

The Nature of Things

THE BENTON COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 27 Summer 2022

Conservation Report *By Shelby Williams, Director*

A lot happens in the parks year-round, there most definitely isn't a "slow" season for us. Summer, of course, is busy as always. Here is an update on a few happenings or general park improvements that may affect your use of the parks this season.

The Staff

If you see any staff out and about, know that they love talking to you but they are extremely busy, so don't mind if the conversation is short!

Conservation Technicians - The Conservation Technicians have been helping everyone with their projects, working on the outlying areas, and managing multiple large projects that overlap.

Environmental Educators - BCC Naturalists have been quite busy with field trips and camps! In May alone, they saw over 1700 people! That's making quite the impact on the community.

Park Rangers - The Park Rangers have been busy with heavily used campgrounds, park maintenance, and general park safety. They each manage multiple seasonal staff while moving forward with their other projects.

Seasonal Staff - Our seasonal staff have been keeping us all sane by helping accomplish all of these things! It wouldn't be possible without them.

Hannen Lake Park

We're developing plans for a new Hannen Lake Park Shop/Maintenance Shed. We have hopes to get final plans in the next few months. Of course, it will be a process prior to building, but we couldn't be more excited to move forward with this project. If you see survey markers, flags, etc. be sure not to move them!

There was a noted fish kill at ice melt, this was due to low oxygen levels in the winter, which occurs due to thick ice and snow cover. Fortunately, our fish population was not impacted and we are already into a great fishing season.

Also, for officer safety and general functionality, there is now one registration tube and kiosk, this is located on the east side.



Figure 1: BCC full time Staff at Hannen Lake Ice Fishing Tournament 2022

Inside this Issue

Conservation Report

Pages 1 & 2

Meet Our New Park Ranger

Page 3

Field Trips, Field Trips, Field Trips!

Pages 4 & 5

Figuring Frogs, Tallying Toads

Pages 5 & 6

Iowa's State Flower

Pages 6 & 7

Meet the Benton County Conservation Seasonals

Pages 7 & 8

Thank You!

Page 8

Benton County Watershed Tour

Page 8

Newsletter Update

Page 9

Electronic versions and email sign up are available at our website

www.bentoncountyiowa.org

Conservation Report *Continued from previous page*

Hoefle-Dulin Recreation Area

Hoefle-Dulin Recreation Area, just west of Vinton, will have a shoreline stabilization project done, once the river levels allow. This project will armor 635 feet of shoreline along the campground, in turn providing amazing fish habitat and saving the bank from further erosion. With the hard work of the staff, we received funding from various entities including Iowa DNR Fish Habitat Grant, Benton County Whitetails, Community Foundation of Northeast Iowa Izaak Walton, and more. This project will temporarily shut down the campground and park use; however, we will let everyone know and keep park closures updated online.

Old Creamery Nature Trail

Some of the bridges on the OCNT need repair. We've replaced two of the bridges so far and another three are in need. Because of this, there will be some road blocks in various areas ensuring that rules are being followed, allowing only foot and bike traffic. A few of them are not safe for anything heavier at this time. We will post as complete closures and repairs are being done.

Rodgers Park

Currently, we are lowering the water levels at Rodgers Lake. This is in preparation to do some spillway maintenance on the dam. Once the spillway work is complete, we will start to raise the levels again. Until then, it will be slightly lower than normal. Also, several people noted a small fish kill at Rodgers Park this late spring. This was a naturally occurring incident during spawning and our fish population has not been affected. We appreciate the watchful eyes of the public and always ask that you report something fishy!



Figure 2: Rodgers Park sunset

Wildcat Bluff Recreation Area

We've been adding parking areas for day use throughout the parks and especially at Wildcat near the disc golf trailhead. We're hoping to add facilities in the near future. In order to do so, there may be survey markers, flags, etc. throughout the park, be sure not to disturb these.



