

# The W.R.E.N.

Wapsi River Environmental News

SUMMER 2014

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 Happenings

By: Director, Dave Murcia

### SCCB at the Wapsi Center Awarded!

In spring the Wapsi Center was recognized and awarded the **2013 Chris Holt Youth Environmental Education Award** by the Iowa Association of Naturalists (IAN) and the Iowa Conservation Education Coalition. The award recognizes outstanding environmental education for youth, and was awarded for the **Outdoor P.E. Program** with Davenport Community School District. The program supported about 450 students and included aquatic stewardship while participating in low impact recreation activities like fishing, canoeing, and kayaking at West Lake Park in Davenport, Iowa. Also recognized by IAN, were four staff at the Center, for Professional Development requiring a minimum of 20 hours of educating, communication, administrative, certification, and professional service and training.

### Farewell Partners!

After a long partnership agreement between Scott County (SCCB) and Clinton County Conservation Boards (CCCB), the CCCB

has decided to part ways and end the agreement and their support in education programming and development. Due to the increased demands of CCCB staff time in Clinton County, they have requested a complete withdrawal from the Wapsi Center and both Boards have agreed to a July 1 termination date. **The SCCB and Wapsi staff appreciates the commitment the CCCB played in the establishment, development, and support over the past decades. THANK YOU!**



### New Kestrel Cabin Complete

The Wapsi River Center has replaced the original Kestrel Cabin with a energy efficient and ADA compliant cabin! Committed to conservation, the cabin has **EnergyStar** appliances, LED lighting, an on-demand water heater, The cabin sleeps six comfortably and has a common living area with sofa sleeper and lounge chair. The full kitchen has a stove/oven/microwave/refrigerator/freezer, a bathroom with shower/sink/stool, a sleeping room with



queen bed and bunk beds/drawers, and a covered porch. A grill and fire pit are located in the front lawn. Please call for more info at 563-328-3286.

### Stewardship Workday

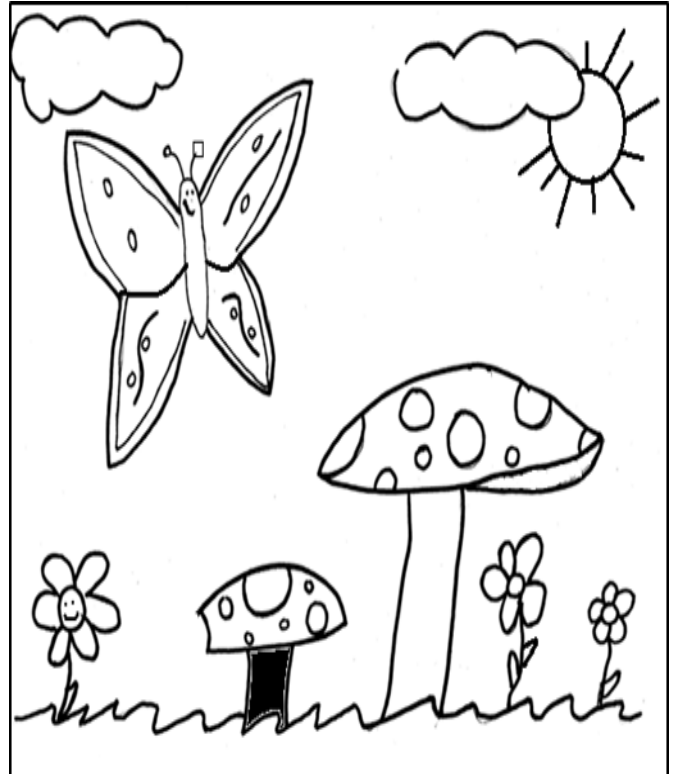
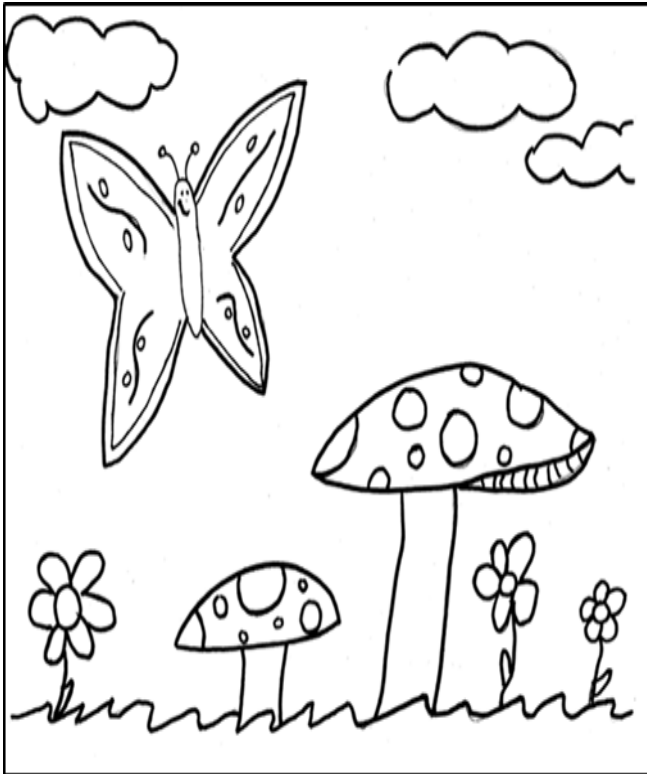
Another spring workday was a success thanks to 19 volunteers including our own *Friends*

