

# The Nature of Things

THE BENTON COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 5 FALL 2014

## **The Thrill of the Hunt** *by Karen Phelps, Naturalist*

When we start to prepare for a newsletter, it isn't just a week or two before it gets published. I start to pester our staff for articles shortly after the previous newsletter went out. I try to give everyone plenty of time to get their creative juices flowing. With that said, your's truly is just now writing her article so I can finish the newsletter.

Too many times I struggle with what to write about - beautiful fall colors, owls, trees, hunting, constellations, M & M's, gnomes - the ideas are endless. So the other evening as I left my home and crossed a bean field to venture into the woods to bow hunt for deer, I was still struggling with what to write about. I marveled at the intense fall colors of the trees, wondering if we'd appreciate their splendor if they were this color year round. When I was young I thought the leaves turned all those awesome colors in the fall - after all, that's what we all say. When in reality, the leaves turn green in the spring as chlorophyll takes hold and the leaves produce food for the trees. As the tree rests in the late fall and winter, the leaves take a break, the chlorophyll stops making food and the leaves are once again their natural color. Either way, turning green or red, yellow, orange - whatever, they're splendid this year.

Reaching my destination among the pines, I settled in for another evening spent in my favorite place - the woods. Shortly after arriving, the Great Horned owls aroused from their daytime slumber, announced to each other their territory. I counted 3 different locations in all, and was pleased when I discovered one was just off to my right in a tree that afforded a good view of Iowa's largest owl.

Years ago I discovered tree stands and I do not have a lot in common: I don't do heights. I don't like blinds either; too restrictive. So, that leaves me one alternative; hunt on the ground and find a natural area to blend in with. I like the challenge and the versatility this affords me, and so on this particular evening I concealed myself among three small-diameter trees, naturally surrounded by low brush between myself and the field, and fairly open to the woods.

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Electronic versions are  
available at our website or via email  
through the  
following website:  
[www.bentoncountyparks.com](http://www.bentoncountyparks.com)  
or call us at:  
319-472-4942 to be added



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# Benton County Nature Center: Bringing the Outdoors Inside

By Aaron Askelson, Naturalist



*A Common Yellowthroat hides among the branches of the Oaks at the Benton County nature Center.*

It is harder than you think to bring the outdoors inside. It seems simple enough when you first start to think about it. How can we show people the beauty of Iowa's different ecosystems and give them a taste of what is out there in our Nature Center? We want to show the people of Benton County that they have a lot to be proud of when it comes to some of their native plants and animals. But our main goal is getting people interested in heading outdoors. Benton County Conservation parks and areas are a great way to connect with nature; we would like our Nature Center to be a gateway for opportunities at our parks. The idea is to inspire people to spend more time in the outdoors.

Building nature displays for the center has been a learning experience for all of those involved. This has led both naturalists, Karen and Aaron, down many new roads and introduced us to a whole other realm of building museum quality displays. For two people who have little or no experience in this endeavor, there was a lot to learn. The internet, some visits to different nature centers, a few Youtube videos, and some real helpful advice from Karen's taxidermist husband Marc Phelps, helped us along the way. Karen and I both have a love of art and nature so we decided to put our artistic skills to use. Having the displays built by an outside contractor was an option that was looked at but the cost for the projects were well out of our budgetary restrictions.

