

The W.R.E.N.

Wapsi River Environmental News

Fall 2013

Scott County Conservation Board's Environmental Education Newsletter

www.scottcountyiowa.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 HAPPENINGS

By: Director, Dave Murcia

INVASION...OF AN ASH TREE NEAR YOU!



Do you happen to have an ash tree? Do you enjoy our natural resources including forests, parks, and backyards? If you do, please take note of the latest invader of our trees- the **Emerald Ash Borer (EAB)**.

This Asian beetle was first discovered in Michigan in 2002 and thought to have been transported in manmade shipping materials. Since then, it has invaded 18 states including Iowa where in 2010 it was confirmed in Allamakee County. Now it has been found in both Des Moines and Jefferson Counties and the Scott County Conservation Board has taken a proactive stand in passing a resolution this past August to help prevent the spread.

The resolution, in accordance with State and Federal guidelines, **PROHIBITS IMPORTATION OF FIREWOOD ONTO ANY PROPERTIES UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE SCOTT COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD FROM OUTSIDE OF SCOTT COUNTY** unless the wood meets State of Iowa and USDA firewood label requirements.

The insect's life cycle depends on ash tree species including green ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*), white ash (*F. americana*), and black

ash (*F. nigra*). The metallic, emerald green beetle emerges as a half-inch adult, mates, and lays eggs on ash trees. These eggs develop as larvae that do the most damage by feeding through the ash tree's cambial layer, into phloem layers, and disrupting water and nutrient transportation.

Symptoms of infestation may include: woodpecker feeding (jagged holes covering feeding galleries), D-shaped exit holes on branches and tracks from beetles, frass-filled tunnels present when bark is removed exposing the serpentine feeding tunnels, wilting foliage with canopy thinning, and epicormic or root sprouting associated with dead branches.

If you would like more information about this latest threat to our native ash tree population, please consider attending the **Emerald Ash Borer program October 5th at 1:00 pm at the Wapsi River Center's Eagle View Eco Center** or visit: www.emeraldashborer.info , or: <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/pme/emeraldashborer.html> .



DELECTABLE GOODIES AT LOCAL FARMER'S MARKETS MAKE GREAT GIFTS !

Within Scott County, Iowa, buying from farmer's markets not only strengthens the local economy, it also provides a fantastic selection of gift ideas, according to Susan Salterberg, coordinator for the **University of Northern Iowa Center for Energy & Environmental Education's Reclaim Your Holidays initiative**.

Some items often found at farmer's markets include breads, cheeses, wines, and flowers that make great host and hostess gifts, Salterberg says. Honey and honey products—as well as jams and jellies—sweeten most anyone's holiday, while locally raised meats—such as chicken, beef, bison or lamb—are consumables for families to enjoy months after the holiday. Be sure the gift recipient has a freezer with sufficient storage space if needed, Salterberg cautions.



She also suggests that produce, combined with accessories, can be a special treat for bakers. For example, pumpkins can be coupled with a pumpkin brulee recipe, local cream, and ramekins found at an antique

store. Other possibilities include loading a basket with local wines, cheeses, and a loaf of homemade bread or crackers. The latter could be purchased from a grocer or handmade by you. Apples, chocolates and popcorn nestled into a local potter's bowl or a bottle of wine paired with a night's stay at a Bed and Breakfast are other welcome combinations.

Additional farmer's market gift ideas, as well as other green gift ideas, may be found at www.ReclaimYourHolidays.org.

The "Reclaim Your Holidays" initiative is a program of the University of Northern Iowa Center for Energy & Environmental Education. It is funded with support from the Resource Enhancement and Protection Conservation Education Program and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources Solid Waste Alternatives Program, the Scott County Conservation Board and the Wapsi River Center are also project partners.

