



Up and Down the River

JACKSON COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD SUMMER 2023

Maquoketa River Water Trail Designation

On May 31, a group of paddlers, including conservation staff, DNR personnel, water trails steering committee members, and the general public, gathered in Canton to officially designate the Maquoketa River Water Trail in Jackson County. The group held a ribbon cutting ceremony and then paddled the river from Canton to Royertown river accesses. It was a great day to celebrate!



Jackson County Conservation has been working with the Iowa DNR and ECIA for the past 3 years in creating a master plan for the water trails in Jackson County. According to Iowa DNR Director Kayla Lyon, who attended the ribbon cutting and paddling event May 31, the Maquoketa River Water Trail is one of the more scenic water trails in the state and is one of only two state water trails with a paddle in campsite (Buzzard Ridge).

These two new water trails (The Maquoketa & North Fork Maquoketa) add more than 90 additional miles to the overall state total, which is now 1190 miles (Maquoketa--53.1 mi; North Fork Maquoketa—27.8 mi). The Maquoketa River will be the 34th and the North Fork Maquoketa, the 35th water trail to achieve state designation since the inception of the water trails program in 2005.

Water Trails are recreational corridors and routes on rivers and lakes that provide a unique experience for canoeists and kayakers and provide adequate access points that can be used for planning your trips at various lengths and difficulty. A water trail will have a detailed map showing access points and river mileage and may even provide information on history and area culture, wildlife viewing opportunities and more.

They can help re-connect Iowans to their history, heritage, geology and wildlife. Water trails promote an ethic of caring that makes us more aware of our surroundings and environment and can be thought of as educational venues. Whether they are used for relaxation, health and fitness, education or just for spending time with family, water trails provide in-state destinations for recreational river users that can even help boost local economies.

For more information about the Maquoketa River Water Trail, visit the following websites:

<http://jacksoncountywatertrails.org/>

<https://www.iowadnr.gov/Things-to-Do/Canoeing-Kayaking/Water-Trail-Maps-Brochures>

<https://www.mycountyparks.com/county/Jackson/Park/Maquoketa-River-Water-Trail.aspx>

Mowing to Monarchs

Mowing to Monarchs (M2M) is a program established by the Dubuque County Conservation Board and the Dubuque County Master Gardeners. The M2M program provides accessible training & information and an experience base to guide urban and suburban homeowners in successfully adding high-value native plants into their yards. The program offers a combination of workshops, private coaching, planting guides, and funding for native pollinator planting in lawns. In just three years, 180 Dubuque County Landowners have converted almost 120,000 square feet of turf grass to prairie.

And it's spreading to Jackson County!

Interested in joining us? Jackson County Conservation and Friends of JCC are bringing M2M to Jackson County and we need participants! 2023 will be a pilot year and we are looking for up to 10 homeowners willing to convert up to 120 square feet of their yard to a native plant garden. This is a 3-year commitment as we let these native plants *Sleep, Creep, Leap*. Funding for plants is provided by Friends of Jackson County Conservation! Please contact Tony or Jess if you are interested in participating in the M2M program in Jackson County by July 15.

Sleep...Creep...Leap...

Prairies usually establish in a 3-step growth system of sleep, creep, and leap. In the 1st year of planting prairie, it "sleeps" and it looks as though nothing is happening and nothing is growing. However, plants are putting all their energy into establishing their root system underground. In the 2nd year, the prairie "creeps", this is when we start noticing more leaves and flowers popping up. The root system has become big enough that energy can be transferred to above ground growth. The 3rd year, the prairie "leaps", and comes to life. The plants have become acclimated to the environment and are in full bloom and beautiful. While this 3-step process seems direct, some plant species may take 3-5 years to reach their full potential growth. Being patient is the key with prairie plantings.



Andrew & Easton Valley 5th graders investigate Prairie Creek during School of the Wild.

School of the Wild

Jackson County Conservation will be entering its fourth year of participating in School of the Wild for 5th grade students in Jackson County. School of the Wild was created by the University of Iowa's College of Education in partnership with local schools and County Conservation Boards across the state.

