

Looking Out the Back Door...

A publication of the Sac County Conservation Board

"To initiate awareness and foster stewardship of nature's rewards."

Winter 2015



Signs in the Snow

Newsletter Line Up

- 2....Fact Files
- 2....Eyes to the Skies
- 3....Upcoming Events
- 4....Kid's Korner
- 5....Special Events
- 6....Nature News
- 7....At-A-Glance Calendar



Conservation Center Hours
Monday-Friday
8:00 AM – 4:30 PM

Winter is a great time to get out and enjoy nature! Just because the ground is covered in snow and the plants have gone dormant, does not mean life stops. Out on a winter exploration there are many ways to tell if an animal has been around. Check out the examples below and keep your eyes open at your next adventure outdoors!

Trails



Deer Mouse



White-Tailed Deer



River Otter

Chews

Cotton Tailed Rabbits and White-Tailed Deer both munch on twigs in the winter. Rabbits make clean cuts and deer are a bit messier.



Rabbit



Deer

Tracks



Dark-Eyed Junco



Wild Turkey

White-Tailed Deer



Red Fox



Cotton Tailed Rabbit



Bobcat



Come leave your own sings in the snow at a public program this winter! Check page 3 for details on snowshoe treks, ice fishing, and winter day camp.

Eyes to the Skies

Bundle up and head outside this winter!

December 2015

7- Conjunction of the Moon and Venus

[Look in Eastern sky just before sunrise]

11- New Moon

13-14- Geminids Meteor Shower

[Up to 120 multicolored meteors per hour, after moon sets]

21-22- Ursids Meteor Shower

[5-10 meteors an hour after midnight]

22- Solstice

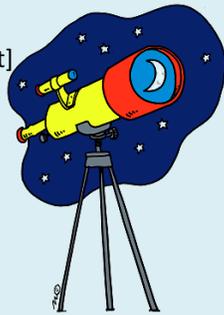
[First day of winter]

25- Full Moon

[Cold or Long Nights Moon]

29- Mercury at Greatest Eastern Elongation

[Look for the planet low in the western sky just after sunset.]



January 2016

3-4 Quadrantids Meteor Shower

[Up to 40 meteors an hour after midnight]

10 New Moon

24 Full Moon

[Wolf Moon]

February 2016

7- Mercury at Greatest Western Elongation

[Look for the planet low in the eastern sky just before sunrise.]

8- New Moon

22- Full Moon

[Snow Moon] Celebrate on the 21st at the Night Trek!

Fact Files!

Snowy Owl

(*Bubo scandiacus*)



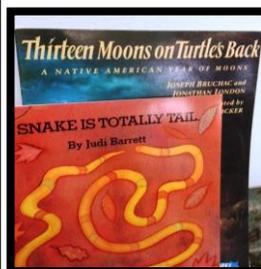
- Visitor to Iowa during Irruption years.
- Eats small mammals and birds.
- 2 feet tall and wingspan of 5 feet.
- A diurnal owl, that prefers to be active during daylight hours.
- Males become almost all white at maturity.
- Lay eggs on the ground.
- Have around 13 eggs in each clutch.
- Can survive below zero temperatures for long periods of time.
- One was sighted in Sac County last winter!

Have an idea for a future file? Email me at sccbnt@frontiernet.net and it could be next!

Thank You!

Sac PEO Chapter for items donated from the environmental education wish list!

Books



Craft Supplies



Kitchen & Cleaning supplies



SCCB Upcoming Events

*Find us on Facebook for the most up to date information.

* To register for a program, email sccbnat@frontiernet.net or call 712-662-4530.

*Events may be cancelled if there are extreme weather conditions or if the minimum number of registered participants is not met.

