



The Web

Newsletter of the Iowa Association of Naturalists

Grow Where You Are Planted

By Karen M. Phelps, Executive Director, Benton County Conservation



"I'm Karen Oehl, and I'm from Wannabe County; I wanna be a Naturalist." I remember those words as if it were yesterday. In fact, it was over twenty-two years ago I spoke those words at Lakeside Lab during introductions at an IAN workshop. At the encouragement of a dear friend and naturalist, I had joined IAN while still a graphic artist.

My friend encouraged me to follow my dreams. She believed in my untapped potential. So several years before I landed my job as a naturalist in Benton County, I joined IAN. I took vacation days to attend the IAN workshops and volunteer for my friend when needed. When she informed me of a job opening in Benton County, I applied.

Several months of waiting and two interviews later, I landed my dream job. It wasn't your typical career advancement though. That year I turned 40 and took a \$10,000 pay cut. I never looked back. I had been married for 3 years and my husband, having also worked in conservation, couldn't have been more proud of me.

I remember my first day on the job. Pulling into the parking lot, a cold-icy landscape greeted me and the chill enfolded me as I stepped from my car. Walking into the office, my new boss was setting a mousetrap, while another trap held its tight grip on a bulging-eyed corpse. I was home.

The office was small. My boss and I shared one space, our desks two feet apart. After settling in with a cup of coffee the conversation began. "You know" he said, "You're the first Naturalist on staff, and I have no idea what a Naturalist does, so you're on your own." Welcome to Benton County.

As the months unfolded, I introduced myself to teachers, the community, and the mice running around in the office. I explored the parks and spoke with campers and anyone who took the time to listen. That first hug from an excited child announcing my arrival into the classroom has never been forgotten. The months turned into years, measured by thousands of hugs, snotty noses, innocent questions, and some of life's most rewarding moments.

During a Kindergarten program, the teacher had chosen a shy little girl to stand at the front of the class and be transformed into a butterfly. As I was helping the girl through her metamorphosis by tying large plastic ears on her legs, I noticed a slight change to her posture. In that instant our world changed as urine ran down her leg, and across my hand as her classmates announced to the world that "Sally" was peeing. And indeed she was. Mrs. "F" charged into action, and the world was righted once again. Ten years after that incident Mrs. "F" still smiles and announces that all her students are ready for me and have had their bathroom breaks.

Life's lessons have prepared me for where I am today. I've learned hugs can fix almost anything; embarrassing moments can be laughed about; anger, left to smolder, only fans to a flame and eventually creates an inferno; keep moving forward, but never too fast to notice the simple things along the way; nature is the ultimate healer.

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Over the past 15 years, my office locations have changed due to: new staff members needing room, upgraded storage space for a growing educational program, floods, and numerous other reasons to move a naturalist. During the remodeling of what was to become our nature center, I watched as my permanent office began to take shape. Never again would I have to relocate. The sign on the door simply said "Naturalist".

Four years ago, we hired Aaron Askelson. My boss at the time was worried I would have difficulties giving up "my" stuff, as he constantly reminded me that it wasn't "my" stuff but the county's. He threatened I had to learn to work with others and to quit being in charge. And so it began. I took Aaron to one of our schools, showed him how I did the program, told him to do the next one while I watched, and then I walked out of the room. I had complete confidence in Aaron and was so thrilled to have someone to share "my" stuff, create new programs, help me carry program tubs, open doors, go eat ice-cream, have a drink after work, laugh at my warped sense of humor and my clumsy blunders – I don't know how I survived without him.

So why did I apply for the Director's job? I can't honestly say. Perhaps it's because I have respect for the staff I work with. They know how to do their job and are willing to accept the challenges ahead of them. We are a team and have much to accomplish together. Perhaps it's

because I knew the program needed to grow beyond where I felt I could take it. The most difficult task I faced as the new director was hiring my replacement. I knew the majority of the applicants and respected all of them. After a month of interviews, sleepless nights, and nonstop conversations with God, my decision was made. Enter Caitlin Savage.

Aaron has since taken over my naturalist office, an office I swore I would never leave until retirement or death. His willingness to help me move was not strictly out of kindness, I'm sure. I turned my new office into a cozy habitat adorned with all my naturalist trinkets. Caitlin is in Aaron's old dinky office and is continuing to make it her own.