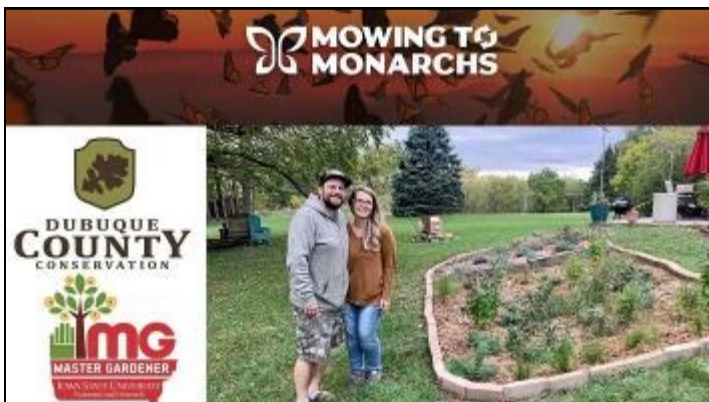
The mission of School of the Wild is to awaken an awareness of the wildlife and natural ecosystems in our area, develop an appreciation of the natural world, and encourage a balanced environment ethic and caretaker attitude concerning the earth.

For the past three years the following schools have participated: Andrew, Bellevue, Easton Valley, and Maquoketa. Sacred Heart in Maquoketa and Marquette Catholic in Bellevue will be joining this upcoming school year, which will capture all schools in Jackson County.

The locations of School of the Wild are specific to each school district. Andrew, Easton Valley, and Maquoketa use Prairie Creek Recreation Area in Maquoketa. Bellevue uses Felderman Park and Bellevue State Park in Bellevue.

The duration of this outdoor classroom differs with each school district and range from 3-5 days. Topics covered include archeology, geology, woodlands, prairie, pond, birds, and survival day (fire, shelter building, wild edibles, and compasses). For example Andrew and Easton Valley participate for 5 days and the students are on a topic rotation Monday through Friday. The students enjoy the outdoor classroom and gain an appreciation for the natural environment.

Article by Teacher Extern Amanda Fowler. Amanda is a 5th grade teacher at Easton Valley and has been part of School of the Wild with her school and JCC every year!





Summer Calendar of Events



Registration is REQUIRED at least 48 hours in advance for ALL programs.

Register by calling (563) 652-3783 or email conservation@jacksoncounty.iowa.gov

Programs are free of charge unless otherwise noted. Donations are accepted.

For up to date information on our programs, check online at www.JacksonCCB.com or visit the Hurstville Interpretive Center's Facebook page.

OWLS Mississippi Paddle Trip **Thursday, July 6 from 8:30-2:00**

Mud Lake Park to A.Y. McDonald Park, Dubuque
Join Naturalists for an adult kayaking trip on the Mississippi River! Kayaks are provided or bring your own. Registration required online at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/owls-mississippi-paddle-tickets-663236587487>

Walking Adventures **Thursday, July 13 at 9:00 AM**

McNeil Nature Preserve & Papke Wildlife Area
Visit Jackson County Parks with Friends of Jackson County Conservation Members Pam True & Mary Hayward the 2nd Thursday of the month through October to explore some of the parks, preserves, and public areas of Jackson County. July 13—meet at McNeil parking lot at 9:00 AM or Fairgrounds in Maquoketa at 8:30 to carpool.

Kayaking at Hurstville **Saturday, July 15 from 1:30—3:00 PM**

Hurstville Fishing Pond
Try your hand at paddling a kayak! Stop out anytime between 1:30 – 3:00 PM. This is a great opportunity for anyone who hasn't been paddling before and a safe place for kids to learn without the current of a river. This event is free, and all ages are welcome.

Iowa Wildlife Challenge **Sunday, July 23 at 2:00 PM**

Hurstville Interpretive Center
How well do you know wildlife in Iowa? Can you identify a mammal by its fur, a bird by some feathers, a turtle by its shell? Test your knowledge at this fun and interactive program while learning more about the wildlife in our area. This free program is geared for adults and children both.

Public Atlatl Throw **Sunday, July 30 at 2:00 PM**

Hurstville Interpretive Center
Try your arm at using an atlatl! People of all ages and athletic ability are welcomed to try using this primitive tool used to fling darts at their quarry or a target. All equipment and instruction will be provided. All ages are welcome for this free event.

Nature Crafting **Sunday, August 6 at 2:00 PM**

Hurstville Interpretive Center
Have fun creating crafts with materials from nature. We'll provide crafting materials and ideas for inspiration; you find items from nature to create a work of art. Bring your creativity! There will be something for all ages at this free event.