*of the Wapsi Center* members and two scout groups! The day was spent spring cleaning all limbs and branches from the grounds that winter left, hauling and organizing stone piles, and raking the road rock back into place after winter for a total of 57 hours! A big thank you to our Friends group for hosting refreshments for the volunteers!



# Kid's Korner

Spot the differences!! There are 10 differences between the pictures. Can you find them all???



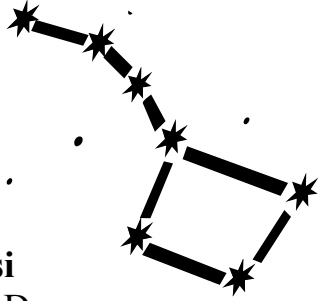
# Summer Events

## June

7<sup>th</sup> ~ Menke  
Open House  
~ Dusk ~

Monsignor Menke  
Observatory ~ 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.



11<sup>th</sup> ~ Wild About the Weather ~ 1:00 P.M. ~  
Scott County Library (Eldridge Branch) ~  
Join Wapsi River Center naturalist Mike  
Granger for a lesson on weather. Learn how  
weather happens through experiments and fun  
weather facts. Please call the Eldridge Library  
at 563-285-4794 to register.

14<sup>th</sup> ~ 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Quad Cities Triathlon ~  
7:00 A.M. ~ West Lake Park ~ Participants  
begin the day by swimming Lake of the Hills,  
then bike a 15-mile trek and return to West  
Lake Park to finish with a run. This is a



spectator event only, as the  
registration is closed and  
there are already over 100  
triathletes on the waiting  
list. For further details  
visit [www.qctriathlon.com](http://www.qctriathlon.com).

16<sup>th</sup> -20<sup>th</sup> ~ Beginner's Wilderness Skills  
Camp ~ 9:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M. (Daily) ~  
Nahant Marsh ~ Sign up and explore  
woodlands, wetlands and prairies while  
learning practical survival and primitive skills.  
This camp is geared for children ages 7 -10

years old. For more information please call  
Nahant Marsh at (563) 323-5196.

17<sup>th</sup> ~ Kayak Experience~ 1:00 – 3:00 P.M.  
~ Scott County Park, Pride Lake (South  
Entrance) ~ Come learn kayaking basics and  
tour around Pride Lake. This is a weather  
dependent event and all  
equipment is provided. Pre-  
registration is required by  
calling (563)328-3286.



19<sup>th</sup> ~ Annual Friends  
Meeting ~ 5:30 P.M. ~  
Whispering Pines Shelter ~

Scott County Park ~ Join the Friends of the  
Wapsi River Center's for our Annual meeting  
at Scott County Park. We will be discussing  
current events and happenings at the Wapsi  
River Center. We will provide main dish and  
drinks. Please bring a dish to share and table  
ware. Please call if you are interested in  
attending (563) 328-3286.

