



THE

CONSERVATIONIST

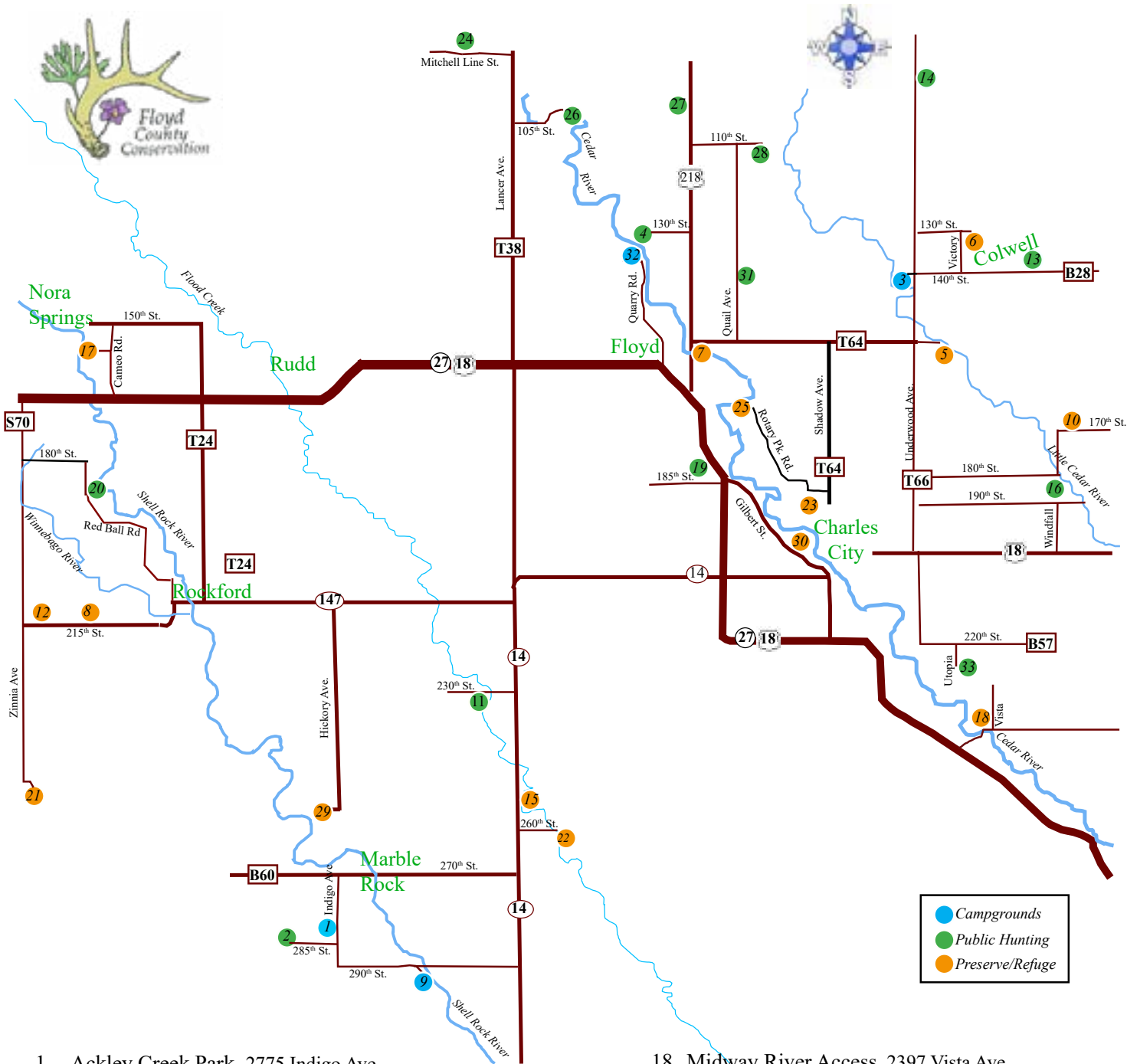
Fall 2023

Volume 27, Issue 4

Eyes
IN THE NIGHT

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- Upcoming Events
- FCC happenings and articles



