Nahant News

FALL 2020

Volume 14, Issue 4

Special 20th Anniversary Edition



4220 Wapello Ave. • Davenport, IA 52802

Photo by J. Malake



ABOUT NAHANT MARSH

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Natural Resources Technician I



Then and Now: 20 years later!



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 are part of the Nahant Marsh preserve as well. The 305-acre preserve is owned by the City of Davenport and the Nahant Marsh Board, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Conservation and restoration efforts on the preserve are directed by the Nahant Board. The educational programming is overseen by Eastern Iowa Community Colleges (EICC). EICC's Advanced Technology Environmental Education Center (ATEEC) is also a critical part of Nahant Marsh.







NAHANT MARSH CELEBRATES 20 YEARS AND LOOKS INTO THE FUTURE

by Brian Ritter, Executive Director

October 16th marks our 20 year anniversary as Nahant Marsh Education Center. It's an important time to reflect on all that's been accomplished at the marsh, but also look forward to what the next two decades may bring. Here's a look at where we were in 2000 and where we are today.

In 2000, Nahant Marsh by the numbers:

78 Acres

1 Staff member

1,400 program attendees

1 restroom

Less than ½ mile of trails

In 2020:

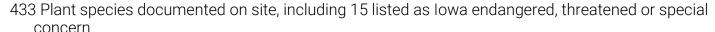
305 acres

13 Staff Members

22,600 program attendees (2019)

4 restrooms

2 miles of trails (and several more miles under construction)



212 Birds, including 7 lowa endangered, threatened or special concern

42 Mammals, including 2 federally endangered bats

22 Reptiles and amphibians, including 3 lowa endangered or threatened

Many other fish, insects, and mollusks, including 1 state threatened fish, 1 state endangered mussel, and 1 federally endangered bee



2001-A Naturalist leads a group of students on a hike.



2018 BioBlitz. Photo by J. Malake.



A rare Cattle Egret spotted at the marsh in 2020. Photo by J. Malake.



2019-Monarch Release Party. Photo by J. Wiebler.

The future's not ours to see, but it is ours to help shape. You can help shape Nahant Marsh's future by participating in Master Planning sessions that will be held in late fall. As part of an agreement signed in July, the US Army Corps of Engineers will be assisting Nahant staff in developing a comprehensive master plan for Nahant Marsh and surrounding areas over the next 2 years. As part of the planning, the public will be invited to attend (either in person or virtually) an open house in which your feedback will be gathered to help develop a master plan for Nahant Marsh and surrounding areas. This master plan will serve as Nahant Marsh's guide over the next 10-20 years for expanding the preserve, trails, education, and recreation. More information will be available soon at www.nahantmarsh.org.

EDUCATION UPDATE

by Amy Loving, Director of Education

In a typical year, the education team would be preparing for fall field trips, after-school programs, and weekend events. Since things look different this year, the education team is doing what it does best - adapt! We are working hard on modifying programs to meet the needs of teachers and homeschool families. Since field trips and in-class programs are not an option this year, we are offering schoolyard programs and smallscale field trips. If you are a teacher or know a teacher, or a homeschool parent who would be interested in a schoolyard program or small field trip, please contact me at aloving@eicc.edu. The team is also working on honing our skills in educating on a digital platform-whether that be live lessons, videos, or creating virtual classrooms. The monthly homeschool program will also look a little different: class size will be limited, and programs will be conducted outdoors in September and October. The classes will resume in the spring of 2021.

During September, we hosted a few monarch tagging events in lieu of our annual large-scale event. In total, we were able to tag 16 monarchs. I am continually impressed by the innovation, creativity, and can-do attitude from our amazing education team.













