

Blue Water Nature Notes

Visit Kenue Park

As the warmer weather approaches us in Northwest Iowa, there are many things that outdoor enthusiasts get excited about over the summer months. One of those things is to visit Kenue Park, it has such a variety of experiences for families to learn and enjoy.

The “birders” in us get excited to see the Osprey come back to the area. This year both ospreys returned in the first week of April. Or take a walk down by the wetland to climb up in the observation tower and view the wild swans that sometimes stop for a bit and join our local Trumpeter swan.

While you are here, stop into the Dickinson County Nature Center to experience wonderful interactive exhibits and learn about key conservation practices. Take a minute to say hi and learn about the live animals and the great animal ambassadors that help with those animals.

Then go outside and play on the nature playscape where you can walk the logs that surround the area or play in the sand pit and many more fun features to enjoy.

Take a stroll down a portion of the Dickinson County Trail system to the one room schoolhouse, where you can immerse yourself into history of how schools where operated in the past. Children can experience what their parents or grandparents experienced in their childhood and the parents and grandparents can enjoy a walk down memory lane.

After the schoolhouse, gather friends or family and play a round on the 18-hole Okoboji Gold disc golf course. A couple disc golf fairways even make you play over the Kame that was left from the glacier that melted and retreated many years ago.

As you can see there are many reasons people get excited about visiting Kenue Park and the Nature Center. So come visit us at 22785 Nature Center Road, Okoboji, IA 51355.



Nature Center Hours:
Tuesday-Saturday 10-4

Closed :

New Year's Day
President's Day
Memorial Day
Independence Day
Labor Day
Veteran's Day
Thanksgiving Day
Friday After Thanksgiving
Christmas Eve Day
Christmas Day

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What do you do with batteries?

By Charles Vigdal, RCC Manager



With more and more wireless devices, there also comes batteries. According to the Rechargeable Battery Recycling Corporation (RBRC), consumers use an average of six wireless products in their daily lives with cell phones replaced every 18 to 24 months, all which contain batteries. Batteries are everywhere but how do you dispose of them properly? First, we must identify what type of battery it is. There are many types of batteries, and they are made of many types of materials with some being toxic or hazardous and some being non-hazardous. Here are some types of batteries and how to dispose of them.

Alkaline batteries

These are typically non-rechargeable (AA, AAA, C and D) and commonly used in remotes, clocks, and other small electronics. Alkaline batteries are non-hazardous and can be safely disposed of in the trash. A better option economically and environmentally would be to purchase rechargeable batteries.

Button batteries

Button batteries are small, round, and silver colored and are mostly found in watches, hearing aids, cameras, and other small devices. These batteries can contain mercury, silver or lithium and should not be thrown in the garbage and taken to the local Regional Collection Center or anywhere they recycle batteries.

Lead acid batteries

These batteries can be in a variety of devices and vehicles. They are considered hazardous because they contain lead and sulfuric acid. It is illegal in Iowa to dispose of these batteries in the trash. Retailers are required to accept used batteries when a new one is purchased. If that is not possible, they can be taken to the local Regional Collection Center or anywhere they recycle batteries.

Rechargeable batteries

Rechargeable batteries such as nickel-cadmium (NiCd) and Lithium Ion (Li-ion) are the most common types of rechargeable batteries and are found in cellular phones, small electronic equipment, coreless tools, and toys. These batteries are hazardous to your health and environment as they contain heavy metals and could possibly explode or start on fire. Rechargeable batteries should never be thrown away in the trash. They can be recycled, safely at your local Regional Collection Center or anywhere they recycle batteries.

Battery recycling locations can be found at <https://www.call2recycle.org/locator/> or contacting your local Regional Collection Center in Iowa.



Dickinson County Regional Collection Center

Accepted Materials

- Yard Waste
- White Goods
- Electronic Waste
- Tires
- Household Hazardous Materials

DCRCC

2260 220th St
Milford, IA 51351

712-338-2549

rcc@dickinsoncountyiowa.gov

Information provided by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources



Tree receiving AccuFlo Soil Injection to give the tree a plant growth stimulator.

Bur Oak Blight

By Brian Cuperus, Natural Resource Manager

Management of our natural resource areas can come with challenges. One challenge we have been dealing with in the past few years is bur oak blight. Bur oak blight started to become prevalent in the Dickinson County area in 2016. Once it was on our radar, our first step was to gather information about the disease and possible treatments for it.

