

The W.R.E.N.

Wapsi River Environmental News

SPRING 2023

Scott County Conservation Board's Environmental Education Newsletter

www.scottcountyjowa.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



How Deep Are Your Footprints?

In a world of eight billion people, a world with only three percent fresh water <https://waterkeeper.org/who-we-are/>, a state that ranks last in public use lands, only 0.1% of Americans growing their own food <https://farmersfootprint.us/>, rising energy needs and pollution <https://childrenshealthdefense.org/defender/farm-bill-biodiverse-regenerative-food-systems-cd/>, how deep does your footprint last where you live, work, and play? Do you shop and buy local? <https://www.rereader.com/> Do you plan and are you prepared? Are you eco-friendly?

There is no substitute for nature and the freedom of the outdoors is for everyone, and it all has an impact, specifically by humans. There is more use and over use, resulting in health risks to humans, wildlife, climate, and our choices in our quality of life.

As a **Community Partner**, Scott County Conservation at the Wapsi River Center are **Proud Partners**. **Leave No Trace** empowers people to be the solution to conservation. No matter where or why you get outside, it's yours to protect. **Leave No Trace** is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization providing **Leave No Trace** programs, education, training and outreach in all 50 states and more than 100 countries around the globe. Utilizing the power of science, education for all, and stewardship to support and protect nature, **Leave No Trace**. Learn more at: www.LNT.org

Outdoor enthusiasts, naturalists, and freedom loving explorers, keep meandering for innovative, and forward thinking alternatives to lifestyle changes in health and wellness for mind, body, spirit, and earth.

Field Experiences

An **emphasis on supporting the Iowa Core and Next Generation Science Standards** will enhance programming for school and public both. If you are an educator and would like to schedule a winter, spring or summer field experience, we recommend that you call well in advance if possible and contact us at (563)328-3286.

Sponsor an Animal

If you are interested in sponsoring an educational animal, please contact us at (563)328-3286 for details.



Center Update

As we enter Spring, the last Phase of the old **Owl's Nest Dormitory** building renovations are now underway including main exhibit flooring and display planning/install. The project continues to be a team and community partner effort and includes community craftsmen of all trades. Stay tuned to our websites for more.



Tallgrass Prairie
C E N T E R

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA

Restoring a National Treasure

UNI Tallgrass Prairie Root Granted

Thank you to the *UNI Tallgrass Prairie Center* and the *Iowa Living Roadway Trust Fund* for acknowledging and awarding our environmental education program with a tallgrass prairie root for exhibit. The specimen includes big bluestem grass and compass plant roots and reflects the intrinsic and innate value these plants offer not only our prairie habitats, but us as human species on earth. The display is expected to be complete for our new education building, thanks to our SCCB . Please stay tuned to our websites for when the exhibit can be viewed, and until then consider exploring the Wapsi Center and the grounds that make Iowa home to all creatures great or small.

Partners of Scott County Watersheds



Give 100% for Our 3%!

As Spring flows into our lives, consider volunteering for the many opportunities to protect, conserve, and

preserve our most vital of natural resources, **water**. Our world freshwater sources cover only about three percent of this world, yet our population has grown to over eight billion. Whether you are a farmer, rancher, gardener, fisherman, boater, student, or a parent, *water is life!* As a Board Member of the *Partners of Scott County Watersheds*, I encourage you honor our waters, by making time to volunteer in the many opportunities offered locally. Please visit the following partners to give your time:

PARTNERS OF SCOTT COUNTY WATERSHEDS:

www.partnersofscottcountywatersheds.org/volunteering-2/



LIVING LANDS AND WATERS:

www.livinglandsandwaters.org/what-we-do/our-projects/all-projects.html



RIVERACTION

RIVER ACTION:

www.riveraction.org/volunteer

X_STREAM CLEANUP:

<https://xstreamcleanup.org/>

QUAD CITIES~I LIVE HERE:

www.ilivehereqc.org/



iLivehere
myhome ourcommunity

KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL AFFILIATE

SPRING EVENTS

APRIL

1st ~ Dan Nagle Walnut Grove Pioneer Village

Opens ~ The Dan Nagle Walnut Grove Pioneer Village opens for the 2023 Season. Visitors may tour the site from 9:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. through October 31st. Call (563)328-3283 for more information.