A Director is only as good as the staff he/she is in charge of. And that staff can only face the challenges ahead if their boss has respect for them. I have always strived to grow where I'm planted. Whether that seed falls in Naturalist soil, Director soil, or any other conservation type soil, it is important to do your best, learn from your mistakes, forgive, and move forward.

As for becoming a Director, I know that seed grew out of the support and network of my fellow Naturalists. We learn and grow together and each one of us has an important role in the life of a conservationist. No one of us is more important than the other, as long as we understand the importance of conservation as a whole. It takes a team. It takes all of us. Be proud of where you are planted and allow yourself to grow whichever way is best.



IAN T-Shirts

We still have some of the new IAN t-shirts left, and they will be at the spring workshop available for purchase! We have a few mediums, and several large, XL, and 2XL available for purchase. Contact Mary Bulger mbulger@co.iowa.ia.us with any questions about t-shirts.

You Can Host a Workshop Too!

By Victoria DeVos

Only a few more weeks until the spring workshop. I am so excited to be hosting. For years I have been a participant, but I never thought I could be the host. Plymouth County has a nice, new large meeting facility, but due to budget constraints we were unable to build a meeting space that could be divided. I started to think outside of the box, because Plymouth County is worth the visit. We are the home of the Ice Cream Capital of the World, for goodness sakes!!! The northern Loess Hills start in Plymouth County!!! We have prairie rattle snakes, regal fritillary butterflies and apparently an ornate box turtle. You all need to come here, but how am I going to do this with one meeting space?

I figured it out, made a phone call, sweet talked the field staff, and bam we will make another meeting space. With a little ingenuity and the donation of a couple heaters, we will turn a two sided picnic shelter into our second meeting space.

When you come to the workshop, I want you to be prepared to be outside no matter the weather, eat yummy food no matter your dietary needs, learn from experts, network and socialize, explore new places, and leave with new ideas.

If you are in town on Wednesday night, we will be hosting an ice cream social at the Blue Bunny Ice Cream Parlor in LeMars from 7-9pm. There are 40 flavors of ice cream to choose from. I would highly recommend getting a single with two flavors. I have only ever seen one double cone ordered and it was humungous!!!

My goal at the workshop is to show you that you CAN host a workshop even if you don't have the "perfect" space to do it in. So if you have any interest in hosting a work shop let an ExCom member know. I hope to see you March 8-10.

Submit guesses to Karen Johlas-Szalkowski at karenjohlas-szalkowski@warrencb.org. Please use "Name that Nature Center" as the subject line. The sender of the first correct answer will win bragging rights in the next issue of The Web!

Name that Nature Center



Congrats to Ann Burns!
She correctly guessed Osbourne
Conservation Center in Clayton County.



Spring 2017 IAN Workshop
March 8-10, 2017
Plymouth County Conservation Board
Hillview Recreation Area
25601 C60, Hinton, IA



Wednesday March 8, 2017 - Pre-workshop Options

Explore the Northern Most Loess Hills of Iowa - Victoria DeVos, Plymouth CCB

12:30 - 4:00 PM at the Center for Outdoor Learning, Hillview Recreation Area

We will caravan to the Loess Hills Interpretive Center in Westfield, then travel to Broken Kettle Grassland and learn about their bison herd, and maybe even see a magpie or two. Our last stop will be a hike at Five Ridge Prairie, a 900 plus acre state preserve and wildlife area, managed by Plymouth County Conservation.

DSLR Photography Basics - Jerry Mennenga

1:00 - 4:00 PM at Hillview Recreation Area

Bring your camera!!! Jerry will go over some camera basics involving settings in the menus as well as explaining some basic functions that includes camera metering, settings and histograms as well different kinds of lenses that basic and advanced DSLR cameras can use. To finish off the class participants will head outside and actually shoot photos so photographers can put into practice what we just discussed and ask questions along the way.

CPR class - John MacGregor

1:00 - 4:30 PM at Floyd Valley Hospital

Floyd Valley Healthcare will offer American Heart Association Heartsaver CPR class. CPR courses taught at Floyd Valley Healthcare are in accordance with the American Heart Association's standards for Basic Cardiac Life Support and meet OSHA requirements for CPR training. The American Heart Association recommends recertification every two years.