We started with the trees; we wanted to depict Iowa's oak savanna inside our Nature Center. As luck would have it, years ago Karen and I both attended an Iowa Association of Naturalists conference in Clinton County. Since Clinton County is along the Mississippi River it used to have a large lumber industry, so there is a sawmill museum which we had the opportunity to tour, getting a backstage pass to how they made many of their displays, some of which were large trees. The ideas that we learned there would be the basis for how we wanted to construct our oak savanna trees. We started with a cardboard concrete form then wrapped it in hardware cloth. The cardboard tube would give it great form but no tree is perfectly round so you wrap hardware cloth around it and bend it to make it look irregular like the trunk of an actual tree. Any large gaps between the cardboard and hardware cloth we filled with expanding foam. After that had set up, some of it would usually need to be trimmed off. We wanted to reproduce bark that actually looked like the real thing, well what better way than to take some bark and make a reusable mold that can replicate actual bark. This process we learned from Karen's husband; I believe it was invaluable to us reaching the level of realism we were looking for. These rubber molds made turning a pile of wet concrete into bark a lot easier. We would place wet concrete on our "trees" and then press our bark molds into the wet concrete creating an exact reproduction of actual oak bark. With some painting they have turned out better than we expected. We feel they are realistic representations of oak trees and they have impressed quite a few people that have gotten the opportunity to view them at our Nature Center.

Limestone bluffs are also a common feature along many of Iowa's river valleys, Benton County is no different with its scenic limestone outcroppings along the Cedar River. We needed to come up with something that looked like limestone rock but didn't weigh that much. We were able to find a great product called Quik-Rock. It is a 4x8 sheet of molded spray foam that looks exactly like rock. This product can be broken up or cut to size to fit into any size or shape. With this we were able to take advantage of the high ceiling in our center. Small chunks of Quik-Rock could be screwed together to make a larger wall.

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## The Whispering Pines at Hannen Lake *By Logan Hahn, Park Ranger*

Hidden behind the many vegetative species that are more typically found in Iowa, Hannen Lake Park is harboring a treasure-trove of White and Red pine trees. Slowly and unceremoniously growing over the last several decades, they are at the beginning stages of reaching a magnificent maturity.

When a person finds themselves among a particular habitat, like a mature pine stand, it is not easy to put a finger on the specific nuances about that habitat that give it its own brand. These subtle, unique traits are what cultivates mystery to the wild. When it comes to wild spaces, there are few that can compare to a healthy pine stand.

I invite you to visit Hannen Lake Park after the first snowfall this winter to take a long walk among the pines. The natural acidity of pine forest ecosystems keeps vegetation low, which makes them ideal for effortless walks and high-visibility wildlife viewing. The thick, rust-red, spongy needle layer from seasons past will reveal itself from under the light snow with each step. You will hear the wind audibly swell as it whispers through the soft over-story. You will hear chickadees and nuthatches picking at the flaky bark of a titanic Red pine in the distance, in search of a grub that will bring them a satisfaction that only a little bird will ever know. In a world that puts an ever-growing priority on the comforts of man, you will feel delightfully out of place among these trees.

Maintaining the health of this valuable resource, as well as the other resources in Hannen Lake Park, will be a consistent and rewarding task in the following months and years. I hope you find the time to come out and appreciate them as much as I do.

### Volunteers Needed!

Now that we have had our grand opening we are looking for volunteers to help staff our Nature Center. Many counties across the state that are lucky enough to have a nature center use members of the community to help keep their nature centers open while the staff is out doing programs, park maintenance and various other tasks that need to be attended to. Volunteers are an integral part of a well-functioning nature center. We have several volunteers that would like to help keep the center open but we would like more volunteers so we can keep it open for more hours and have back-up volunteers if a person has to back out. Volunteering can be a fun experience where you can meet new people and share information, and many times also learn something new. You won't have to know everything about nature to help out. There will be different things to do like keep the bird feeders full, water plants, some weeding, answering of the phones. Some volunteers might have skills that they can share with the county. For example we have a volunteer who teaches basket making classes with Karen at the Nature Center. If you have something you would like to share, make sure you tell us so we can put your skills to work.

Keeping the Nature Center open will not require any special skills just a friendly smile and helpful attitude. The old adage "many hands make light work" would really apply here and the work will always be light. So if you think you would like to help out at the Nature Center or you think you could help out in a different way be sure to give us a call at (319) 472-4942 and ask for Karen or Aaron.



