Nahant News

WINTER 2021

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4220 Wapello Ave. • Davenport, IA 52802

Photo by J. Malake



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Natural Resources Technician I

ABOUT NAHANT MARSH



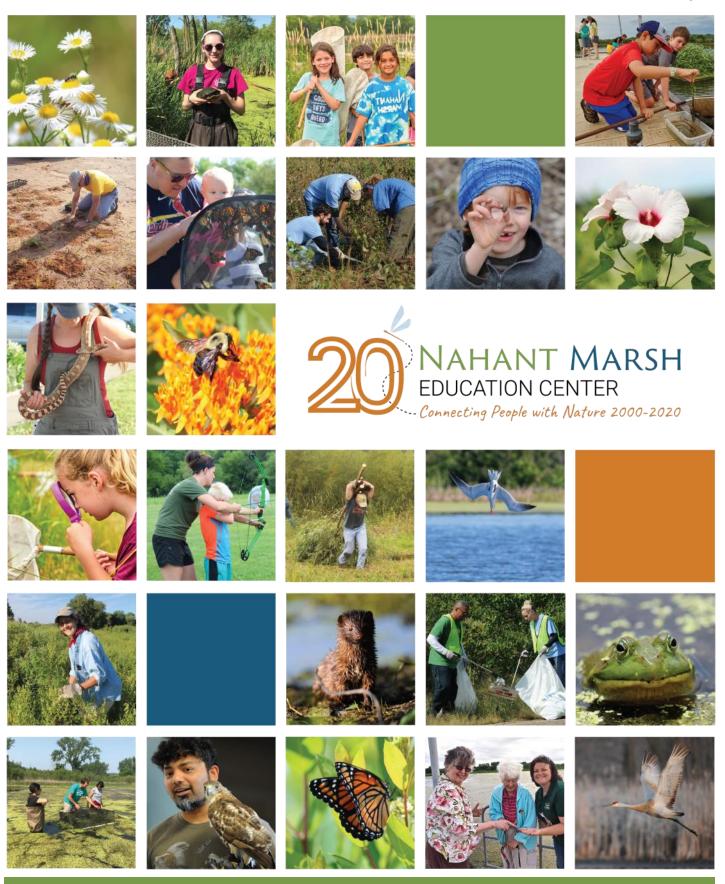


Nahant Marsh preserve is one of the largest urban wetlands on the Upper Mississippi River. It is comprised of marshy areas, mesic, wet and sand prairie, and bottomland forest. A spring-fed quarry, known as Carp Lake, and the surrounding grounds are part of the Nahant Marsh preserve as well. The 305-acre 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.









To make a donation, go to nahantmarsh.org/donations

LAYING THE GROUNDWORK FOR 20 MORE YEARS (AND BEYOND)

by Brian Ritter, Executive Director

On October 16, 2020, Nahant Marsh celebrated our 20th anniversary as an organization. During those 20 years, both the education program and the preserve have grown. To make sure that we continue to provide the best possible education and recreation experiences while protecting the marsh ecosystems, we have started to lay the groundwork for the next 20 years and beyond. The steps we take today will ensure that we have a resilient, healthy, and functional Nahant Marsh for us to enjoy now and in the future.

Master Planning

In 1998, a master plan was developed for Nahant Marsh. Even though we have accomplished a great deal on what was conceived in this original plan, we were far overdue for an update. This past fall, we began work with our partners at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to develop a new comprehensive master plan. We will use feedback gathered from the community to create an overall plan to help us prioritize future recreational, educational, and natural resources projects. More details can be found at: https://www.mvr.usace.army.mil/Rock-Island-District/Nahant-Marsh-Master-Plan/.



Photo by J. Malake

Land Restoration

During the past year, Nahant Marsh restored and enhanced wetlands and prairies on our newest 39-acre parcel. The parcel had consisted of 20 acres of farmland and 19 acres of degraded wetlands. We expanded the wetlands by about 8 acres and planted a prairie buffer around the rest. This project will provide more habitat, flood mitigation, and water filtration. Additionally, over 250 trees consisting of 18 different species were planted that will someday provide food, shelter, and shade for wildlife. Additionally, a 2-acre degraded patch of woods to the east of the education center was cleared and planted this fall and will soon be a diverse sandy savanna. If weather allows, we will be planting 1,000 trees on a 35-acre parcel this spring.

