

The W.R.E.N.

Wapsi River Environmental News

FALL 2023

Scott County Conservation Board's Environmental Education Newsletter

www.scottcountyjowa.com/conservation/wapsi

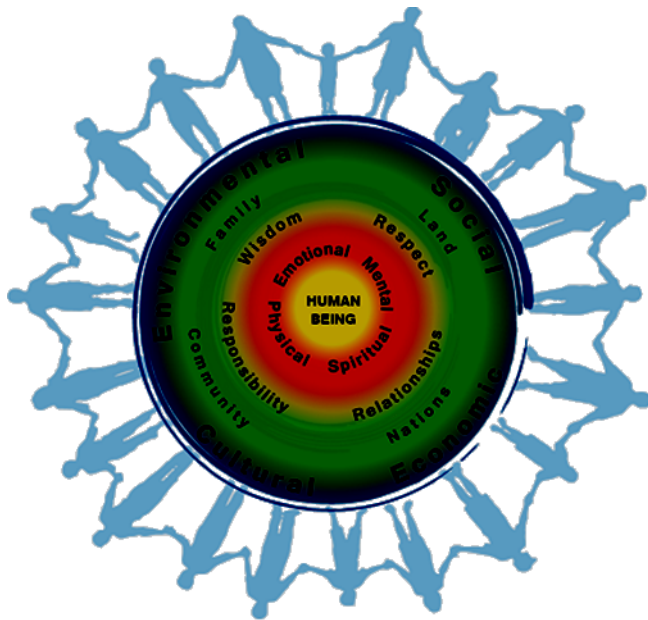
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The Wapsi River Center is owned, managed and operated by the Scott County Conservation Board

Wapsi Happenings

By: Director, Dave Murcia



<https://www.fnha.ca/>

Nature is Medicine

"We depend on nature not only for our physical survival, we also need nature to show us the way home, the way out of the prison of our own minds." Eckhart Tolle

As our population on this planet grows, so does the need to feed, shelter, enjoy, connect, and *awaken* our lives. Nature has, for thousands of years, been the living connection and *choice* that nourishes our bodies, minds, and souls. Natural

areas, wild places, wilderness, and even parks, all reflect the intrinsic energy that nature offers to all who *rise* and seek it.

Starting with the air that we breath, it is necessary that our bodies take in the clean, unrestricted air that only nature offers. The soil beneath our feet on a trail, grounds us literally, and *organically* nourishes our food and gut biomes. The water that we swim or paddle in, baths us, and is necessary for life, is big medicine- water is life. Nature offers not only physical survival, but the social connections that we, as humans, need for sound minds and spirits.

In a culture and society that is relying more on technology, chemicals, and pharmaceuticals to maintain a way of life, it is nature that always shows us the way out of that prison. Nature is the power to heal.

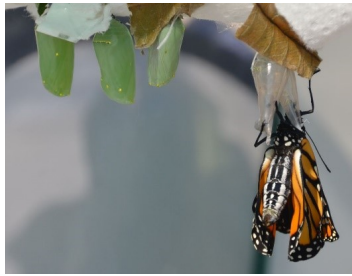
I encourage our community to look deeply into what they are breathing, eating, drinking, and how they are spending time for self and family. Slow down, take in the freedom of our natural world, breathe deeply, the inspiration of the sky, heed the message of the living waters, regenerate the soil beneath us, and listen closely to what Mother Earth reveals. Emerge, and make the choice to visit our local parks and natural areas and become a steward of the sacred and holistic medicine only nature offers. Be well, stay wild, and **Leave No Trace!** *Nature is medicine.*



leave no trace

Seasonal Successes

This summer education series was filled with healthy fun in the outdoors including: kayak experiences, wild edibles, archery, Survival Camp, the 5th Annual Monarch Festival/ 3rd Annual Fun Run. A big thank you to our *Friends of the Wapsi Center* for all their volunteer support!