1. Ackley Creek Park, 2775 Indigo Ave.
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6. Fix Wildlife Area, 3116 130th St.
7. Floyd Bridge Access, 1564 Hwy 218
8. Fossil & Prairie Park Preserve, 1227 215th St.
9. Gates Bridge Access, 2920 Kirkwood Rd.
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11. Happy Acres, 2040 230th St.
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17. Mathers Forest, 1563 Cameo Rd

18. Midway River Access, 2397 Vista Ave
19. Mink Creek, 1799 US-18
20. Nagle Wildlife, 1862 Redball Rd.
21. Peterson Prairie, 2503 Zinnia Ave.
22. Puhl Wildlife, 2190 260th St.
23. Riverbend Wildlife, 86 Riverside Ave.
24. Rock Creek Wildlife, 1965 Mitchell Line St.
25. Rotary Park, 1661 Rotary Pk. Rd.
26. Seter's Landing, 1050 River Rd.
27. Slough Creek, 1035 Hwy 218
28. Strickers Fen, 2683 110th St.
29. Tosanak Recreation Area, 2543 Glass Rd.
30. Trowbridge Wildlife, 1958 Gilbert Ave.
31. Wentlands Woods, 1498 Quail Ave.
32. West Idlewild, 1374 Quarry Rd.
33. Winterink Woods, 2264 Utopia Ave.



Back to my Roots

Adam Sears, Director

What's New at the Fossil and Prairie Park?

Imagine a place where you can hike for miles, view wildlife, collect fossils, go fishing and visit a wonderful education facility all in one stop. Yes, a place like this does exist, and it's in Floyd County at the Fossil and Prairie Park, located 1 mile west of Rockford Iowa. For those of you who haven't been to the Fossil and Prairie Park recently, some exciting changes have been made.

Recently, a new asphalt trail was laid out connecting the parking area by the shelter, to the modern restroom facility. This allows people with disabilities easy access to these facilities. We have also connected the asphalt to an area that has a new wheelchair accessible picnic table. Later this fall an information kiosk will be installed near the shelter to help visitors learn more about the park.

We have also resurfaced the quarry trail that leads to the historical kilns with a rock base to make it more suitable during wet conditions. Staff has also made efforts to expand the trail system at the Fossil and Prairie Park. Along the complex trail system several new benches have been arranged at scenic locations for a relaxing break for some wildlife viewing. We continue to plant trees in the high use areas to provide shade and a break from the wind.

We have been fortunate to have a couple of Eagle Scouts provide improvements to the park as well. One project included installing an information kiosk at the trailhead coming from Rockford. We also have had 3 permanent trash receptacles installed. These are installed at the river access, the kiln shelter, and the fishing dock in the quarry.

When out on the trails you will notice our newly constructed wood duck boxes arranged in and around the wetlands at the Fossil and Prairie Park. The boxes have been proven to rear young ducks with an 80% success rate! Staff has made it a priority to keep weeds and woody vegetation under control at the park by using a combination of cutting, mowing, burning and herbicide applications.

We have made some changes in the Fossil and Prairie Center as well! We hired a local artist to construct and paint a tree to place taxidermy work on display. We have also added a tortoise to the live animal display area. New doors will welcome you in the building that are ADA compliant with a button for automatic door opening.

With all the recent changes to the Fossil and Prairie Park, even our annual visitors should be able to find something new. The park hours are from dawn to dusk allowing for people to come and go fossil collecting without any set up or registration. So please make it a priority to visit this diverse park and enjoy the wonders of the Fossil and Prairie Park.



A view from the fence . . .

Heidi Reams, Naturalist

Why do we do?

At a recent Iowa Association of Naturalists workshop, we had the discussion of the impact teachers and professors can have on others and then wondered if we are having an impact on the children we are with. Deep conversation, huh?! After that session, we also solved all of the problems in the world. LOL

Who had an impact on me? There have been many times looking back that have shaped the person I am becoming (I truly believe that I have not grown up yet!) As with many of you, in the beginning, it was my father. I have mentioned many times the outdoorsman he was and the things that we did together. Not a step in the woods goes by without stirring up a memory. In school, it was my basketball coaches. At the time, I was convinced that the Assistant Basketball Coach hated me. She was always on my case to do this or don't do that. Now I see that she was pushing me to try harder and do things I didn't think I was able to do. The Head Coach took me under his wing. I believe he saw potential in the awkward clumsy kid. He had me work with upper classmen, who treated me nicely, and shared what worked for them. I may not have ended up playing in the WNBA but there was a lasting impact.