1st ~ Buffalo Bill Cody Homestead Opens. The Buffalo Bill Cody Homestead opens for the 2023 season. Visitors may tour the site from 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. through October 31st. Call (563)225-2981 for more information.

12th ~ Scott County Conservation Board Meeting ~ 3:00 P.M. ~ West Lake Park (Gate # 3) The Scott County Conservation Board normally meets the second Wednesday of every month at the West Lake Park Headquarters office, 14910 110th Ave, Davenport, Iowa 52804. The public and press are encouraged to participate. Please call (563)328-3281 for more information.

19th ~ Homeschool Days ~ 10:30 A.M. to 2:30 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Once a month the Wapsi River EE Center will be hosting a day just for homeschoolers! Join us for themed programming led by our Naturalists! The goal of this series is to immerse children in the natural world and help them experience seasonal phenomena in a hands-on way. Most appropriate for K-8th grades, though all ages welcome. Suggested donation of \$1/student. Please come prepared for the weather because much of the planned programming will take place outdoors. Please bring a lunch. Registration is limited and required by calling (563)328-3286. Registration opens the first of each month.

20th ~ Friends of the Wapsi Center Meeting ~ 6:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center & Virtually ~ Learn about the current happenings at the Wapsi River Center. This meeting will be virtual and in-person. Please call for more information (563)328-3286.

22nd ~ Earth Day!



22nd ~ Spring Volunteer Stewardship Workday ~ 9:00 A.M. – Noon ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Come celebrate Earth Day at the Wapsi River Center. Join the *Friends of the Wapsi Center* and Staff for our annual Spring Volunteer Workday. The workday will focus on habitat clean-up and sprucing up the facilities for upcoming events. All ages and skill levels are welcome, so bring the whole family and invite a friend! Please bring a water bottle, appropriate clothing, and work gloves. Afterwards, enjoy light refreshments by the *Friends of the Wapsi Center*. Please call to register at (563)328-3286.



22nd ~ If You Can't Beat It, Eat It: Foraging for Invasive and Noxious Edible Plants ~ 1:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Come learn about the plants where rules don't apply! Invasive plants are unfortunately almost everywhere, but some of them are edible! Naturalist Becky will teach you about foraging for local edible invasive species. We will focus on foraging basics, foraging safety, identifying plants, and preparing the edible invasive plants. We will take a hike outdoors to identify some of the invasive species that are in our area. Registration is required by calling (563) 328-3286.

22nd ~ Herping Experience ~ 4:30 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Join Iowa 4-H AmeriCorps Educator Emma to learn about Reptiles and Amphibians (herps), that call the Wapsi River Center their home! Explore what makes a good habitat and look for wild herps first hand! This event will include a hike, please dress accordingly, bring water and bug spray, and be ready for a great time! Registration required by calling (563) 328-3286.

29th ~ Super Critters: Insects ~ 10:00 A.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Join Iowa 4-H AmeriCorps Educator Emma to learn about different superpowers in nature! At this program we will focus on insects and their SUPER ADAPTATIONS! We will be constructing insect hotels for you to take home to help your local insects! Please bring a plastic bottle to use for your hotel. Registration is required by calling (563)328-3286.



29th ~ Menke Observatory Astronomy Day (QCAS) ~ Dusk ~ Monsignor Menke Observatory ~ Join

representatives from the Quad Cities Astronomical Society for a tour of the night sky. Please check www.qcastro.org or the Quad Cities Astronomical Society Facebook page on the day of the event to find out if weather conditions will permit viewing.

MAY

2nd ~ Spring Snapshot Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring Event ~ 9:00 to Noon ~ Davenport Public Works

~ 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 (Partners of Scott County Watersheds) in raising funds for water quality improvement