Figure 3: Wildcat Bluff Recreation Area

An Update on Dumpsters

Hannen Lake Park, Rodgers Park, and Wildcat Bluff Recreation Area all have one waste dumpster and one recycling dumpster. Be sure to read the sides of the receptacles so you know which is which. The recycling is commingled, but no plastic bags, garbage, or Styrofoam can be recycled. These receptacles are used for park waste/recycling only; no household waste or nonpark wastes shall be put in there. For instance, wrappers from your smores go in the waste dumpster, cans from your favorite beverage go in the recycling, and the mattress you decided you don't want anymore, goes home with you for proper disposal.

There's this and so much more going on within the parks. I could write pages and pages of what the staff have been up to, this is just a small highlight reel. When wanting to know about closures, be sure to check our Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/bentoncountyparks/> and our county website: <https://www.bentoncountya.gov>, as this is where we will be posting the most up to date information. You can also find our rules and regulations as well as various other information on the website.

Meet Our New Park Ranger

By Camryn Grubic, south Unit Park Ranger

My name is Cam Grubic and I have recently taken the position as Benton County Conservation's South Unit Park Ranger. I was born and raised in Cedar Falls, Iowa and graduated with an AAS in Natural Resources Management from Hawkeye Community College in 2019. Immediately after my graduation, I began full time work with the Hardin County Conservation Board in Iowa Falls and for the past three years have specialized in environmental education, wildlife rehabilitation, and natural resource management. I also worked in private land management and as a seasonal technician for Black Hawk County Conservation while attending HCC. I have also enjoyed coordinating outdoor education and recreation courses for Hawkeye Community College students.



Figure 4: South Unit Ranger, Camryn Grubic with a wild turkey

Just like most conservation professionals, things that I enjoy the most are hunting, fishing, and practically anything else outdoors. Aside from harvesting wild game, I enjoy birding, hiking and paddling lakes and rivers. I find something to enjoy in every season and right now it would be open water fishing. Working outdoors and in conservation brings me to a place of peace and I look forward to it each and every day.

One of the most fulfilling parts of working for Benton County has been the ability to apply my own style of management, workmanship and relations with everything that happens and everyone I meet. I love being able to connect with the everyday park patrons and hearing the stories and memories of Hannen Lake's unique past. Being provided with a work experience that coincides with my life's passion has been a thrill, and the excitement of bringing some of my park visions to life has been great. A couple of examples so far have been new covered benches to replace the old covered tables and a new registration kiosk, which is coming soon.

Keeping the beach updated and maintained has also been a priority; seeing the families enjoy it each week by swimming, picnicking, and playing sand volleyball has been a great payoff. We hope they enjoy the new beach shelter coming soon.

In my short time here, I have felt the acceptance of my new co-workers and community. My wife and I thought that moving to southern Benton County would have brought its own form of difficulties or culture shock, coming from Cedar Falls. However, our new community and the many friends we have made have proven otherwise. We are pleased to be calling this our new home and look forward to welcoming the newest addition to our family, a baby boy later this year!

Benton County Conservation Foundation Needs You!

Benton County Conservation Foundation is reestablishing! We have a number of exciting projects going on today and anticipate many more in the future!

We need people who value conservation, our county, and have a vision for the future. If this seems like something you want to be a part of, the **Foundation is hosting a meeting June 28th at 7PM, at the Nature Center!** Please stop by and learn more about the group. If you have questions, email foundation@bentoncountyparks.com or call 319-472-4942

Field Trips, Field Trips, Field Trips!

By Aaron Askelson, Naturalist

Nothing says spring for a Naturalist like field trips. Throughout late April and all of May all we do is field trips. It is a hectic, crazy time. One day you are hosting 45 preschoolers the next you are teaching middle schoolers how to canoe for the first time. You have to be flexible and be able to change programming on a dime due to weather or a late bus. Schedules have to be flexible with the ever-changing spring weather of Iowa. Some days it might be snowing, others it might be 75 degrees and beautiful. Our biggest concern is always safety so we are always checking for severe weather. Lightning and field trips are never a good mix.

