

Looking Out the Back Door...

A publication of the Sac County Conservation Board

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

Fall 2015



Why do leaves change color in the fall?

Newsletter Line Up

- 2....Fact Files
- 2....Director's Notes
- 3....Upcoming Events
- 4....Kid's Korner
- 5....Nature News
- 6....At-a-glance Calendar



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• **Conservation Center** •
• **Saturday Hours** •
• **Sept. 5th & Oct. 3rd** •
• **9:00-11:00 AM** •
.....

School is back in session, cooler weather is on the way, daylight is growing shorter and the leaves are changing color; all signs pointing to the upcoming season change. This year the fall season officially begins on September 23rd and will lead us right into winter, ah winter! I don't want to think about snow and ice yet so we are going to focus on the amazing process of how leaves change color in the autumn season.



As discussed in the summer newsletter the Earth rotates and changes the tilt throughout the year. In the fall we start becoming further away from the sun, which is why daylight is shorter and temperatures get cooler. This also leads to some plants and animals changing their behavior. Animals may start to stock up and prepare to hibernate through the cold weather, while others will migrate and move to different places in search of food, and lastly some will adapt to the cold weather and stay here all year round. Then there are plants, most will prepare to become dormant (in active) or die off before the cold weather sets in.



Some of the most noticeable actions that plants have in the fall are that leaves become brilliant red, oranges, and yellows. This all has to do with the production of food for the plants and the cells that make the food, chlorophyll. Leaves are the food factories for plants and in those leaves there are several different types of workers inside all year long, but you can't see some of them until production slow down in the fall. See the chart on page 6 for an explanation of the different colors and how you are able to see them in the fall.

Go outside and appreciate the cooler weather and beautiful colors!



Director's Notes

As Labor Day is nearly here it is a wonder how fast the summers seem to fly by. The regular rains this summer have kept the SCCB staff busy with just keeping up with mowing. Because of this, some of our other projects have been on hold until this fall. We are having the Iowa Conservation Corps back to do more hiking trail work at Hagge Park. They will be here working from September 21st – October 15th and will be replacing another set of steps, installing a new bridge and doing some erosion control work on the trails. Portions of the trails will be closed while this work is being done.

We also will be doing some tree removal at Reiff Park. Over the last few years disease has taken its toll on the conifer plantation on the west side of the park. Later this fall some trees will be taken down. This will be a multi-year project and eventually new tree plantings will be done. The SCCB recognizes that this area is important habitat in that part of the county and restoration is needed there.

With hunting seasons starting to open up the SCCB has several areas open for hunting. Keep in mind that some areas have special regulations in place and it is always safe to check the rules and regulations for these areas before venturing out by contacting the SCCB office at Hagge Park.

Fall is an excellent time of year to experience the outdoors in one of your Sac County Conservation Board areas. Whether it is a bike ride on the Sauk Rail Trail, a canoe float down the North Raccoon River, camping at Grant Park, hunting at Whitetail Woods or fishing the river at Hagge Park, it seems like there is just not enough time to do it all!

We hope you have a wonderful experience outdoors and stop in and visit us at the Sac County Conservation Center when you are out and about this fall.



Fact Files!

Big Brown Bat

(*Eptesicus fuscus*)



- One of the most common bats in Iowa.
- Body is 4-5 inches long, fur is brown and wings are dark brown to black.
- Uses echolocation at night to find food.
- Roosts in hollow trees, under bark, or in manmade structures like attics or garages during the day.
- Winter hibernation site will be a different spot than the day roost in warm weather.

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

Thank You!

Summer Staff:

Grant Park Attendant-Roger Huster

Grant Park Camp Hosts-Terry & Melissa Rath

Hagge Park Camp Host-Diane Page

Summer Technicians- Norm Lewman & Justin Geery

Wendy DeVries, Carrie Gorden and Dallas Pullen for helping with summer camps.

Buena Vista County Conservation for use of equipment.

Sac County Iowa State Extension for help with the Summer Fishing Clinic.

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.



September 2015

Tuesday the 8th Monarch Tagging Program- 6:00-7:00 PM

The majestic monarch butterfly will be getting ready to head to Mexico. Come out to Hagge Park to help provide scientists with information about this great migration by helping to catch, tag and learn about monarch butterflies.

Wednesday the 23rd Knee High Naturalists: Butterflies- 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 butterflies. In this program children and adults alike will participate in crafts, activities (may be outside), a story and a snack. **Registration Required.**



October 2015



Wednesday the 21st Knee High Naturalists: Creepy Crawlies- 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 creepy crawlies in nature. In this program children and adults alike will participate in crafts, activities (may be outside), a story and a snack. **Registration Required.**

Saturday the 24th & Sunday the 25th- Story Walk & Fall Fun Weekend

Can you read and walk at the same time? Come out to Hagge Park this weekend to find out! Bring the whole family to enjoy a fall walk in the woods and read a story at the same time. Stories will be set up along the trails in the park and available for public viewing from **Noon on Saturday until 5:00 PM on Sunday**. Fall fun activities like leaf art, hoop toss, atlatl throwing and hot cocoa will be available on **Saturday 1:00-3:00 PM and Sunday 2:00-5:00 PM** outside of the conservation center building.

