



The Web

Newsletter of the Iowa Association of Naturalists

Summer Workshop Info on pages 5-6!

Iowa's Lead Shot Debate Continues

By Laura Zaugg, Dallas County Conservation Board

If we pay attention to the natural world around us, it is constantly communicating to us and we are given signs when something is wrong. Sometimes the signs are subtle and sometimes the signs are very obvious. Ten years ago, the Bald eagle became the latest “canary in the coal mine” for Iowa’s wildlife rehabilitators. Year after year, an alarming amount of bald eagles were coming in to rehabilitators with various injuries and most of them did not survive. While over 60% of other raptors coming in to rehabilitators were healed and released, that was not the case with bald eagles and the reason why wasn’t clear. This caused further investigation into what was causing the injuries to these eagles.

What became clear after further blood testing was the reason that most of the bald eagles were ending up on rehabbers door step was due to high levels of lead in their blood. What wasn’t clear right away was how they were getting high enough levels of lead in their blood to be fatal. Most of you naturalists know this story by now: eagles were landing on the doorstep of rehabilitators during the months of October through March, coinciding with the hunting seasons. After further investigation it was found that eagles were eating off of carcasses or remains that were left in the field by hunters. If lead shot was used to harvest that animal, the shot would fragment into many pieces when it hit that animal and the eagle picked up the lead as it ate these leftovers for its meal.

It takes only a baby aspirin size piece of lead or the equivalent in small fragments, to cause lead toxicity in eagles. So the research and education began. Educating naturalists, hunters, youth, and wildlife enthusiasts seemed to be the best place to start. But this wasn’t enough. Year after year, bald eagles kept coming in at

the same rates with most of them dying from lead toxicity and they weren’t the only critters being affected. There are 120 species of animals, including humans, around the country that have been proven to have ingested or been poisoned by lead shot and Iowa houses 62 of those species who are vulnerable.

The latest numbers from September of 2011 to now from rehabilitators throughout Iowa show that 44 bald eagles were admitted with 34/44 of those having elevated lead levels. 28 out of those 34 died. There are some who say the bald eagle population in Iowa is doing just fine. I ask then, how many is too many to allow die? What could the population be if this many bald eagles didn’t die each year? Especially considering that many of them are adult females and it takes 5 years for them to come to reproductive maturity?

“In the end, our society will be defined not only by what we create, but by what we refuse to destroy.”

- John C. Sawhill.

Continued on Page 3

In This Issue

IAN News.....	page 2
Grapevine News.....	page 4
Book Review.....	page 4
Summer Workshop.....	pages 5-6
Name That Nature Center.....	page 7
2012 Brass Bluegill Award.....	page 8
Upcoming Events and Opps.....	page 8

IAN News

Traveling Exhibits Committee Update May 7, 2012

Exhibits on the Road!

Large space or small space, no nature center.... the traveling exhibits project has something for everyone! And there is more to come!

The Aquatics Team met in April to review their exhibit theme and flesh out the panel topics and the messages visitors will take away from viewing the exhibit. They are also working on ideas for the hands on components (a very popular part of the Prairie exhibit) and other details for the exhibit development. The team is also communicating with representatives from the Cedar River Watershed to discuss ideas that they are working on for public education and how the two projects can complement each other.

Meanwhile, check out the Tallgrass Prairie exhibit schedule from page one of the IAN website. Or, select the Display Swap menu to see pictures of the Albino Animals and Water exhibits that are also available. Contact information for each of the exhibits is at the end of this article.



The Tallgrass Prairie and Snakes! exhibit both require about 600 square feet for display. (The Prairie exhibit components can be configured in various settings, while the Snake exhibit requires a “single setting” arrangement).

The Albino and Water exhibits are just the thing for smaller venues! And if you don't have a nature center – check to see if a local library or other public building would like to serve as your host site! Host sites report that the traveling exhibits bring in new visitors and can act as a theme around which to build a series of public programs. Prairie exhibit survey responses so far indicate that visitors are gaining knowledge and are participating in prairie activities as a result of seeing the exhibit. And that's just what we wanted to happen!



Contact information:

- Prairie exhibit – Ann Burns amburns29@jacksonccb.com
- Snakes – Pete Malmberg pete.malmberg@co.dallas.ia.us
- Albino animals - Sondra Cabell fontanapark@iowatelecom.net
- We All Need Water – Holly Schulte Thayer holly.schulte@dnr.iowa.gov

Aquatics Exhibit Team looking for creative people!