Fast forward to having children of my own to shape and those in the classrooms I visit. What impact am I making?? I hope that I am sharing a enjoyment of the outdoors, critical in a world where you can discover amazing things from the comfort of your couch. Although my children enjoyed some memorable times outdoors growing up - watching them choose to do those same activities as adults is a proud moment.

As for the impact that Naturalist have on their students, its a marathon not a sprint! We all hope that something we do or say, whether in a classroom or on a hike, sticks with them. I know that on a good day, students will share what we discovered during class with their parents. How do I know? I sometimes have to explain the context to the parents, often details are missing!

So what impact are you making? You can follow the lead by joining your child on a hike. Let them lead the way and share what they know. Cater to their curiosity! Get them out - you don't have to venture far, investigate the backyard or visit a Floyd County Conservation area. The more we introduce the next generation to the outdoors the more they will care about it and take care of it. Then share! I'd love to hear about the exciting discoveries you and your family make! Together we both can make a great impact on the future and how they interact with the environment. Nothing would make me prouder!!



Outstanding in the Field . . .

Spencer DeJoode, Resident Ranger



Hello, my name is Spencer DeJoode, and I am the newly hired Floyd County Conservation resident Park Ranger. To give you some information about myself I was born and raised in Knoxville, Iowa pursuing activities like sports, fishing, and hunting. I graduated from Knoxville High School in 2019 which led me to my first natural resource job working for the IDNR at Elk Rock State Park. I continued with my education by attending Hawkeye Community College obtaining an AAS Degree in Natural Resource Management and Upper Iowa University for a BS Degree in Conservation Management. During these four years of college, I worked for Marion County Conservation gaining a wide variety of work experience to prepare me for my future goal of being a Park Ranger.

My official starting date working for Floyd County Conservation was August 7th having a smooth adjustment for myself and the conservation staff. A month has passed, and I have already learned and seen how much everyone appreciates the opportunities Floyd County Conservation has to offer from recreational to wildlife areas. I plan to continue to learn about Floyd County so I can provide a variety of opportunities for the people. I look forward to pursuing my career by enhancing these recreational areas not only for myself but for all to enjoy.

Memorials

Dale Fullerton
Karry & Sharon Hicok

Charkes McElroy
Karen Dow
Dana & Janelle Larson
Claude & Debra Nash

John Andersen
Ken & Keri Blair
David Ayers

Gila Jorgenson
Larry & Sharon Enabnit
Larry & Sharon Hicok

Marion Stufflebean
Larry & Sharon Enabnit

Virgil Burns
Dale & Laura Schmitz

Ted Pitzenberger
Barbara Brown

Bernadine Howe
Larry & Sharon Hicok
Bernadine Howe

Mike Paulus
Larry & Sharon Hicok
Barbara Brown

Rodney Ellis
Dennis & Rhonda Westergard

Morgan Walters
Joel & Theresa Cannon

Ellyn Beland
Barbara Brown

Gladys Nauman
James & Anne Ott

Maida Wiegmann
Dennis & Rhonda Westergard

Heath Farr
Barbara Brown

Kristeen Boyd
Larry & Sharon Hicok
Dennis & Gloria Carr

Glenn Biggs
Jim & Sandy Lawrenz
Larry & Sharon Hicok
Barbara Brown
Kim Mehmen DeBolt & Val DeBolt