November 2015

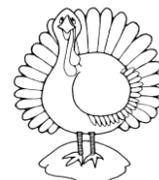
Tuesday the 10th Owl Prowl- 6:00-7:30 PM



Come out to Hagge Park to learn all about owls! We will learn how to identify the different owls in Iowa, go for a hike to listen for owls, make a craft and enjoy a snack. **Registration Required.**

Wednesday the 18th Knee High Naturalists: Turkeys- 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 Turkeys. In this program children and adults alike will participate in crafts, activities (may be outside), a story and a snack. **Registration Required.**



FALL

Q G O S X P E I E R E D T H X
O K C H X G U Y W G F H V K A
L W I Q N N R M H D V F S E D
X F F A R E C O P C L X K G Y
Y S R O D L C O Q K N O A R C
E O C I E K I H R W I U C X F
L A P P Z K W D L N I N R O A
L S Y Q C K G G W S U L C C E
O W Y J K X G U P E A Y A N L
W K R D A F R O S T K O Y G M
C G V P J S T Q Q H E G C X L
F I P N E R I M O B T O O O Z
D L I V R T G Q O K T C S P T
E G E S E D I R Y A H A H Z A
F O Y B N S Q R Z W X C B G I

Find these words in the puzzle above!

Some words are backwards and/or diagonal.

ACORN
COLD
FROST
LEAF
RED

APPLE
CORN
HAYRIDE
ORANGE
SPIDER

BAT
CRUNCHY
HIKE
PUMPKIN
YELLOW

Nature News

Summer Program Review

Fishing Clinic with ISU Extension Office

On June 6th SCCB and the Sac County ISU Extension teamed up to host a summer fishing clinic. We learned about water safety, casting, how to tie knots, water pollution, were able to catch some fish at Black Hawk Lake and even gave away some door prizes!



Library Visits

The summer reading program theme was every hero has a story and Megan visited 7 libraries in the county to teach about Nature's Superheroes in June.



Wild Wednesdays

This summer on Wednesday nights at 7 PM a different superhero taught about something in nature.



Summer Camp 2015

We had a blast at summer camp this year! Check out some of the neat things we did.

5-7 Year Old Camps



8-10 Year Old Camps



11-14 Year Old Camp



Events At A Glance

Date	Time	Event
<u>September 2015</u>		
Tuesday the 8 th	6:00-7:00 PM	Monarch Tagging Program
Saturday the 19 th	10:00 AM	SCCB @ Clay County Fair
Wednesday the 23 rd	9:30-10:15 AM or 4:00-4:45 PM	KHN: Butterflies
<u>October 2015</u>		
Wednesday the 21 st	9:30-10:15 AM or 4:00-4:45 PM	KHN: Creepy Crawlies
Saturday the 24 th	12:00 PM	Story Walk Opens
	1:00-3:00 PM	Fall Fun Activities
Sunday the 25 th	5:00 PM	Story Walk Closes
	2:00-5:00 PM	Fall Fun Activities
<u>November 2015</u>		
Tuesday the 10 th	6:00-7:30 PM	Owl Prowl
Wednesday the 18 th	9:30-10:15 AM or 4:00-4:45 PM	KHN: Turkeys

Sac County Conservation Board

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Andy Meredith, Lake View

Vice Chairperson

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Member

Dean Stock, Lake View

Member

Kenny Bentsen, Sac City

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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



Why do leaves change color in the Autumn?

Most of the spectacular colors of autumn have actually been in the leaves all summer, however they were "covered up" by the dominant green of the chlorophyll. As weather cools, and shorter days settle in, the chlorophyll begins to break down, revealing new and varied color pigments. The brightest colors are seen when late summer is dry, and autumn has bright sunny days and cool nights.



White Birch



GREEN - Chlorophyll

Chlorophyll is responsible for helping trees and plants turn sunlight into food. For most months, it is the dominant color seen in most leaves until it fades away. As many trees shut down their food production, they turn to stored sugars to survive the winter.

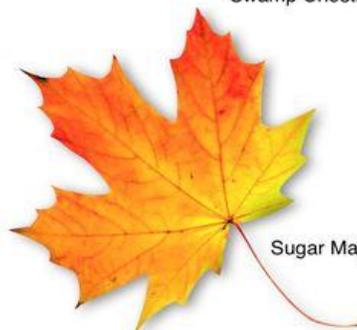


Swamp Chestnut Oak



RED - Anthocyanin

Unlike other leaf colors that always exist in the leaf, anthocyanins are produced as the chlorophyll is broken down. The anthocyanins are often seen in leaves named for their autumn splash of red including Red Maples, Scarlet Oaks, and Red Sumacs.



Sugar Maple



ORANGE - Carotene

Sugar Maples may be one of the best examples of carotene in action. Their bright signature orange fills many hills and country roads throughout the northern US. Sassafras leaves also turn a slightly more muted orange. As its name implies, Carotenes are also the chemical responsible for giving carrots their unique coloring.



Aspen



YELLOW - Xanthophyll

Xanthophyll can be seen throughout the fall in trees including beeches, ashes, birches, aspens, and some oaks. It also contributes its bright yellow color to autumn squash and corn.