*Trail through White pine stand at Hannen Park*



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## A “New” Cabin Along the Red Cedar River *By Jon Geiger, Park Ranger*

For those of you not familiar with the Winegar Park of Benton County, we highly recommend it for all kinds of outdoor activities. This is a public hunting area that holds many types of wildlife, fishing opportunities, and we recently added an equestrian trail to be utilized by the public. Many years ago Judge John Tobin from Vinton, and the St. Claire family built two matching cabins on this site. In 1977 Judge Tobin and his wife donated their cabin and 68 acres of adjoining land along the Cedar River to the Benton County Conservation Board to be used by outdoor enthusiasts. The St. Claire family's cabin was then passed down to the Radcliff family. For many years Tobin's cabin was rented to the public and used by area Boy Scout groups until the cabin was destroyed by the floods of 2008. The Cabin was not rebuilt due to the proximity of the river and the damage it had sustained. With funds from FEMA, the cabin was then turned into an open air pavilion. The foundation and the stone chimney still stand as a reminder of the Tobin's contribution to conservation in Benton County.

The Radcliff (St. Claire) cabin was purchased by the Benton County Conservation Board in 2011 and many improvements have been made by the conservation staff and a few local contractors. A new septic system was added in 2012. Removal of debris from the inside and outside of the cabin began in 2013. The year 2013 also saw the replacement of the asphalt shingle roof with a steel roof later that year. In 2014 we have replaced all the electrical, replaced the wall coverings, and added a heating and cooling unit. Expanding foam insulation was added for cooling and heating efficiency, and an electric fireplace was placed within the preexisting stone fireplace. The old plumbing was removed and updated, a complete bathroom renovation with a new corner shower stall and stool were added. The concrete floors were painted with an industrial sealant that makes them more attractive and provides some added protection. The exterior log siding, which gives the cabin some of its charm, was also replaced with new log siding, and the entire exterior was given a fresh coat of paint.

*Continued on page 11*



### **Biographical Note**

*John W. Tobin (1895 -- 1989) was a life-long resident of Vinton, Iowa. The son of a lawyer, he joined his father and brothers' legal firm of Tobin, Tobin and Tobin in 1917. He served in the signal corps during WW I. Tobin was appointed district judge in 1954, for the counties of Benton, Marshall, and Tama. Judge Tobin remained on the bench until 1970 when he reached the mandatory retirement age. Always active in community affairs, Tobin helped organize the American Legion in Iowa and the Lions Club in Vinton. He was president of the State Bank of Vinton and active with the local library. An ardent conservationist, in 1952 he was elected national president of the Izaak Walton League of America and in 1974, he became a member of their Hall of Fame. In 1977 he and his wife donated their 68 acre Cedar River property to the Benton County Conservation Board. Judge Tobin died in Vinton, Iowa, at the age of 94.*

*For more information on Judge John Tobin, visit the University of Iowa Library website at:*

*[www.lib.uiowa.edu/scua/.../msc387\\_tobinjohnw.htm](http://www.lib.uiowa.edu/scua/.../msc387_tobinjohnw.htm)*

## Nature Center: Bringing the Outdoors Inside *Continued from page 2*

Once the main chunks of “rock” were in place, the gaps needed to be filled with smaller chunks of “rock”. Newspaper then needed to be stuffed in all the holes and gaps. We then used a mixture of joint compound and shredded paper to fill in any remaining gaps. Once that was dry we sealed it with a spray sealer. It was then ready for a base coat of paint. The Quik-rock comes in a limestone like color, but if you have ever taken a real close look at any rock, you will realize that they are made up of many different colors. So I armed myself with some spray bottles of diluted acrylic paint and a rag and began to paint our cliffs. I would first spray some paint on very lightly and then dab away any excess paint that made the rock too dark. It was a slow process but it really highlighted the cracks and some of the forms of the fake rock. Then we added some highlights of lighter color to make certain areas stand out. Karen then went through and added some fake moss and painted flowers to complete the picture. Make sure you check out the bobcat jumping out of his den.

