



## Spring and Summer Floods hit Nahant Marsh

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Interested in a field trip or learning more about Nahant Marsh?

- Learn about Nahant at: [www.nahantmarsh.org](http://www.nahantmarsh.org)
- Check out some great Nahant photos at: [www.nahantmarshgallery.com](http://www.nahantmarshgallery.com)
- Call to set up a guided tour with your group at: 563-323-5196

2008 has been a very wet year in Iowa. A cold, snowy winter lead into a very rainy spring forcing many Midwestern rivers outside their banks, in many cases to record levels.

This year has shaped up to be one of the worst years for flooding on record in Iowa.

When the Mississippi River hits approximately 12 feet at the gauges in Rock Island, water begins backing into Nahant Marsh. Nahant Marsh experienced moderate to severe flooding in late April and near-record flooding in June. When the marsh flooded in April, large amounts of old cattails, logs, and other debris washed up on the trails and prairie.

When the floods hit in June, they carried in even more de-

bris, this time further in. The lower parts of Nahant's restored prairie seemed to have taken a hard hit, although time will tell— prairies are remarkable resilient.

Nahant's trails and dock also suffered as a result of the flooding. Much of the grass that was covered the lower trails is now mud. The dock is twisted and was moved several feet from its original location.

Not all is bad, however. Marshes thrive with flooding and Nahant is experiencing an explosion of life. Insects, frogs and turtles are abundant, which in turn, provide food for other living things. The upper prairies are thriving in these wet conditions and are in full bloom now, attracting multi-

tudes of butterflies. And Nahant is getting a beautiful new dock system soon that will allow better access and seating at the marsh.



*A view of Nahant marsh during and after (below) the floods*



## Celebrating 10 Years of the Frog and Toad Surveys

Nahant Marsh will hold an open house on July 18th at 7pm to celebrate 10 years of biologist Jennifer Anderson-Cruz's frog and toad surveys. Refreshments will be provided by the Friends of Nahant Marsh while Jennifer gives a presentation on amphibians

and her findings over the past decade.

Participants are also welcome to stick around until after dark to participate in an actual survey. Admission is free. Participants who are interested in participating in the survey are

asked to bring their own flashlight and dress accordingly.



## Enjoy Summer's Wonders in the Tallgrass Prairie



*Caption describing picture or graphic.*

One of the best parts of summer is having the opportunity to explore all the beauty that nature has to offer. The tallgrass prairie is wonderful any time of the year, but especially in the summer.

Countless plant, mammal, insect, bird, reptile, and amphibian species call the tallgrass prairie their home. And in the summer, the prairie is in its full glory. The wonderful thing about prairie is that it is always changing. From day to day, or even minute to minute, the

prairie is never quite the same.

A rainbow of colorful flowers are in full bloom now, soaking up the sun's rays and attracting a mass of butterflies, bees, and other pollinators. These, in turn, attract the hungry birds, amphibians, and reptiles looking for a nutritious meal.

The prairie is never a dull place, and the more time you spends in it, the more you will be amazed by it. Don't miss one of summer's most delightful shows— a prairie in it all it's glory.

Where can you find a prairie? Unfortunately since 99.9% of Iowa's prairies have been destroyed, a good prairie is hard to come by. But there a few around. In Scott county there are prairies at Nahant Marsh, Fairmont Cemetery, the Wapsi Center, and Scott County Park, just to name a few. There are also beautiful prairies nearby in Rock Island, Clinton, and Muscatine Counties. To find them, go to the state DNR websites or to the county conservation websites.

## Nahant Marsh Junior Conservationist Day Camp



Nahant Marsh Education Center, in conjunction with the Partners of Scott County Watersheds, will be offering a Summer Day Camp for 9-12 year olds. The week-long day camp will be a fun, interactive camp that will provide kids with an opportunity to learn and explore nature and science in a safe environment. Activities include orienteering, hik-

ing, water sampling, insect netting, nature survival skills, animal and plant identification, solar cooking, renewable energy, Native American home building, fishing, and a whole lot more!!