CLARKE PROPERTY UPDATE

by Kinsey Nielsen, Natural Resource Manager

Lots of progress is happening at Nahant's Clarke property for the wetland restoration project. The 39-acre area is in the process of being converted from an agriculture field into wetlands, mesic prairie, and sand prairie, along with a raised berm/trail for future public use. Restoration began on February 27th, 2020 on the South side of the project. Dunn Construction performed all of the dirt moving for the new habitats. The South wetland/prairie area was seeded on March 6th, 2020, just before the Mississippi River flooded. Restoration of the North field resumed in late May, and dirt moving was completed on August 20th, 2020. So far, the South wetland and prairie areas have had lots of vegetation growth. Staff, interns, and volunteers have worked hard to remove weeds such as flowering rush and burdock to help reduce the weed pressure for next year. The next steps of the project include planting native seed on the North area in late fall and creating a trail system. Stay tuned for updates next spring about trail development and a public opening of the property!



February 14, 2020- Clarke Property South field with coyote appearance before construction began.



February 29, 2020- Dirt moving in progress by Dunn Construction.



March 6, 2020- Seeding completed! Natural Resource Manager Kinsey Nielsen pictured using a cultipacker to cover seed with soil.



April 19, 2020- The wetland area completely underwater during spring flooding.

August 17, 2020- Vegetation growing on most of the area in late summer.

Photos by Nahant Trail Camera

RUSTY PATCHED BUMBLE BEE SIGHTED AT NAHANT

by Amy Loving, Director of Education

This rusty-patched bumble bee, Bombus affinis was discovered at the Marsh as it foraged for pollen and nectar on white clover that covered the lawn. This was exciting news since this species of bumble bee is endangered. Back in 2017, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service listed this species; it's the only bee on the list. Bumble bees are generalized foragers, but despite that, the rusty-patched has declined in much of its historic range. We will continue to diversify our prairies to promote not only the rustypatched, but pollinators and creatures alike. If you would like to help researchers and scientists track bumble bee populations, check

out https://www.bumblebeewatch.org/. You can upload photos to the website or app, and experts will confirm the species. Happy bee watching!



Photo by A. Loving

PURPLE MARTINS AT NAHANT

by Jimmy Wiebler, *AmeriCorps Educator*

Nahant Marsh recently received a donation from the Quad Cities Audubon Society to purchase a housing addition for Purple Martins.

Our largest swallow, Purple Martin males are uniformly bluishblack, while females are blue with dingy, gray-brown undersides. This species nests in colonies and generally relies on artificial housing to successfully reproduce in the eastern half of the United States. The history of humans caring for Purple Martins dates back to pre-European settlement. Native Americans would hang hollowed-out gourds to support nesting colonies. Martin houses used to be so common in the nineteenth century that during his travels, John James Audubon would choose his lodging based on the handsomeness of the martin box at each country tavern.

Although Purple Martins are currently making their way to southern Mexico and South America, be sure to check out our Purple Martin gourds hanging in the front prairie east of the dock during your next visit. Begin looking for them using their gourds in late spring. If there are none flying in and out of their gourds, scan the marsh for martins on the wing catching insects or skimming the water for a daytime drink.



Jimmy and Allison with the Purple Martin House. Photo by E. Novak

References: audubon.org; purplemartin.org

AMERICAN LOTUS

by Allison Nodurft, AmeriCorps Educator

The view of the marsh is quite different from last summer. The unusually dry summer has lowered the water level in the marsh, revealing rich mud and a huge patch of American lotus (Nelumbo lutea). This emergent plant can have a two-foot long round leaf that will either be floating or sticking up out of the water. The pale yellow flowers are held above the water. These flowers are often eight inches wide and have several petals. The seed pod is a funnel-shaped receptacle about five inches wide. It's brown and pitted and contains as many as 30 half-inch, acorn-shaped seeds. Over the years, as the marsh acquires more sediment, American lotus will become more prevalent because it needs a large amount of nutrients and sediment for growth.







(Far left) Drone photo of Nahant Marsh, you can see the round circle of American lotus that has formed. Photo by J.Wiebler. (Top left) Lotus seed pod. Photo by A. Nodurft. (Top right) Lotus flower. Photo by K. Nielsen.