The prairie display with a loping coyote was assembled in a similar fashion using Quik-rock. Instead of rock we wanted to represent the Tall grass prairies of Iowa. So we painted the Quik-rock to look like soil. Flowers and grasses were preserved so the coyote would have something to walk through and Karen painted some more on the wall to add depth to the display. Prairie roots were constructed out of burlap and raffia, a tedious task, to say the least.

In the coming months there will be additions to the Nature Center. One that has been in the works for a while is a prairie plant display that was literally grown to help people understand the importance of prairies to our soil and the ecosystem. A Lead plant was grown by the Tallgrass Prairie Center at the University of Northern Iowa. Its root was grown in a substance called Turface, inside a 10 foot long PVC pipe that had been placed in the ground. When the plant had been in the ground for over a year the entire PVC tube was taken out of the ground and all the Turface was removed so the root structure of the plant was exposed. This root will soon be on display at the Nature Center to help us interpret the incredible story of Iowa’s tall grass prairies.

Other projects are in the works that are also very exciting and will continue to grow our Nature Center. Things will constantly be changing as we grow and find new ways to get people educated and excited about the great outdoors. The grounds around our Nature Center will always be evolving as we continue to expand our Environmental Education program.





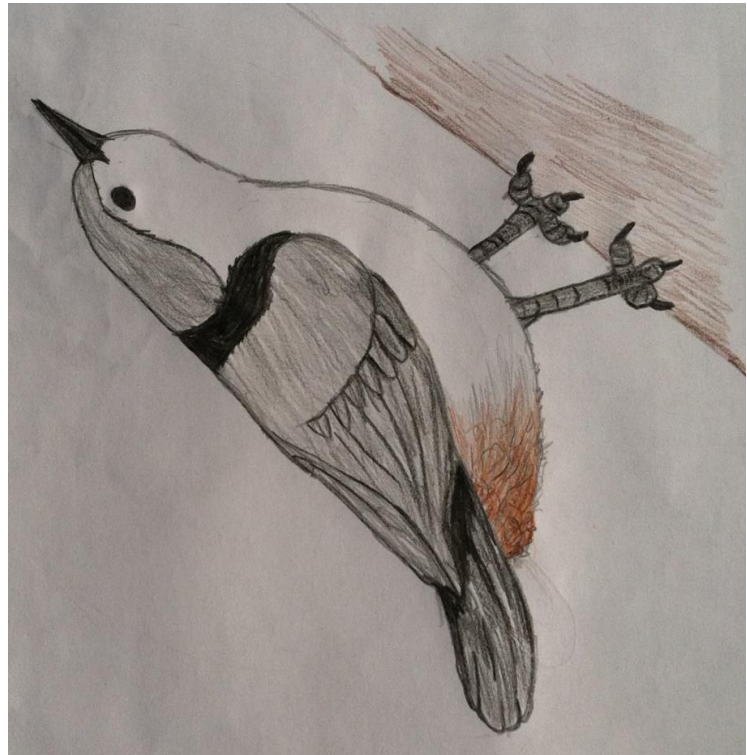
October 2, 2013  
Bodeker Woods  
Benton County, Iowa

## Nuthatch in the Fall Light

Today I headed out to the stand of scrub trees north of my house—the birding hot-spot in the yard where I find a multitude of songbirds, woodpeckers, and all sorts of nests. I settled down under the biggest tree and scanned the branches with my binoculars. After listening to the wind humming and blowing gently, I moved up the stand to an old, fat-trunked tree. Although I could hear what I assumed to be a woodpecker rapping on some unlucky branch, I couldn't find it. I shifted my attention to the lower section of the tree and looked around.

Soon I noticed a White-breasted Nuthatch flat against the trunk, roughly seven feet up, hopping along upside-down. I identified it as a female for it had a grey cap (male has black). I also noted the black stripe on the back of her neck and the reddish-chestnut under her tail, fading into the white of her belly. She would peck at the wood then look up or down—depending on her position—peck at the wood, look up or down, and so on and so forth, repeating this dance like a mess of staccato notes separated by a long rest.