Monarch Butterfly Emerging
Photo: Bob Bryant



New Menke Observatory roll-off building

The **St. Ambrose University Menke Observatory** continues renovations, expansions, and improvements in cooperation with the **QC Astronomical Society**. Recent improvements include: a classroom. The latest expansion includes the completion of the new roll-off building that will house a larger scope. The Center is pleased to support and cooperate in the expansion plans including new buildings and programing within the prairie site. Keep looking up!

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.



Friends of the Wapsi Center

Center Improvements

Scott County continues to make improvements at the Center and recent renovations on the old *Owl's Nest Dormitory*. The Phase 1 addition (basement) is complete, Phase 2 (entry and new multipurpose room) is nearing completion, and Phase 3 (exhibit rooms) are being completed this season.

HELLO CLARAH!

Hello! My name is Clarah Buhman and I am the newest addition to the Wapsi Education team as an Assistant Naturalist. In the spring I graduated from the University of Wisconsin- Stevens Point with a degree in Environmental Education and Interpretation. In 2019 I volunteered here over the summer. Then started my college career at Kirkwood Community College studying Natural Resources. I reflected back on this volunteer experience for other jobs and scholarship opportunities. At Kirkwood was exposed to the use of fire for land management and how to ID native flora and fauna. In 2020 I worked at Lake Iowa as a naturalist. Then transferred to UW- Stevens Point for my final degree. In Wisconsin I was able to teach at the school forest for K-12th grade programs. The two

summers I had in Wisconsin I spent living off the grid at Camp Amnicon doing Wilderness canoeing with 6-12th graders. Both of these summer jobs have built my confidence, along with my education, has prepared me to come back to the Wapsi. The part I am most looking forward to is the new nature center opening and all of the opportunities that come with the new building opening!



FALL EVENTS

Attention visitors: Registration has changed! Starting in July the Wapsi River Center moved to online registration. Unless otherwise noted, registration for our programs can be completed by visiting: <https://web2.myvscloud.com/wbwsc/iascottcitywt.wsc/splash.html> and clicking on **Public Programs**. If you have any questions during the registration process, please call the Wapsi River Center at (563)328-3286.

OCTOBER

7th ~ Fall Ecology Day ~ 9:30 A.M. – 1:30 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Join Wapsi River Center's Environmental Education Staff for a fun day dedicated to the arts and nature! All ages are welcome at this FREE program. The events will move indoors in case of inclement weather. There will be two concurrent sessions in the morning and 2 different concurrent sessions in the afternoon. You can only register for 2 programs, one in the morning and one in the afternoon because of overlap of timing. Morning options from 9:30 – 11:00 A.M. include: DIY Natural Charcoal Art Sticks or Natural Clay Pottery. We will break for lunch from 11:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M. Please bring your own lunch. A fire will be provided for your own roasting needs.

Afternoon options from 12:00 – 1:30 P.M. will include: Prairie Wreath Class or Songs of the Earth Community Sing. Online registration is required for each of the options.



14th ~ 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.

12th ~ 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 Board) and Brian Ritter & James Wiebler (Nahant Marsh Ed. Center). Topics include: “Diurnal Raptors of Iowa” and “Nocturnal Raptors of Iowa”. The day will end with a Birding Hike concentrating on raptors 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 bring your own lunch if you are planning on staying the entire day. Online registration is required.



18th ~ Scott County Conservation Board Meeting ~ 3:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ The Scott County Conservation Board meets this Wednesday at the Wapsi River Center, 31555 52nd Avenue, Dixon, Iowa 52745. The public and press are encouraged to participate. Please call (563)328-3281 for more information.

18th ~ Homeschool Day ~ 10:30 A.M. -2:30 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Once a month the Wapsi River EE Center will be hosting a day just for homeschoolers! 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. Please come prepared for the weather because much of the planned programming will take place outdoors. Online Registration is required and there is a fee of \$1/ participant. **All participants must be registered** (children and adults). Registration opens the first of the month.