We tend to have most of our preschool to second graders over at the Nature Center and then third on up at Rodgers Park or Hannen Lake Park. At the Nature Center we have several live animals that the kids always enjoy meeting. We also have our outdoor playscape that the kids can play on and burn up some energy. The older kids get to go on longer hikes and get to do things like fishing, canoeing, atlantls, group games, pond study, and archery.

A few of our hikes we even teach the kids some edible plants that can be found along the trail. We make sure they understand that you have to be certain what you are eating and always be educated about the plants that you try. Many of them are amazed that there are plants that can be eaten. Some of them are a little hesitant at first to try a new food but most end up trying a little. These wild edible hikes are always very popular. Some of the plants we sample are basswood leaves, Virginia waterleaf leaves, and Virginia bluebell flowers. We are always careful to taste only a little and do as little damage to the plant as possible. Identifying poison ivy is also something we cover on our hikes.



Figure 5: Found a hatchling next to Rodgers Lake while taking kids on a hike

Teaching canoeing to first timers can be a little challenging. First, we always go over safety and get every kid a proper fitting PFD (personal floatation device), and the basics of paddling. If there is any wind it definitely adds to the degree of difficulty for the kids. I don't know if it is the pressure of the situation or what but fifth graders seem to forget what their left or right side is once they get out on the water. This can lead to some interesting problems as I am giving them instructions on which side to paddle on to make their boat go where they want it to. Many of the kids express concerns about collisions with other boats and tipping over. The tendency for kids to scream and put their hands in the air rather than paddle away from an obstacle are very high. I tell them that their paddle is their tool to move them around the lake and it can't do its job unless it is in the water. Screaming won't turn your canoe no matter how loud you do it. When a canoe of kids figure it out and can successfully maneuver their boat around the lake they certainly have a sense of pride and accomplishment.

Teaching 25 kids to fish at the same time can be a very stressful experience. After meticulously going through the poles and making sure they are functioning properly, it only takes a matter of minutes, no, possibly seconds before they are a tangled, unusable mess. After much instruction and hearing from multiple third graders how they go fishing all the time and they are experts, it is not surprising to have two kids come up to you with a tangled mess before you even have the last pole passed out. Usually one of the kids who claimed to be an expert is one of the first with a tangled mess he or she can't figure out. For the first time Naturalist or intern or even a seasoned fishing veteran, this can try one's patience especially if you fix their pole and they return to you with similar results in a very short time. Other Naturalists have jokingly brought up that we deserve hazard pay for doing fishing programs. A rookie mistake is to let the kid hold the fishing pole while you are trying to bait, untangle, or fix it. That can lead to a hook in your hand when the kid gets distracted by a classmate who caught a fish and jerks the pole you are working on.

Field Trips, Field Trips, Field Trips! *Continued from previous page*



Figure 6: Kids proud to show off their turtle craft

The stress level for fishing programs can be a little higher than most but the reward of a kid catching their first fish makes it worthwhile.

By the end of May we have completed over twenty field trips and in-school visits and have seen over 1,700 students. We are spent, our Rangers, Conservation Technicians, and Director have all helped with running stations for the kids or helping set up and tear down the activities. Without their help we could not provide the kind of experience we want for the kids. It takes a lot to put a field trip together and of course the teachers are a huge part of that. The number of times you hear a kid say “this is the best day ever!” makes it all worth it. Now we are on to summer camps.

Figuring Frogs, Tallying Toads *By Faith Henrichs, Naturalist*



Figure 7: Tiny American toad

I love sitting outside on the warm summer nights listening to the chorus of frogs proudly belting their song, trying to swoon females nearby. I enjoy listening to the different variations of the calls and the various frequency of them. As a young, aspiring Naturalist, I wanted to learn more about these amphibian creatures and the difference between them. I also thought frogs were frogs, and toads were toads. But I then learned that all toads are frogs, but not all frogs are toads. Confusing, right? Frogs and toads are both amphibians in the order *anura*, which is Latin for “without a tail.” In the most simplest terms, toads are a subclassification of frogs. So, what’s the difference between frogs and toads? Toads have a parotoid gland on their neck and back that excretes toxins to deter predators and toads are generally considered more terrestrial. Frogs lack those toxic glands and are considered more aquatic.

