

# ***The W.R.E.N.***

***Wapsi River Environmental News***

***FALL 2021***

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

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



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*The Wapsi River Center is owned, managed and operated by the Scott County Conservation Board*

## **Wapsi Happenings**

**By: Director, Dave Murcia**



**NATIONAL RECREATION  
AND PARK ASSOCIATION**

### **NRPA Reports: "Parks protect the health of all people"**

Connecting to nature is essential. Here in Iowa, right here in Scott County, we stand free to choose how to stay connected in nature and remain healthy. Scott County Conservation parks, including the Wapsi River Environmental Education Center, are such places. Whether it is hiking, paddling, snowshoeing, foraging for wild edibles, or simply exploring our parks, take liberty to join others in our programs and maintain well-being.

In a recent report by the *National Recreation and Park Association*, key findings found:

- Nine in 10 park and recreation agencies take specific actions to ensure their health and wellness programs and services promote health equity.
- Eighty-four percent of park and recreation agencies offer in-person fitness and exercise programs.
- Seventy-two percent of park and recreation agencies offer virtual fitness and exercise programs.
- Park and recreation agencies are leaders in addressing public health threats, such as physical

inactivity, chronic diseases, social isolation and loneliness, and food access.



### **AmeriCorps Member Positions Open**

The Wapsi River Environmental Education Center of the Scott County Conservation Board is seeking qualified individuals to serve as a temporary AmeriCorps 4-H Environmental Education Member. The **Full time positions** require the successful completion of at least 1700 hours of service by term end (~ 12 months, approximately 35 -40 hours weekly). The Member will receive: a living allowance of \$16,000 to be distributed equally by month over the term of service, a \$6,345 *Segal Education Award* upon completion of the term, student loan forbearance, leadership and skill development, as well as hands-on experience.

The Wapsi River Center now seeks a motivated, outgoing person with a background in natural

resources, biology, parks/recreation, community organizing, communications, or administration. The candidate should have strong communication skills, a desire to serve with youth and diverse groups of people, and a passion for community stewardship. This is an excellent opportunity for an individual to gain valuable experience in educating about the importance of Iowa's native resources and conservation practices. The Member will assist in developing/conducting interpretive and educational programs for community outreach including school and public groups. Details are found at: <https://www.scottcountyiowa.gov/conservation/post/2021/09/17/employment-opportunity>.

### Seasonal Successes

*This summer education series was filled with healthy fun in the outdoors including: canoe/kayak experiences, wild edibles, archery, the 1st Annual Monarch Migration Fun Run, the 3rd Annual Monarch Festival, and World Rivers Day Wapsipinicon River paddle.*



Monarch Photo Booth



World Rivers Day Float on the Wapsi



### Wapsi River Center Awarded Grant

The **Center** has been awarded a Environmental Grant award of \$2500 from Iowa American Water in support of a new **Augmented Reality Interpretive Watershed Educator Topo Box**. The recognition is in support of education to improve, restore, and protect watershed(s). A big thank you to **Iowa American Water** for this recognition and support of our environmental education and watershed programs.



### Center Improvements

UPDATE: Scott County continues to make improvements at the Center and recent renovations on the old Owl's Nest Dormitory. The **Bryant Memorial Butterfly Garden** was dedicated at the Monarch Festival on September 11<sup>th</sup>, in memory of previous Wapsi Center Director Bob Bryant's wife Jeanne. Thank you Bob and Jason Bryant and family, Master Gardeners, *Friends of the Wapsi Center*, and staff for this living recognition.



Bryant Butterfly Garden Dedication





The **St. Ambrose University Menke Observatory** is also going through improvements and additions in cooperation with the QC Astronomical Society. The Center is grateful and pleased to support and cooperate in the expansion plans including new buildings and viewing pads within the prairie site. Stay tuned in.