Trails

Nahant Marsh staff has begun work on improving and expanding our trail network and accessibility. Work on the east trail should be completed by June 2021. Additionally, a new 1-mile trail on our 39-acre parcel will be open to the public by the end of 2021. As part of the master planning process, we will be exploring ways to create a trail loop around the marsh to create better connectivity with the river and other public trails.



Photo by J. Wiebler

Education and Research

Recently, Eastern Iowa Community Colleges received a \$175,000 National Science Foundation grant that will allow Nahant Marsh to purchase scientific equipment. This equipment will allow us to expand our research and education efforts in the near future and will ultimately allow us to better understand and protect the plants and animals that live at the marsh.

KEEP ON LEARNING

by Amy Loving, Director of Education

This unique year presented the education team with challenges, but we have been here before (remember the historic flood of 2019?!). The team is used to adapting and solving problems. This year presented a new problem, and we were determined to find safe and innovative ways to provide environmental education to the public. We learned many things along the way, like...

- How to set up a virtual classroom (and that lighting is important!)
- How to use equipment like microphones and headsets
- Sometimes, the turtles can be camera shy
- When shooting video in the marsh, one needs to wear chest waders
- How to edit videos
- How to work together while being distant
- Laughing uncontrollably for no reason is normal when shooting a video
- And much more...

Our team also took the time to polish up on skills like bird identification and botany. With partners like Spring Forward and the Davenport Library, we have distributed around 1,000 educational kits to students in the Quad Cities. Our team has also produced dozens of videos on natural phenomena that are used for social media and in classrooms. As the year comes to a close, it's nice to reflect on all the good that has come out of such a strange time. Our education team is now equipped with new skills that elevate our programs to the next level. Stay tuned for what 2021 will bring!



NATURAL RESOURCE PROJECT UPDATE

by Kinsey Nielsen, Natural Resource Manager

The year 2020 has been busy for the natural resource crew! If you have hiked past the overlook on the East trail this year, you may have noticed that many trees and stumps were removed from the area next to the trail. We have a large ongoing restoration project that is finally close to being completed. This old, overgrown forest was filled with invasive mulberry trees and other undesirable plants. After years of brush removal, goat grazing, stump grinding, and tilling/harrowing the soil, we are ready to plant prairie seed in this almost 1.5-acre area. Many oak trees are planted in this area as well, with the ultimate goal being to turn this into a restored oak savanna habitat. This area will also include a new trail that will loop around the oak savanna, which will allow visitors to enjoy the restoration progress in the coming years. The trail is expected to be open to visitors in the spring of 2021.



Zach Strong uses a stump grinder to remove old stumps from the oak savanna restoration area on 7-17-2020. Photo by A. Nodurft.



Oak savanna ready for prairie seed 11-24-2020. Photo by K. Nielsen.



Aerial view of the oak savanna progress 8-18-2020. Photo by Z. Strong.

Other projects that have been worked on this year include removing trees/shrubs from the prairies, performing prescribed burns in select prairie areas, adding more prairie seed and native plant plugs to existing prairies, trail improvements, tree planting, derecho/storm cleanup. trash/tire removal, and of course pulling weeds by hand in many areas. We are thrilled with the progress that has been made, thanks to the hard work of both staff and volunteers, and look forward to what the future brings in the new year.







Top left: Intern Grace McKenzie removes shrubs from a prairie while Cheesecake the goat supervises on 6-23-2020. Photo by K. Nielsen.

Bottom left: Staff managing a prescribed burn at Nahant on 11-23-20. Photo by C. Shirk.

Above: Intern Zach Jacobsen plants a compass plant on 6-22-2020. Photo by K. Nielsen.

DARK-EYED JUNCO

by Allison Nodurft, AmeriCorps Educator

Dark-eyed Juncos are one of the most common birds across North America. They are a medium-sized sparrow with a rounded head and a short and stout pink bill. Junco colors vary across the country; the ones in our region will be slate colored with a white belly and white underside on their long tail. Juncos are typically found hopping around on the forest floor in coniferous forests. They will also be on the ground hopping under your feeders. Juncos are primarily seed eaters, but they will also snack on insects. They are ground nesters and rarely reuse a nest. Some Dark-eyed Juncos live year round in the mountains. moving to higher elevations in the winter. Others will spend their breeding season in Canada and Alaska, migrating down to most of the United States. Darkeyed Juncos also called "snowbirds" because they tend to show up when the winter sets in.

