

## Brown Bag Bunch

Bring your lunch or snack and a lawn chair and join the naturalist for an informal program or leisurely walk.

**Wednesday, September 28 10:00 a.m. - Noon**  
**Hawk Watch** - Grammer Grove  
 (Bring chair and Binoculars)



**Friday, October 14 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.**  
**Bike Linn Creek and Prairie Exploration** -  
 Grimes Farm (Bring Bike)



**Thursday, November 3**  
**11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.**  
**Reclaim Your Holidays** - Grimes Farm

## Uncle Ike Nature Program

(Grades 1-5, family members welcome)

Celebrate 28 years with Uncle Ikes! This award-winning program is FREE and is co-sponsored by the MCCB and the Izaak Walton League to provide enjoyable environmental learning experiences. **Woodland Wanderers** is the theme for this year's program that meets monthly October – April.



**"Leaf it to Us"**  
**Saturday, October 8 9 – 11 a.m.**  
**GrimesFarm & Conservation Center**



Kick off the new year of Uncle Ikes with a hike in the fall forest. Experience different kinds of trees and create an autumn treasure.

**"Got Trees?"**  
**Saturday, November 12 9 – 11 a.m.**  
**GrimesFarm & Conservation Center**



Wildlife and people need trees. What happens when there aren't enough trees? Discover how you can help.

## Fall Color Nature Sketching

**Tuesday, October 11 5:30 - 6:30 p.m.**  
**GrimesFarm & Conservation Center**  
 2359 – 233<sup>rd</sup> Street



Capture the beauty of fall colors as a local artist shares simple sketching techniques. Bring colored pencils or watercolor pencils, small sketch pad and a lawn chair. **Pre-register by October 7 by calling 752-5490.**

## IOWATER Snapshot

**Saturday, October 15 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**  
**Various sites in Marshall County**



Help us take a "snapshot" in time of water quality in the Central Iowa River watershed. You can assist IOWATER trained volunteers in sampling creeks that feed into the Iowa River; no previous experience is necessary. All monitoring kits will be provided. Dress for the weather. **Pre-register by October 11 by calling 752-5490.**

## Down on the Farm Tour

**Sunday, November 20 12:00 - 5:00 p.m.**  
**Meet at GrimesFarm to carpool to Woodward**



Come meet small, family owned businesses near Woodward, Iowa who supply natural, healthy, organic and environmentally friendly products to the people of central Iowa. Their special joint "Sample Sunday" offers free food, beverage, or goodies samples and often have family activities, guest vendors, craft demonstrations, or even music. **Pre-register by November 15 by calling 641-752-5490.** Sites on the tour include: Picket Fence Creamery, Prairieland Herbs, and Flowers by Donna Jean.

## 2011-2012 Photo Contest

Picture the striking contrast of sunlight beaming through towering clouds of a thunderstorm, the shocked expression of a toddler catching their first fish, or wood duck ducklings emerging from a nest box. Each of these scenes last but a few brief moments. We have all been in the right place at the right time only to say "wish I had my camera." Well for those of you who did have camera in hand and captured that moment here is your chance to show it off. The MCCB is holding its tenth annual natural resource/conservation photo contest. **The entry deadline is noon on February 3, 2012.** A contest rule sheet may be picked up at the nature center or is available at our website.



## Wanted: Apples

At Prairie Heritage Day, volunteers demonstrate how apple cider is pressed and give out free samples of the sweet refreshment. Many bushels of apples are needed to provide for the large crowd expected at the popular Prairie Heritage Day Celebration on Saturday, September 24 at the GrimesFarm.

Do you have surplus apples to donate for this special event? If so, I can arrange for volunteers to pick them. Please contact Diane Hall at 752-5490 if you can help us. Thanks.



# SEASONS



## Marshall County Conservation Board Quarterly Newsletter

Volume 26, Issue 3  
 Fall 2011

## Rules and Regulations by Mike Stegmann

In baseball, strike three and you're turn at bat is done; in football, grab a facemask and it's a 15 yard penalty; drive 70mph in a 55 zone and get a ticket. Rules and regulations are established and enforced and fall into play with every facet of our lives. If we didn't govern ourselves, life would be mass chaos. Can you imagine driving with no pavement markers or traffic signs let alone what violent crimes against society would be? Life is no different in county conservation board managed areas. There are many things to keep in mind when examining the management of the natural resources, playing by the rules is just one.