What is it? Bur oak blight is a fungal leaf disease that will weaken the tree. However, this disease on its own will not kill the tree. It appears as a browning leaf mid summer. Once the tree has been weakened, it opens the door for secondary pests, such as the two-lined chestnut borer. The two-lined chestnut borer is the usual cause of death to Bur Oak trees after getting blight.

After recognizing the bur oak blight, we began step two, put a management plan together. With treatment options being expensive, we had to be selective on which trees to treat. Our Nature Center has the most aesthetic Bur Oaks in our savannah and were selected for treatment first. Each tree was assessed and recorded for the severity of disease to determine which, if any, treatments were required. To be more successful, we decided to treat for the Bur oak blight and the Two-lined chestnut borer.

To achieve this, we used equipment and products from the ARBORJET System. The first piece of equipment used is the F SERIES Tree I.V. This system requires drilling one way plugs into the root flare of the tree and allows us to inject our fungicide, Bur oak blight Treatment and pesticide, Two-lined chestnut borer at the same time. To optimize efficiency, there is critical timing for injection. May is typically when the tree has its highest water uptake which allows for the best transfer of pesticides. The tree injection pesticides will protect the tree for two years, and the soil injection will protect for 3 years.

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Following this treatment, we used the AccuFlo Soil Injection Kit to give the tree a plant growth stimulator. The growth regulator has many benefits such as increasing root production to reduce any other stress. Secondly, it helps the leaves become thicker and more resistant to the blight, which spreads from leaf to leaf.

Treatment strategies have been proven ineffective when the oak trees have already sustained high levels of stress. Treatment on healthier trees doesn't always work. Therefore, the conservation team are implementing tree replacement plans to keep bur oaks on our native landscape.



Tree receiving treatment for bur oak blight and two-lined chestnut borer.

Mission Statement

"to encourage environmental awareness among visitors and residents while fostering appreciation, preservation and conservation of the Iowa Great Lakes region's unique cultural history, glacial geological formations, native species and natural habitats through education and action."

Current Board Members

President: Tom Maser

Vice president: Rebecca Peters

Secretary: Erika Leupold

Treasurer: Mike McFarlin

Board members: Leah Streeter, Kim Stroud, Barbara Tagami, Jim Tuel, Ron Williams, Penny Wilson, Mary Kay Donovan, Lisa Leopold

Become A Member

We thank you for being a member of the Conservation Foundation of Dickinson County! With your support, we can offer many and varied programs, events, and offerings to our community.

If you haven't become a member but still want to, there is still time. The Conservation Foundation of Dickinson County is an independent, non-profit organization whose purpose includes charitable, educational, preservation and scientific endeavors which benefit and support conservation activities in Dickinson County.

There are many benefits to being a CFDC member. You will get access to annual membership appreciation events, a 10 percent discount at the Nature Store, a 10 dollar discount on youth summer camps. The Foundation partners with the Dickinson County Conservation Board to improve facilities and environmental education opportunities for everyone in Dickinson County! Your membership and donations will help these projects move forward. Membership and donation information can be

found at dickinsoncountyconservationboard.com/foundation.

Current projects are offering scholarships toward summer camps and assisting with the installation of a new gazebo. It will be placed south of the Maser Monarch Lodge for an outdoor venue. There are many more exciting projects that the Conservation Foundation of Dickinson County and Dickinson County Conservation Board will be partnering on in the near future.



Membership Levels

Robin: Student, \$15

Goldfinch: Individual, \$30

Cardinal: Family, \$50

Bluebird: Contributor \$75

Oriole: Sustaining member, \$125

Wood Duck: Patron, \$250

Great Blue Heron: Diamond member, \$500

Osprey: Platinum member, \$1,000

Meet Barbara Falk

By Jackie Jerge

Barbara Falk retired to the Great Lakes area with her husband Roger from DeKalb, IL. And we are so happy they did!

Barbara is a long-time volunteer here at the Nature Center. In fact, I would refer all questions to Barb if she is on duty. I am always amazed at her knowledge of nature and the history of the Nature Center itself. Her smile and friendly attitude leave a lasting impression on all our visitors.