OWLS Devonian Fossil Gorge Tour **Monday, August 7 at 9:30 AM**

Devonian Fossil Gorge, Iowa City
Join Naturalists for a day trip to the Devonian Fossil Gorge at Coralville Lake! This is a great opportunity to see a peek into what life looked like 375 million years ago. Be dressed to hike and be sure to bring a water bottle and a sack lunch. The event is free, for adults only, and registration is required by Aug 3. OWLS events are sponsored by Dubuque, Jackson, and Jones County Conservation departments and open to all adults.

Walking Adventures **Thursday, August 10 at 9:00 AM**

Spruce Creek Park, Bellevue
Visit Jackson County Parks with Friends of Jackson County Conservation Members Pam True & Mary Hayward the 2nd Thursday of the month through October to explore some of the parks, preserves, and public areas of Jackson County. In August, join Mary & Pam in exploring parks in the Bellevue area, beginning at Spruce Creek Park at 9:00. Carpooling is available. Register in advance.

Floral Jelly Class **Saturday, August 12 at 1:00 PM**

Hurstville Interpretive Center
Together we'll collect the flowers and create a beautiful floral jelly. Cost is just \$5 per person and you get to take your creation home to enjoy. Space is limited.

More info for our programs can be found online at www.JacksonCCB.com, click on Events

Summer Calendar of Events Continued

Registration is REQUIRED at least 48 hours in advance for ALL programs.

Register by calling (563) 652-3783 or email conservation@jacksoncounty.iowa.gov

Hamilton (Codfish Hollow) Prairie Walk Wednesday, August 23 at 6:30 PM

Ray Hamilton Prairie

Join a prairie walk and experience the Hamilton (Codfish Hollow) Prairie. Hamilton Prairie is located across the road from Codfish Hollow Barnstormer's parking lot 35th St &, 288th Ave, IA 52060. Ray and Tony will share their knowledge of prairie ecology on a guided hike through the prairie. This area has been managed as a local biological preserve for 36 years and is home a unique and diverse set of native plants. Participants come dressed for the conditions, wear long pants, and bring a bottle of water.

Youth Outdoor Skills Day

Sunday, August 27 from 1:00-4:00 PM

Hurstville Fishing Pond

Canoeing, kayaking, archery, fishing and shooting sports will be happening at the annual Youth Outdoor Skills Day in Jackson County! Youth ages 7-17 are invited to participate in hands-on outdoor recreation activities led by knowledgeable instructors. All equipment for activities will be provided. Event is free. Parents and guardians are welcome to stay or drop off youth.

Hudson Bay Bound

Thursday, September 14, 2023

EB Lyons Center, Mines of Spain, Dubuque

Paddlers and outdoor enthusiasts we have a presentation for you! Avid paddler and public speaker Dr. Natalie Warren will present on her 2,000 mile paddling expedition from Minneapolis to Hudson Bay. Natalie Warren is one of the first two women to have paddled 2,000 miles from Minneapolis to Hudson Bay and will connect you with adventure and natural resources issues that concern us all.

Sponsored by Dubuque, Jackson, and Jones OWLS group and Friends of Jackson County Conservation.

Find us online at

www.JacksonCCB.com

www.MyCountyParks.com—Jackson County
Facebook—Hurstville Interpretive Center

Flooding of Mississippi Closes Our Campgrounds

Spruce Creek Park and South Sabula Lake Park, both along the Mississippi River in Jackson County, are the Conservation Department's two modern campgrounds. And due to high levels of the Mississippi River this spring, both campgrounds had late openings for the 2023 camping season.

Why was flooding likely this year on the Mississippi River? According to the National Weather Service, multiple factors impacted this year's spring flooding potential, but the main driver was the unseasonably deep snowpack across northern parts of the region, coupled with the rapid warm-up that led to rapid melting. March was colder than normal, which limited gradual melting. With an unusually warm first half of April, rapid snowmelt filled river systems that feed into the Mississippi River.

Water began reaching flood stage at Lock & Dam 12 (Bellevue, Iowa) in mid-April. It reached its peak on April 29 at 21.78 feet. The river began coming down in May. We were able to open South Sabula Lake Park in time for Memorial Day weekend. Spruce Creek took another couple of weeks to clean up and open for camping.

