

# SEASONS



## Marshall County Conservation Board Quarterly Newsletter

Volume 27, Issue 4  
Winter 2012

## Renovation

by Mike Stegmann, MCCB Director

The abbreviated definition of renovation is “to make something like new again.” Such is the case at the MCCB’s Green Castle Recreation Area near Ferguson. You have already seen the new and improved Gander Lookout Shelter. There are many plans in the works to renovate other areas within the park. For example new fencing is being constructed around both the swan and bison enclosures to ensure safety for both the public and animals. Canoes and kayaks are now allowed on the lake and a new access point has been constructed near the south end of the lake.

Perhaps the most noticeable happening at Green Castle is that beginning in the fall of 2012, the MCCB began lowering the lake level at the park. Eventually it will be lowered 9 feet from full pool level. The main purpose of the draw down is to remove undesirable rough fish that have infested the lake. Unfortunately this will also entail removing all the desirable fish too. How the common carp got there is uncertain, whether someone maliciously put them there or they were released unknowingly, it doesn’t matter. Since their discovery approximately 10 years ago they have populated the lake to the point of nuisance levels. Their behaviors and habits have degraded the fishery to the level that it was unproductive for people fishing and the problem wasn’t going to get any better. Thus the determination was made by the MCCB to begin the process of eradication of the species.

The first step is to lower water level as much as possible confining fish into a small of body of water. This will allow fishermen to easily catch fish. Regular fishing rules and regulations still apply at this point in time. Prior to final steps of eradication those rules and regulations may be relaxed to maximize salvage of fish. Eventually chemical treatment of the lake will kill remaining fish creating a sterile environment. At that point in time, the IDNR will restock the lake with bluegills, catfish, and large-mouth bass at no cost to the county. Also while the lake is down the MCCB is working to secure funds to remove accumulated silt from the south end of the lake. Fish habitat structures will be added through out the lake bed and gravel spawning beds both targeted at improving the quality of fishing in the future. This entire process will take approximately two years to complete but the end result will be a better resource for the park users.

The MCCB is also proceeding with the concept of a fully modern campground at Green Castle. Although still conceptual at this stage, behind the scenes plans are being formulated to create a full engineered design. This will provide a cost estimate which will initiate a fund raising campaign so that construction can take place. No definitive time line has been set for completion. As this project proceeds, notice to the public will be made and comments are welcome by contacting the MCCB office at 641-752-5490; your input is important to us.



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# Exciting Changes to the Website

By Tami Krough Administrative Assistant

Here at MCCB we are continually looking for ways to improve the information that we provide the public. Two exciting changes have been made to the Marshall County Conservation Board website (<http://www.co.marshall.ia.us/departments/conservation>). The two new sections that have been added:

1. Marshall County Outdoor Events Calendar
2. Frequently Asked Questions

The Marshall County Outdoor Events Calendar will include outdoor activities such hunting, fishing, etc for the Marshall County area. We are asking that if you have an organization that is nature and/or conservation related please send an email to [tkrough@co.marshall.ia.us](mailto:tkrough@co.marshall.ia.us) and I will add your information to the calendar. The goal of this calendar is to make it an one stop shop for people seeking outdoor activities or organizations to join. I will also add a description of your organization to the page with any relevant information about your organization as well as membership information. Guidelines for having events added to the calendar:

1. Name of Event
2. Date and time of event
3. Is it open to the public? or not?
4. Description of the event, you can be as brief or put as much detail as you want.
5. Any fees associated with the event?
6. Contact information for the event
7. Anything else relevant to the event



Do you ever have a question about finding an abandoned bird in your yard and what to do? The new Frequently Asked Questions section will be a continually updated section with common questions that what we receive at MCCB.

Also, do not forget to the check the website for a complete list of MCCB upcoming events. We are also exploring the option of sending out notifications and reminder emails on events, please be sure to watch the website for more details if this option becomes available.



## The GrimesFarm and Conservation Center will closed:

- Monday, December 24 and Tuesday, December 25 for Christmas
- Tuesday, January 1 for New Years
  - Monday, February 18 for Presidents' Day

## WINTER HOURS AT NATURE CENTER

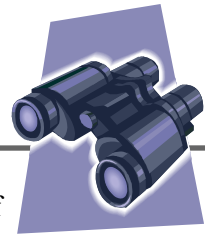
The GrimesFarm & Conservation Center will be changing to winter hours for the months of December, January, and February. Week day hours will be Monday – Friday 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. On Saturday the center will be open from 9:00 a.m. - Noon on December 8, January 12 & 26 and February 9 & 16 only.