### **Fall and Winter Field Experiences**

If you would like to **schedule an experience**, we encourage educators/groups to schedule as far in

advance as possible, and taking an active role. Our programs are focused on supporting the **Iowa core** curriculum, including **NGSS** and **STEM** elements for Iowa schools, and healthy, sustainable lifestyles. Please call (563)328-3286 for more information.

### **Bald Eagle Viewing**

Bald eagles will start arriving in November along with migrant waterfowl.

The stretch of the Wapsi River below the Center supports dozens of eagles in the night roost. The best viewing will be at the Center from December through early March, one to two hours before dusk.



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# **THANKYOU!**

**Scott County**

**Conservation Board**

**Friends of the**

**Wapsi River Center**

**Partners of Scott County  
Watersheds**

**Camp Liberty & Girls  
Scouts**

**Iowa 4H AmeriCorps**

**QC Women's Outdoor Club**

**River Action**

**Grant Ericksen, PV Schools**

**Church of Later Day Saints**

**Port Byron Homeschoolers**

**Hagen Homeschoolers**

**Bob Bryant and Family**

**Dave & Connie Huber**

**Jerry Wala**

**Victoria Graves**

**Jolinda Eggers**

**Joy Sheeley**

**Cheryl Marti**

**PJ Slobojan**

**Brandi Turner**

**Allyson Knanishu**

**Angela Meyer**

**DCSD 2<sup>nd</sup> grades**



# FALL CALENDAR

## OCTOBER

**2<sup>nd</sup> ~ Fall Ecology Day ~ 1:00 – 4:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center** ~ Join us for a spectacular fall celebration of art in nature! Activities offered will include: pinecone crafting, leaf creatures and natural weaving. Activities are geared for all ages and abilities. **Registration is limited and required. Please call (563)328-3286 to register for this program.**



**2<sup>nd</sup> ~ Menke Observatory Open House ~ (In Person or Virtually)** ~ St. Ambrose University is hosting a star party at Menke Observatory, located at the Wapsi River Environmental Education Center - Dixon, Iowa. This event is free and open to the public. Visitors may come on site or log on for a zoom link at the AmbroseAstro Facebook page. On the day of the event, the same number may be called for a recorded message that will either confirm the event or report a cancellation. For more information, contact Robert Mitchell at [MitchellRobertC@sau.edu](mailto:MitchellRobertC@sau.edu) or (563)333-6141.

**5<sup>th</sup> ~ Fall Snapshot Water Quality Monitoring ~ 8:00 A.M. to Noon ~ Surrey Heights Fire Station in Bettendorf** ~ Register now for the Spring Snapshot Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring Event! This is your opportunity to become a citizen scientist for the day and gather important data about the health of Scott County's watersheds. The valuable data gathered by volunteers will assist PSCW in raising funds for water quality improvement projects in the county. No experience is necessary, and anyone over 16 is welcome to participate. Volunteers will return at noon for a FREE pizza lunch and FREE t-shirts! To register please sign up at: [www.xstreamcleanup.org/event/fall-snapshot-water-quality-monitoring-october-5-2021](http://www.xstreamcleanup.org/event/fall-snapshot-water-quality-monitoring-october-5-2021). For any questions or for more details please email [info@partnersofscottcountywatersheds.org](mailto:info@partnersofscottcountywatersheds.org).

**13<sup>th</sup> ~ Scott County Conservation Board Meeting ~ 3:00 P.M. ~ West Lake Park** ~ The Scott County Conservation Board meets monthly at the West Lake Park Headquarters office (Gate 3) 14910 110th Ave, Davenport, Iowa 52804. Please call if interested in attending (563)328-3280.

**19<sup>th</sup> ~ Partners of Scott County Watersheds Forum ~ Noon to 1:00 P.M. ~ Via Zoom ~ ~ Ray Wolf** presenting as a Master Gardener and will be discussing landscaping for water quality improvement. Register at [www.partnersofscottcountywatersheds.org](http://www.partnersofscottcountywatersheds.org).