Slowly she worked her way up the trunk in this manner. I lost sight of her every now and then, and during that time I began to think she looked a little like a Red-breasted Nuthatch, but told myself it was very unlikely this time of year. I also verified in my field guide that the ruddiness of the Red-breasted Nuthatch extends beyond the tail through the underbelly, stopping at the neck. She looked beautiful in the golden, fall light on the east side of the trunk where she would appear haphazardly. She disappeared around the back of a branch and I lost sight of her completely.



*Note the reddish-chestnut underside does not extend past her legs.*

~by Coralee Denise Bodeker



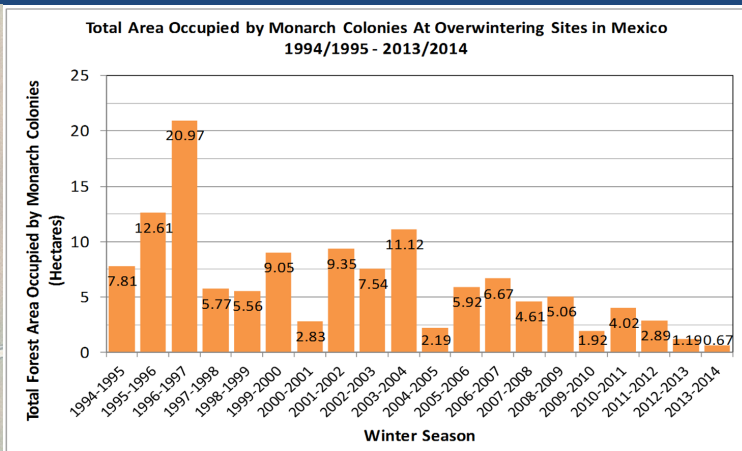
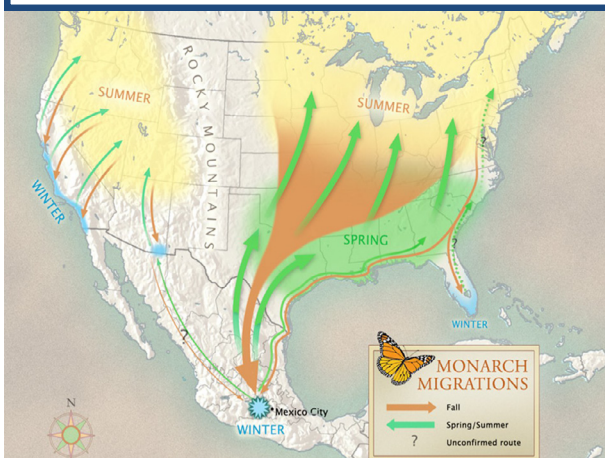
By: Ben Bonar

# The Monarch Issue

Monarch butterflies (*Danaus plexippus*) are one of Iowa's most iconic insects. These amazing insects migrate from overwintering grounds in Mexico each spring to the southern United States and eventually make their way north to Iowa in the summer months. A depiction of this migration can be found below. Monarchs are unique in that they depend on milkweed (*Asclepias* spp.) plants to grow and reproduce. Female monarchs need milkweed to lay their eggs and their caterpillars only feed on this group of plants. Historically, Iowa supported vast numbers of monarchs with numerous and diverse milkweed species. However, with shifting land management practices we have lost much of this habitat and as a result support far less monarchs.

So how have monarchs fared in recent years? The unfortunate truth is that their migration has been in serious decline in the past few years. Monarch success is measured in how many hectares (1 hectare = 2.47 acres) monarchs take up in the overwintering grounds each winter. A depiction of these results can be found below. 2013 was by far the worst year on record with only 0.67 hectares being occupied.