The seeds are edible. When eaten half-ripe, they taste like chestnuts. Ripe seeds can be boiled or roasted. The underwater tubers can be boiled or roasted and resemble sweet potatoes. The Native Americans relied heavily on the American lotus as a food source. They would cut the tubers and hang them to dry. These dried tubers would then be soaked and served with beans, corn, or meat. Many birds and other animals also feed on the American lotus. The submerged stems provide excellent habitat for invertebrates and fish. The large patches become a favorite hunting ground for larger fish. Waterfowl will enjoy the seeds and the invertebrates that inhabit a patch of American lotus.





LSAMP SUMMER 2020

by Jimmy Wiebler, AmeriCorps Educator and LSAMP Research Coordinator

Every summer, Nahant Marsh offers internships to students who enroll in Eastern Iowa Community College's Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (LSAMP) summer research program. Students from various local colleges and universities (and sometimes high school) develop and carry out a scientific research project that not only helps them gain experience and improve their skills in the sciences, but helps Nahant Marsh learn more about its local ecosystems. This summer, Nahant Marsh hosted six student interns, and their findings are summarized here.

Ricardo Saguilan (Scott Community College) continued our 11-year investigation of turtle populations at Nahant Marsh. Data for his project suggested that turtle trapping success increases with rising water temperature. An increase in turtle captures was observed when the water reached 84 ° F. In addition, he performed a radio telemetry project, whereby he tracked Blanding's turtles' movements among various wetlands at Nahant Marsh, adding to our knowledge of how these turtles use the landscape. We even successfully raised six Blanding's turtle hatchlings this summer, an initiative aimed at improving our local population of this threated species.





Photos by J. Wiebler

Two other students, William Sharis (Pleasant Valley High School) and Matthew Moncrief (Upper Iowa University), compared water quality between Nahant Marsh and Big Sand Mound Preserve, the latter of which was formed under similar geological events as Nahant Marsh but, unlike Nahant, is cut off from the Mississippi River completely and is inaccessible to the public almost entirely. They found that Nahant Marsh and Big Sand Mound share similar water

chemistry except that Nahant Marsh has higher levels of chloride, a potential side effect of human influence.



Avery Arp (Muscatine Community College) found that bat populations differed between monitoring sites at Nahant Marsh. He found that insect abundance and diversity could play a role in determining presence or absence of different bat species in Iowa. Overall, he detected five bat species this year: the big brown bat, Eastern red bat, hoary bat, silver-haired bat, and tricolored bat. We'd like to thank Amber Schorg (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) who assisted Avery in his analysis.



Photo by J. Wiebler

Elise Davis (Scott Community College) investigated the relationship between garter snake presence and earthworm abundance. Although there was no direct relationship, snake numbers appeared to be lower this summer than previous years, potentially due to extreme flooding last spring. Moreover, earthworm abundance was strikingly different between testing sites, which raises some interesting questions for future investigations.



We would like to thank these students and congratulate them on their hard work this summer. Their research is invaluable to us, and we wish them the best with their future endeavors.

CAMPS AMONG COVID

by Kelsi DeNoyer, Graduate Assistant

We all know this year has looked a bit different, but even during a worldwide pandemic, one thing remains the same: kids love camp. Nahant's camps are certainly no exception to this rule, as this summer we held six camps with over forty participants!

During each camp, we did a number of fun and unique activities, such as fire-building, fairy terrariums, rock painting, atlatl, insect pinning, and so much more! With various themes and age groups, each camp provided its own special experience for the campers.

To stay safe during these activities, a number of precautions were taken. First, camp registration was limited to reduce potential exposure. During camp, all activities were held outside in open spaces while practicing social distancing, and masks were worn for indoor restroom and drink breaks. Additionally, any materials needed for an activity were separated, disinfected, and given to the participants to use individually. Campers self-screened before coming to camp, and all surfaces were disinfected after. Although we were able to have a safe and successful summer, we hope that next year, things move back to normal so we can offer more camps to more campers!



Wild food snack sampler for Taste the Wild Camp (Sumacade, aronia berry jam, purslane pesto, bergamont biscuits, and bison meat). Photo by A. Loving



Campers learning atlatl, a Native American hunting method, at Taste the Wild Camp. Photo by K. DeNoyer

(Left) Camper learning how to build a fire during Wilderness Skills Camp. Photo by K. DeNoyer

(Right) Camper's nature wings during Prairies & Fairies Camp. Photo by K. DeNoyer



WE OUR VOLUNTEERS!