Have you found MCCB on Facebook yet? Facebook is a great way to interact with each other, see pictures of events, and find information about MCCB events. We encourage you to become a fan of Marshall County Conservation Board and invite your friends to like us too!

# Bird Watching Guide

By Matt Wetrich, Carroll County Naturalist



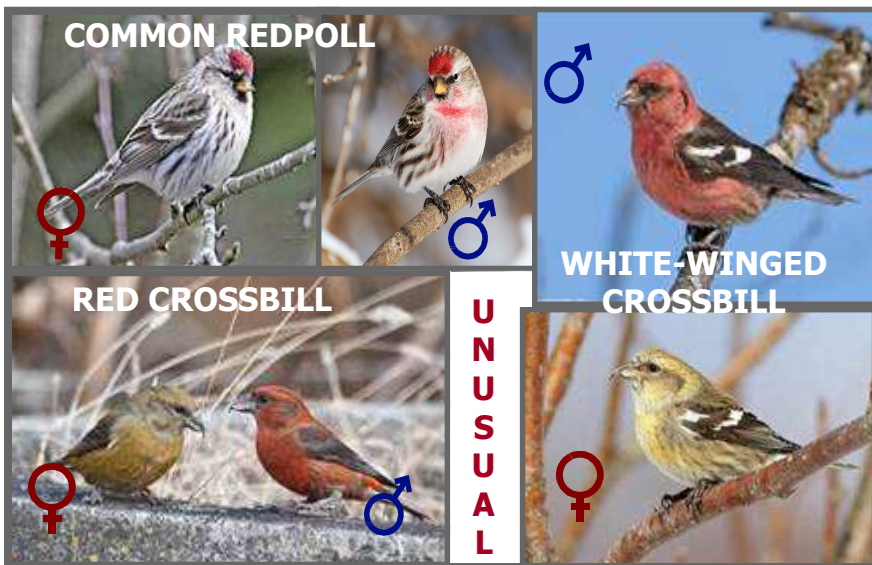
It's shaping up to be a FUN winter for interesting birds showing up around here! Below is a visual guide to letting you know what things you might encounter, as well as an explanation to why we think some of these visitors will be showing up. If you happen to see any species in the "UNUSUAL" or "RAREST" categories, PLLLLLEEASE let us know so we can help document this unusual event known as an "eruption" or "invasion" of northern visitors.



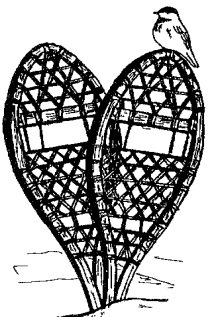
**Visitors from the North.** Years in which the cone crop in boreal regions is low, cone seed eating birds come south in search of food. This appears to be one of those years!

- Watch for these visitors at your bird feeders and keep them full of sunflower seed, suet, peanuts, and nyger.
- Watch for Snowy Owls atop utility poles, hay bales, fence posts, and sitting on the ground.

Color version of this chart available online at [www.co.marshall.va.us/departments/conservation/](http://www.co.marshall.va.us/departments/conservation/)



## Ski & Snowshoe Rental



Chase away the winter blues by getting outside! The Marshall County Conservation Board has cross-country skis and snowshoes available for rent at \$5 a day per set plus a \$50 deposit per set. A waiver of liability must also be signed. The deposit will be returned when the equipment is returned in good condition. Rented equipment may be used on the GrimesFarm trails or off site, but must be returned within 72 hours. The Marshall County Conservation Board offers many trails where cross-country skiing is allowed including: Grimes Farm, Green Castle, Timmons Grove, and Grammer Grove. During Marshall County Conservation Board sponsored events the equipment will be available for use at no charge. See the Special Events listing on page 4 for ski and snowshoe program details.

# SEASONS

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

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## Thank You!

**Newsletter Collation:** Kayann Lowry, Dorothy Christensen, Paul & Darlene Maytag, Bob Dunham, Dena Graff, Kay Russell, Sharon Depew, Micki Stanley, Joan Studts, Dianna Freiboth

**Programming:** Mark Proescholdt, Jeff Cope, Carrie Barr, Sally Wilson, Kathy Lupkes, Tom & Cheryl LaVille, Sam Edwards, Emma Alman, Lauren, Leah & Brenda Moiser, John Hall

**Reception Desk:** Sheila Geraghty, Marian Flora, Margaret Kroener, Linnette Tuttle, Denny Eige, Janet Johnson, Bev & Wayne Sloppy, Ivadeen Proffitt, Marian Hale

