



Seasons

Marshall County Conservation Quarterly Newsletter

Volume 35, Issue 4

Winter 2020



Derecho Opened New Start for Timber Maintenance

By Mike Stegmann, Director

It is no secret that the August derecho left in its path a level of destruction not previously recorded here in Marshall County. Cleanup efforts continue in the Marshall County Conservation areas and will likely be the case for some months, if not years to come. The groomed park areas are largely cleared of debris and have reopened for public use. Keeping parks in operating condition is an important factor with increased use due to social distancing measures in place for nearly a year. All Marshall County Conservation areas have seen an increase in use for all types of outdoor recreational activities.

Sadly, the Marshall County Conservation wildlife management areas were just as devastated, if not more so, than the park areas. Most of the damaged trees in these areas will be left to decay and begin the process of nutrients returning to the forest ecosystem. One of the hardest-hit areas was the “sugar bush” in Grammer Grove, where we tap hard maple trees for Marshall County Conservation’s maple syrup production. Unfortunately due to the extensive damage, we will have no syrup production for a couple of years.

In the “sugar bush” and some of the other heavily damaged areas we will do what is possible to salvage downed trees that have value to them, making sure we do not do any further ecological damage to our natural resources. Due to the extensive damage to our woodland areas, the salvaging

of downed trees will evolve into more forest management practices in the future. These practices will largely be new to Marshall County Conservation and need to be practiced due to the disturbance from the derecho. The storm removed many large canopy trees in our woodlands and have opened the forest floor to larger amounts of sunlight. This sunlight will encourage the growth of many understory species. Some of these species are undesirable or invasive, like honey suckle and will flourish with the increase sunlight and disrupt the forest ecosystem.

Just like our tallgrass prairies that need fire, our hiking trails that need to be mowed, the shelter houses that need to be stained and cleaned, our timber areas need maintenance as well. These forest management plans will serve as maintenance plans that will help to increase the diversity of trees, plants, and wildlife in our woods, encourage natural regenerations of oak and hickory species, and leave healthy woodlands for future hunters, birders, horseback riders, hikers, and all those who explore Marshall County Conservation Areas.



Forest Maintenance Techniques

Technique	Description	Benefits
Invasive Species Removal	Removal of species like Honey Suckle, Multiflora Rose, and Autumn Olive	Allow for native species to grow and regenerate, which our wildlife depend on.
Tree Planting	Planting where trees are not capable of regenerating on their own	Increasing diversity, tree quality, while providing habitat for wildlife. Replacing lost trees.
Thinning	Reducing stand density by removing undesirable trees	Allows for regeneration, bigger trees, healthier trees, and more seeds/nuts/fruits.
Prescribed Fire	Sending controlled fire through select forested areas - small flames, forest floor only.	Helps decrease invasive species, increase seed germination, decrease competition undesirable trees, stimulates regrowth of native understory plants.
Harvest	Harvesting select merchantable trees	Allows for areas of regeneration or planting area to higher quality, more diverse tree species.



Nature Story Hour

Nature Story Hour will continue to be held through the winter months via Facebook Live, instead of in person at the Conservation Center at Grimes Farm. The program will include a story book, education program about the topic, and a suggested activity or craft to do as a family. Each session will last about 20 minutes and viewers can type in questions to ask the naturalist about the topic of that day. These sessions will also coincide with our Nature Activity Kits. Read more about those on the next page. Log into Facebook on the following days and times to learn about fun nature topics and listen to a great book!



December 17 - 10:00 a.m. Earth's Gifts
 January 7 - 10:00 a.m. Taking Care of the Earth
 January 21 - 10:00 a.m. Owls
 February 4 - 10:00 a.m. Snow
 February 18 - 10:00 a.m. Maple Syrup
 March 4 - 10:00 a.m. Tracks
 March 18 - 10:00 a.m. Migration

Changes to the Annual Photo Contest

Due to COVID, we have decided to change our photo contest this year. This option has many perks!! 1. This is less work for you, the participant. 2. The contest will have no admission fee. 3. It will allow everyone to participate no matter their comfort level with COVID19.

How the contest will work:

- **All entries must be emailed to** mccb@marshallcountya.gov titled Photo Contest by Sunday, January 31 at midnight. In the body of your email state the category for the photograph(s), your name, address, brief description of the photo (if you have multiples) and phone number. No photos will be accepted in person.
- Photographs will be judged the week of February 8, for the categories listed below.
- Categories: Scenic (Natural Resources), Native Wildlife, Native Plants, Open Nature, and Outdoor Recreation. Winners of each category will receive a \$20 gift certificate. For more information on the categories: <http://www.co.marshall.ia.us/departments/conservation/photo-contest-2>
- The week of February 8 through February 15, all photographs received will be posted on Facebook. The photograph that gets the most likes for Peoples' Choice will win a \$20 gift certificate.
- There will be no chili supper, therefore all certificates will be mailed to winners.

Brown Bag Bunch

Enjoy everything you love about Brown Bags from the comfort and safety of your own home. This winter our Brown Bags will be available in video format through YouTube. Winter Brown Bag videos will be available the third Tuesday of each month and will be approximately 30 minutes long. **Call 641-752-5490 or email mccb@marshallcountya.gov to sign up to receive an email link to the video that you can watch anytime! Pre-registration deadline is the second Tuesday of every month.** This is a great option for assisted living and senior living facilities as well.

January - Owls

Registration Deadline January 8
Program Release date January 19

Owls are captivating, beautiful birds that are active during the month of February protecting territories, finding mates and laying eggs. In this month's Brown Bag naturalist Emily Herring will discuss the many adaptations that help owls to survive in Iowa. She also will talk about the many different species that thrive in Iowa and learn to identify them by their calls.



