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June 3 Iowa Outdoors

Press Releases from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources

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IOWA OUTDOORS

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES | CONSERVATION AND RECREATION DIVISION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: JUNE 3, 2014

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NO ADDITIONAL DEER TEST POSITIVE FOR CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE

A deer shot during the regular gun season in Allamakee County was the lone positive out of more

than 4,000 samples collected from 2013/14 looking for the presence of chronic wasting disease (CWD) in Iowa.

That positive sample from a wild deer was the focus of three public meetings in April, where the DNR engaged Allamakee and Clayton County residents to work together to increase surveillance and the number of deer samples collected in a five mile radius from where the positive deer was harvested.

“This additional surveillance, along with more than 1,100 deer sampled in the past 12 years in this immediate area, will help us to determine if CWD has spread to other deer. If no further cases are found in the next three years, we will go back to routine testing,” said Dr. Dale Garner, chief of Wildlife for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. “If additional cases are found, we will work with the public to decide how to proceed.”

Since 2002, the Iowa DNR has sampled nearly 51,000 wild deer and 3,500 captive deer and elk for CWD. A majority of samples came from 11 counties in northeast Iowa, which is the area closest to the CWD endemic areas in Wisconsin and Illinois, and Minnesota’s southeast containment area.

Sampling effort also concentrated on three areas surrounding captive facilities that had animals test positive in Iowa in 2012 and the area north of where Missouri’s positive CWD deer have been found.

No additional positive CWD results have been found in wild deer. The DNR is encouraging the public to report all road kill deer, and sick or severely emaciated deer found in the targeted area by calling [563-546-7962](tel:563-546-7962) or [563-380-3422](tel:563-380-3422).

MEDIA CONTACT: Willie Suchy, Wildlife Research Supervisor, Wildlife Bureau, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, [515-281-8660](tel:515-281-8660).

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PEREGRINE FALCON BANDING FRIDAY IN DES MOINES

Two young peregrine falcons will be banded on June 6, at the American Enterprise Insurance building, 601 Sixth Avenue, in downtown Des Moines.

Staff with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources will discuss the peregrine recovery in Iowa at 11 a.m. in the courtyard of American Enterprise Insurance building.

Downtown Des Moines has a second pair of falcons nesting with an unknown number of young at the Capitol.

Fifteen other nest sites have been documented around Iowa, which is an increase of two. New nesting sites are at Bellevue State Park, in Bellevue, and Eagle Point Park, in Dubuque.

Peregrine falcons are considered the standard-bearers of the Endangered Species Act. They have

recovered to breeding status and are no longer endangered.

The American Enterprise Insurance building has hosted a nesting pair of peregrine falcons each year since 1993.

MEDIA CONTACT: Pat Schlarbaum, Wildlife Diversity Technician, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 712-330-0526.

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STEPHENS STATE FOREST-THOUSAND ACRES BIRD CONSERVATION AREA DEDICATION

CHARITON – A ceremony to dedicate three Stephens State Forest units and the surrounding area as Iowa’s newest Bird Conservation Area (BCA) will take place June 19, at 1:30 p.m. The event will be held at the Lucas County Conservation Board Headquarters at Pin Oak Marsh, located about one mile south of Chariton along Hwy. 14.

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is hosting the dedication that will include brief presentations and the unveiling of a special Bird Conservation Area sign. Following the ceremony, there will be a short tour and possible birding hike of Stephens State Forest.

The creation of Bird Conservation Areas in Iowa is a priority for DNR’s wildlife diversity program and is part of a larger international effort promoting assistance for birds with the greatest conservation need. This will be the second BCA centered on Stephens State Forest units and the fourth BCA centered on Iowa state forests.

“Designation of Stephens State Forest as Iowa’s 19th official Bird Conservation Area will give state and national recognition to the area’s importance for both nesting and migratory birds,” said Bruce Ehresman, DNR wildlife diversity program biologist.

Both Stephens Forest and the surrounding woodland and grassland habitat in private ownership provide critical nesting habitat for declining species such as American woodcock, whip-poor-will, wood thrush, Kentucky warbler, and bobolink. To date, 185 species of birds have been identified in this proposed BCA, with more than 25 percent of these species considered of greatest conservation need.

The emphasis of the Bird Conservation Area program is to encourage habitat conservation at a large landscape scale to establish stable or growing bird populations, and the Stephens State Forest area, with its existing tracts of public forests interspersed with privately owned woodlands and grasslands, is an ideal candidate.

Stephens State Forest-Thousand Acres BCA will be the result of state, federal, and county agencies, as well as private conservation organizations and citizens, working together to emphasize the importance of bird habitat.

“This cooperative effort represents a partnership that serves as a good example of ways to better

conserve all natural resources in this unique forest-savanna landscape," says Jessica Flatt, DNR area forester at Stephens State Forest. "Diverse management insures habitat for all native species while providing recreational opportunities for hunters, as well as hikers, bird watchers, and many other outdoor enthusiasts."

"Bird watching is one of the nation's fastest-growing outdoor activities, and this new BCA is likely to attract even more bird enthusiasts from throughout the region. This should result in the growth of the local tourism economy while also building sustainable local bird populations," Ehresman said.

The public is welcome to attend this event.

For more information, contact Ehresman at (515) 432-2823, or Flatt at (641) 774-4559.

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MANAGING POND PLANTS

Pond plants are necessary for healthy fish populations and good water quality, but can become a nuisance and cause frustration to pond users. In trying to make pond access easier, the trick is to reduce plant abundance without getting rid of them altogether.

Correctly identifying the plants is the first step to controlling their abundance. To help with this, the Iowa DNR has just posted a Pond Plant Identification Guide at www.iowadnr.gov/Fishing/AboutFishinginIowa/IowaFarmPonds/FarmPondPlants.aspx.

This interactive, visual guide identifies 26 most common aquatic plant species in Iowa ponds and lakes.

MEDIA CONTACT: Darcy Cashatt, Fisheries Biologist, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 712-769-2587.

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[Photo available by sending an email to mick.klemesrud@dnr.iowa.gov]

PERIODICAL CICADAS EMERGING IN IOWA

Periodical cicadas are emerging in the woods of Iowa after living underground as nymphs for 17 years.

These red-eyed periodical cicadas occur in the southeastern half of Iowa, and in Missouri and Illinois with other broods occurring at different times throughout the country. The best place to find them is in native woodlands. They are the longest living insect in North America.

Periodical cicadas do not have chewing mouth parts and will feed only on sap posing little threat to plants. They will not bite or sting.

Much like the annual cicadas, adult males will “sing” from late morning through early afternoon for five or six weeks after hatching. This “singing” can be incredibly loud due to the high population of periodical cicadas that emerge during each cycle.

Iowans who are lucky enough to see periodical cicadas are encouraged to report their sighting to the National Geographic Society *Magicalcicada* Mapping Project at www.magicalcicada.org to help researchers better understand these long-lived insects.

More information on these unique insects can be found through the Iowa State University Department of Entomology at www.ent.iastate.edu.

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