December 2015

Sunday the 20th Knee High Naturalists: Turtles- 3:00-5:00 PM

Knee High Naturalists are children ages 2-4 and have an accompanying adult attend the program. This month we will be utilizing the traveling display and focusing on turtles! Due to holidays and school programming this month will take place on a Sunday and will have activity stations open from 3:00-5:00 PM. **Registration Required.**

Tuesday the 29th Winter Camp - 9:00-11:00am & 1:00-3:00pm

Calling all students on winter break!! This is the chance for you to get outside during the break from school. During this free camp at the Sac County Conservation Center children will learn about nature, participate in activities, go on winter hike/snowshoe, an enjoy a small snack at the end of the camp. Space is limited to the first 16 children with a wait list available so call or email today!

Session Age Groups: 9:00-11:00am is for 5-7 year olds & 1:00-3:00pm is for 8-10 year olds

January 2016

Saturday the 2nd Christmas Bird Count- 8:00 AM - Registration Required.

Join us while we conduct a bird survey in Sac County to help the National Audubon Society collect data on bird populations. We will meet at the nature center and take it from there! Binoculars and field guides available.

Wednesday the 20th Knee High Naturalists: "The Mitten"- 9:30-10:15 AM OR 4:00-4:45 PM

Knee High Naturalists are children ages 2-4 and have an accompanying adult attend the program. This month we will be focusing on the story The Mitten and the animal characters. In this program children and adults alike will participate in crafts, activities (may be outside), a story and a snack. **Registration Required.**

Sunday the 24th Snowshoe Clinic-2:00-3:00 PM

Are you interested in learning how to use snowshoes, need a refresher, or want to go on a guided trek? We will go over the moves and some history before going out for a hike. Snowshoe numbers are limited. **Registration Required.**

February 2016

Wednesday the 17th Knee High Naturalists: Snow & Ice 9:30-10:15 AM OR 4:00-4:45 PM

Knee High Naturalists are children ages 2-4 and have an accompanying adult attend the program. This month we will be focusing on snow & ice. In this program children and adults alike will participate in crafts, activities (may be outside), a story and a snack. **Registration Required.**

Saturday the 20th Youth Ice Fishing Clinic- 9:00-12:00 @ Black Hawk Lake

During this free event co-hosted by SCCB, ISU Extension and the Iowa DNR we will learn about ice fishing and try our luck with some fishing. Stay tuned for more details.

Sunday the 21st Full Moon Night Trek- 6:30-8:30 PM

Take a romantic evening walk through the woods or bring the family out to explore the night. The path will be lit by luminaries and the full moon. Snowshoes and hot cocoa will be available.

Kid's Korner

Signs in the Snow Search!

Look for and circle the following animal tracks in the snow below. Page 1 can be used to help.