As my curiosity and knowledge of frogs and toads grew, I signed up to be a Frog and Toad Monitor through the Iowa DNR. This duty entails a few hours of training learning the frog and toad calls of Iowa, how to conduct the surveys, and establishing a monitoring route. Here in Benton County, I monitor five sites. Three times between May and June, I venture out with our Naturalist Intern to survey these sites around the county. Before we leave the Nature Center, we typically will do a frog call refresher and gather supplies needed for surveying. Some items we bring with us include clip boards with data sheets, extra pencils, head lamps, bug spray, duct tape, and typically, a caffeinated drink or two. Aside from the physical needs to do these surveys, we also have to have a lot of patience. We start the surveys 30 minutes after sunset and spend approximately five minutes at each location, sitting in “silence”, listening to the frogs. I put quotations around silence because the calls of the frogs around us are anything but silent. These surveys are done 100% by sound, but we usually will get out of the vehicle at our first site to enjoy the sunset and watch the frogs jump around in the shallow wetland.

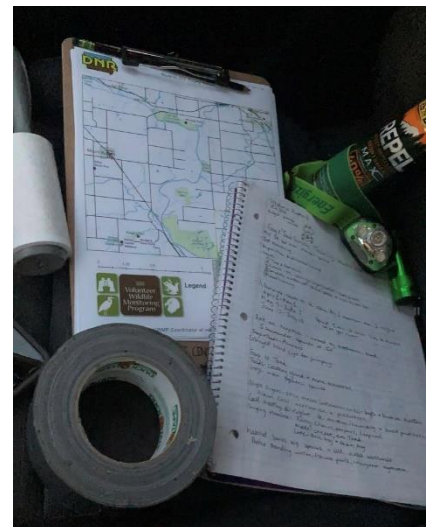


Figure 8: Frog and Toad survey supplies

Figuring Frogs, Tallying Toads *Continued from previous page*

These surveys end up being long nights for us. We start the surveys around 9:30 PM or slightly later because the moisture and humidity are high and it's the best time to get an accurate count of frog density. Only the males sing, which are known as attraction calls, and their favorite time to do so is at night, shortly after sunset. Depending on the time of year will determine the species of frog that are singing. Some of the earliest singers include chorus frogs, spring peepers and leopard frogs. Then we will start to hear tree frogs and American toads in late spring / early summer. In the late summer we are likely to hear bullfrogs and green frogs. Each species of frog has their own unique sound. The northern leopard frog sounds like a creaky door with a chuckle, cricket frogs sound like marbles bouncing against each other, and green frogs sound like an out of tune banjo plunk.



Figure 9: Eastern Grey Tree Frog in a log

After we complete our three survey runs, we submit all of our data back to the DNR Wildlife Diversity program, which is one of the longest running in the country! The data collected from these surveys help determine distribution range extensions of frogs and toads, helps biologists better understand population trends in the state and provides an index for water quality. Since all amphibians start their life in the water and their skin is highly permeable, they are very sensitive to pollutants in the water. This survey provides valuable information and is only possible with volunteer monitors. If you are like me, and want to learn more about and help our amphibians of Iowa, you can attend one of the Volunteer Wildlife Monitoring Workshops next spring and contribute to the states citizen science program by visiting <https://www.iowadnr.gov/Conservation/Iowas-Wildlife/Volunteer-Wildlife-Monitoring/Frog-and-Toad-Survey-Maps>

Iowa's State Flower *Lauren Giddings, Naturalist Intern*

As some may already know, the state flower for Iowa is wild rose. There was not a specific species picked, however it is represented mostly by the wild prairie rose. It was designated as the state flower for Iowa in 1897 because it was used as decoration on the silver service which was presented by the state of Iowa to the battleship USS Iowa. A silver service is used for dining, and originates from France. It consisted of 40 pieces which cost roughly \$5,000. Currently, it is on display at the Iowa State Historical Building in Des Moines.