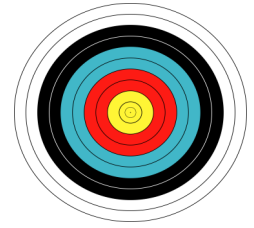
projects in the county. No experience is necessary, and anyone over 16 is welcome to participate! Volunteers will meet at **Davenport Public Works** for a brief overview about water quality and quick training on how to collect the data. During this time, volunteers will meet their data collection group and enjoy some coffee and donuts. After training, groups will go collect data from 5-7 designated sites around Scott County. The data collected includes pH, nitrogen, chloride, transparency, and more. After collecting this information from each site, groups will meet back at the Davenport Public Works for free pizza and t-shirts! The data collected from our Snapshots is entered into the largest water quality database in Iowa! PSCW then analyzes the data for patterns and trends to identify any areas of impairment. With this information, we work with agencies and individuals to implement projects and improve our county's water quality. Register today at www.xstreamcleanup.org/

6th ~ 2023 Earth Day Fair presented by PACG ~ 9:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M. ~ Freight House Farmers Market, Davenport, IA

~ Join the *Friends of the Wapsi Center* at this year's Earth Day Fair at the Freight House Farmers Market. Learn what our local organizations are doing to invest in our planet and our community with many environmental organizations in attendance. This event is free and family-friendly.

6th ~ Archery Basics ~ 10:00 A.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Learn how to use a bow and arrow in this informative and fun hands-on class. You will learn

safety and proper archery techniques according to National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP) guidelines. Children must be in the 4th grade and above and accompanied by an adult to participate. Adults are welcome to participate as well! This program is free and weather permitting. Park in Parking Lot A and meet at the observatory. Registration is required by calling (563)328-3286.



6th ~ Volunteer Round-Up and Docent Training ~ 1:00 P.M. – 2:30 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ The

Friends of the Wapsi Center is looking for more volunteers! Will you join us? This is your chance to learn more about the Wapsi River Center and how to get involved. Share your passion for the environment with like-minded people and learn how to host the Eagle View Eco-Center. No experience necessary! Registration is required by calling (563)328-3286.

6th ~ Wildflower Hike ~ 3:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center

~ Join Naturalist Mike Granger for a lesson on spring woodland wildflowers at the Wapsi River Center. May apple, bloodroot, and hepatica are just some of the wildflowers to discover. Please wear sturdy waterproof shoes for this woodland adventure. Registration is required by calling (563)328-3286.



6th ~ Frog and Toad Chorus Hike ~ 6:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Come learn about the frogs and toads of Iowa and experience the sounds of the season, in search of the frogs and toads which inhabit the Wapsi River Center. Please bring a flashlight and waterproof footwear. Registration is required by calling (563)328-3286.

10th ~ Scott County Conservation Board Meeting ~ 3:00 P.M. ~ West Lake Park (Gate # 3) The Scott County Conservation Board normally meets the second Wednesday of every month at the West Lake Park Headquarters office, 14910 110th Ave, Davenport, Iowa 52804. The public and press are encouraged to participate. Please call (563)328-3281 for more information.

11th ~ Building Better Birders Citizen Science Workshop ~ 9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Join host Scott County Conservation for a citizen science workshop on building better birders. This workshop will be conducted by Kelly McKay (Bio Eco Research and Monitoring Center), with assistance from Mark Roberts (Clinton County Conservation), Brian Ritter & James Wiebler (Nahant Marsh Ed. Center). Topics include: "The Upland Forest Birds of Iowa" and "The Floodplain Forest Birds of Iowa". The day will end with a Birding Hike at Wapsi River Environmental Education Center. The mission of the workshop is to create birders across Iowa, that contribute knowledge about birds through participation in Citizen Science programs such as Christmas Bird Counts, Great Backyard Bird Counts, Project FeederWatch, etc. Funding for this workshop was provided by the Resource Enhancement and Protection – Conservation Education Program (REAP CEP). Please call to register today (563)328-3286.



13th ~ Menke Star Party (St. Ambrose) ~ Dusk ~ Monsignor Menke Observatory ~ 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.

17th ~ Homeschool Days ~ 10:30 A.M. to 2:30 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Once a month the Wapsi River EE Center will be hosting a day just for homeschoolers! Join us for themed programming led by our Naturalists! The goal of this series is to immerse children in the natural world and help them experience seasonal phenomena in a hands-on way. Most appropriate for K-8th grades, though all ages welcome. Suggested donation of \$1/student. Please come prepared for the weather because much of the planned programming will take place outdoors. Please bring a lunch. Registration is limited and required by calling (563)328-3286. Registration opens the first of each month.