In order to provide adequate county parks and recreation areas for Marshall County it becomes necessary to adopt certain rules and regulations for the control and administration of such areas. It is essential that you feel secure when visiting an area for legitimate recreational reasons. Since parks and other conservation areas are public property, all people are welcome. Your conduct should be governed by a sense of respect and consideration for **the land, plants, animals, facilities and other people** visiting the area. Compliance with state laws and the county rules and regulations will enhance your experience. The enforcement of the laws by peace officers is designed to protect the "rights of the many from the selfishness of a few," to protect the natural resources, and help people enjoy the area. For a complete set of rules and regulations governing County Conservation Board managed lands please visit [www.co.marshall.ia.us](http://www.co.marshall.ia.us) or look under Iowa Code Sec. 350.5.

In the world of natural resource management providing everything to everyone for every purpose of outdoor recreation is not only impractical but impossible. One must keep two important concepts in mind when you ask why certain activities are not allowed in parks and management areas: 1. we cannot be all things to all people and 2. conservation is defined as the wise use of natural resources. Thus the need for bag limits for hunting and fishing seasons and allowed methods of take, as well as, no incompatible and destructive activities. Likewise that is why things like wood cutting, off road vehicles, paintball and littering are not allowed in the public areas we manage and could be construed that people are loving the land too much or rather overusing it. Section 350.1 of the Code of Iowa states the

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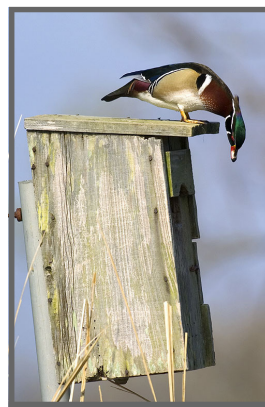
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purpose of the MCCB as “To acquire, develop, maintain and make available to the inhabitants of the county, public museums, parks, preserves, parkways, playgrounds, recreation centers, county forests, wildlife and other conservation areas, and to promote and preserve the health and general welfare of the people, to encourage the orderly development and **conservation of natural resources**, and to cultivate good citizenship by providing adequate programs of public recreation.”

To ensure your visit to MCCB areas is safe and secure several different agencies have jurisdiction to enforce the rules and regulations set forth by the state and county. They include the Marshall County Sheriffs office, The Iowa Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Bureau and the Marshall County Conservation Board. The MCCB is pleased to announce that this fall, Maintenance Technician Jeremiah Manken, will be attending the Iowa Law Enforcement Academy to be certified as a Peace Officer of the state of Iowa. Upon his completion of the academy Jeremiah will be instated with full law enforcement capabilities of the County Conservation Board Rules and Regulations, in addition to the maintenance duties he is already responsible for.

## Wood Ducks

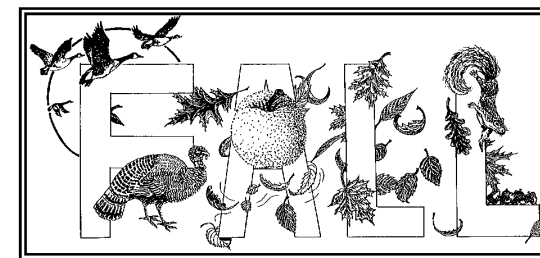
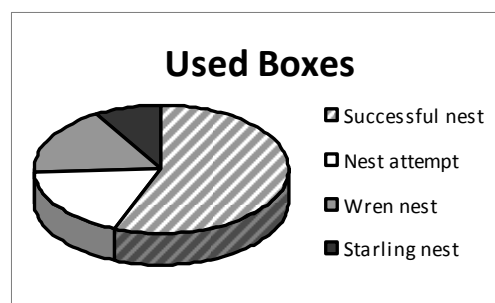
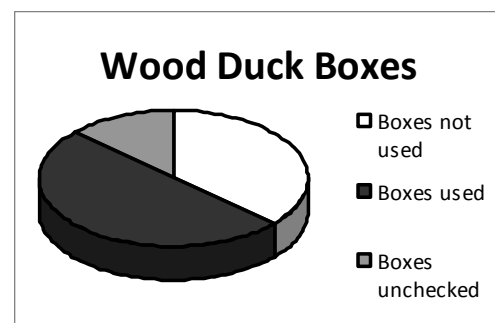