5 White-Tailed Deer

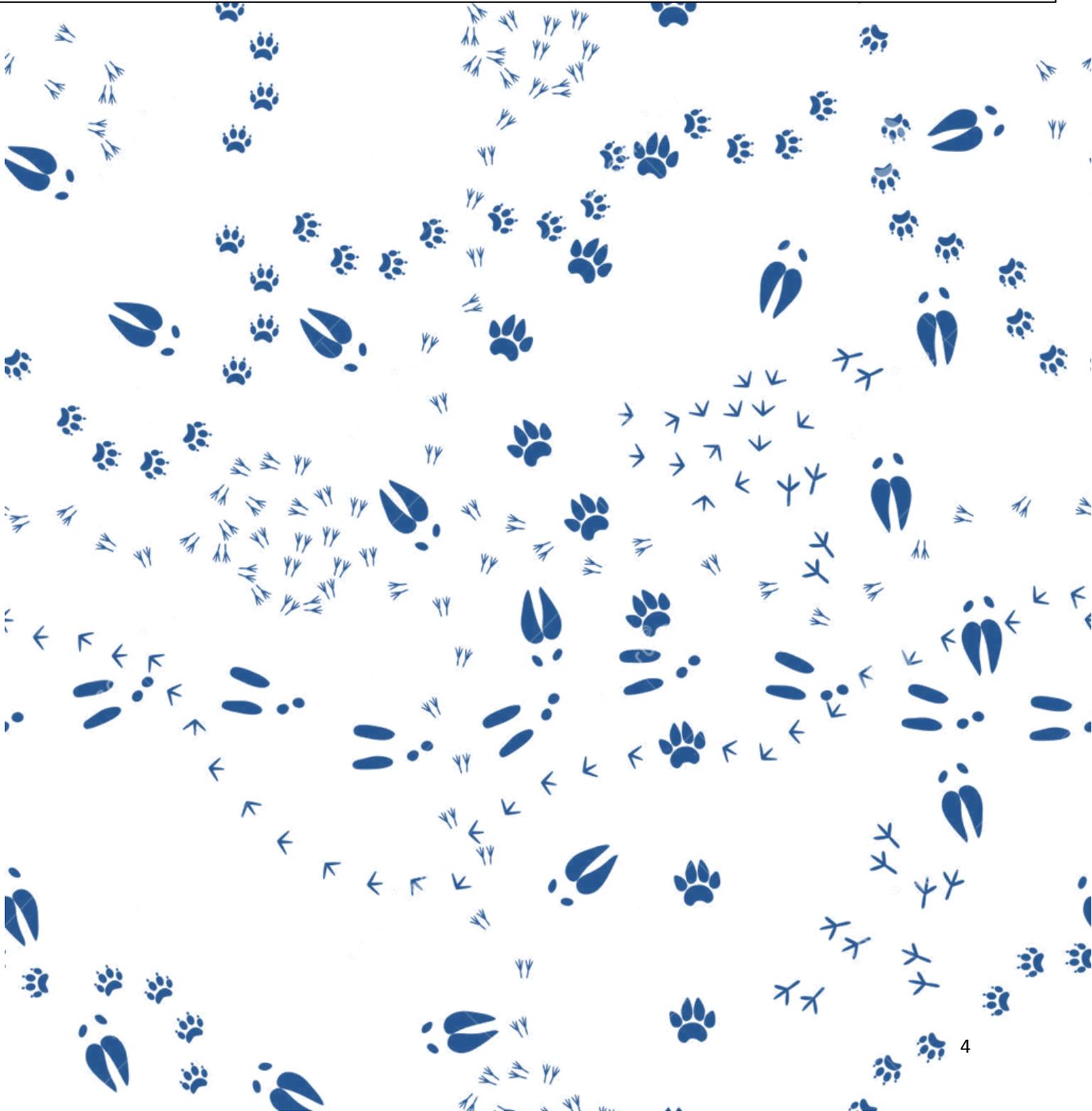
7 Red Fox

6 pairs of Dark Eyed Junco

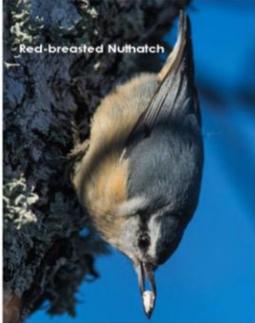
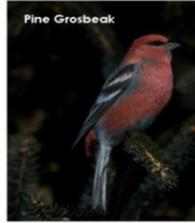
3 Cotton Tailed Rabbit

4 Bobcat

8 Single Turkey



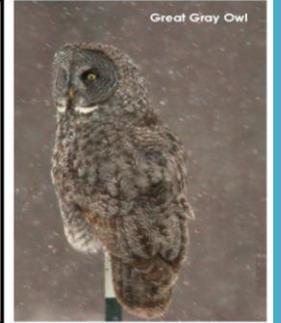
Special Events!



Join us on another
Minnesota Avian Adventure
 February 5-8, 2016

Experience the beauty and charm of the North Woods, as well as amazing wildlife! Let professional naturalist guides show you the amazing sights and sounds of the Sax-Zim Bog and Duluth areas.
 Great trip for couples, photographers, and anyone who loves nature!

Hosted and led by naturalists from Carroll and Sac County Conservation Boards. **Featuring multiple days with professional guide, Erik Bruhnke** For more information, please contact Matt Wetrich at (712) 210-4614, email matt@carrollcountyiowa.org or Megan Cook at (712) 292-9118, email sccbnt@frontiernet.net



Traveling Exhibit

Sac County Conservation Building December 2, 2015-February 2, 2016

Open for public viewing Monday-Friday 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM.