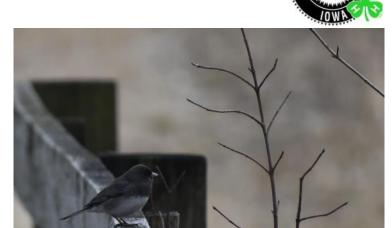
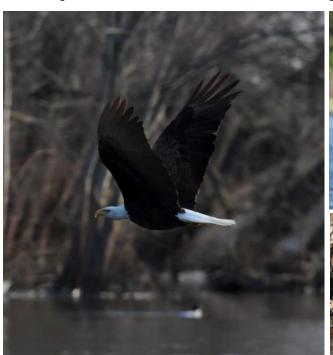


Photo by C. Shirk

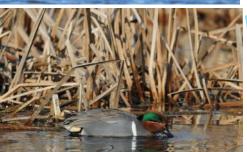
BIRDING WITH JIMMY

by Jimmy Wiebler, AmeriCorps Educator

We've completed another round of bird hikes, this year led by me, with AmeriCorps Naturalist EmiLee Novak also assisting in leading two hikes. Despite limitations of the pandemic, we had 36 participants and spent 15 hours hiking and birdwatching. We thank the Quad City Audubon Society for generously providing funds to purchase new binoculars for participants to use during our programs. Bird viewing was much more pleasurable for folks using our new optics! Species highlights include the following: Black Tern, Forster's Tern, Caspian Tern, Northern Harrier, Brown Creeper, Bald Eagle, Canvasback, and lots of Green-winged Teal! Stay tuned for upcoming bird hike dates in 2021.







Left: Bald Eagle. Top Right: Caspian Tern. Bottom Right: Green-winged Teal. Photos by J. Malake.



BUILDING BETTER BIRDERS

by Kelly J. McKay, Local Bird Expert, Mark Roberts, Environmental Education Director-Clinton County Conservation Board, and Brian Ritter, Executive Director of Nahant Marsh

The statewide program "Building Better Birders and Citizen Scientists Workshops" was created based on two pilot programs, which occurred over a four-year period: "Beginning Birding Cruises" conducted at Rock Creek Park with Clinton County Conservation Board (2017-2020) and "Beginning Birding Tours" at Nahant Marsh with the Nahant Marsh Education Center (2018-2019). The objectives of these programs were to engage the public with nature, to get them involved with local conservation organizations and efforts, and to develop an active group of citizen scientists. Both programs were very successful and as a result were awarded the "2019 Ding Darling Environmental" Education Award" and the "Outstanding Volunteer Award" by the Iowa Association of Naturalists and the Iowa Conservation Education Coalition.

With these two state awards in hand, we decided to apply for a REAP-CEP (Resource Enhancement And Protection-Conservation Education Program) grant in order to expand our successful experience with the two pilot programs across the state. As a result, we developed the "Building Better Birders and Citizen Scientists Workshops" which would be hosted by various county conservation boards across Iowa. Our workshops offered several types of programming that the counties could choose from, including birding hikes of various durations, bird identification presentations (i.e., digital field guides), and "publicfriendly" avian research presentations. Furthermore, counties were encouraged to add their own programming within workshop sessions. Originally, we had contacted 54 county conservation boards to gauge the level of interest in our proposed workshop program. 53 of the counties were interested in hosting the workshops. Photo by J. Malake.





In June 2019, our grant proposal was approved for funding by the REAP-CEP Committee. The grant will allow us to conduct 100 workshop sessions across Iowa from September 2020 through February 2022. We believed the best chance for achieving our goals was through repetition. Consequently, we gave preference to counties willing to host 4 workshop sessions. We also wanted to provide these workshops across the state. Therefore, we divided the state into five regions, with approximately 5 counties per region receiving the workshops. Due to personnel changes in some counties and Covid-19 restrictions in others, our distribution of counties was slightly altered. The Northeast Region was represented by Allamakee, Chickasaw, Clayton, Dubuque, Jackson, and Jones Counties, while the Southeast Region included Cedar, Clinton, Iowa, Jefferson, Muscatine, and Van Buren Counties. The Central Region involved Boone, Hardin, Marshall, and Warren Counties. The Southwestern Region was represented by Cass, Crawford, Decatur, Pottawattamie, and Ringgold Counties, while the Northwest Region included Buena Vista, Cerro Gordo, Palo Alto, Sioux, and Woodbury Counties. Assuming these workshops are a success, we hope to secure another REAP-CEP grant in the near future to accommodate interested counties which were not included in this grant.