As fall migration begins, many species of ducks will begin to fill our skies including Wood Ducks. Male Wood Ducks, called drakes, can easily be distinguished from other ducks by the multicolored iridescent plumage. Both the male and female Wood Ducks can also be identified while they are swimming as they bob their head back and forth and they are the only waterfowl that frequently perch in trees. Found throughout the United States, these ducks are most abundant in the Eastern half of the United States. They inhabit wooded swamps, marshes, lakes, ponds, and rivers. Wood Ducks nest in tree cavities or if natural cavities are scarce, will also readily use man-made nest boxes. The Wood Duck is the only North American duck that is able to produce two broods in one season in the southern part of their range. They will lay between 7 and 15 eggs and at times will lay eggs in other females’ nests. These nests then become a dump nest where there may be 30 eggs or more which are not incubated.

Wood Ducks may nest in a cavity or nesting structure as far as a half mile from a body of water but typically they nest in areas a hundred yards or less from water or over water. Boxes should be placed to minimize predator destruction of the nest. If a box is placed on a tree there should be a predator guard put in place. There are boxes that can be bought that are made out of plastic and will last many years. These boxes are lightweight and are easy to clean and maintain. If interested in these boxes check out [www.cattailproducts.com](http://www.cattailproducts.com) or contact Marshall County Conservation if you have any other questions.

Here in Marshall County we have over 150 Wood Duck boxes in County Conservation areas with many more areas suitable for nest boxes. We also try to build extra nest boxes available to the public each year to promote more nesting areas on private lands. In recent years we have supplied 58 nest boxes to the public of Marshall County. Each year the boxes are checked and cleaned out in February or March. The old bedding is removed and replaced with fresh wood shavings or sawdust.

Records are kept for each box on whether it was used or not and what it was used by. Other species that typically will use the box are Hooded Mergansers, Screech Owls, Wrens, and Starlings all of which have nests that are easily identifiable or leave a sign that they frequent the box. The charts show the use and success of Wood Duck boxes managed by Marshall County Conservation during the 2010 breeding season.



## Nature Story Hour

September 7 & 21 10:00 a.m.  
 October 5 & 19  
 November 2 & 16  
**Grimes Farm & Conservation Center**  
 (2359 233<sup>rd</sup> Street)

Preschoolers and their adult(s) are invited to listen to fun nature stories, take a walk and explore nature's wonders. Join us on the first and third Wednesdays each month.



## Monarch Tagging

Wednesday, September 7  
 6:00 - 7:00 p.m.  
**Grimes Farm (2359 233<sup>rd</sup> Street)**

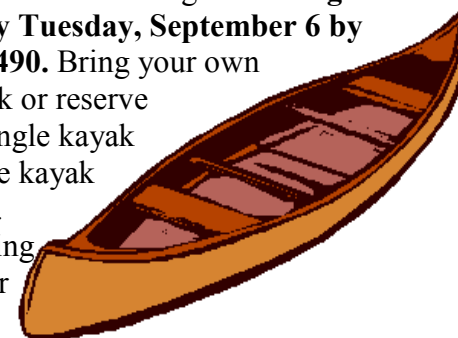
Where do monarch butterflies go in winter? Through the Monarch Watch tagging program many discoveries about monarchs are made. Help us tag monarchs. Bring a net if you have one. Some nets available.

## Canoe/Kayak & Cook

Saturday, September 10 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

### Furrow Access to Three Bridges

Enjoy a short float on the Iowa River by canoe or kayak followed by an outdoor cooking demonstration at Three Bridges. **Pre-registration is required by Tuesday, September 6 by calling 752-5490.** Bring your own canoe or kayak or reserve through us (single kayak \$22.50, double kayak or canoe \$27). Cost for cooking demo is \$5 per person.