FALL AND WINTER SCHOOL FIELD TRIPS

If you would like to **schedule a field trip**, we encourage educators to schedule as far in advance as possible and taking an active role. School programs are not scheduled for Mondays so that staff may work on administration and projects. *You may download our field trip planner from our website to better plan a trip!*



NEW WAPSI CENTER DISPLAY

Recently a new display has been opened at the Eagle View Eco Center. The Wapsi River Center received a "SUITCASE FOR SURVIVAL" Environmental Educational Program designed to raise awareness about wildlife trade and Biodiversity. Uncontrolled and illegal trade threatens many species of plants and animals world wide, and contributes to the loss of Biodiversity. Thousands of shipments of live wildlife and wildlife products enter the United States illegally.

A partnership between the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), World Wildlife Fund (WWF), The American Zoo and Aquarium Association (AZA), and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Fisheries Office of Law Enforcement (OLE) with additional assistance from TRAFFIC (the wildlife trade monitoring program) and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation have made this program possible.

To put seized products to a worthwhile use these groups developed the program which teaches students and adults how they can help solve the problem of illegal and unregulated wildlife trade by becoming educated consumers.

The display features products made from elephant ivory, stingray skin boots, several prepared reptile skins, a portion of elephant hide, shark teeth, turtle shells, and many invertebrates.

The Eagle View Eco Center is open on Saturdays from 12:30 to 4:30 P.M. Come visit us and see the new display !!!



TWENTY SECOND ANNUAL WAPSI RIVER ECOLOGY DAY

WHERE: Wapsi River Environmental Education Center

WHEN: Saturday, September 28th, 2013 from 10:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

WHY: This year's theme is "HUNTING AND GATHERING"!

10:00 A.M. ~ Woodland Hike ~ Trees, seeds and a variety of fungi can be found at the Wapsi River Center. Join our naturalists for an informative educational hike through our woodlands

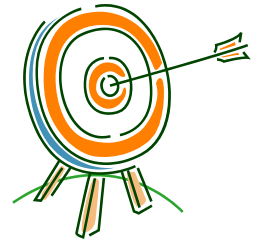


11:00 A.M. ~ Atlatl Demonstration ~ Learn how early hunters used atlatls to bring down large prey such as the mastodon or woolly mammoth.



Noon ~ LUNCHTIME! ~ Lunch is being provided by the Friends of the Wapsi Inc. group. Please bring tableware. Donations are welcomed.

1:00 P.M. ~ Archery ~ Come Take an archery lesson from NASP Trainers. Learn the 11 steps to archery success. Can you get a BULLSEYE!



3:00 P.M. ~ Prairie Seed Gathering ~ Explore the Wapsi Center's restored prairie for a lesson on plant identification, and seed harvesting.

KID'S CORNER

Animal Group Names: Draw a line to match up the group of animals to the name that they are called.



SCURRY

GAZE

MURDER

FLUTTER

MISCHIEF

FAMILY

PLAGUE

SWARM

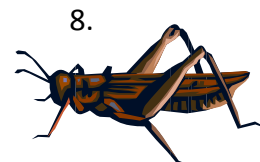
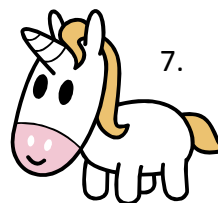
COLONY

BLESSING

PARLIAMENT

ARMY

12.



1. flutter 2. Murder 3. mischief 4. Gaze 5. Scurry 6. Family, 7. Blessing 8. Plague 9. Parliament 10. Army 11. Swarm 12. Colony

SEPTEMBER

1st & 2nd ~ Fall Festival ~ 11:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. (each day) ~ Dan Nagle Walnut Grove Pioneer Village (Scott County Park) ~ Enjoy a fall harvest in Pioneer Village. Period dressed "Friends of the Village" demonstrate crafts of the old days and also sell their wares. Admission is \$2.00 for adults, \$1.00 for children 5 -12 years old, and children under 5 are free.

7th ~ Monsignor Menke Observatory Open House ~



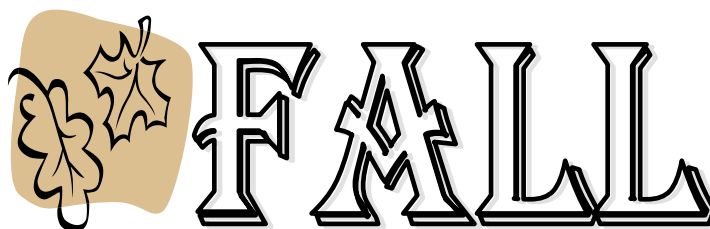
Dusk ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Join Dr. Mitchell, Director of the Monsignor Menke Observatory, for a tour of the spring sky. Please call (563) 333-6141 on the day of the event to find out if the weather conditions will permit viewing.

14th ~ Wapsi River Kayak Experience - Syracuse Landing to Sherman Park ~ 10:00 A.M. ~ Join Wapsi staff for a trip down stream to explore a wild and meandering river. All gear is supplied though you may bring your own kayak and gear as long as it meets IADNR requirements. Participants must be 12 years of age (accompanied by an adult) or older. Registration is required by calling 563-328-3286 by Sept. 12, is limited to 12 participants, and the event is weather dependant.

19th ~ Friends of the Wapsi River Center, Inc. Meeting ~ 7:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Join us at the Eagle View Eco Center to learn about current events, happenings and volunteer opportunities at the Wapsi River Center.

25th ~ Hunter Education Online Field Day ~ 5:00 - 9:00 P.M. ~ Scott County Park (Old Nature Center) ~ Scott County Park Rangers will be teaching a Hunter Education Online Field Day at the old nature center. Participants must be 16 years old or older and have completed the online hunter safety training at

www.HunterExam.com or www.hunter-ed.com/Iowa; participants must bring voucher to class. This is a review class with no firing. Please call (563) 328-3282, Extension 1, to register.



28th ~ Twenty-Second Annual Wapsi River Fall Ecology Day ~ 10:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Bring the whole family for a fun filled day of activities. Our theme this year is "Hunting and Gathering". Learn how to shoot a bow and arrow and then learn how to hunt with an Atlatl. Explore the Wapsi Center's prairie for a lesson on plants and harvesting seed. Lunch will be provided by the Friends of the Wapsi Center Inc. For more details see our special add following the calendar of events. Please pre-register by calling (563) 328-3286.

OCTOBER

4th ~ Leafy Story Time Program ~ 10:00 A.M. ~ Scott County Library System (Eldridge Branch) ~ Join us for a seasonal lesson brought to you by our local trees. Learn what leaves do to help a tree grow and make an awesome leafy craft. This presentation is designed for younger students (Children ages 0-5 and their parents/caregivers). Contact librarian Christine Garrow at (563) 285-4794, to register.



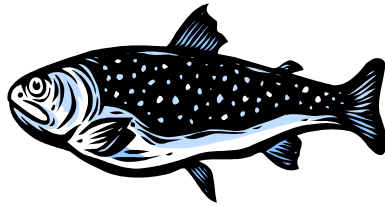
5th ~ Emerald Ash Borer, Coming to an Ash Tree near You! ~ 1:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center, Eagle View Eco Center ~ Do you have an ash tree? If so, you may want to learn the ABC's of this invasive insect now known to be in 3 Iowa counties! Join Director Dave Murcia for a presentation on the Emerald Ash Borer- potentially, the greatest invasive species to hit our country in recent years! The presentation will cover history, identification, biology, and current efforts to stop the spread including the latest proactive resolution that the Scott County Conservation Board passed in August.

17th ~ Friends of the Wapsi River Center, Inc. Meeting ~ 7:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Join us at the Eagle View Eco Center to learn about current events, happenings and volunteer opportunities at the Wapsi River Center.

EVENTS

19th ~ Trout Release ~ 10:30 A.M. ~ West Lake Park ~ Please join the members of Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Scott County Conservation Board, Wapsi River Environmental Education Center, to release 2,000

rainbow trout at Lake of the Hills, Gate #1. Participants may fish if, properly licensed and have appropriate gear.



26th ~ Halloween Hike ~ 5:00 – 10:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Come to the Wapsi Center for an educational hike to learn about nocturnal creatures. Learn about the human eye, and how nighttime animals can see much better than humans, and then take a stroll through the woods to discover some of these amazing nocturnal creatures!!! At 5:00 P.M. we will provide a fire for roasting (please bring your own meal to cook). After the hike we will be serving hot chocolate and snacks. BYOM "Bring your own Mug" Please call to pre-register (563)328-3286.



26th ~ Polar Plunge ~ 10:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M. ~ Lake of the Hills Beach (West Lake Park, Gate #1) ~ This event features a cold start and a warm ending as plungers run into the lake from beach access to raise money for Special Olympics, Iowa. Get your team together (costumes optional) and create an experience full of memories as you go "freezin' for a reason". For more information, contact Lindsay Eastin at (877) 267-0134 or visit www.firstgiving.com/soiowa.

30th ~ Hunter Education Online Field Day ~ 5:00 - 9:00 P.M. ~ Scott County Park (Old Nature Center) ~ Scott County Park Rangers will be teaching a Hunter Education Online Field Day at the old nature center. Participants must be 16 years old or older and have completed the online hunter safety training at

www.HunterExam.com or www.hunter-ed.com/Iowa; participants must bring voucher to class. This is a review class with no firing. Please call (563) 328-3282, Extension 1, to register.

NOVEMBER

2nd ~ Fall Leaf Hike ~ 3:00 P.M.~ Wapsi River Center ~ Enjoy a fall stroll at the Wapsi River Center to explore our local trees. Learn how to identify trees by their leaves, bark, seeds, nuts and fruits. Bring the family for this informative jaunt through the woods. Call (563) 328-3286 to register.

2nd ~ Black Hawk Hiking Club's Wapsi Night Hike ~ 7:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Join members and representatives of the Black Hawk Hiking Club for a stroll through the Wapsi River Center's wild places. Learn more about this highly active hiking club and how to join. Light refreshments will be served after the hike. For more information about the hike please call the Wapsi River Center (563) 328-3286.

23rd ~ Hunter Education Online Field Day ~ 9:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M. ~ Scott County Park (Old Nature Center) ~ Scott County Park Rangers will be teaching a Hunter Education Online Field Day at the old nature center. Participants must be 16 years old or older and have completed the online hunter safety training at www.HunterExam.com or www.hunter-ed.com/Iowa; participants must bring voucher to class. This is a review class with no firing. Please call (563) 328-3282, Extension 1, to register.

DECEMBER

1st ~ Christmas at the Village ~ 1:00 - 5:00 P.M. ~ Dan Nagle Walnut Grove Pioneer Village ~ Begin your holidays early with a historic walk through the beautifully decorated Village; complete with Friends of the Village in period costume. While there, enjoy craft demonstrations and sales, letters to Santa in the telegraph office, refreshments at the soda fountain, holiday music, and a visit with Santa and Mrs. Claus. Admission is free, but nonperishable goods are requested for donation to the North Scott Food Pantry.



ANIMAL PROFILE: CICADA KILLER

BY MICHAEL J. GRANGER, NATURALIST

Upon a couple of recent outings I encountered an insect which brings fear to anyone who sees it, the Eastern Cicada Killer, *Sphecius speciosus*. This is a large solitary wasp measuring nearly 2 inches in length, most often seen as the cicadas start to sing in the fall. I have seen lots of them this year and have wondered much about them.

I have always had an interest in insects, which started when I was exploring as a child in my backyard. In the insect world, color is used for camouflage, warning or mimicry. Many insects use bright bold coloration to be noticed or seen. Typically yellow, red or orange coloration often paired with black, help to tell predators that they have a defense mechanism and will be in trouble if bothered. Most of us have experience the painful consequences of wasps, bees and hornets. These insects belong to the order Hymenoptera which includes sawflies, parasitic wasps, wasps, bees and ants. These are very beneficial insects, as the group includes valuable predators or parasites of insect pests, and bees are well known for their pollination habits, and creating honey.

The Eastern cicada killer is a large digging wasp, the adults of which emerge late June and live through mid-September. They will be present in an area for 60 -75 days. They are robust wasps colored with red on the thorax, and brown, yellow and black stripes on the abdomen. The wings and legs are both orange-brown in coloration. The whole coloration scheme and size of this wasp make it a very threatening sight when seen. These solitary wasps have very different habits than communal wasps, like hornets, yellow jackets and paper wasps. First of all they don't really have a nest to defend, so they won't sting unless handled roughly. Secondly the adults will feed on nectar from flowers, whereas, many communal wasps are predacious, feeding on spiders and insects. So then, why are they called cicada killers?

Upon emergence in late June the adult wasps begin feeding and preparing for courtship. Male cicada killers often congregate in large groups forming a breeding congregation. The males can be seen flying erratically and "fighting" one another for territories. Two or three males male grab each other

in apparent combat, spinning through the air, and eventually releasing each other. An online reference says that the males do not possess the ability to sting like the females. On our recent cleanup our volunteers



Cicada Killer with Cicada
Photo: Dave Murcia

came upon a large congregation of these males along the lakeshore. Everyone was truly "keeping their distance". Now that I know the males pose no threat I can inform future groups that they are relatively safe.

What about the females? Female cicada killers are larger than the males. They will be seen flying along the ground looking for possible nest sites. They prefer to find sandy or loose soil that is easy to dig. At a recent cookout I saw a female flying low to the ground searching around a garage foundation, I wondered why it was so low to the ground. That's it . . . she was looking for a nesting site. Females do have the potential to sting but it is not their nature unless provoked or grasped.

Upon finding a suitable nest site the female will dig a burrow and then begin to search for cicadas. She will capture a cicada and paralyze it with her sting. She then holds the cicada upside down and begins the journey to her burrow. This can be an exhausting trip, for the cicada may be twice her weight. She will put the cicada in her burrow and lay a single egg on it. Interestingly she will put 2 or 3 cicadas in a burrow if she lays a female egg on it. (Remember the females are larger and require more food). The egg will hatch in 2 days and the larvae will feed on the paralyzed cicada. In two weeks the larvae will turn into a pupa. The pupa overwinters in its underground burrow until the next summer. The adults do not overwinter, and upon mating will die soon.

I have often wondered about cicada killers and have seen them often. My many questions have been answered during my research about them. This fall if you happen to see a cicada killer, take some time to observe their activity. They are beneficial, impressive to see, and relatively harmless.

FUNGUS PROFILE: GOLDEN CHANTERELLE

BY ASHLEY VANSPEYBROECK, SEASONAL NATURALIST

On my first day working at the Wapsi I overheard a very excited Mike talk about some Chanterelles he had found along one of the trails. My head was buzzing with questions; what do they look like, where are they found, Can you eat them? Being so curious, I talked a bit with Mike about the foreign fungi and he finally asked, “Want to go see them?” Um... YES! So began my quest uncovering the mysteries of this new mushroom.

Cantharellus cibarius, better known as the Golden or Yellow Chanterelle is a widely distributed species. So widely distributed, they can be found around the world! From North America to Russia to Germany! They can typically be found shaded by hardwoods or in mixed woods in low or slightly sloped areas in the late summer and fall. These spots are ideal because the Chanterelles have a symbiotic relationship with the trees. The mushroom gathers moisture and minerals that feed the tree, and the tree offers photosynthesized carbohydrates, a.k.a. food, to the mushroom. They can also be found in clusters or scattered; if you see one, there will more than likely be more in the general area. They are fans of the more mature woods where the ground is not disturbed and there is little competition from ground plants.

As the name suggests, the Golden Chanterelle has an eggy yellow to orange colored cap. The specimens that I observed out on our hike seemed to be older and looked as if they were covered in faded orange safety spray paint. This orange cap was also smooth with wavy to irregularly lobed margins and can be 3-10 cm wide. The gills, which are where the spores are stored, tapers down from the cap to the stalk and are forked towards the top of the rounded gills. This means that they split and look like more gills. A word of caution: The *Omphalotus illudens* has a similar shape and color but have knife like gills and are TOXIC. Always make sure you know exactly what you are eating before you eat a wild mushroom!

Spores, like the seeds of a flower, help the Chanterelle to reproduce. These spores are ejected from the gills, land where they may, and wait for life bringing moisture to allow them to germinate. The spores of the Golden Chanterelle are pale yellow to ochraceous (orangey-pink). These spores, once they

have met the moisture they need, and then create a network of fungal cells called mycelium. This mycelium hangs out underground with the tree roots until it is mature enough to grow a mushroom and send off more spores. So what we see above the ground is only there to spread spores!

All these features add up to be one edible mushroom! Golden Chanterelles are a choice species and are used in gourmet cooking around the world. Look for these characteristics while foraging for the perfect golden delight.

- * Fragrant peach/ apricot odor
- * Golden or apricot color
- * No sliminess or decaying parts
- * Gills not granular or fragmenting off the cap

To harvest them, gently tug and wiggle them out of the ground, then cut off the bottom of the mushroom, place it in the basket, and toss the bottom back into the woods. The reasoning behind placing them in a basket is the same as tossing the bottom back into the woods; to help more mushrooms to grow! You don't want to over forage an area AND not let the spores escape because there won't be any or as many mushrooms next season. Because of this risk of over foraging, some areas have permits that you need to have or have caps on the number of mushrooms you take so please make sure you do your research before heading out!

Once you get then home you have to clean them, and because of their shape, they can be tricky to clean. Some may also grow around plants so make sure to clear those out before cooking to ensure the best quality taste the Chanterelles can offer. Because they are common all around the world, there are recipes abound! One of the simplest ways to cook this is how the Russians do, chopped with some butter and potatoes. So delicious!

Fall is the perfect time to forage gourmet Golden Chanterelle as well as many others, especially after a light rain. So get your boots on, grab a basket, and start searching at a park near you!



THANKYOU'S

SCOTT COUNTY CONSERVATION MAINTENANCE,
CLINTON COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD,
THE GREAT MIDWEST EDUCATIONAL THEATRE CO.
SAINT AMBROSE UNIVERSITY, LUCIA DRYANSKI, BILL ROBBINS, CAROL ROGERS, CASEY BECKER
ERMA WISZMANN, INGRID BOGDANOWICZ, JIM & JULIE ROSS, CAITLIN ROEDER, KYLE MOELLER,
(DUSTIN HINRICHS, MARK PINGENOT, AND DEBBIE FLUEGEL FROM TREES FOREVER).

HELLO BECKY

I am so excited to be working at the Wapsi River Environmental Education Center as a Seasonal



Naturalist. I have been striving for a job like this one for the past 8 years of school. I got my Bachelors of Science degree in Animal Sciences at the University of Illinois in 2009, and then received

my Masters of Science degree in Biology at Western Illinois University in 2013. I also received my Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Zoo and Aquarium Studies from Western Illinois University in 2011. My thesis for my Master's degree focused on animal behavior and how it relates to temperature in a captive environment for grey seals at the Brookfield Zoo in Brookfield, IL.

My interests and hobbies include animals, running, playing tennis, and being outdoors. I previously worked at Nahant Marsh Education Center as an Education Intern and at Niabi Zoo as a Seasonal Zookeeper. While at Nahant Marsh, I volunteered a few times here at the Wapsi Center. I really enjoyed doing group programs here and I am really excited to start my position here taking care of the animals and teaching the public and school groups about animals and nature.

HELLO ASHLEY

I am so excited to say that I have joined the Wapsi team as a new seasonal assistant naturalist! I have just graduated from Western Illinois University with a BA in Recreation, Park and Tourism Administration with an emphasis in Outdoor Education and a minor in Environmental Studies. This past semester I completed my internship at the Rock Eagle 4-H Center in Georgia and I am thrilled to be back in the area. Being a native Moliner, I couldn't be happier with my new position here and helping to spread environmental education to the QCA.

Some of my hobbies are identification of any and all plants, scouting, and MUSHROOMS! I enjoy seeing them on the trail, photographing them and identifying them. I am also a member of the Boy Scouts of America through Venturing Crew 119 out of Moline and have worked at Camp Loud Thunder since 2007. Working with the scouts really created this affinity for nature and teaching that has lead me to Wapsi. I look forward to learning and teaching more in this new chapter of my life!