A benefit of the Benton County Secondary Roads Department utilizing Integrated Roadside Vegetation Management is that we are actively planting milkweed species in the diverse prairies we are reconstructing in county right-of-way. As we continue to plant Benton County's 5184 acres of right-of-way, we are doing our part to preserve this migration for years to come. However, there is always more that can be done! If you are interested in creating monarch or other pollinator habitat on your property, contact the Benton County Secondary Roads Department and we can provide you with resources on how you can help.







## FROM THE ROADSIDE MANAGER

Iowa is home to a diversity of grass, forb and sedge species. Each is unique in how it fits into our ecosystems and what species it supports. Check out the article below to learn more about this month's native plants.

### Ladies Tresses Orchids

*Spiranthes ovalis*, *Spiranthes cernua*

By: Ben Bonar

October has been a very exciting month for the Benton County IRVM program. While I was cutting cedars and harvesting seed from remnant plant communities, I stumbled across two species of *Spiranthes* that I had not seen before.

Nodding Ladies Tresses (*Spiranthes cernua*) is a native perennial plant that grows to between 4 and 12" tall. It is often found in moist environments and typically occurs in disturbed areas. Due to their short stature, they can easily be missed. However, their white flowers stand out in the fall as most other plants have finished flowering. Like most orchid species, Nodding Ladies Tresses requires an endomycorrhizal association with certain fungus species to grow and develop.



Nodding Ladies Tresses (*Spiranthes cernua*)

## Native Plant Profile

Oval Ladies Tresses (*Spiranthes ovalis*)



Oval Ladies Tresses (*Spiranthes ovalis*) is another native perennial plant in the orchid family. This plant is listed as a threatened species in Iowa due to much of its habitat disappearing from the landscape. It can be found in moist woodlands and often springs up after a large disturbance. Disturbances can include removal of taller vegetation through fire, wind or human actions.

Like Nodding Ladies Tresses, Oval Ladies Tresses is very small in stature and forms spikes of bright white flowers. However, *Spiranthes ovalis* has smaller and less showy flowers. Additionally, this plant tends to prefer light shade whereas Nodding Ladies Tresses is often found in full sun.



**IRVM**  
Integrated Roadside Vegetation Management  
Iowa's Roadside Resource



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## Thrill of the Hunt *Continued from page 1*

Those familiar with bow hunting for deer this time of year know that “grunting” or “rattling” for deer can be quite effective. Grunting involves gently blowing into a special tube, mimicking the pig-like sound a buck makes when on the trail of a receptive doe. Rattling on the other hand, involves taking a pair of antlers or sticks in a bag, and moving them in such a way as to imitate two bucks sparring. With intentions of luring in a monster, I set out to do my best impersonation of a deprived buck and two others working out their frustrations. Nothing. A half-hour later, not to be dismayed, I tried again. Within a few minutes of laying the antlers down on the ground behind me, he emerged. Instantly I knew this was not the deer I was looking for, so I left my bow hanging next to me in the tree and waited for the moment to pass; a moment that turned into a 45-minute lifetime adventure.

Once the buck decided to venture my way, I could see he had a unique rack with nine awkwardly placed tines, or points. He was approximately two-and-half years old and quite curious. Checking out scrapes and rubs he or another buck had made on previous romps through the woods, his path of travel was heading directly towards me. Directing my glance downward, so as to avert the whites of my eyes from him, the buck sauntered towards me with his “where are those guys?” look in his eyes.

Normally before I go into the deer woods to hunt, I make sure I’ve taken a bath with scent-free soap, and sprayed my clothing down with odor killer, even though I keep the clothes in an airtight container. I disguise my face with camouflage paint, and often hang scent wafers from the trees to help conceal my odor. Not this night; I was in a hurry. My clothes had been hanging over the bedroom door with all good intentions of washing them after the sweaty night I’d had in the woods a few days before. My two dogs had to “hug” me before I left the house, making sure I carried their scent with me as well. All that said, the young buck came closer and closer, strolling by me at a mere four feet. As he passed, I admired his long eye lashes and the curious way one of his brow tines grew separately from his head and not his main beam, creating three brow tines and not the normal two.