The camp will be for 9-12 year olds and will be held daily July 21st-25th from 9:30am-3pm.

Limited bussing to and from

the camp is also available

And if you didn't make it to the camp this year, look for it again next year!

The cost per child is \$50. Full or partial scholarships will be available. For more information call 563-323-5196, or log on to [www.nahantmarsh.org](http://www.nahantmarsh.org)



*Bob Bryant uses a tractor to remove overgrown vegetation from a turtle nesting area at Nahant Marsh*

## Dogwoods Cleared to Improve Turtle Nesting Area

Nahant Marsh is prime real estate for turtles. Several species, including Snapping turtles, Red-eared sliders, Painted turtles, Softshell turtles, and the endangered Blanding's turtle use Nahant Marsh not only for habitat, but also for nesting. They especially prefer the sandy open area to the east of

the Education Center.

Unfortunately, the prime nesting area, which historically prairie, had become severally overgrown with woody plants, primarily dogwoods. After trying to clear the area by hand and becoming quite discouraged at the slow progress, Re-

source Manager Bob Bryant suggested an alternative route—bulldozing.

Since Bob is also an employee of Scott County, he was able to borrow the county's Kubota tractor and use it to clear the area. The plan is to re-seed the area with a prairie mix this fall.

## Today's Youth By Marie Copenhaver

two usual nine year-old boys. They both enjoy skateboarding and wrestling. What makes the duo unique is their love of the outdoors and ways to preserve the natural habitat that both animals and people share.

Spencer has volunteered at Nahant Marsh since he was seven years old. Since then, he had found another recruit, his friend Cameron Moore.

Some accomplishments the two share is working to eliminate invasive species, garbage removal, recycling, and cleaning up debris from the recent flooding. Besides volunteering,

the two simply love to enjoy everything that Nahant Marsh provides. "I like to find animal bones and collect them. Just today I found a muskrat skull!" said Cameron, "You never know what you are going to find!"

"Today I found a piece of wood that the beavers chewed through," stated Spencer enthusiastically, "I can tell by the teeth marks on the wood!"

No matter what age, Nahant Marsh offers peace and contemplation for the dreamers, or excitement for the explorer inside.

These two young volunteers have given up personal time to better the environment. When asked about the work they had put in at Nahant Marsh, they laughed and replied in unison, "this isn't work, this is fun!"

Some have said that today's youth are lost, however, I believe the opposite. In today's busy world, the adults need to take a time out and enjoy nature's bounties. It is up to the adults to get the younger generation involved. All it takes is one moment to inspire the youth for a lifetime.



Young volunteers Cameron and Spencer hard at work at Nahant Marsh.

## Help Out at Xstream Clean-up

Volunteers are needed again this year to help out with the Xstream Clean-up. Nahant is one of the sites where volunteers can get dirty and have a little fun, all for a good cause.

Nahant volunteers will be

asked to pick up trash and debris and also cut and remove invasive plants. After this year's flooding and unusually wet summer, invasive plants have begun to grow out of control and take over parts of

the preserve. But, we can take back the preserve and help nature with a few extra hands.

To sign up, long on to: [www.xstreamcleanup.org](http://www.xstreamcleanup.org) and lets make a difference together!

**Xstream Clean-up is August 16th. Sign-up now for a sight at [www.xstreamcleanup.org](http://www.xstreamcleanup.org)**

## From Nahant's Unusual File: Dobson Flies

An unusual creature that you may see hanging around at night or at dusk is this menacing-looking creature called the Dobson fly.

Dobsons are quite large and have menacing-looking pinchers. Even though they are mainly found in and around water, they are attracted to light and can be found some

distance away.

Even though they are very large, somewhat frightening-looking bugs, they are useful predators, especially when they are in their aquatic larval stage. They hunt and eat other water-dwelling bugs like mosquitoes.