19th ~ Friends of the Wapsi River Center Meeting ~ 6:00 P. M. ~ Virtually ~ Learn about the current happenings at the Wapsi River Center. This meeting will be virtual only. Please call for more information (563)328-3286.

21st ~ Trout Release ~ 10:00 A.M. ~ West Lake Park , Lake of the Hills, Boat Ramp (Gate #1) ~ In cooperation with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, and Scott County Conservation, a trout release, will be offered to the public at Lake of the Hills. The event will include prizes for those catching only tagged trout from the 2,000 rainbow trout being released. Anglers are required to follow Iowa DNR regulations and possess a Iowa fishing license, as well as trout stamp. Please call park headquarters at (563) 328-3280 for more information.

21st ~ Paint By Nature ~ 10:00 A.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Happy Halloween! Join Naturalist Paige at this fun, family-friendly event! She will guide you through the creation of a Halloween-themed painting. All skill levels welcome! All supplies will be provided, just bring your creativity! There is a program fee of \$5 / canvas. Online registration is required, all painters must be registered.



21st ~ 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 4th 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. Online registration is required.

21st ~ The Great Atlatl Pumpkin Hunt ~ 3:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Join Naturalist Mike 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!!! Online registration is required.



21st ~ Halloween Hike ~ 6:30 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Join Naturalist

Mike 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. Online registration is required.

22nd ~ Learn to Fur Harvest: Trapping Basics ~ 8:30 A.M. – 4:30 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ The Iowa DNR will be providing this “Trapping Basics” course. Participants will learn basic strategies for trapping such as proper equipment, trap placement, trapping regulations and steps for preparing hides for trade. Sessions will cover history of trapping in North America, wildlife identification, regulations and several demonstration stations. Lunch will be provided. This training costs \$15. This course does not provide certification. If you have questions, contact Brooks VanDerBeek at brooks.vanderbeek@dnr.iowa.gov. To register, go here: <https://license.gooutdoorsiowa.com/Event/ViewEvent.aspx?id=2687>.

31st ~ Happy Halloween!

NOVEMBER

8th ~ 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.

10th ~ HOLIDAY ~ County offices will be closed in observance of the Holiday.

11th ~ 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.

15th ~ Homeschool Day ~ 10:30 A.M. -2:30 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Once a month the Wapsi River EE Center will be hosting a day just for homeschoolers! The goal of this series is

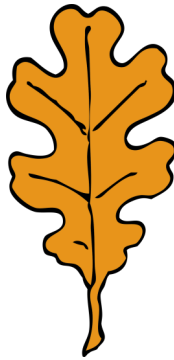


to immerse children in the natural world and help them experience seasonal phenomena in a hands-on way. Most appropriate for K-8th grades, though all ages welcome. Please come prepared for the weather because much of the planned programming will take place outdoors. Online Registration is required and there is a fee of \$1/ participant. **All participants must be registered** (children and adults). Registration opens the 1st of the month.

16th ~ Friends of the Wapsi River Center Meeting ~ 6:00 P. M. ~ Virtually ~ Learn about the current happenings at the Wapsi River Center. This meeting will be virtual only. Please call for more information (563)328-3286.

18th ~ Fall Wild Edible Workshop ~ 10:00 A.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Come 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 then 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! Online registration is required for this event.

18th ~ DIY Leaf Coasters & Tree Hike ~ 1:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Join *Friends of the Wapsi Center* member, Susan McPeters, to learn how to make DIY leaf coasters using native fall leaves and ceramic tiles. You will learn how to identify the fall leaves while decorating two ceramic tile coasters to take home with you. While the craft is drying, we will take a tree hike outdoors lead by Naturalist Paige and learn about the trees the leaves came from. Leaf coaster kits include 2 tile coasters and are \$5.00/kit payable by cash or check at the program to the Friends of the Wapsi Center. Online registration is required for this event.



23rd & 24th ~ HOLIDAY ~ County offices will be closed in observance of the Holiday.