**21<sup>st</sup> ~ Friends of the Wapsi Center Meeting ~ 6:30 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center** ~ Come learn about the current happenings at the Wapsi River Center. Please call if you are interested in attending (563)328-3286.

**23<sup>rd</sup> ~ Zombie Archery ~ 1:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center** ~ Learn how to use a bow and arrow in this Halloween themed, informative, and fun hands-on class. You'll learn safety and proper archery techniques according to National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP) guidelines. Children must be in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade and above to participate and accompanied by an adult. Adults are welcome to participate as well! Your target will be Zombies! This program is free and weather permitting. Park in Parking Lot A and meet at the observatory. **Registration is limited and required. Please call (563)328-3286 to register for this program.**



**23<sup>rd</sup> ~ The Great Atlatl Pumpkin Hunt ~ 3:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center** ~ Join Naturalist Mike Granger for a chance to hunt with an atlatl, a primitive hunting weapon originally used to hunt mastodon and bison. Large target pumpkins and real pumpkins will be set out as targets. Fun for the whole family and outdoor enthusiasts alike!!! **Registration is limited and required. Please call (563)328-3286 to register for this program.**

**23<sup>rd</sup> ~ Halloween Hike ~ 6:30 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center** ~ Join Naturalist Mike Granger for an educational adventure to learn about mysterious and misunderstood animals. At 5:00 P.M. there will be an open fire for grilling. Please bring your own food items and we will provide the fire and roasting sticks! The hike will begin at 6:30 P.M. with a spooky scavenger hunt afterwards.



Please bring a flashlight! Family fun for everyone. **Registration is limited and required. Please call to register for this program (563)328-3286.**

**31<sup>st</sup> ~ Happy Halloween!**

## NOVEMBER

**10<sup>th</sup> ~ Scott County Conservation Board Meeting ~ 3:00 P.M. ~ West Lake Park ~** The Scott County Conservation Board meets monthly at the West Lake Park Headquarters office (Gate 3) 14910 110th Ave, Davenport, Iowa 52804. Please call if interested in attending (563)328-3280.

**11<sup>th</sup> ~ HOLIDAY ~ County offices will be closed in observance of the Holiday.**

**13<sup>th</sup> ~ Wild Edible Workshop ~ 10:00 A.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~** Join Naturalist Becky to learn about the many wild edibles in your own neck of the woods. We will focus on foraging basics, foraging safety, identifying plants, and preparing wild edibles. We will take a hike outdoors to identify some of the fall wild edibles available during this time. At the end of the program, you will get to sample some wild flavors! **Registration is limited and required. Please call (563)328-3286 to register for this program.**



**13<sup>th</sup> ~ Cocoa Picasso ~ 1:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~** Join Naturalist Paige to learn about some common backyard birds that you can see all through the year and create a fun bird-themed painting with step-by-step instructions. Hot cocoa will be provided to enjoy as we paint. All ages welcome. This program costs \$5/canvas. **Registration is limited and required. Please call (563)328-3286 to register for this program.**

**16<sup>th</sup> ~ Partners of Scott County Watersheds Forum ~ Noon to 1:00 P.M. ~ Via Zoom ~** PSCW Snapshot wrap up – Representatives of the Partners of Scott County Watersheds will be discussing the analysis of this past year's Snapshot data, how it fits into the trending and 20 years of previous data, event and workshop recap, etc. Register at [www.partnersofscottcountywatersheds.org](http://www.partnersofscottcountywatersheds.org).

**18<sup>th</sup> ~ Friends of the Wapsi Center Meeting ~ 6:30 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center and virtually ~** Come learn about the current happenings at the Wapsi River Center. Please call if you are interested in attending (563)328-3286.