**Prairie Heritage Day:** Ed Moore, Norm Charlton, Charlotte McGinty, Micki Stanley, Deb Ratliff, Rose Wagner, Jennie Barwick, Tom Kurth, Sam Scafferi, Nicholas Stegmann, Joyce Elliott, Jan Williams, Ann Kent, Sharon Depew, Joan Studts, Sheila Geraghty, Alyssa Fulton, Prairie Creek String Band, Dena Graff, Dianna Freiboth, Kayann Lowry, Ed Savage, Judy Wasco, Margaret Kroener, Paul Sams, Brandon Roberts, Wayne Judge Sr., John VanNordstrand, Keith Niedermann, Irene Elsberry, Ed Mason, David Young, Carla Young, Phil Cox, Ron Crow, Gary Fulton, Bonnie Ohrt, David and Joyce Bollhoefer, Lisa Naig Hodges, Marilyn Willits, Julie Stahl, Wayne Faas, Ray Steveson, John Hall, Leroy Jero, Nile Dielschneider, Jim Fitz, and Bill Stone

**Sand Lake Trout Release:** Ben's Tire, Dean Elder Jr., Fastenal, The General Store, Home Rental Center & Sales Co., Kmart, Menards, Southard Implement, Theisens, Tri County Bass Club of Marshalltown, Tri State Lock, and 4th Avenue Bait and Tackle, Julie Stahl, Ray Helland, Jeff Mathis

**Iowater Testing:** Gary Fulton, John Hall, Melody Bro, Bill Helgen

**Donations :** Sharon Depew, Dean Proffitt, Hutton Taxidermy, Marshalltown Garden Club, Garry and Roberta Brandenburg, Urbandale Historical Society, Richard Seim, James & Linda York, Central Iowa Ornithologists, Kenneth and Sherry Folks, Chapter 675 of the EAA

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

Help us keep costs down and save resources. If you would like to receive the newsletter electronically rather than having it mailed, please send an email to [mccb@co.marshall.ia.us](mailto:mccb@co.marshall.ia.us). Also the electronic version is in color!



## MARSHALL COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD

2349 - 233rd Street, Marshalltown, IA 50158  
(641) 752-5490

[mccb@co.marshall.ia.us](mailto:mccb@co.marshall.ia.us)

[www.co.marshall.ia.us/departments/conservation](http://www.co.marshall.ia.us/departments/conservation)

### Conservation Center Hours

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

Designated Saturdays 9:00 a.m. - Noon

### Board Members

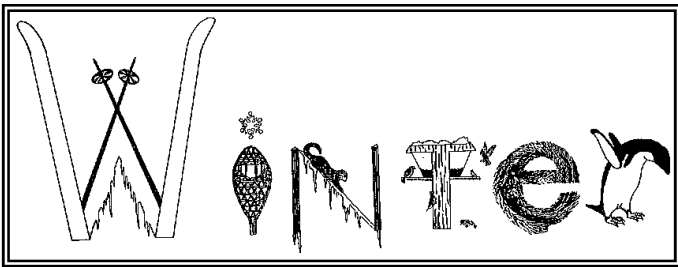
James Fitz  
Jeffrey Mathis  
Julie Stahl  
Jerry Gaffney  
Ray Helland



QR code for  
MCCB website.

### Staff

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



## Nature Story Hour

December 5 & 19      11:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m.  
January 2 & 16  
February 6 & 20

GrimesFarm & Conservation Center  
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.



## Brown Bag Bunch

Bring your lunch and join the fun, fellowship, and fantastic programming at the GrimesFarm and Conservation Center.

Friday, December 7      11:30 a.m.—1:00 p.m.  
Holiday Wreaths and Twig Vase  
(Bring pruners and jar)  
Friday, January 18      11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.  
Taxidermy 101  
  
Friday, February 1      11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.  
Winter Tree ID

## Reclaim Your Holiday Make a Mix

Thursday, December 13      7 - 8:00 p.m.  
GrimesFarm & Conservation Center  
(2359 233rd Street)

Simplify your holiday gift giving by joining us for a fun evening of creating homemade mix in a jar gifts. Choose from Skillet Lasagna \$2.50, Beef & Noodle Quick Dinner \$2.50, Cinnamon Oatmeal Pancakes \$2.00, Raspberry Tea \$5.00, Cappuccino \$5.00 and Playdough \$2.00. **Pre-register and select mixes by December 6 by calling 752-5490.**



## Uncle Ike Nature Program

(Grades 1-5, family members welcome)

Celebrate 29 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. “Outdoor Adventures” is the theme for this year’s program that meets monthly October - April.