February - Woodworking for Wildlife

Registration Deadline February 5
Program Release date February 16

Think spring and make a difference for wildlife! Conservation director Mike Stegmann will be the presenter for this month's Brown Bag video. He will talk about the importance of providing nesting structures for cavity nesters here in the state of Iowa, what to consider when putting up nesting structures, and the many different animals that call them home. He will also show viewers how to construct nest boxes. Participants can register and will receive a link to watch the video. Along with the link you also have the option to purchase Bluebird House Kit or a Wren House Kit for **\$15.00 per nest box**. Most supplies to build a nesting box will be included, excluding a hammer and light earth toned paint.

What's local, delicious, supports environmental education, and is the perfect Christmas gift?!

Marshall County Maple Syrup!



Marshall County Conservation has a limited amount of Maple syrup available for sale at the GrimesFarm and Conservation Center from 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. 50 ml are \$3, 12oz bottles are \$12, and 16oz bottles are \$16. Stop out and pick some up today, while supplies last!

Adult Take and Make

Suet Mug Feeders

Registration Deadline January 15

Kit Pick up January 25

Here is a fun take and make activity for all ages, reuses old mugs, and the birds will love them! With this take and make craft kit you will receive all the supplies and instructions to construct a suet feeder from an old mug. This kit includes peanut butter, so please let us know of any nut allergies. The birds will thank you! **Pre-registration and payment of \$5.00 is required to secure limited kits by January 15 before 4:00 p.m.** Register by calling the Conservation Center at 641-752-5490, email mccb@marshallcountvia.gov, or text only 641-758-9777. **Pick up of supplies will need to be scheduled the week of January 25 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.**



Leopold Bench Kit

Registration Deadline February 12

Kit Pick up week of February 22



One of our most popular programs is back, albeit in a little different format. During the week of February 22 head out to the Grimes Farm to pick up a Leopold Bench kit. Aldo Leopold was known as the father of

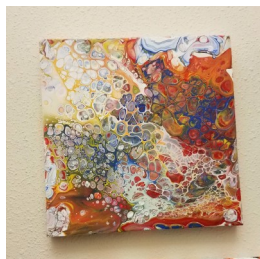
wilderness system. He created this simple style of bench for a place to sit and enjoy nature. Our benches will include locally harvested pine lumber, hardware, and a video to see how to construct your bench. **Pre-registration and payment of \$30.00 is required to secure limited kits by February 12 before 4:00 p.m.** Register by calling the Conservation Center at 641-752-5490, email mccb@marshallcountvia.gov, or text only 641-758-9777. **Pick up of supplies will need to be scheduled the week of February 22 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.**

Acrylic Pour

Registration Deadline March 5

Kit Pick up week of March 22

Have you ever wanted to do an acrylic pour and not known where to start. We will teach you how to do an acrylic pour to create an 8" x 10" one of a kind masterpiece. All skill levels are welcome and all supplies will be provided. A video link will be provided with instructions on how to do several techniques. **Pre-registration and payment of \$25.00 is required to secure limited kits by March 5 before 4:00 p.m.** Register by calling the Conservation Center at 641-752-5490, email mccb@marshallcountvia.gov, or text only 641-758-9777. **Pick up of supplies will need to be scheduled the week of March 22 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.**



Nature Activity Kits

Looking for a fun way to learn more about science and exploring nature? Each month the naturalist will prepare family and youth activities related to the seasonal topic. Activities will include crafts, games, outdoor exploration and more. Along with each kit, families will receive background information to learn more about the topic and one Facebook Live Nature Story will be related to the topic.

Families need to pre-register and make payment of \$10.00 per month to secure limited spots. Each kit provides a craft set for one child. Each additional craft set needed will cost an additional \$5.00 per monthly box. Register by calling the Conservation Center at 641-752-5490, email mccb@marshallcountvia.gov, or text only 641-758-9777. Topics, Registration deadlines and pick up dates are as follows:

January - Owls

Registration Deadline January 8

Kit pick up the week of January 18



February - Snow

Registration Deadline February 5

Kit pick up the week of February 15



March - Making Tracks

Registration Deadline March 5

Kit pick up the week of March 15



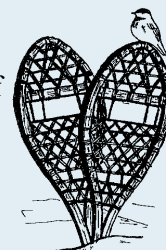
Snowshoe Kits



Once the snow flies, we will have Snowshoe Kits available for all ages! The kits will include snowshoes, a link to a video on how to snowshoe, hot cocoa, and outdoor activities. When there is four inches of snow on the ground, call the center at 641-752-5490 to reserve limited number of kits. Snowshoes can be kept for up to 3 days. Kits are \$20 for 5 pairs of snowshoes, with additional pairs \$5 each.

Snowshoe Rental

Chase away the winter blues by getting outside! The Marshall County Conservation Board has snowshoes available for rent at \$5 a day plus a \$50 deposit per set. A waiver of liability must be signed. The deposit will be returned when the equipment is returned in good condition within 72 hours. The Marshall County Conservation Board offers many trails where snowshoes are 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.



SEASONS

Marshall County Conservation Board
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Marshalltown, IA 50158
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Thank you!

Programming

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Nature Playscape

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Adam, Ezequiel Reyes, Guillermo Arana, Lori
Kriegel, Lucian Banakeng, Jennifer Delgado, Carrie
Barr

Donations

Sharon Depew, Bill Wessels' Memorial, Larry Pfantz,
Marshall County Izaak Walton League

Park Maintenance

Gary Fulton, Joyce & Rob Christensen

Monarch Tagging

Dena Graff, Jack & Linda Mackin

**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@marshallcountya.gov. Also, the
electronic version is in color!

MARSHALL COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD

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mccb@marshallcountya.gov

www.co.marshall.ia.us/departments/conservation

Administration Office Hours

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

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