the fun. Plus, an attempt at the Guinness World Record largest flotilla of kayaks and canoes at Rock Island's Sunset Park. For

**2012** 

registration information contact (563) 322-2969, [www.riveraction.org](http://www.riveraction.org), or [www.floatzilla.org](http://www.floatzilla.org).

**22<sup>nd</sup> ~ Canoe/Kayak Experience ~ 1:00 - 3:00 P.M. ~ West Lake Park ~ Lake of the Hills (Gate # 1) ~** Come learn kayaking basics and tour around the Lake of the Hills at West Lake Park. Pre-registration is required by calling (563) 328-3286.



**24<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> ~ Overnight Kayak Adventure ~ 5:30 P.M. (Fri.) - 3:00 P.M. (Sat.) ~ Syracuse Landing to Allen's Grove ~** Join Wapsi River Center naturalists to explore the Wapsipinicon River via kayak. Individuals will meet at the Wapsi River Center on Friday, float Syracuse to Sherman, stay overnight at the Owl's Nest Dormitory (\$7 per person), and then float from Sherman Park to Allen's Grove on Saturday morning. Friday's supper and Saturday's lunch will **not** be provided. However, a Friday night campfire snack of s'mores along with a light, breakfast Saturday morning will be provided. Items to consider bringing: water bottle, small cooler, hat, sunglasses, sunscreen, and insect repellent. It is important to dress according to weather and river conditions. Footwear should cover toes & heels – no flip flops. For more information and to reserve a spot, call (563) 328-3286 by Wednesday, August 22.



**30<sup>th</sup> ~ Canoe/Kayak Experience ~ 1:00 - 3:00 P.M. ~ Scott County Park ~ Pride Lake (South Entrance) ~** Come learn kayaking basics and tour around the Pride Lake. Pre-registration is required by calling (563) 328-3286.

## SEPTEMBER

**5<sup>th</sup> ~ Canoe/Kayak Experience ~**

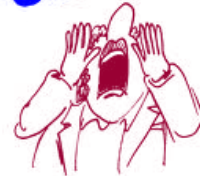


**1:00 - 3:00 P.M. ~ West Lake Park ~ Lake of the Hills (Gate # 1) ~** Come learn kayaking basics and tour around the Lake of the Hills at West Lake Park. Pre-registration is required by calling (563) 328-3286.

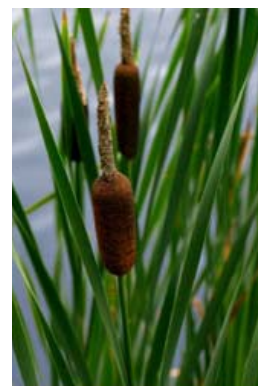
**8<sup>th</sup> ~ Volunteer Stewardship Workday ~ 9:00 A.M. - Noon ~ Wapsi River Center ~** Join

members of the Friends of the Wapsi Center and staff on a variety of projects to enhance the grounds/facilities. Bring gloves, water bottles and lots of energy. The Friends Group will provide a light lunch to reward all your hard work. Call (563) 328-3286 to register by Thursday, September 6.

**Volunteers!**



**8<sup>th</sup> ~ Everything Cattail ~ 2:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~** Come learn about these amazing cattails including how the Native Americans utilized them, how they can be a source of food and what you can make from them. Call, by Thursday, September 6, to register for this "hands-on" class at (563) 328-3286.



**15<sup>th</sup> ~ Monsignor Menke Observatory Open House ~ Dusk ~ Wapsi River Center ~** Join Dr. Mitchell, Director of the Monsignor Menke Observatory for a tour of the night sky. Please call (563) 333-6141 on the day of this event to find out if weather conditions will permit viewing.

# Wildlife Profile: False Map Turtle

by Aaron Askelson, Seasonal Assistant Naturalist

This June, while traversing the Wapsipinicon River in his trusty kayak, Mike loves to get out and comb the sandbars for treasures. Now Mike has found many treasures over the years, like Native American artifacts and some very cool fossils, and this day was no different. On this particular day, Mike stumbled upon a live treasure down by one of his favorite fishing holes (which we will not disclose because you know how some fishermen are about their spots). With his skill and quickness, he was able to capture a beautiful false map turtle (*Graemys pseudogeographica*).

False map turtles are sometimes referred to as sawback turtles. This is because they have a prominent ridge or keel along the top of their shell. They are commonly referred to as map turtles because their shell appears to look like the contour lines of a topographical map. The shell of a turtle has two parts. The top part is referred to as the carapace and the underneath portion is the plastron. A false map turtle possesses a carapace that is an olive-green color and plastron that is a light-yellow color. The carapace is also serrated in the back. A false map also has a bright-yellow crescent behind each eye.



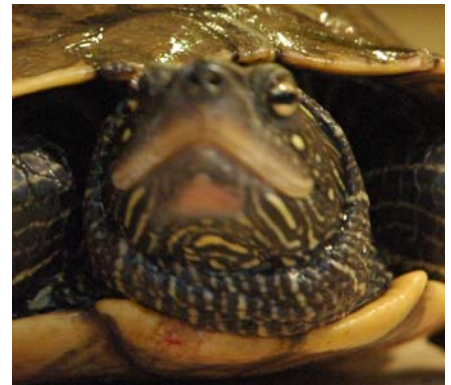
There are about a dozen different kinds of map turtles. Since our turtle is rather large, measuring 8 inches by 6 inches, this lead us to believe it is a female. Since males tend to be much smaller. One can also determine the sex of an aquatic turtle by looking at the tail. The male's vent will be closer to the edge of the carapace while the females will be on the inside edge of the carapace. The male's tail will be longer and thicker than the females as well.