*Typical scene in Iowa during the fall when bucks start to spar.*

“He’s going to bolt” I thought. “He has to smell me”. Wrong again. The buck strolled by without a care in the world, looking for the action he’d heard a few moments before. He stood within 10 feet of me and faced the bean field, surveying it - sure he’d locate the two sparring bucks he heard a few minutes ago. Satisfied that they were no longer in the area, he turned towards me to dine on delicate morsels of leaves and other fine greenery. I heard him munching away and ripping at vegetation, then he jumped over a log a few feet from me and stood closer yet. His steps were cautious as he started sniffing the air. With head low and curiosity high, he inched his way towards my backpack on the ground behind me: “Sniff, sniff, snifffff, snifffff, closer, c-l-o-s-e-r - what is that thing laying on the ground?” Even though his tines were near enough to jab my leg, I stood still, becoming one with the tree. I resisted the urge to reach out and touch his tines while he inspected my backpack. Satisfied it was a lifeless lump that would do him no harm, he mingled around for another 15 minutes, all within a radius of a mere 8 feet.

When he finally strolled away, I knew in an instant what I had to write about for the newsletter. The thrill of the hunt took on an entirely new meaning.

Have an interesting story to share: we’d love to hear it, perhaps even include it as a guest article in our upcoming newsletters. Send your stories to Karen at [kphelps@bentoncountyparks.com](mailto:kphelps@bentoncountyparks.com) and you might just see your story in print.

## Conservation Goes Solar! *By Matthew Purdy, Executive Director*

When looking at alternative energy options in Iowa, solar, geothermal, and wind are the highest utilized residential alternative energy sources. Iowans also have other alternative energy options at their disposal, but solar currently seems to have the quickest payback, which people appreciate. Other options that people may have heard of are: hydroelectric, biomass, gas or wood. Each of these options has perks and drawbacks; however the thing we liked most about solar is the lack of maintenance and warranty of the solar panels at 20 years. The warranty is well within the 7-9 year time frame we estimate the panels will payback their initial installation expense. Not that we should worry about that when helping the environment, but we understand that business is business.

Whether you are a commercial business or a private citizen, you should look at solar energy. When layering depreciation on top of the Federal Credit and the State Tax Credit, you will easily understand how there has never been (and may never be again) a better time to install solar. Everyone is looking for a way to reduce expenses, and currently the tax benefit is over 45% of the initial cost the first year of installation.



*Solar panels newly installed on the Nature Center rooftop. Check out a time-lapse video of the panel installation at our Facebook page: Benton County Conservation*



*Stunning aerial view of the Nature Center and Rodgers Park*

So during the spring of 2014, the Benton County Conservation Board voted to add solar panels to the top of the new Nature Center at Rodgers Park. This was done with the help of our Conservation Foundation to incur the initial expense; however with the Alliant Energy rebate, this project was made very cost effective. This was a very easy decision for the Board considering the Alliant Energy reimbursement available for alternative energy additions, and the overall energy reduction benefits solar panels would provide. The Board elected to utilize the solar company *Moxie Solar*, a local company that would provide the expertise in planning, installation, applying for rebates, and continued maintenance of the panels. The Nature Center will be receiving a

minimum of a 35% to 45% reduction in electric consumption throughout the year due to the additional 16 solar panels attached directly to the roof top.

In addition to the energy reduction benefits, the department will also receive educational opportunities from this project. The nature center currently has a TV monitor that will show the real time energy output of the solar panels. This will help patrons to understand the benefits of solar as an alternative energy source and decide if it is the right decision for them to make at their homes or businesses.

In 2008 at the WIREC (Washington International Renewable Energy Conference), George W. Bush said he “Sees a day when each house can be an electric generator of its own and feed power back to the grid.” Maybe that day is coming sooner than we think. We can only hope.