Would you like to:

- “flesh out” the topic for an exhibit panel
- Help research information
- Investigate ideas for exhibit components
- Review content

please contact:

- Hilary Markin Hilary.R.Markin@usace.army.mil
- Chuck Ungs chuck.ungs@linncounty.org

Save these dates!

Future IAN Workshops:

- Fall 2012- Clinton CCB, November 7-9, 2012
- Spring 2013- Dubuque, March 13-15, 2013
- Fall 2013- Coralville, IA, In conjunction with Midwest Environmental Education Conference September 25-28, 2013



So began the efforts of individuals and organized groups to extend the US Fish and Wildlife Services requirement for using non-lead shot for hunting waterfowl to hunting with non-toxic shot for upland game as well. It seemed logical that once we knew where these critters were picking up lead that these senseless, agonizing deaths of many species, including our nation's symbol, barely removed from the endangered species list, could be easily prevented by banning lead from hunting. As more people began to learn about the educational and legislative efforts, the battle over getting the lead out began. Efforts to educate various groups around the state grew to educating legislators at the state capitol.

The latest skirmish over lead shot came about when Iowa's first dove hunting season since 1918 was to go into action in September of 2011. Supporters of banning lead shot in hunting began the efforts of going to DNR commissioners meetings, talking to and writing legislators, and continuing to educate people about the effects of lead on humans and wildlife, with the ultimate goal of encouraging the requirement of using non-toxic shot for dove hunting. The Iowa Natural Resources Commission (NRC), after extensive review of the evidence of the harmful effects of lead-based ammunition, voted to ban lead shot for hunting doves. However, implementation of this rule was delayed by the Iowa Legislature's Administrative Rules Committee as Governor Branstad and a few legislators made the argument that the NRC overstepped their bounds in making this rule. The first dove hunting season allowed for the use of lead in hunting mourning doves. So the decision for use of non-toxics in dove hunting has been left up to the legislators instead of the wildlife professionals.

"A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise." – Aldo Leopold

The House passed HJR 2001 which nullifies the NRC's rule to make dove hunting non-toxic. As I write this the Senate has yet to vote on SJR 2001. If it is not brought up in the Senate this legislative session, then the NRC's rule to make dove hunting non-toxic will go into effect for 2012's mourning dove season.

This is not just a wildlife issue, but it's also a human health issue as this game, an alarming amount of it containing lead, is fed to hunter's families and friends. There are some groups that would say that these efforts to get lead out of hunting are really just a ploy by environmentalists to work toward banning hunting all together. This most definitely is not the case. Over 120 species of animals have been proven to have ingested or been poisoned by lead and humans are also consuming lead, a known neurotoxin. This is an effort to stop the needless poisoning of our natural resources. Many alternatives to non-toxic ammunition are now available and the poisoning of our wildlife with lead is completely and easily preventable.

To keep track of the latest happenings on this rule, research about lead in wildlife and humans, and efforts around the state to educate about lead in our environment, go to leadispoison.com.

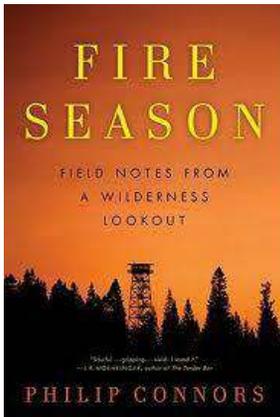
You could write for *The Web*!!

We are always looking for articles, book reviews and upcoming events that would be of interest and any member can submit something!! To submit send your submissions to *The Web* Editor Jacklyn Gautsch at j.gautsch78@gmail.com. Electronic submissions are preferred in word documents for text and jpeg for images.

Book Review

Fire Season; Field Notes from a Wilderness Lookout
By Philip Connors

Reviewed By Karen Manning, Director of the
Maquoketa Library and Member of Friends of
Jackson County Conservation



Fire! Wilderness! Two compelling words and ideas that Connors explores in this memoir of his eight summers as a fire lookout in the mountainous New Mexico forest that includes the world's first protected wilderness area, the Gila Wilderness.

Sitting alone in his fire lookout tower for weeks at a time (well, he has his dog) Connors reflects on solitude, being off-road and off-grid, in the midst of an amazingly pristine forest ecosystem.

His official duties are simple enough — “report the weather each morning, answer the radio, relay messages when asked, and call in new smokes when they show.” The life of a lookout, Connors tells us, “is a blend of monotony, geometry and poetry, with healthy dollops of frivolity and sloth.”