THANKYOU KYLE

Hello, I'm Kyle! I have had the privilege to intern at the Wapsi River EE Center this summer! I have had a lot of fun working with Dave, Mike, Casey and Cate and I have learned many new things such as: programming, animal care, maintenance, canoe and kayak programming and fishing programs, just to name a few. I am a student at Western Illinois University – Quad Cities, entering my senior year. My major is Recreation/Parks/Tourism Administration and I am minoring in environmental science.

Being born and raised in Scott County I have always enjoyed the great outdoors and have spent several years now exploring the different career opportunities involving nature. I have lived in Walcott all of my life and went to school there through 8th grade. I then open enrolled to North Scott High School and graduated in 2009 and graduated from Muscatine Community College in 2011, receiving my associates in arts degree. I look

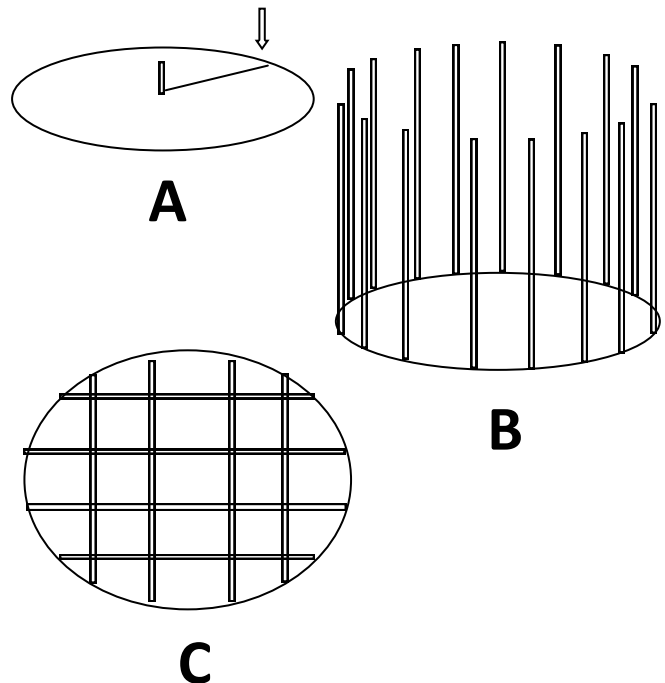
forward to completing my RPTA / Environmental Science degree at WIU – QC and joining the workforce after graduating! I would like to give a special thanks to the Wapsi River Center staff for their time, knowledge and hospitality this summer! It was great to be a part of the 'Wapsi family'! Thanks again to the Wapsi Center staff, I appreciate everything you guys have done for me!

Sincerely,
Kyle Moeller



JUST FOR FUN: WICKIUP CONSTRUCTION 101

A Wickiup, is a domed dwelling made from natural materials. The domed, round shelter is used by many different Native American cultures. The curved surfaces make it an ideal shelter for all kinds of conditions. Here at the Wapsi Center we have built a couple of wickups, or as our summer camps refer to them as “twigaloos”. To construct a wickiup, first collect 30 saplings 8 foot tall or more. My favorite poles are cottonwoods which I can gather fairly quickly from a friend's property. Next a suitable site is chosen to construct the wickiup. The area must be free of debris or sticks. A stick and string are used to create a 10 to 12 foot radius (A). Next a hammer and a sharpened stick are used to crate 16 holes evenly spaced around the circle (B). Next, four poles on one side of the circle are bent over and lashed together with the corresponding poles on the opposite side of the circle. Then the remaining poles are lashed together in the same fashion (C). Next poles are lashed to form a circular ring at knee height around the base of the structure. A second and third tier of poles are also added above to add stability to the structure. Eventually the structure may be covered with more sticks, slabs of bark or even thatched with cattails, to help insulate the occupants from the elements. A sturdy wickiup may last for a couple of years and serve as a playground getaway for young and old alike.



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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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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.

The Scott County Conservation Board in the provision of services and facilities to the public does not discriminate against anyone on the basis of race, color, sex, creed, national origin, age or handicap. If anyone believes they have been subject to discrimination, they may file a complaint alleging discrimination with either the Scott County Conservation Board or the Office of Equal Opportunity, U.S. Department of Interior, Washington D.C. 20240.