18th ~ Friends of the Wapsi Center Meeting ~ 6:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center & Virtually ~ Learn about the current happenings at the Wapsi River Center. This meeting will be virtual and in person. Please call for more information (563)328-3286.

20th ~ Paint By Nature ~ 10:00 A.M. to Noon ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Enjoy nature in a creative way

at this family-friendly program! Join Naturalist Paige to create a nature themed painting with guided step-by-step instructions. All supplies will be provided. \$5/canvas (payable by cash or check at the program). If weather allows, the class will take place outdoors, so please come prepared. Registration is required by calling (563)328-3286.



20th ~ Songs of the Earth and Her Beings (Spring Edition) ~ 1:00 P.M. to 2:30 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Join Friends' member Lucia Dryanski and members of the Quad Cities Community Sing group to join in singing songs honoring nature, the earth, the cosmos and more. **YOU DO NOT NEED TO BE A SINGER OR TO READ MUSIC IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE!!!** The focus of Community Singing is to build community through singing together (as opposed to seeking perfection or performance). All songs are taught through a call and response format, and repetition assures no one is left behind. Weather permitting, we will gather around a fire outside of Redtail Lodge; if the weather is bad, we will move inside Redtail Lodge. We request that you refrain from wearing strong scents in order that those who are sensitive may participate. Registration is required by calling (563)328-3286.

20th ~ Menke Star Party (QCAS) ~ Dusk ~ Monsignor Menke Observatory ~ Join representatives from the Quad Cities Astronomical Society for a tour of the night sky. Please check www.qcastro.org or the Quad Cities Astronomical Society Facebook page on the day of the event to find out if weather conditions will permit viewing.

27th ~ Herping Experience ~ 10:00 A.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Join Iowa 4-H AmeriCorps Educator Emma to learn about Reptiles and Amphibians (herps) that call the Wapsi River Center their home! Explore what makes a good habitat and look for wild herps first hand! This event will include a hike, please dress accordingly, bring water and bug spray, and be ready for a great time! Registration is required by calling (563)328-3286.

28th & 29th ~ Heritage Days ~11:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. (Daily) ~ Dan Nagle Walnut Grove Pioneer Village ~ Enjoy the sights, sounds and smells of yesteryear! The past will come to life as the Village interpreters and actors recreate pioneer life. There will be pioneer craft demonstrations, live music and

performances by the Wapsi Wranglers. Admission is \$2 for Adult and \$1 for Children. Please call (563)328-3283 for more information.

29th ~ Holiday ~ County offices will be closed in observance of the holiday.

31st ~ Summer Reading Kickoff ~ 4:00 P.M. – 6:30 P.M. ~ QC Botanical Center, Rock Island, IL ~ Join the QC Botanical Center in hosting the Rock Island Library Summer Reading Kick-off! The Wapsi River Center along with other partners will have an interactive booth. The event is free, with no registration, and open to all community members.

JUNE

2nd – 4th ~ Free Fishing Weekend ~ Sport fishing license requirements have been waived for residents of Iowa by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources the weekend of June 2nd – 4th, 2023.

3rd ~ Bat House Workshop ~ 7:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Head out to the Wapsi Center to learn about our local bats! Activities include a small lesson, building bat houses and a bat hike. An open campfire for roasting will be available from 6:00 to 7:00 P.M. (roasting sticks are available; Bring your own food). Hike and campfire weather-dependent. \$10 per bat house kit. BYOH – “Bring Your Own Hammer”. Registration is required by calling (563)328-3286.



7th ~ Kayak Experience ~ 10:00 A.M. & 1:00 P.M. ~ Scott County Park, Pride Lake ~ Join the Wapsi River staff for an adventure with kayaks. Program includes all equipment use, covers safety, techniques, and taking a tour of Pride Lake. You may bring your own vessel/PFD, though it must comply with IADNR regulations. Reminder- this program is determined by weather and site conditions, weight capacity loads for kayaks are 250-300 lbs./solo and 425-475 lbs./tandem. Dress appropriately, bring water, and call to register for a limited seat at (563)328-3286.