False map turtles use body language and touch to communicate. Male turtles will use their long foreclaws to vibrate the water near a potential mates' eyes or cheeks as a way to initiate courtship. Mike has witnessed this behavior with another turtle we had here at the Wapsi River Center years ago.

Their nesting spots are bank burrows and old muskrat dens. For a turtle, they are known to be skilled climbers and are adept at climbing slippery logs to reach better spots for basking. They often share spots with red-eared sliders and painted turtles. Even though they are one of the more social turtle species, they are considered extremely shy, rarely seen in the wild, and are mainly loners. But don't get me wrong, turtles often use each other to help lookout for danger so they can quickly slide into the water to escape capture. Since, the false map is considered one of the shyest turtles; it is probably the first to go into the water.

False map turtles are found in the eastern part of the state (along the Mississippi River corridor), the western part (along the Missouri River corridor), up through the Cedar valley area, and along portions of the lower Des Moines River. They prefer larger streams, but are sometimes found in ponds and lakes nearby. They prefer slow-moving water, but are talented enough swimmers to navigate large deep water.

They are considered omnivores, but as they age they tend to eat more plant material. They consume dead fish, earthworms, crayfish, insects and lots of snails. They have powerful jaws that they use to crush bone, exoskeletons and snail shells. Turtles of course don't have teeth; they have beaks instead. The beak (an extension and hardening of the upper lip) continues to grow their entire life. They must constantly wear down the edge so as not to interfere with the operation of their jaw, and I'm sure a healthy diet of snails helps their beak stay nice and sharp.



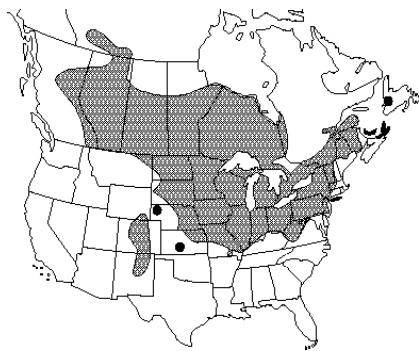
It was a rather exciting and rare find for Mike, and we're happy to share this cool creature with you. She is currently on display with our other aquatic turtles at the Eagle View Eco Center. So, consider stopping by for a visit some Saturday.

# Plant Profile: Canada Anemone

by Michael Granger, Naturalist

Let me introduce to you an interesting plant I frequently see blooming along wet roadways here in northern Scott County – the Canada anemone (*Anemone canadensis* L.). This plant also has several other common names, such as: round-leaf thimbleweed, windflower, or meadow anemone. The Canada anemone belongs to the buttercup family, *Ranunculaceae*. This family is recognized by their numerous stamens and pistils which are develop on a knob or column. Many of our common spring and summer, woodland wildflowers are included in this group. Some common species found in eastern Iowa include: hepatica, swamp buttercup, white baneberry, rue-anemone, thimbleweed and columbine.

The Canada anemone's range covers the lower half of Canada and much of the Midwest; east of the Rocky Mountains extending into the northeast



portions of the United States. The Canada anemone prefers moist roadways and wet places. Ideal habitats for it to thrive are wet road ditches, along moist riverbanks and

around lakes. The anemones boast some 100 species around the world and 6 of them occur in Iowa.

The Canada anemone grows to about 2 foot tall and has a whorled leaf surrounding the stem. The leaf can measure up to 6 inches across and is lobed with three to five “V”-shaped notches giving it a distinctive appearance. The plant blooms in late May to July. Flowers may be single or arranged in a spike. Anemone flowers have the distinction of having no petals as one would think of on a flower, but have colored sepals instead. They are arranged around a central knob covered with pistils and stamens. Each plant will have one flower which

measures up to 1½ inches across and consists of five, white sepals. The sepals may have a tinge of red or lavender, which guide pollinators to the center of the flower. Bees and flies are frequent pollinators.



The word anemone is a botanical term meaning wind; which refers to how the seeds are transported. While seeds are produced as an achene (hard, small, one-seeded fruit), the plant often spreads by roots or rhizomes. The plant can spread fairly quickly and large grouping of flowers are common to observe.

In former times, anemones were used medicinally by North Americans as an astringent for wounds, sores, nosebleeds and eyewash. Meskwaki tribes made tea from anemone roots to treat headaches and dizziness. Roots were also boiled to make a potent antiseptic. The true medicinal properties of Canada anemone are now in question, for the toxin protoanemonin is found in all plants of the buttercup family. It has not been found to be toxic, but its association with the buttercup family make it suspect. Liquid from the plant can cause itching and even blistering on human skin. Ingesting these plants raw can cause nausea, spasms, or even paralysis. Therefore, it's necessary to heat or dry the plants to destroy their toxicity and make the plant usable. It is believed that Canada anemone repels wildlife and can be used in plantings to accomplish this.

Each summer, as the heat builds, I look forward to seeing the Canada anemone's white flower swaying in the breeze along our wet county roadways; reminding me that there are still unexpected wild places to explore.

**WAPSI RIVER E. E. CENTER**  
**31555 52ND AVENUE**  
**DIXON, IA 52745**  
**Tel: (563) 328-3286**  
**Fax: (563) 843-2845**

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*For All Seasons*

**~ ~ ~ ~ ~ Eagle View Eco Center Hours ~ Saturdays ~ 12:30 - 4:30 P.M. ~ ~ ~ ~ ~**

*The W.R.E.N.* (Wapsi River Environmental News) is published quarterly by the Wapsi River Environmental Education Center and the Scott County Conservation Board.

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Chuck Jacobsen, Interpretative Naturalist  
Jessica Steines, Interpretative Naturalist  
Jill Schmidt, Interpretative Naturalist

**Mailing List**

If you would like to receive "The W.R.E.N." and do not have internet access, please send a post card to the Wapsi River E. E. Center at the address above.

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