Although they can pack a painful pinch, they are fascinating

creatures who no more want to mess with you than you do with them. Keep your eyes open at night and you may catch a glimpse of this weird and wonderful insect.

For some great information about insects check out: <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/news/2008/aug/060801.htm>



A female Dobson fly. Dobson flies have up to a 5 inch wind-span. Males have much larger pinchers.



## EICCD/ATEEC/Nahant Marsh

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Nahant Marsh Education Center



Nahant Marsh preserve is one of the largest urban wetlands on the Upper Mississippi River. It is comprised of marshy areas, mesic, wet, and sand prairie, and bottomland forest. A spring-fed quarry, known as Carp Lake, and the surrounding grounds, is part of the Nahant Marsh Preserve as well. Nahant Marsh was used for skeet and trap shooting from the 1960's to the 1990's. Because of the lead left behind, the marsh was declared an EPA Superfund site and was cleaned up in 1999. After that time, the site was declared a preserve and educational center. The building and 78 acres of land is owned and managed by the City of Davenport. The remaining land is held by the Nahant Board, a 501c3. The Educational programming is overseen by the Eastern Iowa Community College District. River Action, Inc. is also critical part of Nahant Marsh.

### Getting to Nahant Marsh...

#### From Davenport, Iowa:

Take Highway 22 South and turn left on Wapello Avenue (last left turn before the I-280 overpass). Follow Wapello Avenue and you will see Nahant Marsh to your left, just before the railroad crossing.

#### From Illinois:

Take I-280 to Iowa and take the Highway 22/Rockingham Road Exit. Turn right onto highway 22 and right onto Wapello Avenue. Nahant Marsh is on the left, just before the railroad crossing



## Upcoming Events



**August 16th – XSTREAM CLEAN-UP. 9-NOON**– Volunteers are needed at

Nahant to help clean up debris, hall brush and cut invasive species. Help us clean-up the Marsh. To sign up, go to [www.xstreamcleanup.org](http://www.xstreamcleanup.org)

**August 19th– Partners of Scott County Watersheds– Public Forum– Surrey Heights Fire Station, Bettendorf– Noon-1pm**–Doug Johnson, Soil Conservationist for the Natural Resources Conservation Service will be discussing threatened and endangered reptiles and amphibians native to southeastern Iowa. Doug will discuss habitat needs specific to these species and projects that the Natural Resources Conservation Service has implemented to address these needs. Lunch will be provided with a \$5 donation.

Please RSVP to Amy Johannsen at 563-391-1403 X3 or [amy.johannsen@ia.nacdn.net](mailto:amy.johannsen@ia.nacdn.net).



**Aug. 21-23rd – Mississippi Riverway Conference**– Nationally known speakers, break-out sessions, and field trips highlight this conference. To learn more go to [www.riveraction.org](http://www.riveraction.org)



**September 24-30th– Wilderness Experience Canoe Trip to the Current River, Missouri**– Join Naturalist Brian Ritter on this exploration of the unique ecosystems and geology in this National Scenic Riverway. Must be 18 or older. To receive college credit, you can sign up with the Eastern Iowa Community College District at [www.eicc.edu](http://www.eicc.edu). For more info log on to [www.nahantmarsh.org](http://www.nahantmarsh.org) or call 563-441-4082.

**Coming Soon- Bird Migra-**



**tions– Fall– Nahant Marsh**– Don't miss the fall migrations. Best to come is early morning and evening.



**Nahant Work Day– 9am-noon– Every Saturday**– For more information call Arnie at 563-381-3100 or just show up.



**Friends of Nahant Marsh meeting– 7-9pm– last Wednesday of the month @ Nahant**– to join the Friends group or to find out more information call Sherri at 309-786-8504



**To schedule a guided tour for your group, call 563-323-5196 or log-on to the website: [www.nahantmarsh.org](http://www.nahantmarsh.org)**