## Farmer's Market Monarchs

Thursday, September 15 4:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.  
**Courthouse Square**

Bring the kids and join us in the Children's Activity Area at the Main Street Farmer's Market for monarch mania. We will have a limited number of monarchs to tag and release on site or you can bring in monarchs you captured at home to be tagged and released.



## Star Gazing

September 16  
 Milky Way Nebulas and Clusters

October 7  
 Fall Constellations

Half hour after sunset  
**Dean Memorial Observatory - Green Castle Recreational Area (1 mile south of Ferguson)**

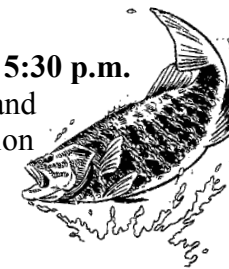
The Amateur Astronomers of Central Iowa invite the public for a telescope view of the night sky. For more information contact Jim Bonser at 641-751-8744.



## Junior Conservationists

Grades 6-8  
 Are you ready to “Explore S'More”? Throughout the school year we'll have local and out of town adventures. Pre-registration and permission slip required.

“Catching On”  
 Wednesday, September 21 2:30 - 5:30 p.m.  
 We'll venture to a local pond to go fishing and also tag monarch butterflies on their migration to Mexico. **Pre-registration by Friday, September 16 by calling 752-5490.**



## Prairie Heritage Day

Saturday, September 24 2:00 - 5:00 p.m.  
**Grimes Farm (2359 - 233rd Street)**

Celebrate Oktoberfest and participate in pioneer crafts and skills: candle dipping, rope making, cider pressing, buffalo chip throw and more.



### Help Wanted

Volunteering can be a fun activity for you and your family. We are seeking volunteers to help with **Prairie Heritage Day** on Saturday afternoon September 24 at the Grimes Farm. Would you like to help with a pioneer activity? **Call 641-752-5490 ASAP.**

# SEASONS

**Marshall County Conservation Board**  
**2349 - 233rd Street**  
**Marshalltown, IA 50158**

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## Thank You!

**Newsletter Collation:** Edna Kirse, Dorothy Christensen, Doris McCarty, Delores York, Dena Graff, Jan Neisses, Kayann Lowry, Dean and Ivadeen Proffitt, Kay Russell

**Programming:** Karen Bach, Carrie Barr, Anita Gummert

**Reception Desk:** Bill Stone, George Hinshaw, Denny Eige, Ann Kent, Dean and Ivadeen Proffitt, Linnette Tuttle, Margaret Kroener, Anita Gummert, Garry Brandenburg

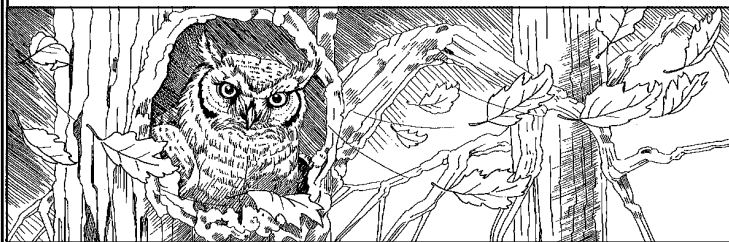
**Uncle Ike Day Camp:** Sally Wilson, Janey Swartz, Olivia Smith, Mona, Haley and Seth Kilborn, Rachel Schmidt, Cheri Bolar, Jennifer Lustyk, Marvis Drew, Danielle Ramsey-Smith, John Hall

**Junior Conservationists Adventure Camp:** Sally Wilson, John Hall, Dick Kelly, Bob Johnson, Jim and Deb Bonser, Randy Braye, Linda Barnes, Daniel Talbert.

**Maintenance:** Rob Christensen

**Donations :** Raymond Weitzel.

If we inadvertently missed someone, our thanks to you also.