Wild prairie rose is distributed on the east side of the United States, spanning from north to south, and partially into Canada. *Rosa rosa pratincola* is the scientific name for wild prairie rose. It prefers a lot of sunlight, and is very drought tolerant so they hold up to variations in the weather. They typically grow in dry to moist prairies, however, will grow anywhere there is adequate sunlight. Between May and August is when you can expect wild prairie roses to appear, and they are perennial, meaning their roots stay alive even during the winter and then come back every growing season. The flowers can be found on shrubs and vary in different shades of pink with yellow stamens in the middle.



USDA Range Map of Prairie Rose
Figure 10: Range map of wild prairie rose

Various animals such as deer, pheasants, rabbits, birds etc. feed on the rose hips, which are the fruit of the rose at the base of the flower and are designed to attract animals so they can spread their seeds. These fruits are able to last through fall in winter which is why they are eaten by many different animals.

Iowa's State Flower *Continued from previous page*



Figure 11: Wild prairie rose

Wild prairie rose also benefits butterflies and other pollinators such as bees because of the strong scent of the flowers; the flower is open and easy to access for them, which helps spread pollen from one flower to another. Humans can even benefit from the flower by putting them in salads, making tea, or they can even be candied. Native Americans often use wild prairie rose to make medicine out of the roots. It was used to treat burns or inflammation of the eye. It can also be used as a source of Vitamin C in times when food was scarce such as winter, because it contains a lot of it.

Recently, I've found wild prairie rose along the gravel roads in Benton County. If you keep your eye out, they seem to be abundant during summer months and are a beautiful flower to enjoy. If you are interested in growing the wild prairie rose, look for the plant at a native plant nursery. Once you have an established plant they are extremely hardy and you will not need to baby them. They will truly be a lovely addition to a garden!

Meet The Benton County Conservation Seasonals

My name is Lauren Giddings and I am the Naturalist Intern for the 2022 summer at Benton County Conservation. I grew up in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and graduated from Prairie High School in the spring of 2020. I began college at Iowa State University the following fall, with a major in Environmental Science and a minor in German. My hopes are to graduate in 2023, which is a year early. During my freshman year of college, I worked at the ISU dining center and the following year I got a job as a Resident Assistant in the dorms. This job taught me valuable lessons about being a mentor, forming relationships with others, and how important those relationships can be. I've always had an interest in the conservation aspect of Environmental Science, and I think this internship will allow me to see various careers that I could go into once I graduate. The moment I knew I would be going into an environmental field is when I was collecting rocks with my elementary school guidance counselor. He inspired me to be curious about things in nature, and where my interest in the environment stemmed from. I also had amazing science teachers throughout my school who helped me become who I am today. My biology classes in high school grew my interest in nature even further and helped me decide on my major for college. Summer camps are nothing new to me because I have spent time at the summer camp they have at the North Liberty Rec Center as a camp counselor. I enjoyed my time there and cherish the relationships I've made with all of the children. I'm excited to continue down this path and incorporate a passion of mine, which is the environment. It's so rewarding to teach kids about the environment and help them learn more about their surroundings. I feel like I am also learning new things every day and that's why it's been an interesting and fun experience so far at Benton County Conservation. My hobbies outside of work and school include playing with my five-year-old niece, painting, being outdoors, camping, and spending time with my family. My favorite thing to do during the summer is go kayaking with my family, and we sometimes go camping on the river sandbars. I'm looking forward to the rest of the summer and what it has in store for me.



Figure 12: Lauren Giddings, Naturalist Intern

Meet The Benton County Conservation Seasonals

Hello, my name is Hunter Hampshire and I am working as a Conservation Aide for Benton County Conservation at Hannen Lake Park this summer and I can't wait to meet you all. I grew up in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, being outside 90% of the day due to having ADHD. I have grown to love nature and all it brings. I can't wait to learn so many new things and meet new people, if you see me come say hi! I graduated at Kirkwood Community College with a Parks and Recreation degree in 2018. After graduating, I transferred to Mount Mercy University in 2019 where I studied Outdoor Conservation for a year. I am currently taking a break from college to get some in the field experience before I finish my one semester left to get my bachelors. I would like to pursue a job as a maintenance worker or a park ranger. I haven't decided which one yet. In my free time I love to hike and camp, so maybe I'll see you around. At times, I love to stay indoors to draw and read books. If you have any recommendations please come find me at Hannen Lake. I'm learning so much, and can't wait what the future has for me.