Evening Ice Cream Social

7:00 - 9:00 at Blue Bunny Ice Cream Parlor, 115 Central Ave. NW in LeMars

LeMars, Iowa is the "Ice Cream Capital of the World" thanks to Well's Enterprises (Blue Bunny). The lower level of this historic building offers an ice cream parlor with flavors you won't likely see in the store and a gift shop. Up the staircase, you will find a meeting room, where we can visit, and a few museum quality displays telling the history of the dairy enterprise. Food is allowed in the meeting room, but you cannot bring ice cream from outside into the building.

Thursday March 9, 2017

Breakfast Available at Hotel

8:30 - 9:00 - Registration

9:00 - 9:30 - Welcome, Announcements, Ice Breaker

9:45 - 10:45 - Concurrent Sessions

How to Write a Better Press Release - Dirk and Lee van der Linden, Belmond Independent New Paper

Dirk and Lee van der Linden, publishers of the Belmond Independent newspaper, will give you ideas on how to write more intriguing press releases, publish eye-catching newsletters and take award-worthy photos. The van der Lindens will have ideas and suggestions for you to take back to your office and implement immediately. Feel free to bring along examples of your press releases, newsletters and photos.

Thursday March 9, 2017(continued)

Gear Swap - Round Table

Do you have some great boots? Or an awesome daypack that you think the rest of the naturalists in Iowa NEED to know about? Bring it to the swap. This informal round table is designed to give you a chance to see what other naturalists in the state are using successfully and perhaps even some gear that has not worked as expected. Bring information on companies that provide discounts for educators, and any other information on gear you'd like to share.

11:00 - 12:00 - Concurrent Sessions

Nurturing Seniors with Nature - Michelle Ten Napel, Park Place

Who are today's seniors in care facilities, what are their skills and limitations, and what should you consider when planning your nature program? Join Park Place Activities Coordinator to get some ideas on nature activities, learn about generational demographics, the aging process and activities that have been very successful!

The 10 Minute Nature Walk and Other Ways Naturalists Can Help with Nature Project Investigations

- Jane Shuttleworth, Lakeside Labs

The "10 minute nature walk" is a tool naturalists can use to help teachers and their students discover nature topics for investigation in their own school yards using Project Approach. Before heading outdoors for inspiration, we will quick review the phases of Project Approach and how naturalists can support each phase. Following the outdoor exploration, we will not just list potential topics that could become investigations, but tools and techniques for moving them into deep investigation.

12:00 - 1:00 - Lunch

1:00 - 2:15 - Concurrent Sessions

STARRING Our Neighbors! – Charlene Elyea, O'Brien CCB and Heidi Anderson, Polk CCB

Enter the digital STAR LAB to explore program options for participants of all ages. Earth, moon, planets, solar systems, stars, galaxies and more not only can be seen ... but also visited with this exceptional tool available through your local Area Education Agency. But that's not all... learn how you can help people in your county experience the GREAT AMERICAN ECLIPSE occurring throughout the entire United States on August 21, 2017.

Introduction to Shooting - Sunday Ford, Sioux CCB

Come learn how to set up portable Crossman ranges and considerations to keep in mind. This session will go over air rifles, BB guns, targets, safety equipment, and instruction. Learn about successful shooting events.

2:30 - 3:30 - Concurrent Sessions

Dutch Ovens 101 - Matt Jurgens, Osceola CCB

Learn the basics of camp cooking with dutch ovens; cooking, cleaning, and maintaining your cast iron. We will also be doing some prep work on the evening meal.

Prehistoric Stone Tools: common artifacts and common tricksters - Megan Stroh; Sanford Museum

Megan Stroh, Archaeologist at the Sanford Museum, will be demonstrating flint knapping and pointing out attributes of prehistoric artifacts. She will also bring along examples of common tricksters that look like artifacts, but are natural formations in the stone.

3:45 - 4:45 - General Session

Trains Across Iowa – Rudy Daniels, Funded by a Humanities Iowa Grant

"Trains Across Iowa" presents how Iowa became settled and developed into a major agricultural region of the world. There is a definite and causal pattern between railroad construction and population growth of the state. At the same time, Iowa tracks had a definite effect on major wildlife habitats and patterns west of the Missouri River.