What is the value of a wilderness? Should roads, hunting, logging be allowed in a wilderness? Should all fires be extinguished? These questions, among others, provide real meat to chew on long after the book has been put down.

The book was published in 2011, paperback edition available in March 2012.



Grapevine News!!

Heather Hucka (Story County Naturalist) and her husband Ben welcomed a baby girl, Avery Mae in April.

Amy Yoakum (Story County) writes: “I just wanted to send you a note and let you know about some changes going on. I have accepted a new position and will be leaving the environmental education department at SCC. I will be the brand new Natural Resource Specialist for the conservation department. I’m very excited to do hands-on restoration of our parks, but sad that I won’t see you all as much! I’ll still be here and most likely will show up at IAN for some “networking”! .”

Lora Kanning (Cass County Conservation Interpretive Naturalist) writes: “Yup we did it!! I am now married, as of March 17, 2012 to Rick Kanning (also the reason I couldn’t attend the Spring IAN)”.

A message from the Joe Halbur Scholarship winner:

I am Crystal Krapfl and I will be attending Iowa State University next year as a Forestry major, with an Interpretive emphasis. I hope to become a Naturalist someday, and am excited to be the Seasonal Naturalist at Osborne Nature Center in Clayton County this summer. I enjoy being outside and have many outdoor hobbies: hunting, fishing, camping, hiking, boating, and tubing. I grew up in the country where I spent a lot of time in our timber growing up, and was interested in nature at a young age. Through my career I hope to be an advocate for conservation of our natural resources, inspire others to appreciate the outdoors, and work hard to improve my future community. Winning this scholarship is a great honor, and I am very excited to attend the fall conference for Iowa Association of Naturalists. Thank you very much for this opportunity!

Summer IAN 2012
August 1st – 3rd
Jones County Conservation

Wednesday, August 1

12:30 – 1 PM: Registration at Central Park Nature Center

1 PM: Welcome and Logistics

1:30 PM: Carpool to: Camp Courageous

2 PM: PowerPoint and Tour of Camp Courageous

3 PM: Rock Climbing and Rappelling

5:30 PM: Supper at Camp Courageous

6:30 PM: Return to Central Park Campsites

7:30 PM: Primitive Fire Starting – “Start Your Own Fire With Sticks” – (Guest speaker Dean Zimmerman)

8 PM: Smores By the Fire. Relax and visit. Musicians encouraged to bring their instrument.



Thursday, August 2

8 AM: Breakfast at Nature Center. (Local Fresh Foods)

8:30 AM: Make and take sack lunches for canoe outing. (Local Fresh Foods)

9 AM: Carpool to Mon Maq Dam. Drop a few vehicles off at Pictured Rocks for shuttling. Tour new renovations at Mon Maq and Pictured Rocks before put in and at take out. Canoeing/Kayaking to Pictured Rocks with picnic lunch on sandbar.

Mid – Late Afternoon: Head back to camp to clean up and rehydrate.

4 PM: Carpool to Stone City

4:30 PM: Tour of Historic Stone City, Weber Stone, and Stone City River Access. (Guide: Bob Hatcher)

5:30 PM Supper at “The General Store” (Pay on own)

6:30: Possible stop at Wapsipinicon State Park to view Ice and Horse Thief Caves.

7:30/8 PM: Return to Camp

8 PM: Lazy night by the fire. Relax and visit. Musicians encouraged to bring their instrument.

Friday, August 3:

8 AM: Breakfast at Nature Center. (Local Fresh Foods)

9 AM: Carpool to the North Bluff Hill Prairie

9:30 AM: Tour of native prairie remnant and review of snake cover board project. Prairie plant ID.

11 AM: Return to Central Park. Break camp and depart for home. Lunch on own on way home.

Accommodations:

Camping at Central Park – Free LET US KNOW if you will be camping at Central Park. (Sites are first come first serve.)

AmericInn in Anamosa, 15 minutes from Central Park. \$99/night two queen beds – Non-Smoking, Indoor Pool and Whirlpool, Complimentary Breakfast Buffet, and Exercise Room. Ask for Gov. Discount.

Directions to Central Park: From Anamosa take Hwy 64 east, turn left onto Hwy X44, turn right onto E29, turn left onto Central Park Road, and turn left into the park. The Nature Center is on the north side of the park. Keep to your right once in the park. For those of you with MapQuest or GPS, the 911 address is 12515 Central Park Rd., Center Park Rd., Center Junction, IA 52212.