During the 2020 Fall season, amidst the raging pandemic, we still managed to conduct 16 of the 17 workshop sessions that were scheduled. Only the workshop in Allamakee County had to be rescheduled. The 16 workshops which were held this fall, occurred in 14 counties between 5 September and 20 November. Of these workshop sessions, two each were held in Cedar and Jackson Counties, while 12 other counties (Cerro Gordo, Chickasaw, Clayton,

BUILDING BETTER BIRDERS

(continued from page 8)

Clinton, Decatur, Dubuque, Jefferson, Muscatine, Palo Alto, Ringgold, Sioux, and Warren) each hosted their first workshops. During the fall workshop sessions, we conducted a total of 16 diurnal bird hikes, 4 owl prowls, 8 bird identification presentations, 4 research presentations, as well as 4 county-based programs.

During our bird hikes, we identified an amazing 145 cumulative species. Among these, some of the most noteworthy birds included:

- Trumpeter Swan
- Yellow-billed Cuckoo
- Common Nighthawk
- Sandhill Crane
- Wilson's Snipe
- Franklin's Gull
- Common and Forster's Terns
- Osprey
- Northern Harrier
- Bald Eagle
- Red-shouldered and Broadwinged Hawks

- Long-eared and Northern Sawwhet Owls
- Pileated Woodpecker
- Merlin
- Peregrine Falcon
- Alder and Willow Flycatchers
- Blue-headed and Philadelphia Vireos
- Purple Martin
- Red-breasted Nuthatch
- Brown Creeper
- Winter Wren

- Veery
- Gray-cheeked and Wood Thrushes
- American Pipit
- Pine Siskin
- Fox and Lincoln's Sparrows
- Eastern Meadowlark
- Rusty Blackbird
- 22 species of warblers
- Summer and Scarlet Tanagers
- Rose-breasted Grosbeak
- Indigo Bunting

Overall, the first 16 workshops were attended by 384 total individuals, which resulted in 521 cumulative participants throughout all the individual workshop sessions. All data collected during the bird hikes were included in a fall seasonal report to the Iowa Ornithologists' Union. Therefore, all bird hike and owl prowl participants contributed to this citizen science effort. Consequently, these 16 workshops produced 194 citizen scientists! We are off to a good start, and looking forward to the remaining 84 workshop sessions.





ANIMAL UPDATE

by Madeline Kull, Natural Resource Technician I and Animal Caretaker

The reptile room at Nahant Marsh has had an unusual quietness about it for almost a year now. Well, it's never *truly* quiet— from the hum and splash of the many filters, and the occasional loud crash of Rizzo the black rat snake toppling his hide from his shelf, there is always some noise filling the space of the animal room. However, the room has lacked one thing: the voices of the wonderful visitors that come to see the animal ambassadors throughout the year.









Top left: Pancake the Softshell turtle. Top right: Captain the Blanding's Turtle. Bottom left: Cucumber the Green Tree Frog. Bottom right: Rizzo the Black Rat Snake. Photos by M. Kull.

Due to the pandemic, the animals ambassadors have not had the opportunity to go out on outreach programs or be part of field trips and programs here at the Education Center. Some of the animals are enjoying their extended vacation, while others like Bob the three-toed box turtle are looking for any attention they can get!

Either way, the animals have been staying healthy and happy over the course of the pandemic with intimate care and as much attention as can be provided to them. Animal ambassador adoptions are still available on our website, and donations are extremely appreciated during this hard time. We all look forward to seeing our community as soon as it is safe to do so, including our animal ambassadors.

UPCOMING EVENTS

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.

February 6, March 6, April 3 from 9-10 a.m.

Cost: \$5 suggested donation

SPRING CLEANUP

Celebrate warmer weather by helping to spruce up Nahant Marsh during our annual cleanup. