



The Jasper County Jewel

Jasper County Conservation Board Quarterly Newsletter Spring 2018

Jasper County Volunteers Receive State-Wide Recognition

We are very excited to announce several of our Jasper County Conservation volunteers have received Iowa Conservation Education Coalition (ICEC) and Iowa Association of Naturalists (IAN) 2017 Excellence in Environmental Education Awards! These awards recognize the best of environmental education in Iowa, representing outstanding programs and individual contributions in the field of EE. Congratulations to our JCCB volunteers, Darrell Batterson and Bob and Connie Van Ervelde!

Darrell Batterson was awarded the “Aldo Leopold Environmental Education Award” for lifetime achievement in environmental education excellence and leadership. Darrell is no stranger in Jasper County. He has been a regular volunteer for over 12 years, and was a Conservation Officer for the Iowa DNR in Jasper, Marshall, and Grundy Counties for 30 years. In 2017 alone, he volunteered for over a dozen JCCB programs. Darrell assists with programs such as large field trip groups, fishing derbies, hunter safety education, youth mentored hunts, Halloween Hikes, and Off the Beaten Path trail races. Darrell has helped install playground equipment at both Ashton and



Mariposa Parks. Darrell also received the 2017 “Pioneer Award” at the JCCB volunteer recognition dinner last November. We are grateful for Darrell’s years of hard work protecting land and wildlife, and for educating so many people!

We are also thrilled to announce that Bob and Connie Van Ervelde have received the “Ding Darling Environmental Education Award” for outstanding environmental education programs or event which informs and educates the general public. Bob and Connie have worked many years to restore their farm south of Grinnell into a wildlife sanctuary of prairie, oak savanna and native woodlands.



Since Bob became a licensed bird bander, he and Connie have hosted bird banding programs on their property throughout the spring and fall migrations and even in the summer to monitor nesting species. They band hundreds of birds every year, with the help of preschool students all the way up to college students and adults. Just in 2017, the Van Erveldes had over 400 participants assist with bird banding. Bob has worked a great deal with Grinnell College and is getting

Volunteer awards, continued on page 5...

2 Conservation News

We Wish Janet A Happy Retirement

Where have the last ten years gone? I cannot believe it is time for me to retire and leave the Jasper County Conservation Department. What a way to end my working career! I have enjoyed every minute of my time with this group the past ten years, whether it was my duties as the office manager or the many other creative programs I have had the pleasure to be a part of. It has been a great experience. I will miss everyone and the opportunity to continue to learn new things and have new adventures, but I look forward to volunteering and will still be a familiar face around Jasper County Conservation.



Above: JCCB Office Manager Janet Rinehart with her husband Monte.

Community Garden Space Available

Have you ever wanted to try out your green thumb but haven't had the room to do it? A summer of growing fresh produce to enjoy is easier than you may think!

Thirteen raised beds are available to reserve at the Community Garden, located in Newton east of the Centre for Arts and Artists. A double-sided composting bin is available for use, along with a rain barrel for watering plants. Growers are responsible for weeding and maintaining the raised beds they reserve. Produce is reserved to the person(s) maintaining the plot unless that person has given permission to another grower to take produce from their plot. A produce stand will be at the garden site for those who wish to share their extra produce.

Jasper County Conservation is currently taking reservations for raised bed plots. Plots are free and open to all community members. To reserve a garden bed, call JCCB at (641) 792-9780 or email goldsen@co.jasper.ia.us.

New Home for Barn Owls

Barn owls now have a new location for nesting at Mariposa Park. Bill Yeager has built two nest boxes that are specifically designed for these birds and helped JCCB staff place one at Mariposa this winter. The other will be located at Jacob Krumm Nature Preserve.

The state endangered Barn Owl is a savanna species that nests and roosts in dark, secluded places. Historically, it nested in tree cavities, specifically in silver maple, American sycamore, and white oak. Today, barn owls are often found roosting and nesting in old barns or abandoned buildings. Barn owls hunt in grassland habitats along field edges, fence-rows, and wetland edges where their favored prey is most available.