23<sup>rd</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> ~ EDIWILD ~Join us for 4-day  
educators' workshop (including evening  
activities) to facilitate the incorporation of  
environmental education into the school  
curriculum. The workshop will use an  
interdisciplinary approach of teaching and will  
emphasize environmental stewardship and this  
year's theme is Prairie Ecosystems and  
Habitats. Please contact the Wapsi River  
Center at (563) 328-3286 or Nahant Marsh  
(563) 323-5196 for more  
details. Visit the  
Mississippi Bend Area  
Education Agency's  
website, [www.mbaea.org](http://www.mbaea.org),  
for credit information.



**27<sup>th</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup> ~ Hunter Safety Camp ~ 7:00 PM (Fri.) – 4:00 PM (Sun.) ~ Wapsi River Center** ~ In addition to all of the hunter education standards, we will be teaching advanced shooting techniques, bowhunter safety, trapping, waterfowl, turkey & raccoon hunting, dog training, caring for game in the field, first aid, wildlife ID, calling and a whole lot more! The course is open to kids, ages 11-16. They don't need to have received the Hunter Education Certificates already. Cost per student is \$20 for dorm stay, meals, ammo and targets thanks to donations from Pheasants Forever, Mississippi Valley Sportsmen and Clinton Area Whitetails



Unlimited, Clinton County Conservation & the Grand Mound Sportsmen's Club. Overnight chaperones will be provided by participants' parents. Space is limited to 50 kids, so sign up early by calling 563-847-7202.

**12<sup>th</sup> ~ Freight House Farmer's Market ~ 8:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M. ~ Freight House Farmer's Market (421 West River Drive, Davenport)** ~ Join Wapsi staff at the Freight House Farmer's Market booth and see what is on tap this season. Learn how SCCB supports aquatic stewardship through low-impact recreation, sign-up for the X-stream Cleanup at West Lake Park, or learn about the latest about the Emerald Ash Borer.

**14<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> ~ Advanced Wilderness Skills Camp ~ 9:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M. (Daily) ~ Nahant Marsh** Sign up and explore woodlands, wetlands and prairies while learning practical survival and primitive skills. This camp is geared for 11 -14 year olds. For more information please call Nahant Marsh at (563) 323-5196.



**17<sup>th</sup> ~ Friends of the Wapsi Center, Inc. Meeting ~ 6:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center** ~ Join us to learn about the latest news and happenings at the Wapsi River Center.

**19<sup>th</sup> ~ Menke Open House ~ Dusk ~ Monsignor Menke Observatory ~ 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.

**22<sup>nd</sup> ~ Kayak Experience ~ 1:00 – 3:00 P.M. ~ West Lake Park, Lake of the Hills - Gate 1** ~ Come learn kayaking basics and tour around Lake of the Hills. This is a weather dependent event and all equipment is provided. Pre-registration is required by calling 563-328-3286.

**26<sup>th</sup> ~ Kayaking Westlake Park ~ 10:00 A.M. and 1:00 P.M. ~ West Lake Park** ~ Join Naturalists from the Wapsi River Center for an American Canoeing Association "ACA", "SmartStart Paddling Orientation: Kayak" course at 10:00 A.M. This 1.5 hour session is geared for beginners interested in kayaking and includes safety, strokes, and simple maneuvers. At 1:00 P.M. there also be an ACA "Quickstart Your Kayak" session for those already familiar with

## July

**1<sup>st</sup> ~ Kayak Experience ~ 1:00 – 3:00 P.M. ~ West Lake Park, Lake of the Hills - Gate 1** ~ Come learn kayaking basics and tour around Lake of the Hills. This is a weather dependent event and all equipment is provided. Pre-registration is required by calling 563-328-3286.

**2<sup>nd</sup> ~ Up, Up and Away ~ 1:00 P.M. ~ Scott County Library (Eldridge Branch)** ~ Come learn about rockets, and space flight. Make your own stomp rocket and go for a test flight. Please call the Eldridge Library at 563-285-4794 to register.



kayaking basics. This 3 hour session will cover paddling safety, potential hazards, and simple rescues along with reviewing strokes.



Equipment and PFD's are provided for both courses, or you may bring your own PFD if Coast Guard approved. Please call to register (563) 328-3286 as the sessions are limited to 10 people per session.