Record High Stages For
Mississippi River at Lock and
Dam 12 (Bellevue, IA):

April 29, 2019 = 20.87 feet

April 29, 2023 = 21.78 feet

April 22, 2001 = 22.58 feet

April 26, 1965 = 23.51 feet



Photo of Spruce Creek campground under water, shared with us by Reenie Montgomery.



Friends of Jackson County Conservation

Mission Statement:

Friends of Jackson County Conservation brings people together through educational and recreational opportunities in partnership with the Jackson County Conservation Board and inspires people to understand and care for our environment.

Recap from April & June Friends Meetings

Sustainability Committee: Members are partnering with the Maquoketa Farmer's Market to compost waste on market days. Food scraps and compostable plates are taken to the Hurstville Center to compost.

Programs: Friends Members Pam and Mary are hosting group hikes at county parks monthly through October. See calendar of events for details.

Fundraising: Friends members continue to take food to Codfish Hollow for bands. More people are needed to help continue this successful fundraiser! A fundraising committee was formed to start a campaign for new exhibits at the Center. More are welcome to join the committee!

Bus Scholarship: Easton Valley 1st Grade was awarded a bus scholarship from the Friends group to help with transportation costs for a field trip with Jackson County Naturalists in April.

Conservation Corps: Friends is helping sponsor the Conservation Corps. They are coming the week of July 24 this summer to work on remnant prairies at county parks.

Exhibits at Center: Friends is helping sponsor new exhibits at the Hurstville Center. Staff are working with an exhibit company on design. More details to come Fall 2023.

Prairie Creek Disc Golf Course: The Conservation department will be installing a disc golf course at Prairie Creek in the near future. Friends Members formed a committee to help with ongoing costs.

Mowing to Monarchs: Friends voted to fund this program to bring it to Jackson County.

Hudson Bay Bound Program: Friends voted to help sponsor this program in September that is a join program with the OWLS group.

Traveling Exhibits: Friends voted to help fund a traveling wolf exhibit from the International Wolf Foundation. The exhibit will be at the Hurstville Interpretive Center October 2023.

Anyone is welcome to join Friends of JCC! Volunteer for a fun group and help with projects and programs!



**Join us for the Next
Friends Meeting
Tuesday, October 10**

At the Hurstville Interpretive Center

Potluck at 5:30—tableware and beverages provided, bring a dish to share!

Meeting will begin at 6:00 PM

Agenda and minutes from last meeting will be sent via email a few days before the meeting. Didn't get the email? Make sure we have up to date contact info.

Spring/Summer Activities with Jackson County Conservation!



Our staff conducted a prescribed prairie burn at the Hurstville Center in April.



Volunteers Jeff Tampir and Kent Crawford built us a compost area. We are working with the Maquoketa Farmer's Market and Friends of Jackson County Conservation to compost waste at the market each week.



Youth enjoyed an overnight paddling trip on the Maquoketa River during one of our camps.



Youth at our Adventure Camp learned how to use compasses and GPS units to navigate around the park.

Raccoons, Our Unexpected Guests

Article by Summer Naturalist Intern Sophia Preciado

Raccoons. The masked bandits, trash pandas, the washing rat (as the Canadians call them), each name for these animals play into their rascally nature. In the wild, raccoons enjoy living in areas with many trees and some water nearby. However, to most people's dismay, raccoons don't always stay in the wild. To most homeowners, raccoons are an unexpected guest, living in their garages, eating garbage, and making a mess of things.

Most people have seen a raccoon before, but what exactly are they? Raccoons are nocturnal, meaning they are awake at night and sleep during the day. They are mammals, like humans, and like humans, they are omnivores, meaning they eat both meat and plants. Raccoons are opportunists; they are happy to eat anything they can find, which includes our garbage. Their ability to eat almost anything and live almost anywhere helps them thrive in our neighborhoods.

In every neighborhood, some homes are more appealing than others. Raccoons love areas with lots of older trees, food, water, and hiding places, like bushes and stick piles. Raccoons operate at night; they prefer the quiet a dark night brings. The best way to deter raccoons from your home is to bag and contain your trash, cover up any water sources at night, clean up brush and stick piles, and use motion-activated lights. Another way to deter raccoons is to sprinkle spices like pepper flakes, cinnamon, or cayenne pepper around areas they might like to hide.

Although, if you don't mind raccoon visitors and wish to see them, setting up a camera trap can help you spot them without scaring them. Place the cameras in areas raccoons like to visit, like birdbaths and bushes. You should not set out food for them. Feeding wild animals can make them less afraid of people, which could lead to dangerous situations. Always be safe and cautious when interacting with wild animals!