Figure 13: Hunter Hampshire, Conservation Aid at Hannen Lake Park



Figure 14: Sydney Hawkins, Conservation Aid at East Unit Parks

Hi, I am Sydney Hawkins. I am working at Wildcat Bluff Recreation Area as a seasonal conservation aide. I went to Kirkwood Community College. My major was Parks and Natural Resources. When I was a kid I was outside pretty much every day just climbing trees, taking a hike, swimming and gardening. However, I got sick quite often and had to stay indoors looking out my window seeing how the weather changes or seeing the birds flying into the trees next to the house. Now that I am older and understand why I was sick all the time when I was young, it was because I am allergic to several trees and climbing trees and pollen had me being sick and unable to go outside. However, being able to work at Benton County Conservation has given me a chance to be outside and enjoy a hard-working job for the summer. Now that I am graduated from Kirkwood I have time to think about the future of conservation with hopes of getting to relax and enjoy the great outdoors.

A VERY SPECIAL THANK YOU TO TILFORD ELEMENTARY STAFF FOR THEIR KIND DONATION TO ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAMMING. WE APPRECIATE YOUR SUPPORT!



Figure 15: Conservation Partners at the Iowa Watershed Approach Tour

ON JUNE 14TH CONSERVATION PARTNERS TOURED SOME IOWA WATERSHED APPROACH SITES IN BENTON COUNTY INCLUDING BENTON COUNTY CONSERVATION'S EDNA SHAIN FEN AND WILDLIFE AREA AND RODGERS PARK. WE APPRECIATE THE GREAT PARTNERSHIPS FOR THESE AMAZING CONSERVATION EFFORTS.

Coloring Page Drawn by Aaron Askelson, Naturalist

Black-eyed Susan, *rudbeckia hirta*

Fun fact: Black-Eyed Susans are pioneer plants; meaning that they are the first plants to grow in an area damaged by fire. They are also the plant host of the Silvery Checkerspot butterfly caterpillar.



Conservation Board Members

Dan Hill: Vinton, Member
Mike LaGrange: Vinton, Member
Denni Randall: Belle Plaine, Chair
Randy Scheel: Garrison, Member
Becky VanWey: Brandon, Member

The Benton County Conservation Board meets the second Monday of every month at the Nature Center. Check

www.bentoncountyiowa.org for times.

Meetings are open to the public.

Find us online at:

www.bentoncountyiowa.org or

www.mycountyparks.com

Find us on Facebook: Benton County Conservation

Conservation Staff

Shelby Williams	Director
Aaron Askelson	Interpretive Naturalist
Faith Henrichs	Interpretive Naturalist
Ed Hach	North Unit Park Ranger
Layla Hagen	East Unit Park Ranger
Camryn Grubic	South Unit Park Ranger
Zach Parmater	Conservation Tech/Ranger
Cecilia Dirks	Conservation Tech

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

Benton County Conservation

5718 20th Ave. Dr., Vinton, IA 52349 (319)-472-4942



Iowa's County Conservation System

There's no better way to celebrate Iowa's unique 99 County Conservation System! Each week we will focus on just one of the 99 Counties and will explore some of the opportunities they provide.

Follow the [My County Parks Facebook page](#) to participate in this great virtual adventure!

Newsletter Update:

If you wish to continue to receive a mailed paper copy of this newsletter, please contact our office via phone or email to remain on the paper mailing list.

Newsletters can be found online at: www.bentoncountyiowa.gov under conservation department - newsletters tab.

We will email newsletters from now on, sign up at: www.bentoncountyiowa.gov under conservation department - newsletters tab or [click here](#).