**20<sup>th</sup> ~ Harvest Wreath Workshop 10:00 A.M. ~ Wapsi River Center** Join naturalist Mike Granger to create a harvest wreath. Participants will create a grapevine



base and then decorate it with seeds, pods, corn husks and cobs. Wreath kits are \$5.00 each. Participants may bring items to decorate and/or share. **Registration is limited and required. Please call (563)328-3286 to register for this program.**

**20<sup>th</sup> ~ Leave No Trace Awareness Workshop ~ 1:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center (Red Tail Lodge) ~** Join Director Dave Murcia for an introduction to the 7 **Principles of Outdoor Ethics**. The workshop will cover Leave No Trace principles that protect the outdoors while minimizing our impacts to the land, soil, vegetation, water, wildlife, cultural resources and other visitors. Upon completion, this entry level workshop offers a Certificate of Completion. Dress appropriately and bring water. **Registration is limited and required. Please call (563)328-3286 to register for this program.**



**20<sup>th</sup> ~ "Songs for the Earth and Her Beings" ~ 2:00-3:30 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~** Join Lucia Dryanski (from the Friends of the Wapsi center) and members of the Quad-Cities Community Sing group to sing songs of the earth, stars, elements and more. Weather permitting, we will gather outdoors around a fire to join our voices in song. All songs (mostly rounds, chants, and similar types) are taught, and you don't need to be a talented singer to join in! Bring a chair (some benches will also be available), a beverage to sip on, and prepare to have fun! *"Let the circle be wide 'round the fireside, and we'll soon make room for you. Let your heart have no fear, there are no strangers here---just friends that we never knew."* -- Tommy Sands. (Note: Because of the nature of this activity, given the COVID pandemic, if we have to move indoors, masks will be required. We also request that all non-vaccinated participants mask and social distance even outdoors). **Registration is limited and required. Please call (563)328-3286 to register for this program.**

**25 & 26<sup>th</sup> ~ HOLIDAY ~ County offices will be closed in observance of the Holiday.**

**28<sup>th</sup> ~ Pioneer Village Annual Christmas Walk ~ Noon – 4:00 P.M. ~ Dan Nagel Walnut Grove ~** Pioneer Village ~ Visit Santa and take your own photos, kids can make Christmas crafts, write a letter to Santa or make reindeer food, listen to Old Time



Christmas music in the church, buy chili, cookies, hot drinks and unique gifts, watch blacksmithing and enjoy Christmas decorations throughout the Village. Well-mannered pets are welcome on the grounds AND they can visit Santa too! However, pets are not allowed in the soda fountain or saloon. Admission is pet supplies or a \$ donation which will go to the Scott County Humane Society, and Down By the Creek Companion Animal Sanctuary.



**4<sup>th</sup> ~ Loggy Deer Workshop ~ 1:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center** ~ Join naturalist Mike Granger to learn how to make "Loggy Deer". These are great for holiday decorating or they make a wonderful gift. Kits are \$10.00 each and supplies are limited. Please bring your own hammer! **Registration is limited and required. Please call (563) 328-3286 to register for this program.**



## DECEMBER

**4<sup>th</sup> ~ Homemade Gifts ~ 10:00 A.M. ~ Wapsi River Center** ~ Join staff to create your own handmade personalized gifts for the holiday season (or enjoy them yourself if you prefer)! This program is suitable for all ages, although adult supervision is required for children under 16. Things to make include but are not limited to: homemade body butter, tea, ornaments, and gift bags. The program fee is \$5/person. **Registration is limited and required. Please call (563)328-3286 to register for this program.**



**8<sup>th</sup> ~ Scott County Conservation Board Meeting ~ 3:00 P.M. ~ West Lake Park** ~ The Scott County Conservation Board meets monthly at the West Lake Park Headquarters office (Gate 3) 14910 110th Ave, Davenport, Iowa 52804. Please call if interested in attending (563)328-3280.