Thursday March 9, 2017(continued)

4:45 - Break/Check on Dinner

5:00 - Business Meeting

6:00 (or after meeting) - Dinner

Friday, March 10, 2017

Breakfast at the Hotel

8:30 - 9:30 - Concurrent Sessions

Native American Games - Jen Nuncio, Good Earth State Park Naturalist

Native Americans participated in many games of chance and skill. Utilizing items around them, play was an important part of their lives. Participants of Native American Games will learn how to play as well as how to craft the items needed for the games. Instructional materials will be provided for your personal reference.

Working with People of All Abilities - Samantha Martin, Camp High Hopes

Join us as we experience what it is like to be non-verbal in a new situation, have a visual or hearing impairment, or utilize a wheel chair. This disability awareness workshop will focus on developing empathy and becoming aware of simple adaptations that promote inclusion.

9:45 - 10:45 - Concurrent Sessions

Black Hawk Lake Restoration Project - Ben Wallace, Iowa DNR Fisheries Biologist

This presentation covers the management actions taken at Black Hawk Lake to improve water quality. Change in water clarity have presented managers with new challenges, mostly on a social level. We will discuss how changes in water clarity and increases in aquatic vegetation can change lake user attitudes. While growth in aquatic vegetation indicate a healthy ecosystem, we are taking steps to manage it in a responsible manner to alleviate lake user concerns.

Can We Build a Mountain Bike Trail in Your Park? - Monte Brent

This was a question presented to the Plymouth County Conservation Board several years ago. Find out why there was a need and what the logistics were on the behalf of the conservation board and the local bike club. If time allows, we will walk to the bike trail and look at how it was constructed.

11:00 - 12:00 - Concurrent Sessions

Are You Communicating Effectively? - Ryan Sjaarda, ToasterMasters International

Are you being an effective communicator? Have you prepared properly to give the best presentation you possibly can? Learn from a Toastmaster how to improve your communication skills through a games and exercises.

Let's Knot - Tyler Flemming, Woodbury CCB

No survival kit is complete without a supply of paracord and the knowledge to tie a variety of knots. Come learn how to tie various knots that are both useful in everyday and in backcountry situations. We will also make a sinnet chain bracelet.

12:00 - Lunch and Depart

Lodging

A block of rooms has been reserved for Iowa Association of Naturalists:

Baymont Inn and Suites - 1314 12th St SW, LeMars, IA

712-548-4910

\$80.10 / night



Spring 2017 IAN Workshop - March 8 - 10, 2017
Plymouth County Conservation Board
Hillview Recreation Area 25601 C60, Hinton, IA



Name _____

Affiliation _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone # _____ Alternate Phone # _____

*E-mail _____

*(Please indicate if this is a new e-mail address or you need to be added to the listserv)

Please register me for the following pre-workshop session:

___ Loess Hills Tour	FREE
___ Photography Class (10-20 people)	\$12.00
___ CPR Certification Class (minimum 5)	\$35.00

Meals (please check all that apply)

Thursday Lunch:	Burrito Bowls	\$8.00
	Chicken___ Veggie___ (please check one)	
Thursday Dinner:	Dutch Oven Meals - Wide variety of meals, sides and desserts	\$10.00
	Meat___ Veggie___ (please check one)	
Friday Lunch:	BBQ Buffett - Smoked turkey (GF), smoked mac & cheese (V), baked beans (GF,V), jambalaya (GF), and apple crisp(GF*)	\$9.00

Special Dietary Needs: _____

Additional Expenses:	Workshop Fee (Required)	\$25.00
	Membership Renewal	\$20.00
	Non-member Workshop Fee (Includes membership)	\$45.00
	Late registration fee after February 24	\$5.00

Pre-Workshop Total _____

Meal Total _____

Workshop and Membership Total _____

Total _____

Please make checks payable to: IAN Treasurer
Mail Payment Form to: Victoria DeVos, IAN Treasurer, PO BOX 1033, Hinton, Iowa 51024

Please contact the workshop coordinator at eherring@marshallcountyyia.gov or 641-844-2833 with any additional questions. If your payment will not arrive by the registration deadline, please let Victoria DeVos know by mailing or e-mailing a copy of your registration form. If your registration form is not received by the deadline, you will be charged the \$5 late fee. No exceptions. If you cancel after the deadline, some or all of the fee will be retained.