8th ~ Birds of Prey ~ 10:00 A.M. ~ Davenport Public Library (Eastern Avenue Branch) ~ Join Wapsi River EE Center Director Dave Murcia for *Wild Raptors of Iowa*- Participants will learn about native raptors of Iowa, habitats, ecology, and human impacts to these carnivore creatures. Please call the library

(563)326-7832 for more information.

10th - Pollinator Workshop ~ 10:00 A.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Learn about the cause and effect of the decline in pollinator populations through The Great Sunflower Project. You will also learn about native bee species and what you can do to support their populations. Then, participate in a pollinator count and make insect hotels that you can take home and install in your own garden using recyclable items. Please bring empty 1 or 2 liter bottles or empty soup or pasta cans for the insect hotels. Registration is required by calling (563)328-3286.

10th ~ Paint By Nature ~ 1:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Enjoy nature in a creative way at this family-friendly program! Join Naturalist Paige to create a nature themed painting with guided step-by-step instructions. All supplies will be provided. \$5/canvas (payable by cash or check at the program). If weather allows, the class will take place outdoors, so please come prepared. Registration is required by calling (563)328-3286.

12th ~ Teaching Outdoor Skills: Fish Iowa! Basic Spincasting (Professional Development) ~ 8:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ The Iowa DNR will offer professional development courses for Teaching Outdoor Skills: Fish Iowa! Basic Spincasting (offered for recertification or graduate credit). This blended course will acquaint participants with the *Fish Iowa!* Basic Spincasting teaching module and a variety of other resources to teach fishing in a variety of settings. Participants will learn fishing basics including fish identification, fishing locations, casting techniques, and cleaning and cooking fish. The registration fee includes lunch, teaching modules, and an instructor kit. Please see special add for more details and how to register.

13th ~ Raptors Along the River, Channel Cat Talks ~ 9:00 A.M. to 11:00 A.M. ~ Celebration Pier Channel Cat Landing, 2501 E. River Drive, Moline, IL ~ Join a Wapsi River Center Naturalist to learn about birds of prey in our area: habitats, ecology, and human impacts to these awesome predators. Be sure to bring your kids and see a [live](#) Wapsi River Center raptor up close!

14th ~ Homeschool Days ~ 10:30 A.M. to 2:30 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Once a month the Wapsi River EE Center will be hosting a day just for homeschoolers! Join us for themed programming led

by our Naturalists! The goal of this series is to immerse children in the natural world and help them experience seasonal phenomena in a hands-on way. Most appropriate for K-8th grades, though all ages welcome. Suggested donation of \$1/student. Please come prepared for the weather because much of the planned programming will take place outdoors. Please bring a lunch. Registration is limited and required by calling (563)328-3286. Registration opens the first of each month.

14th ~ Scott County Conservation Board Meeting ~ 3:00 P.M. ~ West Lake Park (Gate # 3) The Scott County Conservation Board normally meets the second Wednesday of every month at the West Lake Park Headquarters office, 14910 110th Ave, Davenport, Iowa 52804. Please call (563)328-3281 for more information.

15th ~ Raptors Along the River, Channel Cat Talks ~ 9:00 A.M. to 11:00 A.M. ~ Celebration Pier Channel Cat Landing, 2501 E. River Drive, Moline, IL ~ Join a Wapsi River Center Naturalist to learn about birds of prey in our area: habitats, ecology, and human impacts to these awesome predators. Be sure to bring your kids and see a live Wapsi River Center raptor up close!

15th ~ Friends of the Wapsi Center Annual Meeting ~ 6:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Join us to learn more about the *Friends of the Wapsi Center* group. Learn about current events and volunteer opportunities at the Wapsi River Center. A main dish, drinks and dinnerware will be provided. Afterwards tour the new nature center renovations. Registration is required by calling (563)328-3286.

17th ~ Menke Star Party (QCAS) ~ Dusk ~ Monsignor Menke Observatory ~ Join representatives from the Quad Cities Astronomical Society for a tour of the night sky. Please check www.qcastro.org or the Quad Cities Astronomical Society face book page on the day of the event to find out if weather conditions will permit viewing.