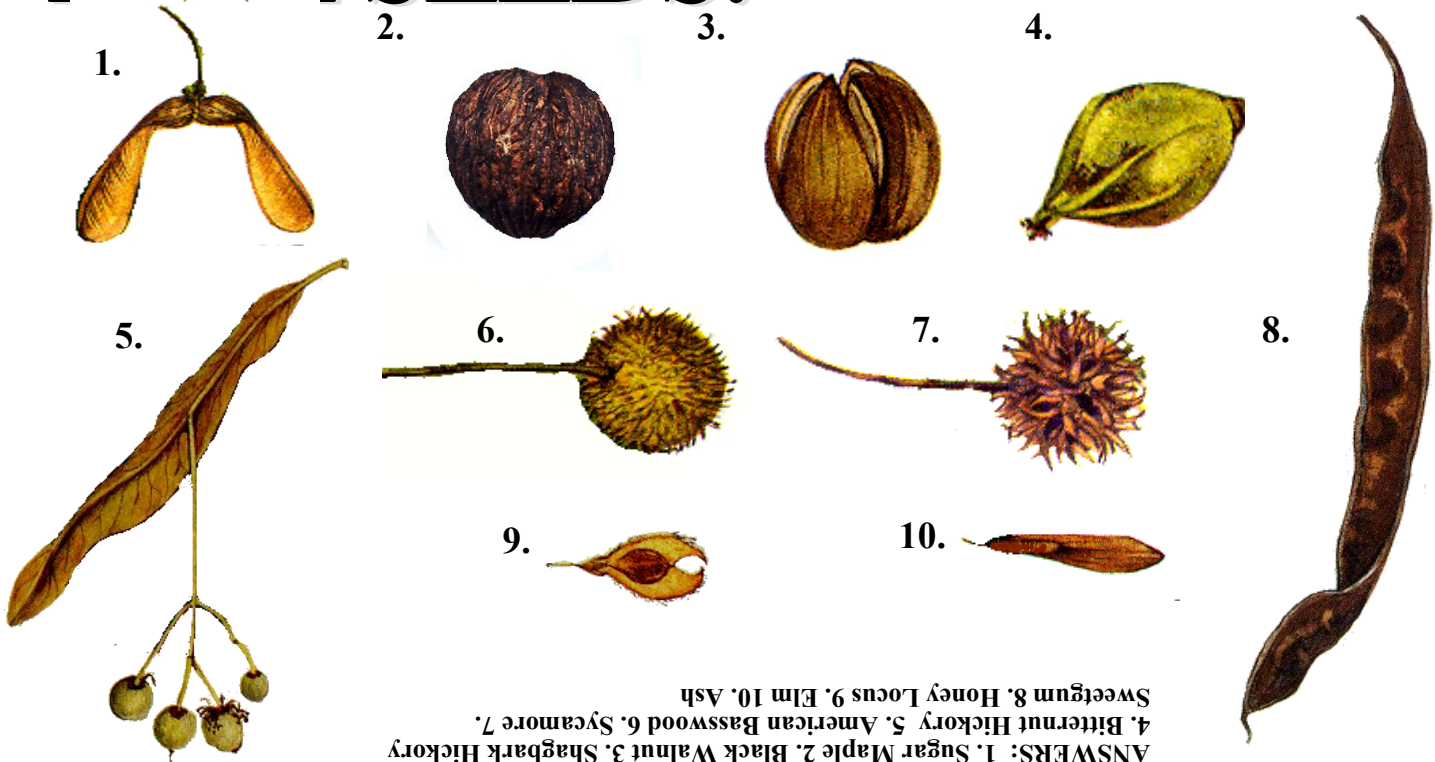


**23<sup>rd</sup> -24<sup>th</sup> ~ HOLIDAY ~ County offices will be closed in observance of the Holiday.**

**31<sup>st</sup> ~ HOLIDAY ~ County offices will be closed in observance of the Holiday.**

# FALL SEEDS!

Can you name these common tree seeds. Answers are below!!