Yeager has also been busy this past winter building wood duck, bluebird and wren boxes to place in county parks.



Scholarship for Students

The Emerson Hough Chapter of the Izaak Walton League is offering a \$750 scholarship this year for a graduating Jasper County High School student who is majoring in conservation or natural resources.

The scholarship application is due April 1st. Information and applications are available through high school guidance offices, online at www.jaspercountyconservation.com, or at the Jasper County Conservation office, 1030 W. 2nd St. S., Newton.



Evening Prairie Burn

Friday, April 6, 7:00 PM

Jacob Krumm Nature Preserve

Fire is a very important management tool for Iowa's tallgrass prairies. Learn about the history and use of fire in prairies and witness this spectacular event as the sun sets. Please meet at the parking lot at the east entrance of the preserve. Old clothing and shoes are appropriate and cameras may be desirable.

In case of rain or strong winds, the burn will be cancelled. Please call the JCCB office or check our Facebook page for updated information.

Programs at Ashton Observatory

The Ashton Observatory telescopes will be open for public programs at 8:00 PM Saturday evenings, April-October. There will be talks given in the observatory, followed by observing through the telescopes. For more detailed information, go to the DMAS website at www.dmastronomy.com.

Older, Wiser, Livelier Seniors (OWLS)

Wednesdays, 10:00-11:00 AM

**Jasper County Armory/Annex Building
1030 W. 2nd St. S., Newton**

April 11- Canoeing the Mississippi

Former JCCB Naturalist Mark Wagner will be back to share stories and talk about his adventures canoeing the Mississippi River with his brother, John Wagner.

May 9- The Floods of 1993

The Jasper County Historical Museum has a new exhibit highlighting the 25th anniversary of the major flooding that happened in our area. Museum Director Joe Otto will talk about the exhibit and share stories from that extraordinary summer.

June 13- Get to Know Jade Read

Meet the new Administrative/Environmental Education Assistant, Jade Read. Jade is an Iowa State graduate who has had some amazing opportunities, including a summer of researching sea turtles in Costa Rica. Come help us welcome Jade to the JCCB!

Bird Banding

Saturday, May 5, 6:00 AM-3:00 PM

**Bob and Connie Van Ersvelde residence
224 420th Ave., Grinnell**

Stop by at any time to watch and/or assist with banding songbirds. See how this fascinating process works and how it is helping us learn more about birds in our area. All ages are welcome!

For more information, please call the Van Ersveldes at (641) 236-6600.



Above: Licensed bird bander Bob Van Ersvelde helps students release banded songbirds at his rural Grinnell home.

Signs of Spring Family Fun Hike

Sunday, May 6, 2:00-3:00 PM

Jacob Krumm Nature Preserve

Celebrate the return of spring! A naturalist led hike will take you on the hunt for spring wildflowers and the many songbirds who have returned for nesting. Discover wildlife under logs and among the treetops.

Wear comfortable walking shoes and bring along binoculars or a camera if you have them. The group will meet at the lake on the west side of the preserve. This program is for all ages! The hike will be cancelled in the event of rain. For more information, please call the JCCB office or check our Facebook page for updates.



4 Upcoming Events/Programs

Rendezvous with the Chichaqua

Free Skinners

Saturday, May 12, 9:00 AM-5:00 PM

Sunday, May 13, 9:00 AM-2:00 PM

Ashton Wildwood Park

See early 1800's lifestyles of mountain men on the frontier at this free public event. Catch craftsmen and artists at work demonstrating skills from the 18th and 19th centuries, including blacksmithing, basket weaving, scrimshaw, leather working, and more. Many craftsmen offer their handmade items for sale or trade.

Also witness mountain men contests using primitive skills: bow shoots, tomahawk and knife throws, cooking contests and a cannon ball toss. Don't miss the Candy Man with his Candy Cannon, several times each day!



