



Thomas Hazelton <countyparksiaowa@gmail.com>

August 26 Iowa Outdoors

1 message

Press Releases from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources

<DNR.Media@dnr.iowa.gov>

Reply-To: DNR.Media@dnr.iowa.gov

To: Iowa Association of County Conservation Boards <IACCB@mycountyparks.com>

Tue, Aug 26, 2014 at 11:49 AM



IOWA OUTDOORS

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES | CONSERVATION AND RECREATION DIVISION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: AUGUST 26, 2014

www.iowadnr.gov | [facebook.com/iowadnr](https://www.facebook.com/iowadnr) | twitter.com/iowadnr | [pinterest.com/iowadnr](https://www.pinterest.com/iowadnr)

1. They Gotta Have Cover, Pheasants That is...
2. Mussel Blitz
3. Iowa Receives \$3 Million for Habitat and Hunter Access Program
4. Early Teal Hunting Information Sessions
5. Alliant Energy to Sponsor Eight Operation ReLeaf Events
6. Becoming an Outdoors Woman Workshop Openings Still Available
7. Chariton Hosts International Forest Pest Workshop
8. Archery Safety Demo at Hawkeye Wildlife Area

THEY GOTTA' HAVE COVER, PHEASANTS THAT IS...

BOONE-- "They Gotta' Have Cover" is a new and catchy way to call attention to what farmers can do to bring back pheasants and other grassland birds.

Debuting at the Farm Progress Show in Boone, Aug. 26-28, the video features three farmers rapping about the cover types they've planted, then nurtured to shelter and feed pheasant throughout the year.

Once you hear the lyrics, you won't be able to forget them.

"They gotta' have cover! Yes they do, yes they do!" or

"Gotta' have grass for the pheasants to nest, 10 to 12 inches is what the hens like best."

It's not as simple as planting a field of brome or switch grass, and watching the birds fly. The DNR's research shows that managed farms with three essential types of habitat produce more birds than unmanaged farms — three times as many.

What's good for pheasant is good for most grassland birds, from meadowlarks to quail; Henslowe sparrows to bobolinks.

Since the 1960s, Iowa has lost half the ideal land for grassland birds — land in hay and small grains like oats — dropping from more than 7 million to 3.4 million acres. As a result, grassland birds are in trouble.

"Gotta' have Cover" gives farmers a quick tutorial on how to bring the birds back. The video is on the Iowa DNR's pheasant page at www.iowadnr.gov/pheasants.

Stop by the DNR booth in Conservation Central, Lot 817, at the Farm Progress Show and prepare to be entertained.

While you're there, check out "Farmer Feud," hot topic speakers, nine cover crop plots, the Soil Health trailer and booths at all 12 conservation partners. More information is available at www.iowadnr.gov or www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/ia/home/?cid=STELPRDB1258112.

Find information about establishing pheasant and grassland bird habitat at www.iowadnr.gov/Environment/LandStewardship/WildlifeLandownerAssistance.aspx.

MEDIA CONTACT: Kevin Baskins, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 515-249-2814.

MUSSEL BLITZ

From the adjacent sandbar, the scene looks like a diving school gone awry. Two shallow divers are connected to oxygen lines. A couple others have masks. Another four wade through the shallower sections. Every couple minutes, someone hoists another mussel; adding to the inventory.

"You are looking for coarser gravel, but not big cobblestones," explains Vance Polton, DNR fisheries technician. He is standing knee deep in the Iowa River, below Iowa City; returning a 'Wabash pig toe' to the sandy bottom.

"They have to push through the substrate where they are located," says Polton. Onshore, small piles of live mussels are inventoried, measured for growth; and then returned to the water.

Iowa's mussel dilemma is mirrored throughout North America. A dozen of 54 known Iowa species are gone. At least half of the remaining species are endangered or threatened. That wakeup call is what brings up to 50 biologists, students and volunteers for a week of wading and groping often muddy Iowa stream bottoms for elk toes, three-ridge, pocketbooks and fat muckets. If nothing else, freshwater clams have great names!

This summer, the target river was the Iowa; above and below Iowa City. Historically, it has been a good 'mussel' river.

"Fish and mussels have 'co-evolved.' They somewhat depend on each other," underscores Scott Gritters, DNR fisheries biologist and annual ringmaster of Iowa's 'Mussel Blitz.' "The more mussel species; the better the mussel density; the better our fish populations; the better our water quality."

The results this year?