Tom Stufflebeam Sr.
Jim & Sandy Lawrenz
Barbara Brown

Easten DeVries
Jim & Sandy Lawrenz

Fred King
Shawn & Sue Davis

Merrill Cooper
Sherrie Burt & Nancy Kies

Theodore Jarosh
Family Community Credit Union



- Sept. 28th Women in the Woods with Wine - Tracks, Scat & Other Signs
7-9 p.m. at the Tosanak Recreation Area (Learning Center), Marble Rock
Join Floyd Co. Conservation Naturalist Heidi Reams and discover more about nature while relaxing with a glass of wine. Women in the Woods with Wine is for women 21+ who are interested in getting outside. Become more comfortable and knowledgeable about the natural world, as you unwind and have fun. Pre-Registration Required online at mycountyparks.com
Cost \$15, (can bring payment the night of the event)
- Oct. 14th Eyes in the Night, 7:00 pm
at the Tosanak Recreation Area (Director Lodge), Marble Rock
(See page 7 for more details)
- Oct. 15th Floyd County Conservation Campgrounds close for the season
- Oct. 26th Women in the Woods with Wine - Halloween Horror-ibles
7-9 p.m. at the Tosanak Recreation Area (Learning Center), Marble Rock
- Oct. 28th Full Hunter's Moon Hike
7 p.m. at the Tosanak Recreation Area (Learning Center), Marble Rock
- Oct. 29th Charcuterie Board workshop
1 p.m. at the Fossil & Prairie Center (Lower level), Rockford
Create your own charcuterie board! Participants will learn step-by-step instructions on creating a stencil, using a heat gun, and the chemical reaction needed to create a unique charcuterie board to take home or give as a gift.
Participants must pre-register online at mycountyparks.com.
Cost is \$15 and can be paid at the workshop. Once registered, participants will be contacted to decide on the stencil design.
- Nov. 11th Fat Tire Bike Ride
1-3 p.m. at the Tosanak Recreation Area (Learning Center), Marble Rock
Cost \$10. Pre-register online.
If you haven't ridden a bike since you got your driving license, this is the ride for you. Join Floyd Co. Naturalist for a guided ride through the Tosanak Recreation Area.

Floyd Co. Conservation 641-756-3490 or the calendar of events at floydcoia.org/190/conservation

For more information . . . follow us on

Registration for events can be done at MyCountyParks.com



From the Inside

Amy Boggess, Office Assistant



“Eyes in the Night”

Spooky Season has officially arrived! What better way to celebrate the season than to join us on October 14th at the Tosanak Recreation Area for “Eyes in the Night”. Floyd County Conservation and the Fossil & Prairie Foundation are teaming up to put on this free special event (donations accepted).

This will be the second year this event will be taking place. Last year we introduced “Eyes in the Night” to Floyd County as our special Halloween event and we had a terrific turn out. This event, although associated with Halloween, is not scary but instead educational and family friendly. Take a thirty minute wagon ride through the woods and learn about several different woodland creatures. Along with the wagon ride there will be games, cookie decorating, s'mores and more!



All time slots for the wagon ride will be on MyCountyParks.com under Floyd County - Tosanak Recreation Area. Reservations will be available the first week in October. Walk-ins will not be guaranteed a seat. Check in for the wagon ride will be at the Director's Lodge. Please check in! Follow us on Facebook for any updates as the time draws near. A big shout out to all volunteers and board members who make this event so special. We hope to see you there for a night full of fun, laughter, and great memories!

Eyes ..
IN THE NIGHT
Saturday Oct. 14
7-9 p.m.
Tosanak Recreation Area, Marble Rock

A family friendly event including a hayride through the woods, games, treats & much more.

Reserve your spot at mycountyparks.com/County/Floyd

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Mary Ramon, Nora Springs, Member

Staff

Adam Sears, Director
Heidi Reams, Naturalist
Spencer DeJoode, Natural Resource/Ranger
Tyron Steere, Natural Resource
Amy Boggess, Office Assistant

Board Meetings

The Floyd County Conservation Board meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcome. The Board meets on the first Tuesday of the month at the Fossil & Prairie Center, located 1 mile west of Rockford on County Road B47. Please note this date can be changed.

Floyd County's Programs and facilities are consistent with pertinent federal and state laws and regulations on non-discrimination regarding race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age and handicap. If anyone believes he or she has been subjected to discrimination, he or she may file a complaint alleging discrimination with either the Floyd County Conservation Board or the Equal Opportunity, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C.