DECEMBER

9th ~ Homemade Holiday Gifts ~ 10:00 A.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Come join Naturalists to get ready for the holiday season! We will learn how to repurpose and upcycle common household items into new wrapping, just in time for the holidays. Crafts will include calendar gift bags, magazine bows, and pinecone crafts. We will also make handmade soaps. Homemade tea will also be available to sample while you craft! The tea

was sourced from the Wapsi River Center's own wild ingredients (and the recipes would make an excellent gift!) This program costs \$5/ participant. Online registration is required.

9th ~ 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.

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16th ~ Natural Wreath Class ~ 1:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Join Naturalist

Mike and learn how to make a natural wreath. Grapevine will be used to create a wreath base which then is decorated with pine boughs, pine cones, seeds and nuts. Participants may bring items to decorate and personalize their own creation. Registration is required and there is a fee of \$10 per wreath. Online registration is required for this event.



13th ~ Homeschool Day ~ 10:30 A.M. -2:30 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Once a month the Wapsi River EE Center will be hosting a day just for homeschoolers! 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. Please come prepared for the weather because much of the planned programming will take place outdoors. Online Registration is required and there is a fee of \$1/ participant. **All participants must be registered** (children and adults). Registration opens the 1st of the month.

25th & 26th ~ HOLIDAY ~ County offices will be closed in observance of the Holiday.

JANUARY 2024

1st ~ HOLIDAY ~ County offices will be closed in observance of the Holiday.

Friends of the Wapsi Center Updates:

The Giftshop; A great place for original, nature themed holiday gifts!

It's fall, and the winter holidays won't be too far behind. Rather than hitting the big box store, why not shop locally, for green and nature-themed gifts you can do so at the Friends of the Wapsi Gift Shop, located in the Eagle View Nature Center. What's more, your purchases will support environmental education in our community!

The last few years, we've made an effort to carry a variety of new items at the shop, such as refrigerator magnets, kid-friendly binoculars, a variety of nature books and field guides, and handmade gifts that come from the talents of our Friends' Group members. For young kids, we have board books (including the "Nature Baby" series that teaches about birds, bugs, rocks & the solar system, and the "Little Naturalist" series, that introduces young children to John Muir, Rachel Carson, Greta Thunberg and more), Audubon plush birds that sing the actual song of each species of bird, and story books about Monarch butterflies and the stars. Our new "Fundanas" combine a



useful bandanna with a game or scavenger hunt printed right on it!

For older kids, we carry: finger puppets from Folkmanis; more advanced books on insects, backyard birds, fossils and critters; butterfly nets, bug boxes, recycled multi-colored crayons (made by Wapsi staff and Friends' member) and rocks.



Your adult friends and family might appreciate hand crafted gifts: recycled wax candles, stoneware candle plates and toothpick holders, crocheted dishrags, rag rugs (all made by Friends' members), cutting boards or wren houses. While shopping, treat yourself to a book on Wild Edibles or a laminated pocket field guide. Plan ahead for winter hikes with Winter Weed and Winter Tree Finder booklets or an animal tracks guide.



Finally we have Wapsi Center "merch" in the form of T-shirts and magnets. **Please bring cash or your checkbook**, as spotty internet service has delayed our plans to begin accepting credit and debit cards. See you soon!!!!



Friends of the Wapsi Center Join Wild Ones; Quad Cities Chapter

The *Friends of the Wapsi Center*, has become an affiliate member of Wild Ones of the Quad Cities. Wild Ones is a national organization dedicated to "Healing the Earth one landscape at a time." The group promotes the benefits and beauty of native plants—in home gardens, community spaces, and larger acreages—any place where plants grow. In addition to offering learning opportunities and experiences, the QC Chapter has been planting native gardens in community spaces throughout the QCA. *Friends of the Wapsi Center* and

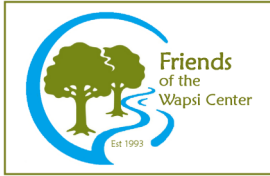
Wild Ones are already planning activities and programs for the spring 2024. To learn more, check out their web site and Facebook pages: [Wild Ones Quad Cities Chapter - Wild Ones Quad Cities Chapter](#).