"It's one of those 'glass half full, glass half empty,' scenarios," assesses Gritters. His long term concern is that populations cannot handle the cycle of highs and lows of past years.

"We really scoured some areas. We found about a thousand mussels; 20 species. We found some decent populations, but I had hoped for 3,000 or so. Mussels don't react well to that."

On the upside, the 2014 Mussel Blitz turned up another five Higgins' eye pearly mussels; thought nearly extinct 40 years ago. Any Higgins' eyes in the Iowa River were stocked there. Raised in hatcheries; they were inoculated as glochidia--larvae--into the gills of fish, stocked several years ago. No larger than grains of salt then, they hung onto their host for several weeks...before dropping off; hopefully into a hospitable gravel bed.

To have the nearly microscopic mussels show up now, as adults?

"It's a pretty big deal," applauds Gritters. "It is a way to reintroduce mussels into our rivers by stocking fish. We stock a lot of fish for our anglers and this way we can 'double dip', so to speak."

With floods, excess nutrients and sediment covering mussel habitat; even extreme cold affecting these inland mollusks, a few glimmers appear from year to year.

"People will like our rivers a lot more, if they can support mussels," says Gritters.

MEDIA CONTACT: Joe Wilkinson, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 319-430-0325.

-30-

IOWA RECEIVES \$3 MILLION FOR HABITAT AND HUNTER ACCESS PROGRAM

Landowners and hunters will benefit from a recent announcement that Iowa will receive \$3 million from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to expand the Iowa Habitat and Access Program (IHAP). The announcement came from U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack in August as part of a \$20 million allocation to 10 states.

The DNR's Iowa Habitat and Access Program provides landowners with financial assistance to improve habitat. In return, participating landowners agree to open those lands for public hunting.

According to Kelly Smith, private lands program coordinator, the DNR will use the grant to enhance 22,000 acres with improvements such as grass seeding, tree and shrub plantings, food plots, timber stand improvements and wetland restorations.

"We've seen growing demand by hunters for more public access, and by landowners for more habitat improvement opportunities," said Smith. "This grant will more than triple the number of acres enrolled in the program."

The DNR launched the Iowa Habitat and Access Program in 2011. Since then, more than 8,000 acres at 50 locations have received habitat improvements and provided new hunting opportunities.

"We have surveyed participating landowners and they have shown high satisfaction with the program," said Smith. "Landowners say they've had very few concerns with hunters on their land, and would recommend other landowners participate."

Additionally, hunters seem pleased to have more options for places to hunt. Lands enrolled in IHAP are open for public hunting from Sept. 1 – May 31 and follow the same regulations as public wildlife areas.

"We ask hunters to fill out cards to let us know about their hunting experience on an IHAP parcel," said Smith. "Of 236 people who completed a card in 2013, 98 percent said they would come back."

The grant dollars came from the USDA's Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentive Program (VPA-HIP). The program is administered by the federal Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to expand or improve habitat in existing public access programs or provide incentives to improve habitat on land already enrolled in their public access programs.

If landowners are interested in participating, they should contact their local DNR private lands biologist. For more information about IHAP and to view maps of locations, visit www.iowadnr.gov/ihap.

-30-

EARLY TEAL HUNTING INFORMATION SESSIONS

Waterfowl hunters have a new season this year. Whether it continues will depend on how well they can identify fast moving teal, over a shallow wetland.

To outline the new 'early teal' season, the DNR has scheduled six free information sessions around the state beginning August 27 at 7 p.m., at the F.W. Kent Park conservation education center, west of Tiffin On Highway 6; followed by Spencer, August 28, 7 p.m., Spencer High School ICN room, 800 East 3rd Street; Burlington, August 28, 7 p.m., Starr's Cave Nature Center, 11627 Starr's Cave Road; Peosta, August 28, 6:30 p.m., Swiss Valley Nature Center, 13606 Swiss Valley Road; and Waverly, September 4, 6:30 p.m., Waverly Public Library, 1500 W Bremer Avenue.

That September 6-21 season across Iowa—provides hunters with earlier dates to pursue the early migrants.

"Blue-winged teal are an early migrating species and the peak of the migration occurs before our regular season opens," explains DNR waterfowl technician Al Hancock. "The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is allowing production states—and Iowa is one of them—the opportunity to participate in an early teal season."

The three year experiment hinges on hunter ability to identify the erratic, fast moving waterfowl. Only teal will be legal during the 16 day September season. During the special season, observation points will be active. Wildlife officials will assess shots taken at non target species. Hancock emphasizes that if too many NON-teal are targeted, the federal agency will eliminate the season.