Pedal the Prairie

Saturday, May 20, 9:00 AM-1:00PM

Neal Smith Wildlife Refuge, Prairie City

Take a spring bike ride along the Prairie Parkway Bike Trail! Ride among wildflowers and toss prairie seed bombs along the trail. Enjoy a variety of exhibits, meet live animals, and participate in games and other activities or enjoy a hike along one of the trails.

Exhibits and activities are scheduled from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Visitor Center. The Prairie Parkway Ride (10 miles) and Family Fun Ride (1.5 miles) both start at 9:00. The Visitor Center will be open until 4:00 p.m. while the trails and wildlife drive will remain open until sunset. To register, go to "Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge" on Facebook and click "Coming".

JCCB Conservation Crew

Fridays, June 1-July 6, 8:00 AM-1:00 PM

Mariposa Recreation Area

Wanted: Youth Volunteers, ages 12-18!

Jasper County Conservation is looking for students who want to make a difference and help improve Mariposa Park! Each day participants will join in educational and ecology activities and hands-on service learning projects. Projects include clearing brush, spreading woodchips, maintaining a pollinator garden, and building fish habitat and nest boxes.

Crew members will be provided work gloves, water and snacks, and a crew member t-shirt. They will need to bring their own sack lunch. Members should dress to get dirty and be prepared to do physical hands-on conservation work. The crew will be rewarded with an end of program BBQ and kayak excursion.

To learn more, or to register for the Conservation Crew, please contact the JCCB office at (641) 792-9780, or email Katie Cantu at kcantu@co.jasper.ia.us.

Splash, Paddle, Dig!

Family Adventure at the Park

Saturday, June 2, 9:00 AM-12:00 PM

Jacob Krumm Nature Preserve

Mark your calendar for this NEW family event and kick off your summer with some outdoor fun! Jasper County Conservation staff and volunteers will have some of our favorite outdoor activities ready for families to try out, including kayaking and canoeing, Dutch oven cooking, fishing, guided hikes, and a fossil dig.

This event is free and for all ages. Participants are encouraged to bring snacks and/or a picnic lunch to enjoy at the park. You do not need to purchase a license to go fishing that day, as it is the Iowa DNR's Free Fishing Weekend.

For more details, check out our Facebook page @jaspercountyconservation and our website at www.jaspercountyconservation.com.



Chichaqua Trail Events

Sponsored by Friends of the Chichaqua Valley Trail (CVT)

Pedal CVT: On June 9 the Chichaqua Valley Cyclists will host Pedal CVT. This event will include a 5K run at 8:00 am in Bondurant, and a bike ride at 9:30 am. The bike ride will include Bondurant, Altoona, Mitchellville, Mingo, Ira, Valeria, and Baxter. Check out bikeiowa.com for more information.

Pedaler's Jamboree: On August 25-26 the group will be hosting the Iowa Pedaler's Jamboree on the Chichaqua Valley Trail between Baxter and Bondurant. We hope you can join us for two fun days of music, food and riding. We have already ordered up two beautiful summer days. Stay tuned for more information to come at pedalersjamboreeiowa.com.

Fall Color Ride: Scheduled for October 20. More details to come!

The Friends of the Chichaqua Valley Trail continue to work with partners at the Jasper County and Polk County Conservation Departments as well as the communities along the trail to make improvements to the trail, and facilitate tourism and economic development. You can visit their website at www.chichaquavalleytrail.org, email at chichaquavalleytrail@gmail.com, and follow the group on Facebook.



Above: Chichaqua Valley Trail prints are available for purchase, with 10% of the proceeds going directly to Friends of the CVT. You can order yours at www.bozzprints.com/shop/chichaqua-valley-trail.

Volunteer awards, continued from page 1:

started with a banding program at Lake Red Rock. Every summer, JCCB Naturalists take our Wildlife Explorers nature campers to Bob and Connie's farm to help band birds and learn about their habitat restoration efforts. It is a favorite summer camp activity!