2016 IAN/ICEC Awards

Aldo Leopold Environmental Education Award

For Lifetime Achievement in EE Excellence and Leadership

Miriam Patton

Miriam Patton was the second Naturalist for the Palo Alto County Conservation Board where she has been educating youth and adults for 31 years now. She has provided countless programs to thousands of individuals through the years. Quality environmental education programs are reflected by the tremendous support she has received over the years from board members, staff and the public. The list of her accomplishments are numerous, including her 25 year dedication as Chair to the Iowa Association of Naturalists Professional Development Program. Miriam also seeks out new members of IAN to introduce them to current members, creating networking opportunities. Thank you Miriam, for your lifetime dedication to environmental education and to IAN.



Bohumil Shimek Environmental Educator Award

For Outstanding Efforts by an Environmental Educator

Becky Horton

Becky Horton was nominated for her “Zombie Archery Class,” which has been held for the last two years at the Wapsi Environmental Education Center. It ties in well with their Halloween Hike, which happens the same day. Participants young and old learn how to shoot National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP) equipment, archery safety, and then shoot at some great targets. Along the artwork for the targets (by Emily Santiago) puts a new spin on archery, and everyone likes Zombies! They have had at least 20 to 30 visitors (family groups) each time the event has been held, and it will be held again next year.



Chris Holt Youth Environmental Education Award

For an Outstanding EE Program for Youth or Conducted by Youth (Preschool-Grade 12)

Justin Kinney

There is a new high school physical education program in Ridge View High School. Justin Kinney is the teacher that implements a wide variety of outdoor activities for his senior class. Students receive a Hunter Safety Education Certificate, firearm handling and training, archery, kayaking, fur harvesting, tomahawking and knifing, orienteering, and wild game processing. Students clean and cook a variety of wild game, including venison, dove, and fish. A special feature of the program, and favorite of students, is air rifle shooting. The course culminates in a six day expedition to the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, where the students will practice their skills in water safety, navigation, fishing, fire starting, and basic survival. This class takes a lot of planning, networking, and financial contributions. It is offered free of charge to students.



Outstanding Volunteer

Kaleb Kaster

Kaleb Kaster is a high school student in Harlan and has been volunteering his time for the past two years for Shelby County Conservation. Growing up, he attended naturalist Christina Roelofs summer camps every year until he was too old to attend. After that, Kaleb volunteered his time to assist with the summer camps. He has even turned down paying jobs to help Christina. Kaleb has also assisted with public canoeing programs and takes time to find and donate night crawlers to help feed the program’s education animals. Kaleb has been such a wonderful volunteer, he will continue to be Christina’s summer help in 2017.



“Ding” Darling Environmental Education Award

For Outstanding EE Program or Event which Informs and Educates the General Public Quad City Pollinator Conference Planning Group

The Quad City Pollinator Conference Planning Group is this year’s winner of the “Ding” Darling Environmental Education Award. The Quad City Pollinator Conference Planning Group consists of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Nahant Marsh Education Center, Rock Island County Soil & Water Conservation District, and Scott County Conservation Board. The Quad Cities Pollinator Conference was first held in 2015 to address both causes and solutions to the problem of disappearing pollinators in the Midwest. This year, 38 businesses and organizations sponsored the event, which saw over 275 people in attendance on Thursday and 120 on Friday for the pollinator habitat tours. Attendees came from 11 states: Iowa, Illinois, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Massachusetts, and Wisconsin. A video contest was held for middle and high school students, asking them to answer the question, “Why are pollinators important?” Nearly 70 submissions were received. The grand-prize winner, Shraesht Dacha, from Bettendorf Middle School, was awarded \$1,000 for his school to fund pollinator projects and activities. Both of the runner-up awardees, Vincent Freiburg from Rock Island High School, and Andrew Ericksen and Isaac Blandin from St. Joseph Catholic School, received \$500 for each of their schools. Additionally, the “Busy Bee” award was presented to Bettendorf Middle School teacher, Kevin Roling, who showed great initiative towards helping pollinators; having his entire class work on creating videos. Kevin was awarded a seed pack from Cardno, valued at \$100.