"I would like to highlight all the work that Julie Malake has put in over the years: taking photos at events, painting many, many projects for the Marsh- last but definitely not least, the Leopold bench for the Ober silent auction. Plus, lots and lots of weeding, invasives pulling, and everything else regular volunteers do. I'd also like to shout out Kent Turner for his many construction projects at Nahant. He has made a definite difference!"-Terry Collins, Friends of Nahant member

"I want to give a shout out to Britt Vickstrom. She is always extremely helpful, especially on Saturdays. She's often available to help with nature hikes, greet visitors, or staff the building when the naturalists are swamped with other duties. She, and other volunteers such as Kathy Lenaghan and Julie Malake, also spend an incredible amount of time doing weekly bird surveys. Their hard work is much appreciated." - Jimmy Wiebler, Naturalist

From being on the Board of Directors to physically working whenever needed, to being the backbone, along with Brian, of fundraising, for being the dedicated treasurer of Friends and for bringing us Kenny Salwey, and for always bringing the beer for the annual potluck. And so much more that I'm not aware of but I'm sure everyone active with Nahant in any way has stories of their own about Curtis Lundy."—Sheri Colman, Friends of Nahant member

"Sheri Colman has been with the Friends of Nahant Marsh from the beginning. She is enthusiastic and knowledgeable and talked me into coming on Saturdays to help out. Her energy really motivated me to get involved and she encouraged me to speak up and volunteer for things I thought I would never do because I was pretty shy. Sheri and I worked together to figure out how to provide midday meals for the AmeriCorps crews and staff, as well as the Friends who brought their various culinary creations for the serving table. She educated me about quantity cooking and how to make sure there was something for everyone, taking into account the many kinds of food allergies. I learned to adapt recipes and make substitutions and still have something palatable."- Lynn Abel, Friends of Nahant member

"I have consistently been amazed by the large amount of work that our volunteers can do in a short amount of time! I've seen them clear out acres of invasive species in a single afternoon, coordinate hundreds of visitors for an event, jump up to help with special construction and beautification projects, and put together last minute potlucks for our visiting AmeriCorps teams! Without their efforts, we would not be able to accomplish half of what we've done over the years. Each of you is greatly appreciated!" - Cassie Drubl, Volunteer Coordinator

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

Families in Nature

TERRIFIC TURKEYS

Learn about the unique characteristics of wild turkeys.

November 14 from 10-11 a.m.

Cost: \$5 Child Members / \$10 Child Guests. No fee for adults accompanying children.

Youth Programs

HOME SCHOOL PROGRAMS 2020-2021

Nahant Marsh Education Center provides a monthly program specifically geared towards homeschool children. The purpose of the programs is to provide homeschool students with the opportunity to learn and explore nature. Students will be able to examine the value of nature, effects of humans on nature, and how to conserve nature. Our homeschool program is geared towards grades K-8th. Each month presents a different topic and grades are separated and presented at appropriate levels. All programming will be conducted outside to encourage social distancing. Masks are encouraged but not required.

October 30: Spidermania

2:30-4 p.m.

Cost: \$6 Members/\$8 Guests

Programs for All Ages

SATURDAY GUIDED HIKES

Join a naturalist for a guided hike along the trails at the marsh. Hikes are offered on the first Saturday of the month and give visitors an opportunity to experience the environmental changes as the plants and wildlife adapt to the seasons. Whether you are a regular visitor or first-timer, there is always something to learn and experience at the marsh.

November 7, December 5 from 9-10 a.m.

Cost: \$5 suggested donation

Adult Programs

BREAKFAST NATURE CLUB

Learn the secrets of Iowa's wildlife during this monthly class at Nahant Marsh. A continental breakfast is included in the fee. Feel free to bring your own coffee mug or travel container. Programs are held on the first Friday of the month from 8-9 a.m.