**28<sup>th</sup> – August 1<sup>st</sup> ~ Young Pioneers Day Camp: Mark Twain Week ~ Dan Nagle Walnut Grove Pioneer Village** ~ Imagine yourself as Huck Finn on an island hunting for treasure. Visit the Mississippi River Eco Tourism Center and ride on a 25 person pontoon in the back waters of the Mississippi. Learn how to fish at Pride Lake. Call (563) 328-3283 for more information.

# August

**5<sup>th</sup> ~ Kayak Experience~ 1:00 – 3:00 P.M. ~ Scott County Park, Pride Lake (South Entrance)** ~ Come learn kayaking basics and tour around pride Lake. This is a weather dependent event and all equipment is provided. Pre-registration is required by calling 563-328-3286.

**9<sup>th</sup> ~ X-stream Clean-up ~ 8:30– 11:30 A.M. ~ West Lake Park** ~ Join staff at West lake Park for both a shoreline clean-up or invasive species removal. Info and registration can be found at: [www.xstreamcleanup.org](http://www.xstreamcleanup.org).

**16<sup>th</sup> ~ Star Party ~ Menke Open House ~ Dusk ~ Monsignor Menke Observatory ~ 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.

**21<sup>st</sup> ~ Friends of the Wapsi Center, Inc. Meeting ~ 6:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center** ~ Join us to learn about the latest news and happenings at the Wapsi River Center.

**31<sup>st</sup> & September 1<sup>st</sup> ~ Pioneer Village Labor Day Celebration ~ 11:00 A.M. – 5:00 P.M. (each Day) ~ Dan Nagle Walnut Grove Pioneer Village** ~ Bring the family out for fall fun at the Village. Period dressed “Friends” demonstrate crafts & sell their wares. Enjoy great food, children’s games and make-it-take-it crafts & more.

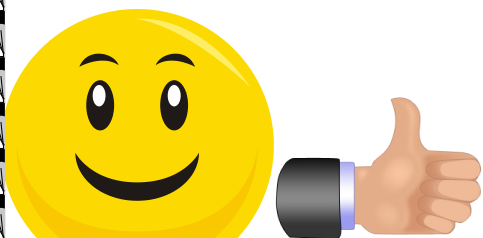
Enjoy old time music and activities in the Saloon and Gazebo. Fun for all ages! Admission is \$2 for adults and \$1 for children.



**Thank You!**

Julie Malake    BSA Pack 89    BSA Troop 85  
 Davenport Walmart Stores    Orion School  
 Rock Island Center for Math and Science  
 Saint Ambrose University interns:  
 Ashley Gillman & Tina Lux.

The Friends of the Wapsi Center Inc.

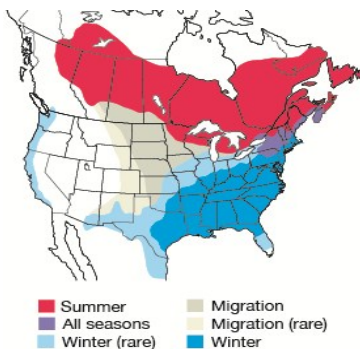


# ANIMAL PROFILE: WHITE-THROATED SPARROW

By Seasonal Assistant Naturalist, Emily Warren

Also known as the Whistler of the North, the White-throated Sparrow, *Zonotrichia albicollis*, is an attractive bird with crisp facial markings. It has black eye stripes and a crown stripe that are interrupted by stripes that fade from bright yellow at the beak to white. It also has a white throat that makes you look twice. These sparrows are slightly larger than a Song Sparrow and have very different behaviors.

The White-throated Sparrow is a ground forager that hops along, often using both feet at once to scratch back the leaf litter and then pounce on anything they uncover. It will also toss leaves aside with a flick of its head. They eat seeds and berries as well as a large number of insects. They prefer areas of low, dense vegetation like



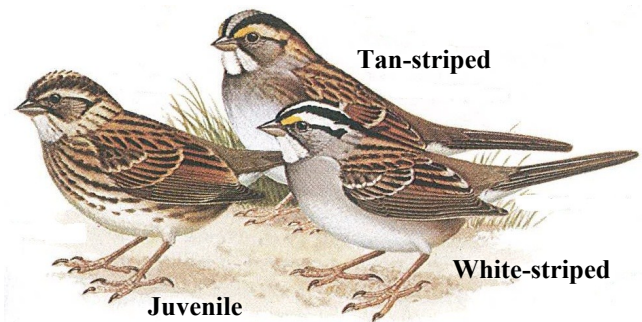
## RANGE MAP

thickets, hedgerows, and weedy fields. In summer, they are found in forests of Canada, the northeastern U.S., and the northern Midwest. As winter approaches, they move southward; their range sprawls as low as southwestern California to Florida.