Nearly 5,000 licensed Iowa waterfowl hunters were surveyed last winter; with 69 percent replying that they would hunt an early teal season.

The information session will include video of September teal, showing how to identify blue-winged and green-winged teal. It will offer suggestions for finding teal hot spots. Also at the session will be tips on decoy spreads, choke patterns and shot loads.

-30-

Alliant Energy customers invited to purchase trees for \$25

ALLIANT ENERGY TO SPONSOR EIGHT OPERATION RELEAF EVENTS

DES MOINES – A popular program offering landscape quality trees at a deep discount to Alliant Energy customers will be held at eight locations across Iowa this fall.

Alliant Energy's Operation ReLeaf is a program to help Alliant Energy customers save energy in their homes using trees to provide shade during the summer and create wind breaks during the winter. For maximum energy efficiency, shade trees should be planted within 30 feet of the east and west and evergreens should be planted as a windbreak on the north and west of the home.

Through the program, Alliant Energy residential customers may purchase high quality landscaping trees for \$25 each, on a first-come, first-served basis. These trees typically retail for between \$65 and \$125.

“Planting a diverse mix of trees on your property and in your neighborhood will reduce the likelihood of losing a large number of trees to forest health threats,” said Paul Tauke, state forester and chief of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Forestry Bureau.

Tauke said they are encouraging homeowners who do not intend to treat for emerald ash borer to plant a replacement tree within 30 feet of the existing ash tree.

Foresters have been working communities across the state to develop management plans from public tree inventories which will guide future tree planting efforts to establish a healthy mix of tree species.

Operation ReLeaf has 35 species of trees from which they select 8 to 10 species for each event based on the local tree inventory that will include shade trees, ornamentals and conifers. Shade trees are 6 to 8 feet tall in 5 to 10 gallon containers and conifers are 2 to 3 feet tall.

Just a few of the advantages of yard trees are:

- Decrease in household heating and cooling costs
- Increase in property values
- Decrease in storm water runoff, which may reduce flooding events
- Beauty and personal enjoyment

“All trees are purchased through a bidding process to promote local nurseries,” said Tauke. “This is a great way for homeowners to get a quality tree at an affordable price.”

Advanced order is highly recommended and advance purchase is limited to two trees per household. In the event there are extra trees available on distribution day, those trees will be released for purchase at that time. Order forms are available online at www.alliantenergy.com/releaf.

Workshops lead by experts discussing tree planting and care will be held at all tree distributions. Workshops will cover root flare and proper planting depth, correcting encircling roots, proper mulching and watering, corrective pruning to reduce future storm damage, planning around buildings for energy efficiency and emerald ash borer.

Operation ReLeaf, is administered by the Iowa DNR’s Forestry Bureau with assistance from local partners, like county conservation boards, municipalities and county extension offices.

Operation ReLeaf participants must be Alliant Energy residential customers.

Operation ReLeaf Events

September 20, 7:30 to 9 a.m.

Marion, Linn County

Squaw Creek Park, 4305 Squaw Lane, Marion

Tree Planting and Care Workshop: 8:15 a.m.

Partner: Linn County Conservation

September 24, 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Chariton, Lucas County

Pin Oak Lodge, one mile south of Chariton on Hwy. 14, 45996 State Hwy 14

Partner: Lucas County Conservation

September 25, 5 to 6:30 p.m.

Anamosa, Jones County

USDA Office, 300 Chamber Drive, Anamosa

Tree Planting and Care Workshop: 5:45 p.m.

Partner: Jones County Soil and Water Conservation District

September 27, 8 to 10 a.m.

Storm Lake, Buena Vista County

AWAYSIS Park (aka Sunrise Park), East Lake Shore Drive, Storm Lake

Tree Planting and Care Workshop: 9 a.m.

Partner: City of Storm Lake

October 2, 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Fairfield, Jefferson County

Jefferson County Fairgrounds, 2606 West Burlington Ave., Fairfield

Tree Planting and Care Workshop: 5:30 p.m.

Partner: Jefferson County Extension

October 4, 9 to 11 a.m.

Donnellson, Lee County

Lee County Fairgrounds, north of Donnellson on Main Street, Donnellson

Tree Planting and Care Workshop: 10 a.m.

Partner: Lee County Extension

October 11, 8:30 to 10 a.m.

Cresco, Howard County

Vernon Springs County Park, 11562 Valley Ave., Cresco

Partner: Howard County Conservation Board

October 16, 4:30 to 6 p.m.