November 6: TBD

Cost: \$5 Members / \$10 Guests

December 4: TBD

Cost: \$5 Members / \$10 Guests

BIRDING WITH JIMMY

Experienced and beginner birders will enjoy this series of exploring bird populations at Nahant Marsh lead by Jimmy Wiebler, AmeriCorps Environmental Educator. Each season brings in new visitors to the Marsh, and the hikes will allow you to learn more about bird identification and behavior. Hikes will take place on the fourth Saturday of each month beginning in May and ending in November.

October 24, November 28 from 8-10 a.m.

Cost: \$5 Members / \$10 Guests



Due to COVID-19 regulations, registration is limited for each program. Pre-registration for programs is strongly recommended, either online at www.nahantmarsh.org or by phone at 563.336.3370.

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WITH APPRECIATION

2020 DONATIONS

Anonymous Lynne Allison

BITCO Fllen Bluth

Fred & Martha Burnham

Arnie Christian

Denise Bulat

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Gail Rinkenberger

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2020 BIRDIES FOR CHARITY DONATIONS

Jerome Bald Mark Bawden

Ken Beck

Barbara Biggs John Bowman

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Jolinda Burr

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Scott & Beth Tinsman

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Sue Werner-Thoresen Spin & Mindy Williams

Lee Woodward

2020 ANIMAL "ADOPTIONS"

Nicolina's Turtle Company "adopted" Picasso, Captain, Ethel, Buddy, and Micheline

Cathy White "adopted" Captain and Squirtle Marsha and Bill Loving "adopted" Sunny Elizabeth Van Camp "adopted" Squirtle

Elizabeth Schramm "adopted" Rocky in memory of

Shirley Horstmann

Cassie Druhl "adopted" Buddy

The Rakus & Wille families "adopted" Picasso

Mark & Lisa Cleve "adopted" Captain Grammy Camp "adopted" Buddy Pati Holmlund "adopted" Pancake Terry Collins "adopted" Pancake

2020 HONORS & **MEMORIALS**

Bryan Adams in memory of Tony Redpath

Scott & Diana Adams in memory of Tony Redpath

Joan and James Bennett in memory of Tony Redpath

Kory Darnall in memory of Elaine Van Fossen

Mary Figel in honor of Curtis Lundy

Mary Jane Krahl in memory of Tony Redpath

Barbara Maplethorpe in memory of Shirley Horstmann

RJ & Robin Redpath in memory of Tony Redpath

Susan Tate in honor of Curtis Lundy

Wolfe Family Foundation in memory of Robert A. Wolfe

Consider Nahant Marsh in your legacy plan to help ensure that future generations can appreciate and enjoy this unique natural

WITH APPRECIATION (continued)

2020 MEMBERSHIPS

Catherine Alexander Lynne Allison John & Liz Arter Marilynn Bartles Anne & Ken Basken Linda Goff Kristen Bergren Barbara Biggs Sharon Blott

Casey Bowden Beth Harris Bernadene Bowles Kelly Harrouff John & Kathy Bowman Judy Hartley Heather Brady & Bella Balunis Ralph & Gail Heninger

Kathy & Paul Brown

Denise & Carl Bulat Carla Chapman

Anne Colville

Blake Connolly & Vered Holl Linda Cook

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Marilyn Davis

Pete Devlin

Candace Egger Nancy Flaherty Tom Fritz Ann Gaydosh

Lynne Groskurth Judith Guenther Patricia Halverson

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Barbara & Carvel Morgan

Pam Ohnemus Paige Owings

Gail Paarmann-Nikulski

Barbara Palen

Kim & Michael Pepping Heather & Eric Perry

Sherif & Teri Ragheb

Rita Rawson Gail Rinkenberger

Bill Robbins

Rene Robinson

Damion & Amy Sadd

Mary & Greg Schermer

Tony & Helen Schiltz

David Schramm

Leo Schubert & Susan Sharer

Julie Schumann Susan Schwartz Victoria Sisco

Jerry & Julie Skalak Mark & Cindy Slater

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FALL NATURE NOOK

by Kelsi DeNoyer, Graduate Assistant

Welcome to the Nature Nook! This is a place where you can find tips to be more sustainable, interesting nature facts, new places to check out to get out in nature, and more; the only rule here is to be all about nature!