ANSWERS: 1. Sugar Maple 2. Black Walnut 3. Shagbark Hickory 4. Bitternut Hickory 5. American Basswood 6. Sycamore 7. Sweetgum 8. Honey Locust 9. Elm 10. Ash

# FRIENDS PROFILE: LUCIA DRYANSKI

## STATS:

**Friends Member Since:** 2005(?)ish

**Favorite Plant:** Jack-in-the-Pulpit

**Favorite bird:** Tufted Titmouse

**Favorite Water Bird:** Great Blue Heron

**Favorite Tree:** Sugar Maple

**Favorite Book:** The Mists of Avalon, Marion Zimmer Bradley

**Favorite Nature Book:** Sisters of the Earth: Women's Prose and Poetry About Nature, Lorraine Anderson, ed.

**Favorite Movie:** Fried Green Tomatoes

Having grown up in Chicago, Lucia's early experiences in nature were limited. As a Girl Scout she went to summer camp in Wisconsin, and visited her relatives' cabin on Wonder Lake, swimming and hanging around with her grandfather while he fished. Eventually, as part of a High School group, she attended a program called "Underway" at Shawnee National Forest in Southern Illinois. For the first time she went backpacking, wilderness camping, spelunking, rock climbing and rappelling. She was hooked, and the experience served her well in her 35 year relationship with her husband Bill, a former National Park Ranger. In the years since, she has enjoyed hiking, a little backpacking, nature study, camping, canoeing, snowshoeing and kayaking. She progressively moved farther and farther from the big city life, eventually landing with Bill and their rescue pets on 40 acres in

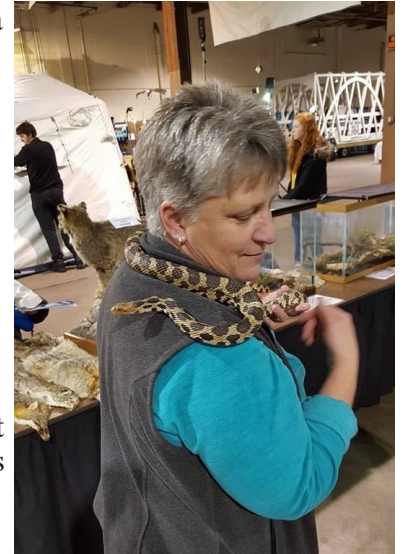
rural Donahue, IA, only a few miles from the Wapsi Center. She's employed as a nurse.

Lucia was encouraged to join the Friends of the Wapsi by Dottie Wala (then the president of the Friends group). Her first meeting was the Friends' annual meeting/potluck...great folks and great food...not a bad first impression! As a Friends member, she has participated in

hosting the Center on weekends, work days, Winter Fun Day, Bald Eagle Days, Monarch festival, and presented a workshop on making candles with recycled wax. She is lead organizer of the Friend's gift shop at the Eco Center. Her favorite volunteer activity at the Center is doing trail maintenance during workdays.

"We need to reach a balance...spending time in nature, because it's important to our humanity, and spending time in political activism, because it's essential that we advocate for the earth before it's too late."

Besides being a Friends member, Lucia loves to read, garden, bake, and participates in the local Quad-Cities Community Sing.

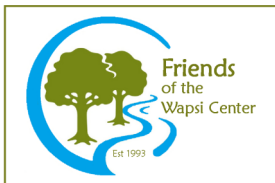


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**"BECOME A WAPSI RIVER CENTER FRIENDS MEMBER TODAY!"**

**[www.scottcountyiowa.com/conservation/Wapsi-friends](http://www.scottcountyiowa.com/conservation/Wapsi-friends)**

**[www.facebook.com/FriendsOfTheWapsiCenter](https://www.facebook.com/FriendsOfTheWapsiCenter)**



The Friends of the Wapsi Center, Inc. organized in 1993, is a citizens' support group dedicated to encouraging the public use and enjoyment of the Wapsi River Environmental Education Center and to the preservation of the Center's natural resources for present and future generations. Please contact the Wapsi River Center for more information (563) 328-3286.