## MARSHALL COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD

2349 - 233rd Street, Marshalltown, IA 50158  
(641) 752-5490  
mccb@co.marshall.ia.us  
www.co.marshall.ia.us/departments/conservation

### Conservation Center Hours

Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Saturday 9:00 a.m. - Noon

### Board Members

James Fitz  
Jeffrey Mathis  
Julie Stahl  
Jerry Gaffney  
Ray Helland

### Staff

Mike Stegmann	Director
Diane Hall	Naturalist
Marty Malloy	Maintenance Supervisor
Jeremiah Manken	Maintenance Technician
Emily Herring	Administrative Assistant
Editor, Diane Hall	

## Remember What Smokey Says: "Even You Cannot Prevent Derechos!"

By Joe Herring, Iowa DNR District Forester

"Derechos?"

I'll admit it --- I had to look the term up myself when it appeared in a note last month that Meredith Borchardt, Trees Forever Field Rep, sent me. It was a flyer for a program that she was putting together to help the residents of Marshall, Tama, and Benton Counties deal with the massive damage to trees caused by the July 11<sup>th</sup> windstorm.



Interestingly, the word "Derecho" is actually a scientific word used to describe what most of us call a "straight line wind." It was first coined by Gustavus Hinrichs, a fiercely ambitious but ill-tempered Danish scientist who was teaching at the University of Iowa in 1888. The word is of Spanish origin and means "straight ahead" or "direct," as opposed to "Tornar" (*tornado*) which means "to turn."

No matter what you choose to call it, we can all agree that it left the trees and forests quite a mess. Many of us who take pride in a tidy, well-kept yard will feel the need to extend our efforts into the natural timbers and woodlands to get them "cleaned up." However, nature is generally not a clean place like we might expect a park to be. Natural forests are not golf courses, and dead trees are a natural part of the ecosystem. As I once heard a wife say to her husband who wanted to clean up all the dead trees and branches in their timber, "This is the country...not the *country club!*"

But this doesn't mean we should just ignore the woodlands and presume Mother Nature is better off without any involvement from humans. To the contrary, the many forests that I have seen wrecked by heavy wind offer the most compelling reason I can find for *actively managing* our woodlands.

A forest is a complex ecosystem, so it's easier to understand if you break it down into simpler parts; in fact, it's much like a high school basketball program: there is a varsity squad, made up of the more experienced upperclassmen; and then you have your underclassmen/junior varsity players, who may have raw talent, but are still young and need some time for development. Each year, the seniors will graduate and move on, and the underclassmen will move up the ladder. A good coach will devote just as much time to culturing the young underclassmen as he does the varsity players, because he knows that today's clumsy freshman will be tomorrow's starting center. In college programs, the best coaches *recruit* players just as well as they coach.

Similarly, a forest has an overstory layer which is made up of the big, mature, overhead trees, and below that are the mid-story and understory layers, which are the young up-and-comers. In normal years, anywhere from 1-5% of the overstory trees will "graduate and move on," meaning they get struck by lightning, catch an illness and die, snap off from ice & snow, or blow over. This creates a gap in the canopy and opens the door for whatever tree is growing below it to take advantage. In the case of the *Derecho*, this process is simply amplified 15-fold, but the net result is the same. The wind only damages the large trees, but spares the smaller, protected ones underneath.

As it turns out, the types of trees that make up the underclassmen "up-and-comers" in most Iowa forests are not what a coach would wish to inherit. If the timber has been heavily pastured in the past, the underclassmen are often invasive shrubs & thorny characters such as honeysuckle, autumn olive, buckthorn, honey locust, and multiflora rose. These would be like the Charles Barkley of trees.

In most other unmanaged forests, the understory trees are shade-tolerant species like ironwood, elm, and boxelder. While these are native species and not *all* bad, they tend to be more "weedy" and do not provide as many benefits for wildlife, fall color, and lumber like our more popular oaks and walnut. I suppose you could say they are like the B-League European players that fill in whenever the real players go on strike --- sure, they look kind of similar and play the part, but it's just not the same.

Derechos, tornados, lightning strikes, and ice storms will continue to occur...but forest landowners do not have to accept the status quo and inherit whatever shady characters are lying in wait to become the future woodland. Active forest management means going out on a recruiting mission to get rid of the trees in the understory we don't want, and make sure the trees we do want are present and ready to climb the ladder when they're called up to the big leagues.