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## Red Cedar Cabin *Continued from page 4*

The interior of the cabin was taken down to the studs and a wall was removed to create a more open and inviting floor plan. The interior wall coverings of the cabin consist of pine siding with barn board wainscoting, giving the inside of the cabin a down to earth warm feeling. An old barn which sat on our County Home property and was destroyed in the storm of 2011, provided the re-purposed barn-board wainscoting for the interior of the cabin.



To further honor Judge Tobin, founder of the Red Cedar Chapter Izaak Walton League, we have recently named this cabin the Red Cedar Cabin. Furthermore, the cabin is nestled along the Cedar River and has many Cedar trees surrounding it. The cabin offers heating and cooling, indoor plumbing, a spacious pavilion, and sleeping room for up to 8 people. We are pleased to inform the public

that at this time it is available for rentals. This area is very secluded and offers many outdoor opportunities. Contact Park Ranger, Jon Geiger (319) 560-9802 for a viewing and /or availability. If you are looking for a quiet place to get away from it all and enjoy Iowa's natural beauty with friends and family this cabin should be on your to-do list.

## Izaak Walton League Christmas Wreaths for Sale

Christmas is just around the corner and that means it's time to order that beautiful wreath to adorn your door, welcoming friends and family to your home. This year, as in the past, the Old Creamery Nature Trail, in cooperation with Vinton's Red Cedar Chapter Izaak Walton League, will be offering wreaths for sale. The 24" wreaths, complete with fresh greenery, ribbons and pine cones are for sale for a mere \$20.00. Orders must be paid for in advance and checks can be made out to the Old Creamery Nature Trail.

For your convenience, we have included an order blank below which you may use, or simply stop by the Nature Center with your order and payment. The wreaths will be constructed in mid November, so get your orders in early. Quantities are limited and all proceeds go to benefit the Old Creamery Nature Trail.

**Please make checks to:** *The Old Creamery Nature Trail (OCNT)*

**Mail or deliver to:** *Benton County Conservation, 5718 20th Ave., Dr., Vinton, IA 52349.*

### **Old Creamery Nature Trail - Christmas Wreath Sales: 24" wreath = \$20.00 each**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

# of Wreaths at \$20 each: \_\_\_\_\_ Total Amount Due: \_\_\_\_\_ Cash: \_\_\_\_\_ Check: \_\_\_\_\_

Special Instructions: \_\_\_\_\_

**Make checks payable to: Old Creamery Nature Trail (OCNT)**

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**OCNT Wreath: Paid in Full \_\_\_\_\_ Balance Due: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Wreaths: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_**

## ***Conservation Board Members***

Stephanie Black - Urbana  
Jean Ohlen - Blairstown, Member  
Mark Pingnot - Vinton, Chair  
Denni Randall - Belle Plaine, Member  
Randy Scheel - Garrison, Member

The Benton County Conservation Board meets the second Monday of every month at 5:30 at the Nature Center. Meetings are open to the public.

## ***Conservation Staff***

Matthew Purdy	Executive Director
Scott Bahmann	Deputy Director/Ranger
Karen Phelps	Interpretive Naturalist I
Aaron Askelson	Interpretive Naturalist II
Jon Geiger	River Parks Ranger
Logan Hahn	Hannen Park Ranger
Zach Parmater	Conservation Aide

Email anyone on staff by using their first initial combined with their last name  
@bentoncountyparks.com  
eg: mpurdy@bentoncountyparks.com

***Please follow us on Facebook at Benton County Conservation  
or visit us on the web at [www.bentoncountyparks.com](http://www.bentoncountyparks.com)***

***Benton County Conservation  
5718 20th Ave., Dr., Vinton, IA 52349  
319-472-4942***



Benton County Conservation Board  
Interpretive Nature Center  
5718 20th Avenue Drive  
Vinton, Iowa 52349