Barbara's love of nature extends beyond her volunteer work. Her and Roger are avid birders and have created their backyard into a National Wildlife Federation Certified Wildlife Habitat.



Barbara Falk

"The broadest, and maybe the most meaningful definition of volunteering: Doing more than you have to because you want to, in a cause you consider good." – Ivan Scheier

Why Volunteer?

With busy schedules, it is hard to find time to volunteer but the benefits of volunteering could never be calculated because of its impact to you and others. Volunteering can help people in need, worthwhile causes, and your community. The right match can help you learn new skills, find friends, and connect with your community.

We at the Nature Center, thank every one of you! Thank you for giving back to your communities! We could not function as well as we do and offer as many services with out our volunteers. Here at the Nature Center, we are lucky to utilize over 30 volunteers that help us and serve as key components to our operation.

Whether greeting people at the Nature Center, cleaning up the grounds, filling our bird feeders, tending to our bees or giving tours at the one room schoolhouse (and many more) you are appreciated!

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, please contact Jackie Jerge, Community Relations Coordinator, at the Nature Center, 712-336-6352.

You can also email any inquiries to jjerge@dickinsoncountyiowa.gov. We would love to discuss your special skills and get you involved here at the Nature Center.



Volunteers Jan Purdy and Karen Dokken

Kenue Coffee Hour

- ◆ May 5th Birding Basics
- ◆ June 2nd Birds of Prey
- ◆ July 7th Drones
- ◆ August 4th Wild Edibles
- ◆ Sept. 1st Bur Oak Blight
- ◆ Oct. 6th Dutch Ovens
- ◆ Nov. 3rd Galapagos Islands
- ◆ Dec. 1st: Nature Trivia

Nature for Everyone

It is no secret that here at the Dickinson County Nature Center, we love our kids! Summer camps, field trips, Family Nature Night, and Nature Tots are just a sample of ways that we reach our youth of Dickinson County. However, did you know we also love to connect with our adult friends as well? Check out the programs below to see how we provide nature for everyone!

Kenue Coffee Hour

Kenue Coffee Hour offers the adult community an opportunity to hear from local experts on a variety of conservation based topics. The program also aims to provide the community with a space to create connections with others, to share in conversation, and to encourage lifelong learning. The programming offered at Kenue Coffee Hour targets adults with an interest in the monthly topic.

Since beginning in January 2022, the staff impressively noticed an early success with the program. Last month, we had a record high of 48 attendees who enjoyed learning about osprey from Bry Huffman, Environmental Education Coordinator. Overall, the program averages 35 attendees each month.

If you haven't yet, add this program to your monthly schedule! Kenue Coffee Hour occurs at the Nature Center during the first Thursday of the month at 10:30AM. The program includes a small beverage bar featuring coffee, tea, and water.

The EE staff at the nature center would like to thank all our amazing guest speakers who take time out of their busy schedules to share at Kenue Coffee Hour. We also would like to thank Oakwood Inn who supplies the coffee for the program.



Community Engagement Programs

The EE staff enjoys offering opportunities to partner with organizations whose mission is to connect people with the community. Our programs provide unique nature experiences to the all who attend.

We currently host five adult groups at the nature center for hands-on visits. Also, we provide programs at two local long term care facilities where we bring nature to the residents and share in conversations around a monthly topic.

Naturalist, Britney Snell, recently shared a presentation about horns verses antlers to one of our visiting groups. The group engaged in hands on discovery of the differences between these two adaptations.

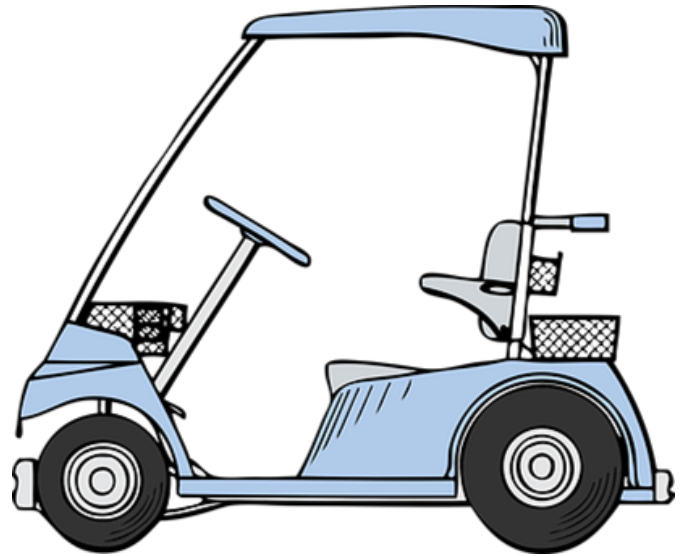


Birding on the Green

The annual bird migration has sprung for the 2022 season! Red-wing blackbirds, Canada geese, purple martins and other birds are making their back to our neck of the woods.