**YES I WOULD LIKE TO BE A FRIENDS MEMBER:** \_\_\_\_\_

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

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**City** \_\_\_\_\_ **State** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone Number** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email Address** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **\$10.00 newsletter**

\_\_\_\_\_ **\$20.00 contributing member**

\_\_\_\_\_ **\$30.00 supporting member**

**PLEASE SEND MEMBERSHIP FORM TO:**

Friends of the Wapsi "Treasurer" / 31555 52nd AVENUE / DIXON, IOWA 52745

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

# ANIMAL PROFILE: WHEEL BUG

By Naturalist Mike Granger



**Wheel Bug; Clipart**

Let me introduce to you an amazing insect that you might encounter in the fall, the wheel bug, *Arius cristatus*. Wheel bugs are some of the most bizarre and amazing creatures in the insect world. They look like they should be featured in a movie about alien invaders. Recently I found a wheel bug on our prairie. The creature was over an inch long, had six long legs, an elongated head, and a spiked wheel-shaped crest on its back. I handled it gently, and then let it go. Thankfully I didn't handle it roughly for I later learned that handling one is not the best idea!

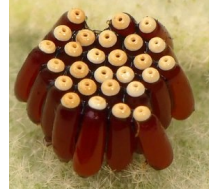
The wheel bug belongs to a group of insects which belong to the Order Hemiptera which are commonly known as "true bugs". Insects in this group have a distinguishing feature on the front wings which are leathery at the base, and fold back, overlapping over the abdomen. The other unique characteristic is a triangular shape between the wings, known as the scutellum. Many common insects belong to this group including boxelder bugs, stink bugs, back swimmers, water boatmen and giant water bugs.

Insects that belong to this order also have piercing tube like mouthparts. Many are plant feeders using mouth to pierce and suck up plant juices, while others are predators actively hunting other insects. To capture prey the wheel bug holds its prey down with its long front legs. After piercing their prey, fluid is injected to dissolve the inner tissues that are later sucked up. They feed on their prey from the inside out. Sticking a plastic straw into a juice box is the best way to explain how these creatures feed.

Wheel bugs are categorized as assassin bugs (Family Reduviidae). The group includes 160 species in North America. All are predatory, actively hunting for their food. Wheel bugs are large insects up to 1 ½ inches long, they can be found in gardens and prairies. They are often found hunting on goldenrod blossoms, locust trees, or cultivated fruit trees. Adult wheel bugs are greyish brown in color. Females are large measuring up to 1 ½ inches long, while males are half their size. They have long legs, long antennae, a slender head with a piercing tube for a mouth. Their

abdomens are V-shaped on the bottom like the bottom of a boat. Their name comes from the wheel or comb like crest on their backs.

Wheel bugs undergo incomplete metamorphosis (egg – nymph – adult). Eggs are laid on trees usually 4 foot below a limb or overhanging branch. The eggs look like little brown bottles with white caps that are laid side by side, in a hexagonal cluster. The eggs overwinter, remaining unnoticed until the following summer. When they hatch the



**Wheel Bug eggs; clipart**



**Wheel Bug Nymph; Wikipedia**

young nymphs are black with bright red abdomens. Nymphs begin to actively hunt for prey. Nymphs will undergo 5 molts before turning into adults. Young wheel bugs capture nuisance caterpillars or different insect species and are considered beneficial in a forest or garden setting.

I mentioned before that handling a wheel bug might not be the best idea for when disturbed or handled roughly adult wheel bugs can inflict a painful bite. It has been said that its bite hurts worse than sting from a bee or wasp causing numbness for several days, plus burning and redness at the bite site. Healing may take up to two weeks. So it is best not to capture or handle wheel bugs, and I am now the wiser. Instead, just admire or take photos.

It is always fascinating to learn about our planet's amazing creatures. The Wheel bug definitely is a candidate for the strange and bizarre. Long legs, antennae, spiked wheel on its back and a sharp piercing beak for a mouth make them a truly wonderful find. I have been looking occasionally out on our prairie in the hopes of finding another one of these special creatures. Next time you are in the field or garden, see if you might find the amazing Wheel bug!