“BECOME A WAPSI FRIENDS MEMBER!”

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.

THANKYOU!

Friends of the Wapsi Center
Mike & Ann Held (membership)
Susan McPeters (membership, docent, program support)
Jim & Julie Ross (membership, docent, program support)
Becky Esbaum (membership)
Bill Robbins (membership, program support)
Lucia Dryanski (membership, docent, program support)
Linda Puls (docent, program support)
Trish Saxby (docent, program support)
Tia Avila-Conklin (animal sponsorship)
Calvin & Aubree Dane (animal sponsorship)

Bernadene Bowles (membership)
Iowa 4H AmeriCorps Members- Leigh and Katie
West Lake Park & Scott County Park Maintenance teams
Eagle Scout Addison Bailey & Troop 43
Kerri Weipert, Scott County Library
Lourdes Catholic School
Partners of Scott County Watersheds
Christ's Family Church- Bettendorf
Putnam Museum
Camp Liberty
Renwick Mansion
Homeschoolers
Chris Ciasto
IA DNR



PLANT PROFILE: POKEWEED

By Naturalist Paige Owings

A commonly asked question around the Wapsi Center is “What is that beautiful hot pink plant??” Our answer is sure to be “It’s pokeweed!” Pokeweed, *Phytolacca americana*, is known for its large leaves, unique hot pink stems, and clusters of magenta berries, making it really stand out!

Pokeweed “trees” typically grow in open wooded areas like

forest clearings or on forest edges. They are usually between 6 and 10 feet tall and the main stalk is generally around 2 inches in diameter, though on occasion they will get even larger making for an impressive plant!

Though not truly a tree, pokeweed grows in a tree-like form with one main stalk branching into a semi-canopy and leaves coming from smaller branches in an alternate arrangement. The leaves are generally large (somewhere between 7 and 14 inches long and about 4 to 7 inches wide) and they are football shaped.

Flowers are found in drooping clusters and are usually whiteish green but then give way to bright pinkish purple berries. Berries appear in summer and fall. Pokeweed is a poisonous species. Never consume any part of the plant,

especially pokeberries! The toxins present will cause varying degrees of unpleasant gastrointestinal distress.

Though inedible, the berries are useful for making inks and a lovely fabric dye, creating various shades of maroon to red to pink. Their Latin name, *Phytolacca*, actually means “red dye plant.” These beautiful berries are also an abundant food source for

birds including mockingbirds, cardinals, and mourning doves. I also recently learned that some (adventurous) folks like to cook and eat the young leaves. In the South it’s fairly common to find a dish called poke “salad”. The key here is that the leaves are **cooked repeatedly!** Cooking young leaves and draining the water in between supposedly removes the toxins.

While I am an adventurous soul by nature, I have not personally ventured into sampling potentially toxic greens, so I cannot speak for the flavor of them, nor can I recommend that anyone try it. The best I can say is that if you feel like trying poke “salad” **DO YOUR RESEARCH.**

Pokeweed is native to North America and can be found throughout most of the United States and into Eastern Canada. It is American Pokeweed that we typically see here in Iowa, though there are other species, including a few that have been introduced for their ornamental value. While we do see some pokeweed around our campus at the Wapsi River Center, there are not too many zones where we see it regularly. If you have pokeweed growing in your yard, do not fret! It’s only toxic if ingested. If it is a risk to children or pets, simply cut down or pull the plant, making sure to

get the roots. You may also want to collect any berries and dispose of them in plastic bags to prevent wildlife from spreading it in your yard.

Though not really sought after most of the time due to its toxins, pokeweed is an interesting species because it is actually useful if you know how to deal with it! I encourage you to keep your eyes open for this pretty and vibrant plant next time you go hiking at the Wapsi River Center! You never know what animals might be visiting it. Happy trails!