20th ~ Leave No Trace Camping 101~ Scott County Park, Pine Grove Campground Shelter ~ 1:00 P.M. ~ Join Wapsi River Center Director Dave Murcia for a presentation on camping basics that emphasize *Leave*

No Trace ethic and principles. Bring the whole tribe. Are you prepared for your adventure? Are you aware where to hike/camp? What do you consider waste, and what do you do with it? Do you leave what you find? How do you use fire? Do you respect both wildlife and humans alike? These LNT principles and more, will be presented along with “how to” set camp for an experience that reconnects us, and honors nature we recreate in.

21st ~ Leave No Trace Camping 101~ West Lake Park , Park Terrace Campground~ 1:00 P.M. ~ Join Wapsi River Center Director Dave Murcia for a presentation on camping basics that emphasize *Leave*

No Trace ethic and principles. Bring the whole tribe. Are you prepared for your adventure? Are you aware where to hike/camp? What do you consider waste, and what do you do with it? Do you leave what you find? How do you use fire? Do you respect both wildlife and humans alike? These LNT principles and more, will be presented along with “how to” set camp for an experience that reconnects us, and honors nature we recreate in.



22nd ~ Kayak Experience ~ West Lake Park ~ 10:00 A.M. & 1:00 P.M. ~ West Lake Park (Lake of the Hills) (Gate #1) ~ Join the Wapsi River staff for an adventure with kayaks. Program includes all equipment use, covers safety, techniques, and taking a tour of West Lake. You may bring your own vessel/PFD, though it must comply with IADNR regulations. Reminder - this program is determined by weather and site conditions, weight capacity loads for kayaks are 250-300 lbs./solo and 425-475 lbs./tandem. Dress appropriately, bring water, and call to register for a limited seat at (563)328-3286.

24th ~ Menke Star Party (St. Ambrose) ~ Dusk ~ Monsignor Menke Observatory ~ 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.

JULY

4th ~ HOLIDAY ~ County offices will be closed in observance of the holiday.

Building Better Birders Workshop

Thursday, May 11, 2023

Workshop Mission

The mission of the workshop is to create birders across Iowa, that contribute knowledge about birds through participation in Citizen Science programs such as Christmas Bird Counts, Great Backyard Bird Counts, Project Feeder Watch, etc. This workshop will be conducted by Kelly McKay (BioEco Research and Monitoring Center), with assistance from Mark Roberts (Clinton County Conservation), Brian Ritter & James Wiebler (Nahant Marsh Ed. Center). Funding for this workshop was provided by the Resource Enhancement and Protection - Conservation Education Program (REAP-CEP).



Workshop Schedule



Session 1: 9:00 AM - 10:30 AM ~ "Upland Forest Birds of Iowa" Presentation
Session 2: 10:45 AM - 12:15 PM ~ "Floodplain Forest Birds of Iowa" Presentation
Lunch Break: 12:15 PM - 1:15 PM (Bring your own)
Session 3: 1:15 PM - 3:00 PM ~ Bird Hike at the Wapsi Center

Call to Reserve Your Spot!

Call the Wapsi River Center at (563)328-3286. You can register for as many or as few of the sessions as you like!
For more information, go to <https://buildingbetterbirders.com>.



← "BECOME A WAPSI RIVER CENTER FRIENDS MEMBER TODAY!" →

www.scottcountyiowa.com/conservation/Wapsi-friends

 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 _____ \$10.00 newsletter
Address _____ \$20.00 contributing member
City _____ State _____ Zip _____ \$30.00 supporting member
Phone Number _____
Email Address _____

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.



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Fish Iowa! Basic Spincasting Course

Monday, June 12th, 2023 ~ 8:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. ~Wapsi River Center

(online pre-work must be completed by June 11)

Registration deadline: June 7, 2023.

Learn to Teach Fishing in Iowa: Professional Development

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) will offer **professional development courses** in June and July for teaching basic outdoor skills. The Fish Iowa, Basic Spincasting class will be offered for **recertification or graduate credit**.

This blended course will acquaint participants with the *Fish Iowa!* Basic Spincasting teaching module and a variety of other resources to teach fishing in a variety of settings. Participants will learn fishing basics including fish identification, fishing locations, casting techniques, and cleaning and cooking fish. Participants will experience lake/pond fishing and be introduced to a variety of *Aquatic WILD* activities to extend the module. Instruction will include a variety of demonstration and hands-on, experiential approaches. Activities will also include peer teaching and small group work to develop appropriate teaching strategies for individual teaching situations. The registration **fee includes** lunch, teaching modules, and an instructor kit. *Fish Iowa! materials* are provided via a Google site; participants receive a copy of the *Aquatic WILD* guide and basic spincasting instructional kit.