Sylvan Runkel Environmental Education School Award

For Outstanding Whole-School EE Program

Nevada Central Elementary Multi-Age Teachers and the Story County Conservation

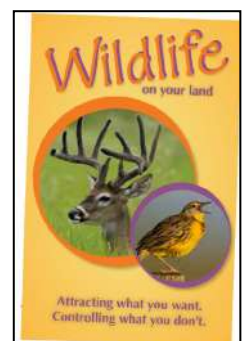
The Nevada Central Elementary Multi-Age Teachers and the Story County Conservation have a long history together. Each year, efforts are made to coordinate the curriculum with the art teacher, media specialist, and music teachers. Students are organized into classes of 20-25 students, ages six to nine and eight to 11 years old.

This past year, Story County Conservation, along with Nevada’s ten multi-age classrooms and teachers, planted a pollinator garden. Leading up to the planting, a Naturalist educated the students about pollinators and their importance. During the winter, a Naturalist and an educator from Neal Smith Wildlife Refuge brought in small greenhouses for the classrooms and the students planted prairie seeds. Then in May, all 240 students helped to plant the pollinator garden. The pollinator garden is located on church grounds, next to sports fields a few blocks from the school. A sign was placed explaining the project and students also created QR Codes for some of the different plants. Many students also said on an evaluation that they helped their parents start a new garden at home, or helped in an existing garden they had. As this information is reinforced each year the garden is used, it will continue to benefit the community.

Outstanding Interpretative Print Media

E Resources Group, Women Food and Agriculture Network (WFAN), and Greenlee School of Journalism and Communication at Iowa State University

E Resources Group, Women Food and Agriculture Network (WFAN), and Greenlee School of Journalism and Communication at Iowa State University have worked closely together to create 10 publications with women land owners. Their goal was to produce publications to successfully get conservation information in women’s hands. Since 2007, these three groups have held numerous meetings for women land owners across 10 states to discover what this audience wanted to know about conservation. Topics for the meetings spanned a range of conservation topics, such as soil health, hunting and wildlife, the Farm Bill programs, and wetlands. Their 10 publications of interpretive brochures and booklets occurred at the direction of Jean Eells of E Resources Group, with grant funding to WFAN through a variety of sources and communication expertise from Iowa State graduate students supervised by Michael Dahlstrom of Greenlee School of Journalism and Communication.





Ada Hayden Conservation Education Award
For Outstanding Efforts to Educate About Preservation, Land Management, or Natural Resource Conservation
Polk County Conservation

Polk County Conservation received a Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) - Conservation Education Program grant to work with 10 religious organizations to install native pollinator gardens at their place of worship. In addition to providing the garden designs and native plants, they educated congregations about pollinators and steps they could take at home to help pollinators. Congregations were chosen as the target audience because they have land to provide habitat for pollinators and they care about what happens at their place of worship. Three different pollinator education programs were created for adults, teens, and younger kids to focus on who pollinators are, why they are important, and what steps they can take to help pollinators. Polk County Conservation conducted 16 pollinator education programs with 12 congregations for a total of 380 people. After the education programs, the pollinator gardens were prepped and planted by congregation members in the months of May and June. Each pollinator garden was approximately 300 square feet and included over 200 plants. There are 18 different species of native perennial plants that will provide a variety of blooms from spring until fall, so there is always a nectar and food source for pollinators. Polk County Conservation will continue to be in contact with each congregation to provide future education programs or support for their native pollinator garden.

Outstanding Environmental Education Program
(2 or less full-time equivalent naturalists)
For Excellence in EE Programming by an Agency or Institution
Henry County Conservation

Henry County Conservation Environmental Education Program has come a long ways over the years. In 2004 they had 400 residents participating in programs. In January of 2005, a naturalist, Cari Nicely, was hired and participation numbers increased to 1,520. The program has continued to grow each year and through November 23, 2016, 15,446 people have taken part in 591 environmental education programs provided by the Henry County Conservation Department's naturalist and ranger-naturalist. The environmental education budget is \$3,750.00 annually. Henry Counties EE program has even improved New London fourth grade Iowa Assessment in Science by 14 percent! Cari has a wide variety of programs ranging from a mentoring program with Mount Pleasant High School to a two day pioneer field trip event for all fifth graders in the county!