Come out and see what turtles are all about!

For more information or to schedule an educational program please contact Sac County Conservation Board at sccbnt@frontiernet.net or by phone 712-662-4530.



Open House!

Wednesday, December 2nd
8:00am-6:00pm

The conservation center opened five years ago. To celebrate we are inviting everybody to come out and take a look! Head out to Hagge Park to look at the displays, animals or grab a treat.

There will be a turtle program in the classroom at 4:30 PM.

This program is free and open to the public.



Nature News- Fall Program Review

Knee High Naturalists

A monthly program for children ages 2-4 and an attending adult. Each month is a different topic!

September-Butterflies



October-Creepy Crawlies



November-Turkeys



Owl Prowl

An evening program where we learned all about owls, went on a short hike and made owl masks to take home!



Story Walk & Fall Fun Weekend

Three stories were put along three trails in Hagge Park. For a few hours each day there were snacks and activities in the conservation center.



Mrs. Gorden's Pre-School Field Trip

On a rainy October day we learned all about worms!



East Sac 3rd Grade Space Unit

During a classroom visit we learned about constellations and then had a field trip to Hagge Park to look at the night sky.



Events At A Glance

Date	Time	Event
<u>December 2015</u>		
Wednesday the 2 nd	8:00-6:00	Building Open House
Sunday the 20 th	3:00-5:00 PM	KHN: Turtles
Tuesday the 29 th	9:00 AM & 1:00 PM	Winter Day Camp
<u>January 2016</u>		
Saturday the 2 nd	8:00 AM	Christmas Bird Count
Wednesday the 20 th	9:30-10:15 AM or 4:00-4:45 PM	KHN: "The Mitten"
Saturday the 24 th	2:00-3:00 PM	Snowshoe Clinic
<u>February 2016</u>		
Wednesday the 17 th	9:30-10:15 AM or 4:00-4:45 PM	KHN: Snow & Ice
Saturday the 20 th	9:00-12:00	Youth Ice Fishing Clinic
Sunday the 21 st	6:30-8:30 PM	Full Moon Night Trek
**Turtles: Secrets of the Shell traveling display open December 2 nd – February 2 nd **		

Sac County Conservation Board

Board Members

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Rich Feilmeier, Early

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Member

Dean Stock, Lake View

Member

Kenny Bentsen, Sac City

Staff

Executive Director

Chris Bass

Secretary

Sandi Huster

Naturalist

Megan Cook

Meetings

Regular board meetings are held the second Thursday of each month at 7:30 PM at the Sac County Conservation Center. These meetings are open to the public.

Contact Information

Hagge Park Office

(712) 662-4530

Email: saccocon@frontiernet.net

The Sac County Conservation Board in the provisions of services and facilities to the public does not discriminate against anyone on the basis of race, color, sex, creed, national origin, age or handicap. If anyone believes he or she has been subjected to such discrimination, he or she may file a complaint alleging discrimination with either the Sac County Conservation Board Office of the Office of Equal Opportunity, U.S. Department of Interior, Washington D.C. 20240

Snow Day Activites!

Can't figure out what to do when there is a snow day? Do one or all of these!

 DANCE PARTY!	 PLAYED A BOARD GAME	 DREW A PICTURE	 WATCHED WINTER BIRDS	 SNOWBALL FIGHT!
 MADE A NEW CRAFT	 SANG A SONG	 WENT SLEDDING	 BUILT AN IGLOO	 CALLED A LOVED ONE
 WATCHED FROZEN	 WROTE A STORY	 LOOKED FOR TRACKS	 HOT COCOA TIME!	 BUILT A SNOWMAN
 BUNDLED UP	 CAUGHT SNOWFLAKES	 ORGANIZED YOUR ROOM	 MADE SNOW ICE CREAM	 READ A BOOK
 MADE A SNOW ANGEL	 EXPLORED NATURE	 LEARNED SOMETHING NEW	 ATE A SWEET TREAT	 BUILT A FORT