Birding on the Green is back for the season! This monthly birding opportunity occurs on the Brooks Golf Course at 7:00AM because we all know that the early bird catches the worm!

From beginners to experts, bird enthusiasts will gather in front of the club house for a quick introduction. Then, we will take off in golf carts to travel around the course in search of our feathered friends. The naturalist will keep record of the identified birds that the group encounters on the excursion! We hope you will join for one or all of the sessions below!



Birding on the Green: May 2nd, June 6th, July 11th, August 1st, September 12th

Hosting the 35th Annual Roadside Conference

The Dickinson County Conservation Board has the privilege of hosting the statewide Annual Roadside Conference this fall. This is an event that will host Iowa Roadside Vegetation staff from across the state of Iowa.

This Conference is a great opportunity for all Iowa county roadside programs to network with each other and learn how each program operates. Everything from brush control to new native vegetation planting techniques. The con-

ference will provide a great learning experience for many staff in the conservation field, with several guest speakers and equipment demonstrations.

This conference also gives our guests the chance to experience many of the great activities that the lakes area is famous for, including a field trip to Arnold's Park, the Maritime Museum, Iowa Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, and a boat ride on The Queen II.

Roadside Program

As for the Dickinson County roadside program, we plan on planting Right of Ways (ROW) on M34, A31, and A22 in the fall of 2022. This will help us achieve our yearly goal of roughly 40 miles of ROW planting.

These plantings will be with native grasses and flowers. Native vegetation will help stabilize the ROW pre-

venting erosion, makes the ROW easier to maintain, helps with topsoil erosion from field edges, provides better filtration for water into the watershed, and helps reduce snow drifting.



Dickinson County Conservation & Nature Center Staff

Executive Director:

Lee Sorenson

E E Coordinator: Bry Huffman

Naturalist: Britney Snell

IRVM/Weed Commissioner:

Tanner Bouchard

IRVM East Technician:

Cameron Arnold

Natural Resource Manager:

Brian Cuperus

Natural Resource Technician:

Clay Pavelko

Regional Collection Manager:

Charles Vigdal

Community Relations Coordinator:

Jackie Jerge

Summer Camp Opportunities

June Theme: Animal Scientists

Entomology	Pre K	June 6, 7	9-12	Session 1
Entomology	Pre K	June 13, 14	9-12	Session 2
Herpetology	TK/K	June 16, 17	9-12	Session 1
Herpetology	TK/K	June 23, 24	9-12	Session 2
Mammalogy	1st/2nd	June 20, 21	9-3	Session 1
Mammalogy	1st/2nd	June 27, 28	9-3	Session 2
Ornithology	3rd/4th	June 30, July 1	9-3	
Ichthyology	5th/6th	July 7, 8	9-3	
Discover the Outdoors	1st/2nd	July 11, 12	9-12	
Imagine	Pre K	July 14, 15	9-12	
Create in the Environment	TK / K	July 18, 19	9-12	
Explore your Environment	3rd/4th	July 21, 22	9-12	

Special Events

Weed Warriors

June 11th

11:30 a.m.

Bee and Butterfly Festival

September 2

4-8 p.m.

Seed Collecting Program

October 8th

11:30 a.m.

Partner Camps

Clay/Dickinson County Camp

June 9-10

4th-6th

Kindermusik and Art Center

Partner Camp

July 25-28

Ages 4-6

Girls in Science Camp

Overnight at Lakeside

August 12-13

Grades 7th-9th

Saturday Morning Stories

The second Saturday of each month at 10:30 a.m. Come join one of the Naturalists for a nature story time!

Family Nature Night

The 4th Friday of each month for all ages. Please pre-register your family for this free program.

Programs