Calendar of Events Summer 2022

All programs are FREE of charge unless a price is listed.

Registration is required and masks are strongly encouraged when indoors.

Pond Study - Blirstown Library Program

June 28th, 6pm at Hannen Lake Park - 1949 Ben/Ia Rd, Blirstown, IA 52209

Join Benton County Conservation Naturalists to explore macroinvertebrates that live in Hannen Lake. Macroinvertebrates are aquatic insects that tell us about water quality. Come out to Hannen Lake on June 28th to get first-hand experience at catching macroinvertebrates with nets and view them up close! This program is in conjunction with Blirstown Public Library's Summer Reading Program.

Registration is not required.

Firefly Magic

July 1st, 8:30pm at Rodgers Park Enclosed Shelter

Come join Naturalist Faith for a night of exploration into the magical world of fireflies. Learn about some of Iowa's most unique bioluminescent insects that can be found right in your very own backyard! Participants will then make their own insect observation container then go on a firefly catching adventure to see what fireflies live here! Participants are encouraged to bring a flashlight, bug spray and an upcycled glass jar with a lid. This program is suitable for all ages and is weather dependent. Registration is required by calling 319-472-4942 or by emailing info@bentoncountyparks.com.

Nature Kids: Frogs

July 8th, 10am at Benton County Nature Center

Ribbit! Ribbit! Who was that?! Come learn about Iowa frogs and who makes what sounds! Kids going into preschool through 3rd grade can enjoy this program with an adult. Program will include learning about frog calls, a book and a frog-catching adventure! Registration is required by calling 319-472-4942 or by emailing info@bentoncountyparks.com.

Habitat for the Bees

July 13th, 5:30pm at Benton County Nature Center

Help the bees by creating habitat! This program will include a brief overview of bees, why they are important, and how anyone can help. Participants are encouraged to bring their own empty food can to make a bee hotel. We will provide cans for those who need one. This program is free and family-friendly.

Registration is required by calling 319-472-4942 or by emailing info@bentoncountyparks.com

Benton County Conservation Adventure Camp

August 9th - 11th for kids going into 6th, 7th and 8th grade

\$80 per child - includes travel, food and lodging

Join us on a 3 day, 2 night trip to Eden Valley Refuge in Clinton County.

Adventures include: a pontoon ride on the Blue Heron to explore the Mississippi River, view birds and find mussels, paddle on the 13 passenger voyager canoe, go caving and rock climbing and much more! Participants will meet at the Benton County Nature Center on August 9th and travel together to Eden Valley Refuge.

Kids will learn valuable camping and survival skills along the way. If you are interested in signing up for this event, please visit

<https://www.mycountyparks.com/County/Benton.aspx> or call us at 319-472-4942 for more information. All registrations must be done online and be made ONE WEEK PRIOR to start of camp.

Monarch Tagging

August 26th, 2:30pm at Hannen Lake Park

Contribute to monarch citizen science by catching monarch butterflies on their amazing migration back south! Participants will get a chance to catch monarch butterflies, tag them for monitoring and test their health. This program is free, weather dependent and family-friendly. Participants should meet at the beach parking lot. Please call 319-472-4942 to register or email info@bentoncountyparks.com

Monarch Tagging

August 31st, 11am at Benton County Nature Center

Contribute to monarch citizen science by catching monarch butterflies on their amazing migration back south! Participants will get a chance to catch monarch butterflies, tag them for monitoring and test their health. This program is free, weather dependent and family-friendly. Please call 319-472-4942 to register or email info@bentoncountyparks.com

Monarch Tagging

September 2nd, 1:00pm at Hoefle-Dulin Area Park: 5901 27th Ave, Vinton, IA

Contribute to monarch citizen science by catching monarch butterflies on their amazing migration back south! Participants will get a chance to catch monarch butterflies, tag them for monitoring and test their health. This program is free, weather dependent and family-friendly. Participants should park by the boat ramp and meet at the playground. Please call 319-472-4942 to register or email info@bentoncountyparks.com