**Wheel Bug; Clipart**



# PUMPKINS, GOURDS, & SQUASH, OH MY!

By Assistant Naturalist Paige Owings

Well folks, it's that time of year again. The time everyone has been waiting for — PUMPKIN SPICE! I know not everyone is fond of this seasonal flavor/scent, but chances are most people are familiar with it and associate it with fall. So, as we transition into fall, I thought we'd discuss a little about pumpkins (and other squashes) and their claim to fame.

First, did you know that pumpkins are a squash, and that squashes are actually considered fruits? Now, the good old fruit vs vegetable debate can be a very confusing topic in and of itself, so let's simplify that

before we move on. A fruit can be described as an edible body that originates from a plant's flower and contains seeds inside (pumpkins do both!) while a vegetable is any other part of the plant like the leaves, stem, or roots (think of lettuce or a carrot).



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So, now that that's out of the way, let's look a little more at what makes these giant orange fruits so incredibly special!

Pumpkins most likely originated in Central America as a much smaller, less tasty, version of what we know today. Archaeological evidence suggests that people discovered the flesh was edible and began to cultivate pumpkins as one of the very first crops as many as 7,500 years ago!! One of the most valuable traits about pumpkins as well as other hard squashes, is that they keep for a very long time because the thick rind offers protection from pests and drying out. This helped people have access to fresh produce even during the coldest months. Bonus!

As time passed, people discovered that in addition to the fleshy "meat" of the pumpkins, the flowers of pumpkins (and other squashes), as well as the seeds, are actually edible, too. In fact, pumpkin seeds are extremely healthy for you! They are high in fiber, high in antioxidants, and high in several vitamins and minerals including magnesium and healthy fats. If you would like to enjoy some of these delicious and healthy seeds, here is one of my favorite recipes:

Since we're on the topic of recipes, let's visit

1. Seeds can be harvested from jack-o-lantern pumpkins especially if you are already carving some for Halloween!
2. Rinse all the meaty bits off of the seeds
3. Preheat oven to 350 F
4. Coat seeds lightly in olive oil
5. Sprinkle seeds with sea salt and black pepper, and optional parsley flakes and parmesan cheese
6. Roast in the oven until crunchy! (~20 minutes) Enjoy!



Google Images

another classic fall favorite—pumpkin pie! The first pumpkin "pie" was far different than that which we know and love. In fact there is a recipe from the 1600s explaining how it was made. Essentially, there was no crust and the rind of the pumpkin was used as the container, which was placed directly on the coals to roast. Milk, honey, and spices were added to sweeten the pumpkin "meat" and tah dah! The first known pumpkin dessert was born!



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Of course, pumpkins are not the only squashes of value. There are many other edible varieties including zucchini, acorn squash, yellow squash, and more! There is also the well-known birdhouse gourd. While not edible, these are quite valuable when dried! Seeds are removed and the hard shell can be used for a variety of natural containers like cups and bowls. They can also be made into cute bird houses! Talk about crafting for conservation!



Google Images

I hope you enjoyed learning a little about the famous fall fruit, the pumpkin, and I hope you all get an opportunity to enjoy your favorite fall treats this season, be it pumpkin or other!

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

**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.

### **Scott County Conservation Board**

**Members:**

|                       |              |
|-----------------------|--------------|
| Rich Mohr             | Doug Grenier |
| John “Skip” O’Donnell | Beth McAleer |
| Carol Fennelly        |              |

**Director:**

Roger Kean

### **Phone Numbers**

Wapsi River Environmental Education Center  
(563) 328-3286

Scott County Conservation Board  
(563) 328-3280

### **Wapsi River Environmental Education Center Staff**

Dave Murcia, Director/Naturalist  
Mike Granger, Naturalist  
Becky Baugh, Naturalist  
Paige Owings, Assistant Seasonal Naturalist

**PROUD MEMBER**



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.