NOTES: Participants must have a valid Iowa fishing license to participate in (required) fishing activities. **Participants must complete online activities via Moodle (AEAOnline) prior to the in-person class.**

Register through the AEALearning website:

<https://aealarning.truenorthlogic.com/> If you do not already have an account, you will be asked to create one. Once you login, you can locate registration information for the courses by entering “outdoor skills” in the course search.

THANKYOU!

Wapsi River Center Homeschoolers
Muscatine, Louisa, Sioux County Conservation
Waste Commission of Scott County
QCCA Expo Center
Lyondellbasell
Iowa 4H AmeriCorps
Scott County Library- Eldridge
Davenport Public Library
St. Paul's Catholic School
Nick Brock- Wingman Taxidermy, Wilton, Iowa
Kelly McKay- BioEco Research and Monitoring
Center
Mrs. Abby Hill -Pleasant View Elementary 2nd
Graders (Animal sponsorship)

Friends of the Wapsi Center
Heather Sanders (Membership)
Ingrid Bogdanowicz (Renewal)
Dave & Connie Huber (Renewal)
Mark Theisen (Renewal)
Trish Zavala (New member)
Susan McPeters (Docent and Program
Support)
Jim & Julie Ross (Docent and Program
Support)
Lucia Dryanski (Docent and Program
Support)
Jolinda Eggers (Program Support)
Caroline Kimple (Renewal, Animal
Sponsorship)
Tim Garner (Renewal, Animal
Sponsorship)
PJ Slobojan (Renewal)

Plant Profile: Dutchman's Breeches

By Naturalist Becky Baugh

When walking in the woodlands in the spring, there is always an easily recognizable flower that blooms for a short period of time. Every time I see this flower, it makes me smile because it reminds me of pants hanging on a clothesline. This plant is Dutchman's breeches (*Dicentra cucullaria*) which is a spring ephemeral, meaning it



Photo: Illinois Wildflowers

appears early in the spring, around mid-April in Iowa, and is dormant again by summer. A dryer season tends to shorten the season of Dutchman's breeches.

Dutchman's breeches typically cover the forest floor only growing up to 1 foot high with the flower stalk. The leaves are fern-like, compound in three sections, and finely divided. They are blueish green in color, and are basal, growing from only the base of the plant. They can spread up to 1 foot in diameter around the center of the plant. This plant, along with other woodland ephemerals, only appears in the spring because it is able to get the sunlight it needs before the trees leaf out for the season. The roots of this plant are typically pink, sometimes white, and are small clusters of tuber-like bulblets. Dutchman's breeches are found on rich slopes of woods, streamsides, and bottomlands. They prefer excellent drainage and humus-rich soil. Their range is throughout the eastern part of the U.S down to Georgia and Oklahoma. They are also found in the Pacific Northwest.

The flower of the Dutchman's breeches is where it gets its common name.

There is a single, leafless, flower stalk that grows from the center of the plant and contains anywhere from 4-10 flowers per stalk. These flowers resemble knee breeches or pantaloons (men's pants of the Regency Era) hanging upside-down on a clothes line. The

flowers are typically all white, but are sometimes found tinged with pink. They have yellow lobes at the base of the flower that open up like wings and reveal the stamens and style of the of the flower.



Flowers:
Wapsi River Center

Dutchman's breeches are beneficial to the early bumblebees just emerging from hibernation. Bumblebees are able to gather both nectar and pollen from this flower because of their long proboscis (tongue) where as other bees, such as honeybees, are only able to gather the pollen from this plant since they have a shorter proboscis. Dutchman's breeches are in the same genus as the Bleeding-heart plant (*Dicentra spectabilis*) and therefore, make a great native alternative to the Bleeding-heart. Dutchman's breeches also have a unique relationship with ants. The seeds of the plant have a fleshy part that ants are attracted to and love to eat. When ants harvest the seeds, they bring them back to their nests and eat the edible fleshy parts, leaving the seeds. These seeds are now thoroughly dispersed throughout the woodlands in various ant colonies and can germinate in the rich soil of the ant nest.