Try this activity to learn more about the different shapes, sizes, and patterns of the leaves that are falling this fall!

Materials:

- Plain paper
- Crayons
- Leaves
- Paper towel

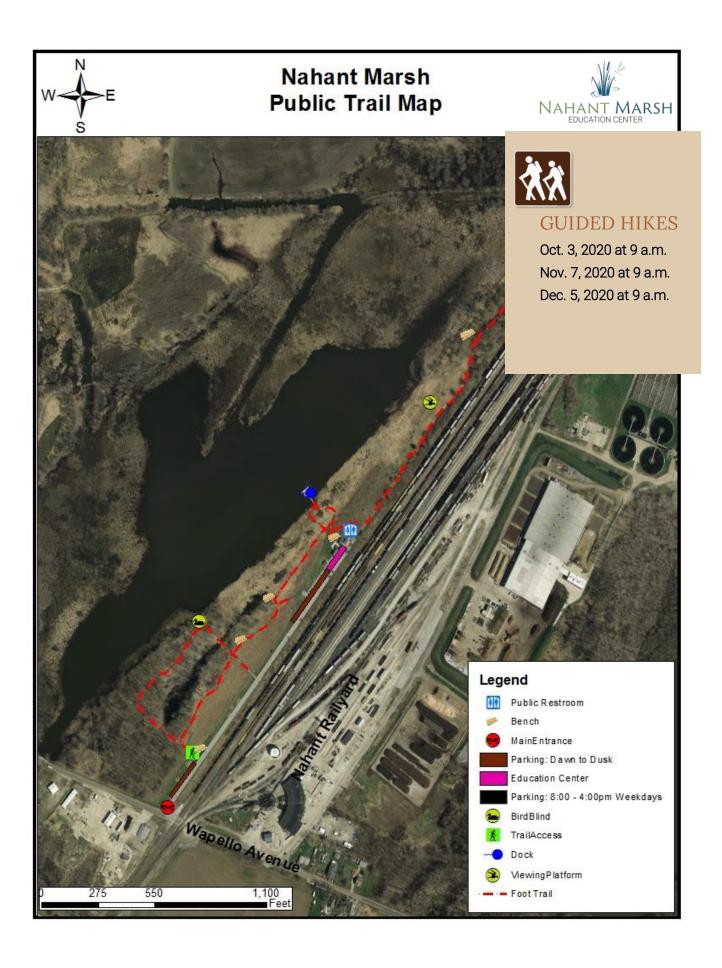




Directions

- 1. Go out and collect a variety of fresh leaves. Note: if they are dead/dry, they will crumble when you rub them!
- 2. Pat and dry the leaves off using a paper towel. If there is excess moisture on the leaf, it may get your rubbing wet!
- 3. Spread the leaves out and arrange them however you would like.
- 4. Lay the paper over the leaves.
- 5. Gently move the crayon back and forth on the paper. The outline and patterns of your leaves will begin to show. Helpful hint: remove the paper label off the crayon and use the long edge for easier rubbing!
- 6. Admire your artwork and nature's beauty!

- MAP YOUR ADVENTURE



EDUCATION CENTER HOURS

Monday-Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to noon (extended to 3 p.m. April-October)

There is no fee to visit the Education Center, but donations are always appreciated.

PRESERVE HOURS

Open Daily from Sunrise to Sunset

If the main gate is locked, trails are accessible from the front parking lot. Look for the opening in the fence near the kiosk.



GETTING TO NAHANT MARSH

Nahant Marsh 4220 Wapello Ave. Davenport, IA 52802

From Davenport, Iowa—Take Highway 22 south (Rockingham Road), turning left on Wapello Avenue (the last turn before the I-280 overpass).

From Rock Island, Illinois—Take I-280 into Iowa to the Highway 22/Rockingham Road exit. Turn right onto Highway 22, and then right onto Wapello Avenue.

Follow Wapello Avenue toward the river. Nahant Marsh will be on the left just before the railroad crossing.