Ames, Story County

Peterson Park East, 55756 180th Street, Ames

Tree Planting and Care Workshop: 5:15 p.m.

Partner: Story County Conservation

For more information, contact Laura Wagner with the Iowa DNR at 515-281-6749 or laura.wagner@dnr.iowa.gov.

-30-

Registration Price Increases Sept. 5

BECOMING AND OUTDOORS WOMAN WORKSHOP OPENINGS STILL AVAILABLE

DES MOINES – Women can still answer their “call of the wild” by registering for the Becoming an Outdoors-Woman (BOW) workshop Sept. 19-21 at the Springbrook Conservation Education Center in Guthrie County.

Women thinking about participating are encouraged to sign up now. After Sept. 5, the cost of the workshop increases from \$150 to \$180.

“Some of the classes are full for this year’s workshop, but many are still open,” says Julie Sparks, DNR Becoming an Outdoors-Woman coordinator.

“This workshop is an excellent opportunity for women 18 years or older to try a variety of activities they may never have had the chance to experience. We have top-notch instructors, our class sizes are kept small and the setting at Springbrook is beautiful, particularly in the fall.”

Workshop topics include basic fishing, fly fishing, birdwatching, archery, beginning shotgun

shooting, basic motor boat skills, geocaching, canoeing, stand up paddling, Dutch oven cooking and much more. The registration fee covers food, lodging and materials for the weekend workshop.

Brochures and registration forms are available online at www.iowadnr.gov/bow or by contacting Julie Sparks, at 515-281-6159 or julie.sparks@dnr.iowa.gov

-30-

CHARITON HOSTS INTERNATIONAL FOREST PEST WORKSHOP

CHARITON – Forest health specialists from Minnesota, Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Wisconsin, Michigan and Manitoba and Ontario, Canada will be in Chariton Sept. 8-11 for the North Central Forest Pest Workshop.

The workshop will focus on issues facing oaks, like bur oak blight, oak wilt and the decline of white oak in the prairie transitions zones, as well as invasive species like thousand cankers disease, the Asian longhorned beetle and emerald ash borer, and demonstrations in the field.

An estimated 70 foresters will be in attendance. The annual workshop rotates among member states. The last time it was held in Iowa was at Dubuque in 1998.

MEDIA CONTACT: Tivon Feeley, Forest Health Program Leader, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 515-281-4915.

-30-

ARCHERY SAFETY DEMO AT HAWKEYE WILDLIFE AREA

Test your own gear on the range, handle the new stuff and ask questions about archery, bowhunting and safety from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m. at the Hawkeye Area archery range; 2065 Amana Road Northwest, west of Swisher.

“A lot of people don’t even know the range is here,” says range director David Giese. “We have the six lanes; with distances from 20 to 60 yards for sighting in your bows. We will show how to safely handle equipment, how to get up in stands and how to safely harness yourself in.”

With upwards of 50,000 bowhunters in Iowa now, tree stand accidents have become a harsh reality.

Two years ago, two deaths occurred as a result of falls from tree stands. Several serious injuries were reported and officials recognize a number of 'walk away' incidents go unreported. Iowa's bow deer season begins October 1. However, hunters in other seasons 'get elevated,' too, for the sight and scent advantage which stands can provide.

Representatives from Fin & Feather and Palo Outdoors stores will be around to answer questions and demonstrate safety systems and new archery products out there; including 3D targets which will handle broadheads. Instructors will supervise youth who want to give archery a try. Boy Scout Troop 211 will staff a concession stand.

- 30 -

MICK KLEMESRUD Information Specialist

Iowa Department of Natural Resources



P 515.281.8653 | F 515.281.6794 | mick.klemesrud@dnr.iowa.gov

Wallace Building | 502 East Ninth Street | Des Moines, IA 50319

WWW.IOWADNR.GOV



Leading Iowans in Caring for Our Natural Resources.

You are currently subscribed to major_statewide_media as: IACCB@mycountyparks.com.
To unsubscribe click the Unsubscribe link below, or send a blank email to: leave-950521-10891386.9a5dc933ee2c145b3c46328d31d66ab9@Lists.ia.gov
http://Membership.Lists.ia.gov/u?id=10891386.9a5dc933ee2c145b3c46328d31d66ab9&n=T&c=F&l=major_statewide_media(click here to unsubscribe)

If you received this message from a friend and would like to sign up for DNR Press Releases e-mails, please send a blank e-mail to: major_statewide_media@lists.ia.gov