Bob and Connie also lead after-school bird formaxing programs for 5th and 6th grade students each year. The 10-year old program has around 20-30 participants each year. The Van Ersveldes have presented other public programs for JCCB, and have even presented to the Iowa Association of County Conservation Board Employees at an annual conference. Bob and Connie received the 2017 "Environmental Educators of the Year" award at the JCCB volunteer recognition dinner last November. We appreciate everything the Van Ersveldes do, and thank them for sharing their knowledge, expertise, and most importantly, their passion for birds.

Mariposa Lake Restoration Update

It has been exciting watching the work at Mariposa Park this winter. We encourage you to drive out and check on the lake restoration progress, and as you do, consider these facts:

- The sediment removed from Mariposa Lake weighs 2,950 lbs/per cubic yard.
- 1 truck holds 20 cubic yards
- That equals about 59,000 lbs per truck load, nearly 30 tons per truck.
- Over 7,500 truck loads of sediment will be hauled from the lake!

The park and campground will remain closed until the restoration project is completed.



6 Summer Camps: The Wild is Waiting!

JCCB is offering programs for kids of all ages this summer with a generous donation from Newton Noon Kiwanis.

Participants are asked to register by filling out a permission form for the programs they will attend with payment for each session. Registration begins Monday, March 26. Many of the camps have limited space. The first 100 children to register will get a summer camp t-shirt. Registration forms are at the JCCB office or at www.jaspercountyconservation.com.

Camps are sponsored by:



Youth Photography Camp

for kids ages 10-16 years old
Tuesday and Wednesday, June 5 and 6
9:00 AM-1:00 PM each day
Jacob Krumm Nature Preserve

Fee: \$20.00; must attend both days, limit 12 kids

Outdoor photography is a great way to enjoy our parks all year long. Summer offers a wonderful variety of wildflowers, birds, and scenic views that can be captured by young photographers. Campers will manipulate their photos during an editing workshop at DMACC and transfer one onto a natural frame. Digital cameras will be provided for each child. Please bring a sack lunch.

Junior Naturalists

for kids ages 8-12 years old
Thursday, June 7, 9:00 AM-2:00 PM
Friday, June 8, 7:00-10:00 PM
Ashton Wildwood Park

Fee: \$10.00; must attend both days, limit 15 kids

Campers will explore the woods with a focus on bird studies, habitat and nature discovery. Thursday morning will include a creek hike. Friday night the group will enjoy a hotdog picnic and listen to a presentation by the Des Moines Astronomical Society, followed by stargazing. Families are welcome to stay for Friday's program. Please bring a sack lunch on Thursday.

Wildlife Explorers

for kids ages 8-12 years old
June 12, 13 and 14*, 9:00 AM-2:00 PM
*Thursday special time 7:00 AM-12:00 PM

Jacob Krumm Nature Preserve

Fee: \$5.00 per session; lunch provided, limit 20 kids

Over three days our group will explore the things that fly, swim, trot and slither in Iowa's great outdoors. On Thursday we will join licensed bird bander Bob Van Ervelde to net local bird species. Transportation will be provided from Krumm Preserve to the netting location.



Princess Adventures

for girls ages 5-8 years old
Tuesday and Wednesday, June 19 and 20
9:00-11:00 AM each day
Newton Arboretum

Fee: \$5.00 per session; limit 10 girls

Do you know a little girl who loves princesses? Want to encourage her to dress up AND have fun exploring the outdoors at the same time? Girls ages 5-8 are invited to the park in "princess attire" (whatever that means to them). We will learn about a courageous conservation woman from the past, participate in a nature activity, followed by a tea party with a snack.

June 19—Mary Anning “Fascinating Fossils”

June 20—Mary Elizabeth Banning
“Botanical Art”



Summer Camps: The Wild is Waiting! 7

Nature Quest

for kids ages 5-7 years old
Tuesday and Wednesday, June 26 and 27
9:00-11:00 AM each day
Newton Izaak Walton League
Fee: \$5.00 per session; limit 10 kids

Our quest is to have fun and explore the outdoors with activities including hiking, pond netting and fishing. Parents are welcome to stay and join their child for the activities, but not required.