Outstanding Environmental Education Program
(3 or more full-time equivalent naturalists)
For Excellence in EE Programming by an Agency or Institution
Nahant Marsh Education Center

Founded in 2000, Nahant Marsh is a unique urban wetland that offers the community recreational, educational, volunteer, and research experiences. The educational staff at Nahant Marsh has grown over the last several years to meet the needs of the community- from one Naturalist in 2010 to 4 full-time and 1 part-time Naturalist today. The education staff at Nahant Marsh has been able to significantly increase their impact on the community over the last several years. In 2012, Nahant Marsh's educational program served around 7,500 people. This year, they have already served around 17,000 people though on-site and outreach programs.

The Nahant Education staff has been instrumental in creating new educational opportunities for people of all ages. The staff works closely with several urban schools and after-school programs in the Quad City area, providing students with what is usually their first experience in nature. These programs have introduced a new audience of people to Nahant Marsh, and more importantly, to Iowa's ecosystems and all they have to offer.

My Favorite Green Thing

Victoria DeVos, Plymouth County Naturalist



I have to admit I had a really hard time coming up with my favorite “green” thing. My life isn’t as green as maybe it should be. I don’t drive an ecofriendly vehicle, I live on the grid, and recycling is tough for people that live out in the sticks. Judge me if you will. So what am I going to write about? My favorite green things are HOUSE PLANTS

I love house plants!!!! My dwelling has had house plants in it for as long as I can remember. In college I started growing my own house plants. Many of those plants have survived many years and many moves to their current location. I have shared these plants over the years and nursed some back from the brink of death.

Having house plants can be beneficial. According to *bayeradvanced.com*, living with plants can help you breathe easier, add moisture to your air and purify it, improve your health, and sharpen your focus.

Oxygen levels in your house will increase when you add plants because of O₂ and CO₂ exchange during photosynthesis. Many plants stop the photosynthesis process at night, so they actually “breathe” like we do. For fresh air at night, orchids and succulents should be placed in your sleeping quarters, as they breathe in CO₂ at night and breathe our O₂. According to NASA, every 24 hours, plants can remove up to 87% of volatile organic compounds in the air. VOC include formaldehyde, benzene, and trichloroethylene.

Through the process of photosynthesis, plants release about 97% of the water they intake. Several plants placed together will increase the overall humidity of a room. An increased moisture level in the air will help decrease dry skin, colds, and sore throats. Hospitals add plants to rooms to increase recovery rates of surgical patients. A Kansas State University study found patients with plants in their room had better vitals, were less fatigued and anxious, requested fewer pain killers and were discharged sooner than those without plants.

Upcoming Workshops

- Winterfest - Waterloo (January 24-26)
- Winter Solstice - Springbrook State Park (Feb 3-4)
- Spring IAN '17 - Plymouth County (March 8-10)
- NAI Region 5 '17- Deadwood, SD (April 5-8)
- Summer IAN '17 - Jackson County (August 2-4)
- Fall IAN '17 - Warren County
- Spring IAN '18 - Open
- Summer IAN '18 - Open
- Fall IAN '18 (IAN's 40th Anniversary) - Open
Central Iowa Location Preferred

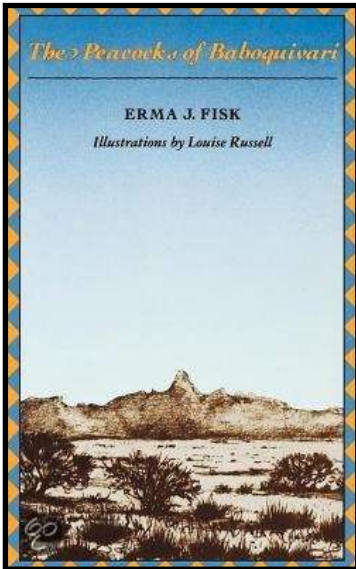
Grapevine News

Congrats to Chelsea Ewen who became Chelsea Rowcliffe on October 15th when she married Bill Rowcliffe. Life changes happen fast and furious for her, as the happy couple bought an acreage and moved less than a week after the wedding! Glad you survived that wild ride!