Summer IAN 2012 Registration
August 1 – 3, 2012 Jones County Conservation
Registration Deadline: July 20

NAME: _____

AFFILIATION: _____

ADDRESS: _____ CITY: _____

STATE: _____ ZIP: _____ PHONE: _____

E-MAIL: _____

Check Meals if you plan to join us so we know how many people will be eating. Meals are included in the workshop fee. (Locally grown and produced food will be used when possible.)

Wednesday, August 1:

- Rock Climbing and Rappelling
- Supper at Camp Courageous

Thursday, August 2:

- Breakfast: Omelets, potatoes, toast, juice, and milk
- Lunch: Chicken salad sandwich, veggies & fruit, cookie, and popcorn.
- Canoeing: ___ I will use a canoe provided. ___ I will bring my own canoe/kayak.
- Supper at General Store in Stone City (Bring spending cash/pay on own)

Friday, August 3:

- Breakfast: French toast, ham, fruit, and juice

WORKSHOP FEE: (Required) \$ 55 (Includes provided meals, activities, and camping.) \$ _____

LAET FEE: (IF received after July 20) \$5 \$ _____

TOTAL PAYMENT ENCLOSED: \$ _____

Please make checks out to IAN TREASURER and mail payment and registration to:

Michele Olson, Jones County Conservation, 12515 Central Park Rd., Center Junction, IA 52212

Bring: Cooler and ice packs, old clothing and hiking footwear, tent and overnight camping gear, service wear, water bottles, sunscreen, sunglasses, insect repellent, additional snacks and beverages, spending cash, hat, and comfortable life jacket. Note: Central Park has a swim at your own risk beach – bring your suit :0) The lake also has paddle boats for rent and fish to be caught: largemouth bass, crappie, bluegill, green sunfish, and channel catfish. – Bring your fishing rod/reel and tackle.

Create insect noisemakers that kids will absolutely love!

To make one, trim an index card into a 3-inch square and staple it in the center of the craft stick. Next, add a pencil eraser to each end of the craft stick. Tie one end of a yard of string on the craft stick between the card and eraser. Finally, stretch a flat rubber band around the eraser ends. Get your noisemaker to buzz by swinging it in a circle above your head.

Taken from Family Fun magazine



Name That Nature Center Contest!

Submit your guess to Pete Eyheralde at pete@iastate.edu; please use "Name This Nature Center" as the subject line. The sender of the first correct answer will win bragging rights in the next issue of The Web!



The winner of the last contest was Dave Bakke. The answer was "O'Brien County's Prairie Heritage Center."

2012 Brass Bluegill Award

Each year the Iowa Department of Natural Resources' Aquatic Education Program honors an individual for their efforts in helping Iowa's youth become skilled anglers and advocates of fishing and natural resources conservation. Karen Phelps, Benton County Conservation Board Naturalist, is the 2012 recipient of the Brass Bluegill Award.

Phelps has established an outstanding local program that exemplifies the goals of Fish Iowa! She has been involved in the program for 10 years, reaching more than 1000 students each year. "I teach Fish Iowa! because as a child I learned life skills from my parents while fishing. Patience was at the top of that list. It is a fun activity that doesn't involve a lot of cost, and it can provide hours of entertainment." Phelps uses Fish Iowa! with all age groups of children, elementary through high school, as well as adults.



She also trains other educators to use conservation education materials like Fish Iowa!, Greenschools, and Project WILD, WILD Aquatic, and Learning Tree.

To say that Karen is passionate about the outdoors would be an understatement! "To see the joy on a child's face when they catch their first fish, or to see grandparents glow with pride when they take their grandchild fishing – it's all worth it."

Karen was presented with her award at the Natural Resources Commission meeting in Des Moines on March 8. As part of the award, Benton County Conservation Board received a set of 24 fishing rod and reels and carrying racks from the Aquatic Education Program. Fish Iowa! strives to create safe anglers and responsible stewards of Iowa's aquatic resources. Fish Iowa! is supported by Sportfish

Restoration Funds, which are obtained from excise taxes paid on fishing tackle and related items and fishing license dollars.

Upcoming Events and Opportunities

Project AWARE



July 7-14, 2012

Iowa River

www.iowaprojectaware.com

Iowa Recycling & Solid Waste Management Conference



Oct 1-3, 2012

Coralville, IA

<http://www.iowaconference.org/>

Broken Kettle Grasslands Bison Day



July 14, 2012

Westfield, IA

[www. http://www.nature.org](http://www.nature.org)

Check out the IAN Web Site:
www.iowanaturalists.org

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Naturalists – planting the seed of environmental stewardship by communicating the meanings and relationships in natural, cultural, and historical resources.