A SPECIAL THANK YOU!

*Jackson County Conservation would like to **thank and acknowledge** the following individuals, organizations and businesses for their continued support and donations. With your help, we have been able to do so much more!!!*

Volunteers

Pam Bahr, Karen Manning, Deb Holm, Mary Hayward, Sarah Hobbs, David Manning, Ann Burns, Mike Griffin, Jim England, Lori Rolling, Larry McDevitt, Jo Ellen Langerman, Karen Krueger, Pam True, Barb McCray, Sam True, Nancy Flagel, Tom Becker, Carolyn Keck, Dean Nelson, Jeff Tampir, Kent Crawford, Brenda Kunau, Wendy Hainstock, Kenny Derganz, Ethan Kalaukoa, Kim Jochum, Roberta Rosheim, David Rosheim, Jack Willey,

Cash Donations

Delwood Kindergarteners, Geraldine W. Bahr Lambert Endowment, Maquoketa Women's Club, Codfish Hollow Barnstormers, Sierra Group White Pines, Bill & Wendy Hainstock, Elaine Holtaus, David Johnson, Janice Julson, Jerald Bybee, Pheasants Forever Jackson County Chapter

Friends Endowment Donations on Great Give Day

Richard Worm, Bill & Wendy Hainstock, Heather Waack, Eunice & Roger Schladetzky, Connie Breno, Steve & Carol Gisel, Elaine Edwards, David Gossman, Kevin & Ann Burns, Cathleen Holtz, Marie Rossman, Forrest Grey

Donations

Iowa Flower Market (plants), Dawn Wagner (plants), Becky Milum (shells, nature items), P&K Midwest (pallets), Yaddoff-Johnson Apiaries (honey bees)

Donations made in memory or in honor of:

Thad Stockham

Richard Efferding



Jackson County Conservation

Conservation Board Members

Larry McDevitt, <i>chair</i>	Maquoketa	319/541-6357
Mike Griffin	Springbrook	563/357-1736
Jim England	Maquoketa	563/652-3213
Lori Rolling	Bellevue	563/872-3299
Mary Hayward	Maquoketa	563/357-0814

The Jackson County Conservation Board meets the third Tuesday of every month at 6:00 pm. Public welcome.

During warmer months, the Board tours a county park before the meeting. Contact our office for locations and times.

Conservation Staff

Our emails have changed!

- Nathan Jones, Executive Director
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- Jerry Widel, Operation Technician
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- Katelyn Yauslin, Park Ranger
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- Adam McPherson, Park Ranger
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Fax: (563) 652-2191

Spruce Creek Shop (563) 872-3621

Website:

JacksonCCB.com

www.facebook.com/HurstvilleInterpretiveCenter

Office Hours / Hurstville Center

18670 63rd Street Maquoketa, IA 52060

Monday–Friday 9:00 am–4:00 pm

Saturday & Sunday April–October 12:00–5:00 pm

Holidays:

OPEN Independence Day July 4

OPEN Labor Day September 4

Jackson County Conservation
Hurstville Interpretive Center
18670 63rd Street
Maquoketa, IA 52060

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JACKSON COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD UP AND DOWN THE RIVER—Summer 2023 Newsletter

A big THANK YOU to our seasonal staff!

Amanda Fowler is our Teacher Extern. Sophia Presciado is our Naturalist Intern. Amanda & Sophia are helping our Environmental Education Staff with programs this summer.



Charlie Sandholdt, Duane Garién, and John Portz are our Summer Conservation Workers. They help take care of our 35+ parks throughout the county.



IOWA PROJECT A.W.A.R.E.
A Watershed Awareness River Expedition

Iowa Project AWARE — A Watershed Awareness River Expedition — is the state's largest river cleanup event. The event educates participants while improving the health of Iowa's rivers and streams.

For one week each summer, hundreds of people converge on a river to pick up trash during Iowa's largest volunteer river cleanup event, Iowa Project AWARE. Attend the whole week or just a few days.

2023 Route: Iowa River from Marshalltown to Marengo, 65 river miles.

Registration is required to attend Iowa Project AWARE. Tent camping and food is included with registration and a limited number of canoes are available. More information at their website:

<https://www.iowaprojectaware.org/>