A less common name of Dutchman's breeches is Little Blue Stagers. It received this name because it is in the poppy family and can induce drunken staggering in cattle if they graze on it. All parts of this plant are toxic to both livestock and humans. It is toxic if consumed in large quantities and symptoms include trembling, staggering, vomiting, diarrhea, convulsions, and labored breathing. It can also cause skin irritation after repeated contact with the sap of the plant. This plant is unique to look at, great for our woodland ecosystem, and an early food source for our Queen Bumblebees and ants, but please do NOT sample it yourself!

The next time you are out taking a woodland hike in the springtime, look for those little white breeches hanging upside-down on their flower stalk. You may even get lucky and see a bumblebee gathering nectar from this plant! Dutchman's breeches are easily recognizable once you see it for the first time and hopefully you will remember it for years to come.



Dutchman's Breeches Range
Map: USDA Database

Animal Profile: The Bobcat

By Naturalist Michael J. Granger

Let me introduce to you an Iowa mammal shrouded in mystery, that has an interesting history, the bobcat, *Lynx rufus*. The bobcat is an elusive creature in the state and it is rarely seen. In 1977 they the bobcat in Iowa was listed as endangered, due to habitat loss. Originally the bobcat was only found in the lower 1/3 of the state. With education and protection bobcat populations rebounded over time. Its status moved to a threatened species in 2001 and then a protected species in 2003. In 2007, numbers had improved to a point



where the state could sustain a limited bobcat hunting season. It is thought that increasing bobcat populations throughout the state is a result of the availability of preferred prey (eastern cottontail rabbits), the quality of escape cover to hide from predators, and the lack of human disturbance.

Bobcats are 3 to 4 foot in length and weigh 20 -30 pounds The bobcat has a buffy grey or brownish coat, with spotting, which varies on certain individuals. They also have black bars on their forelegs and a black-tipped, stubby (or "bobbed") tail, from which it derives its name. They are adaptable predators inhabiting wooded areas, semidesert, urban edge, forest edge, and swampland environments. Bobcats will live in rocky outcroppings, brush piles, hollow logs or trees, and abandoned dens.

Iowa studies show that bobcats have a 10 mile home range. Territories are established by the bobcat and there might be some overlap. It uses several methods to mark its territorial boundaries, including claw marks and deposits of urine or feces. A bobcat den will have the strong smell of urine.

The bobcat is a truly solitary creature only coming together during mating season. Bobcats breed from winter into spring with a gestation period of about two months. As a top predator the bobcat prefers

rabbits, mice, squirrels and small mammals. If available in typical cat fashion the bobcat will prey on chickens, geese and other birds. A study showed that 60 % of Iowa bobcat's diet consisted of Eastern cottontail rabbits. Studies have shown that the bobcat has no impact on local game bird species such as pheasants and geese, which are impacted more by winter weather and habitat loss. Bobcats pose no threat to humans and are very shy secretive creatures.

What are the clues that bobcats may be in your area? Rather than seeing an bobcat, the best clues are bobcat tracks! A bobcat track is fairly distinctive. The best way to learn a cat track is to compare it with a dog track. A dog track will have a heal pad with 4 toes and visible claw prints. All dog tracks will be symmetrical and have an "X"

Pattern formed in between the pads. A cat track with not have a clear "X" pattern between the toes but the heal pad will have an "M" shape. Also bobcat tracks will not be



COYOTE



BOBCAT

symmetrical, and there will be no visible claw marks, for cats can retract their claws. A bobcat track will measure 2 inches wide and 2 inches high. Bobcat scat is often furry, round and pointed at the ends. Scat containing fur is a sure sign of a predatory creature, such as, the bobcat.

Another way to see if bobcats are around is the use of a trail camera. We have been setting one out on some trails and have gotten some great pictures of this elusive creature. I currently have never seen a bobcat with my own eyes, but have found many tracks. Here is a recent plaster cast of a track found on ice.



Next time you are out and about keep your eyes open and you just might find some bobcat tracks, scat or if you are extremely lucky a bobcat itself!

Bobcat Track:

Wapsi River Center

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31555 52ND AVENUE
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For All Seasons

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