Natural Dyed Yarn with Pokeberry; Kelly Wove It



Pokeweed Plant; Wapsi River Center



American Pokeberry Berries; USDA Forest Service



Pokeweed Rangemap: USDA Plant Database

ANIMAL PROFILE: HALLOWEEN PENNANT

By Naturalist Michael Granger

Let me introduce to you an amazing insect I saw recently on a kayaking adventure. The insect was brightly colored with oranges, browns and blacks. It was perched on a tall stem along the shoreline. The insect had four wings and was a very good flier. Flying quickly along the shoreline the insect landed on another plant stem. If you guessed “dragonfly” you are correct! This particular dragonfly is known as the Halloween Pennant, *Celithemis eponina*.



Halloween Pennant:
Inaturalist.org

The Halloween Pennant is a colorful medium sized dragonfly that can be found throughout eastern North America. It is easily recognizable by the colors and patterns on its wings. Males have orange wings, with dark brown bands and some red highlights. Females are more yellow colored with similar dark brown bands.



Halloween Pennant; Male (Left) & Female (Right):
entnemdept.ufl.edu

There are many types of dragonflies all of which belong to the insect order *Odonata*. Odonata include dragonflies and also damselflies. Dragonflies hold their wings outstretched sideways while resting. Damselflies are typically smaller and hold their wings folded lengthwise over their abdomens.

Dragonflies are not dragon’s and they are not flies. They are however insects, meaning they have six legs and three body parts. A head, thorax, and abdomen make them similar to other insects. They are considered aquatic insects. Many dragonfly species are closely tied to bodies of water including ponds, lakes, marshes, streams and rivers. Why are do dragonflies love water? The secret lies in their amazing life cycles.

Dragonflies undergo incomplete metamorphosis. All dragonflies start out as an egg. Eggs are laid by adult dragonflies in bodies of water. Many times if you watch dragonflies you will see them “dipping” their abdomens under the surface of the water. Each time the abdomen goes below the water’s surface an egg is deposited. The egg gently sinks to the bottom. When the egg hatches a dragonfly nymph emerges. A dragonfly nymph is a hunter. The nymph will capture and eat small aquatic invertebrates. As it grows the nymph will molt several times increasing its size and appearance each time.



Nymph:
entnemdept.ufl.edu

When the nymph is mature, the nymph will climb out of the water on a reed or cattail and molt one final time and then the adult dragonfly emerges. This process is known as “ecdysis” which is the shedding of the outer exoskeleton during molting, and is a vulnerable time for the adult. Wings have to enlarge and dry out to be ready for flight. When the adult new exoskeleton is fully dry it begins hunting.

Adult dragonflies are predacious, capturing and feeding on flying insects along the shoreline. One of their favorite foods is the mosquito which is why dragonflies are considered beneficial insects. Interestingly, adult dragonflies, are supreme fliers, but rarely walk, and spend much of their time perching on vegetation near a body of water.

Mating and egg laying occurs throughout the summer months. Adult dragonflies die with the coming of colder winter months. Dragonfly nymphs overwinter on the bottom of a body of water and emerge as adults in the springtime.

The Halloween pennant is one of the more recognizable dragonfly species in Iowa, and occurs throughout the Eastern United States. It is a very strong flier and can fly during a rain storm or high winds. It is named “Halloween” for its orange, yellow and black color patterns. “Pennant” refers to the species habit of perching on the highest plant stem blowing in the wind like a flag or pennant. If you have the luck of seeing one just remember how beautiful it is and how its name refers to its color and how it likes to show off on a tall plant stem!

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: Receive a copy of the WREN free of charge by sending a postcard to the address above.

Scott County Conservation Board

Members:

Rich Mohr
John “Skip” O’Donnell
Amy Murphy

Doug Grenier
Beth McAleer

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
Clarah Buhman, Assistant Seasonal Naturalist
Paige Owings, Assistant Seasonal Naturalist
Christine Hultquist, Resident Caretaker



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.