They nest on or very low to the ground under shrubs, grasses, or beneath dead vegetation and only use their nests one time. If a White-throated Sparrow has previously lost a low lying nest to a predator, it will likely build a subsequent nest up off the ground that same year. They stay with their mates for the summer and then go their separate ways, finding a new mate the next year. They lay 1-6 eggs per clutch. The eggs are very light blue or light greenish blue

speckled with chestnut and lilac colored markings. These birds have a one of a kind wavering whistle that sounds like its saying “Oh sweet Canada, Canada, Canada”.

Interestingly, White-throated Sparrows are polymorphic, which means that they come in two color phases: white-striped and tan-striped. The colors are genetically determined. Both males and females can be either color and even more interestingly, males of both



National Geographic: Field Guide to Birds of N. America

colors prefer white-crowned females, while females of both colors prefer tan-crowned males. White-crowned birds tend to be more aggressive as well. They form large migratory flocks that forage together and there is a hierarchy that exists between them. Males are typically dominant over females, but the color seems to have no bearing on status.

Even though they aren't very closely related and look nothing alike, White-throated Sparrows often mates with Dark-eyed Juncos and produce hybrid offspring, which look like grayish, dull colored White-throated Sparrows with white outer tail feathers.

These birds are common across their range, but according to the North American Bird Survey, their numbers declined between 1996 and 2010. Many migratory birds face habitat loss, predation by outdoor cats, and light pollution in large cities.

# FUNGIUS PROFILE: CEDAR - APPLE RUST GALL

By Seasonal Assistant Naturalist, Ashley VanSpeybroeck



**Cedar - Apple Rust Gall** stumbled upon this queer looking gall online. It was round, found on a Red Cedar tree and had ORANGE TENTACLES! It looked truly amazing and I thought that I would never be so lucky as to see one in real life.

A few days later we went on a hike to find gall specimens for our display. Looking high and low, my eye was drawn to some brown spheres in the Red Cedar tree, *Juniperus virginiana*, and there it was; a Cedar-Apple Rust Gall, *Gymnosporangium juniperi-virginianae*! At the time it was not showing its tentacles, but a few weeks later after some rain they were covered in tentacles! It was time to delve deeper into research!

This gall is formed by a fungus that requires two different trees in order to reproduce; the Red Cedar and an apple tree.



Eastern Red Cedar

The spores that are produced on the Red Cedar can only affect the apple tree and the spores produced by the apple tree can only affect the Red Cedar tree. Usually these galls do not harm the Red Cedar, but they can cause serious disease on the apple trees.

Damage to the apple tree

includes defoliation, deformed and small fruit, and even death of the tree.

The life cycle, simply put, begins with the apple tree developing yellow-orange blisters on the leaves that are surrounded by a red ring.

The top side of the leaf develops black spots called “spermogonia” that release spores into the air between June and September. These spores, called

“aeciospores”, make their way through the air and land on a Red Cedar leaf where small galls appear the following summer and mature the following spring.

After a few warm spring rains, about the time apple blossoms are in the pink stage, the galls extrude gelatinous tendrils from the circular or pocket-like depressions on all sides of the galls called “telia”. These “telia” are comprised of thousands of two-celled spores called “teliospores” which are carried by the wind to a neighboring apple tree. Swelling and drying of telial tentacles may occur 8-10 times during the season and each time, the horns push out further and expose more teliospores until the supply is exhausted. Most galls produce teliospores for only one season; thus completing the cycle!

If you have an apple tree with this gall on it, have no fear, there are fungicides out there that can help. There are also methods such as separating the trees from each other by transplanting them or chopping one down. For more information on control of this gall, please refer to appropriate pest management guidelines.



Apple Tree:  
Leaf Damage

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

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**



“The W.R.E.N.” is published quarterly by the Wapsi River Environmental Education Center and the Scott County Conservation Board.”

**Mailing List:** To receive a copy of the WREN free of charge, please send a postcard to the address above.

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