SciKids Camp

for kids ages 7-10 years old
Monday and Tuesday, July 9 and 10
9:00-11:30 AM each day
Jasper County Armory/Annex Building
Fee: \$5 per session; limit 10 kids

Have a blast exploring through experimentation in our own "science lab" with some cool summer STEM activities. Campers will keep a science journal and make some fun things to take home.

Watersports Wednesday

for kids ages 8-16 years old
Wednesday, July 11, 9:00 AM-2:00 PM
Jacob Krumm Nature Preserve
Fee: \$10.00; limit 20 kids

Spend a day on the water canoeing, kayaking, and paddle boarding. Slide down the giant slip and slide and take part in a fun relay and water balloon toss. Lunch and equipment will be provided, including life vests. Bring a water bottle and sunscreen.

Archery Camp

for kids ages 10-16 years old
Thursday, July 12, 9:00 AM-1:00 PM
Jacob Krumm Nature Preserve
Fee: \$10:00 per person; limit 15 kids

Learn basic shooting techniques and safety on the line. Kids will enjoy learning the sport of archery on our mini 3D course and through games such as "arrow tick-tack-toe." All equipment will be provided. Please bring a sack lunch.



Kids Outdoor Cooking Class

for kids ages 8-16 years old
Tuesday, July 17, 9:00 AM-1:00 PM
Ashton Wildwood Park
Fee: \$20.00; limit 10 kids

Using a variety of fresh ingredients, our campers will learn the basic skills of campfire cooking. From pie irons to Dutch ovens, this camp will be sure to please everyone's pallet.



Drawn To Nature Art Camp

for kids ages 10-14 years old
Wednesday, July 18, 9:00 AM-3:00 PM
Center for Arts and Artists, Newton
Thursday, July 19, 9:00 AM-3:00 PM
Jasper County Armory/Annex Building
Fee: \$20.00; must attend both days, limit 10 kids

Make and keep some awesome new art projects inspired by nature! Campers will work with a variety of mediums, including painting on canvas, working with clay, basket weaving, and sketching. Please bring a sack lunch.

Youth Trail Ride

for kids ages 8-16 years old
Friday, July 20, 9:00 AM-12:00 PM
Meet at picnic shelter in Mingo
Fee: \$5.00; limit 20 kids

Bring your bikes and join us for a fun group ride down the Chichaqua Valley Trail. We'll watch for wildlife along the way and ride back for a picnic at the trailhead. Lunch is provided. Bring a water bottle and sunscreen.

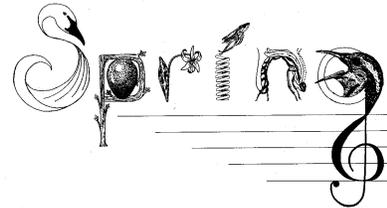
Attention Nature Campers!

Kids ages 6-12 years old can earn the official Junior Naturalist certificate and 2018 embroidered Wild Rose Badge by attending any three JCCB programs and doing two independent activities this summer! Ask for a record book at the JCCB office.

Jasper County Conservation Board
1030 W. 2nd St. S.
Newton, IA 50208

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A Big Thank You To...

Bill Yeager for making nest boxes and Ina Heidemann for sponsoring our environmental education animals.

Shelter House Reservation

Shelter houses located in Jasper County parks can be reserved for \$25 per day. Shelters are located at Ashton Wildwood Park, Mariposa Recreation Area, Jacob Krumm Nature Preserve, Reimer Refuge, Wagaman Mill, and the Chichaqua Valley Recreation Trail. Call (641) 792-9780 to make your reservation.

#ExploreJasperCountyParks

Jasper County Conservation Board's programs are consistent with pertinent federal and state laws and regulations on nondiscrimination regarding race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identification, age and handicap. If anyone believes they have been subjected to discrimination, they may file a complaint with the Jasper County Conservation Board or the Office of Equal Opportunity, Washington, D.C. 29240