Congratulations to Larry Stone for becoming an honorary IAN member. Thank you for your hard work, dedication, and passion for the environment.



An update on Mike Krebill’s book, **The Scout’s Guide to Wild Edibles**. Sales are going well on the pocket-sized field guide that covers 40 edible Iowa plants and mushrooms and is available on Amazon for \$18.95.



The Peacocks of Baboquivari by Erma J. Fisk

Reviewed by Annette Wittrock, Wapello County Naturalist

I picked a book off the shelf in our nature center library, and was intrigued by the title. I figured I would get a few pages into this book and decide it wasn't worth reading, but I was wrong. While not the newest book (copyright 1983), I think all of us can relate to doing something we thought crazy or stupid at some point when it comes to our chosen profession.

Erma Fisk decided to take on the job of banding birds for The Nature Conservancy in the foothills of Arizona's Baboquivari Peak recently given to The Nature Conservancy. Not too out of the ordinary, except that she was seventy-three and would be living alone in a tiny, not so modern cabin for five months through the winter. She was ten miles from a paved road, and parked her car two miles down the canyon so as not to get stranded completely at the ranch. There was no electricity. Heat came from a wood stove, light from candles or propane lantern, and a cooking stove and refrigerator ran on propane.

Erma had a hard time netting birds due to cats and peacocks that were residents of the ranch at which she stayed, by the lack of leaves on trees to shadow the nets, and cows wandering through nets. I enjoyed her firsthand accounts of how she got started banding birds once her kids were in college and agreed to this task since her husband had passed away. Through letters to the conservancy, friends, and family, you get a good idea of what she was dealing with during her time in near isolation.

She has a unique and humorous quality of writing that will keep you reading. If you would like to read this book, I can give you this copy. You will enjoy it!

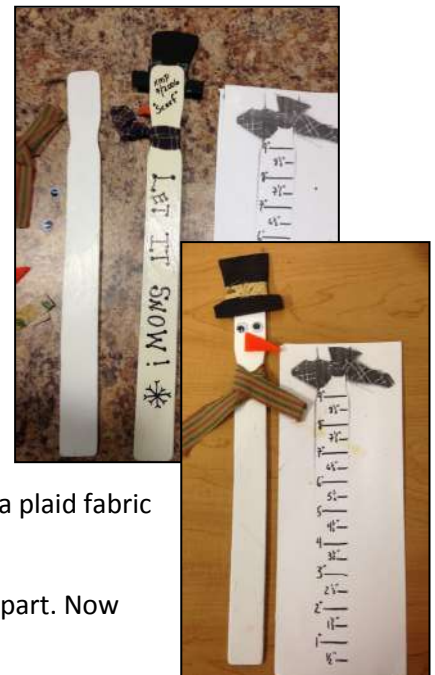
If you have read a book you think we should all know about and read, contact one of your executive committee members. You can review it for the next newsletter.

Let it Snow *By Aaron Askelson*

I am not sure where the idea came from, but Karen Phelps taught it to me when I came to Benton County. I personally love the craft because the kids get to actually use it when they are done. It also has some of that fancy STEM stuff worked in with the measuring and the math. What could be this fantastic? What is this simple craft that involves both joy and learning? It of course is a SNOWMAN MEASURING STICK!!! It is something everybody needs.

You will need to go to your local hardware/paint store and purchase, or if you are lucky, get for free paint stirring sticks. Paint both sides of the stick white. Since you are making a snowman or snowwoman, you will also need a hat, a carrot nose, and some googly eyes. Oh, and all respectable snowmen need a scarf. The hat can be fashioned out of craft foam or felt. The carrot is a simple orange felt triangle, and the mouth is drawn in with a permanent marker. The scarf is made of small strips of a plaid fabric and attached with a small drop of glue.

We have found it easy to make a pattern for the kids to copy for the measuring stick part. Now they are ready to go measure those snowdrifts. Let it snow!





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Left to right: Karen Johlas-Szalkowski, Emily Herring, Michelle Berns, Victoria DeVos, and Amy Loving



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