### “Feathered Frenzy”

Saturday, December 8      9 – 11 a.m.  
GrimesFarm & Conservation Center  
(2359 233rd St.)

What bird was that? Discover how to identify birds by sight and sound. Dress for the weather.



### “Slide into Fun”

Saturday, January 12      9 – 11 a.m.  
GrimesFarm & Conservation Center

Let’s slide into some cross country skis and snowshoes for a winter exploration. Dress for the weather.



### “Tread Lightly”

Saturday, February 9      9 – 11 a.m.  
GrimesFarm & Conservation Center

Can you camp without leaving a trace? Help set up a tent and make camp.



## Calling All Junior Naturalists



Do you qualify for this year’s nature badge and certificate?

- Are you aged 6 – 12 years?
  - Attended three conservation programs in 2012 anywhere in the U.S.
  - Read a nature book, went hiking/camping/fishing or any other nature activity with family/friends
  - Completed a Jr. Naturalist log sheet (find at the GrimesFarm Conservation Center)
- Contact Diane Hall, MCCB Naturalist at 752-5490 to register for the special 2012 Award presentation to be held on Saturday, December 8 at 9:00 a.m. at the GrimesFarm & Conservation Center.

## Cross-Country Skiing

Saturday, January 12 1:00-3:00 p.m.  
GrimesFarm & Conservation Center  
(2359 233<sup>rd</sup> Street)



Enjoy an afternoon on the trail in the winter wonderland on cross-country skis or snowshoes. Bring your own or use ours: supply limited. Basic instruction and hot chocolate will be provided.

## Owl Prowl

Thursday, January 24 7-8:00 p.m.  
Timmons Grove South (1801 Marsh Ave)

Join us for a hootin' good time and discover the three common owls of Iowa. After going in search of owls, join us at the campfire for a cup of hot chocolate. You may bring marshmallows and sticks to roast them with. **Pre-register by Monday, January 21 by calling 752-5490.**



## Bald Eagle Days

January 26 Red Rock, Pella  
10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. 641-828-7522

February 24 Saylorville, Polk City  
Noon - 4:00 p.m. 515-276-4656



Discover more about this majestic national symbol and view eagles, which may be in the area. Sponsored by DNR Wildlife Diversity and Army Corps of Engineers.

### Photo Contest Reminder

Remember, youth and adult entries are **due by noon Friday, February 1, 2013!** Think Scenic (Natural Resources), People and Natural Resources, Native Wildlife, and *added this year* Native Plants. Perhaps you could win one of the \$20 gift certificates. For contest details call 752-5490 or visit [www.co.marshall.ia.us](http://www.co.marshall.ia.us) click on Departments then Conservation Board and then Annual Photo Contest.



## Artifact Roadshow

Saturday, January 26 9:00 a.m. - Noon  
GrimesFarm & Conservation Center  
(2359 233<sup>rd</sup> Street)

Do you have Indian artifacts such as arrowheads, axes, pottery, or stone tools you'd like to know more about? Bring them to our road show to hear comments and basic information from Toby Morrow, author of *Iowa Projectile Points*, and archaeologist with Wapsi Valley Archaeology, Inc. Rock and fossils can also be brought in for identification.

## 12th Annual Photo Contest Awards & Chili Supper

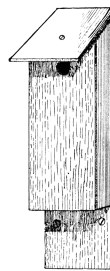
Thursday, February 7 6:00 - 7:00 p.m.  
GrimesFarm & Conservation Center  
(2359 233<sup>rd</sup> Street)

Join us for a hot & tasty bowl of chili, an amazing array of nature photo entries, & (drum roll, please) announcement of this year's winning entries! Advance tickets are \$5 for adults and \$3 for children 12 and under. Don't miss the fun!



## Woodworking for Wildlife

Saturday, February 16 9:30-11:30 a.m.  
GrimesFarm & Conservation Center  
(2359 233<sup>rd</sup> Street)



Think spring, bring your hammer and make a difference for wildlife! Participants can build a wren or bluebird house. **Pre-register by Wednesday, February 13 by calling 752-5490 and specify type of house wanted.** Donations for materials will be accepted. Space is limited.

### Mark your calendars!

A **bird nest monitoring training** workshop will be held at the GrimesFarm and Conservation Center on **Saturday, March 23, 2013** from 10:00 am to 4:30pm. Participants will learn everything they ever wanted to know about Bald Eagles, other raptors, and colonial water bird nesting and making/reporting observations. Registration information will be in the Spring newsletter.

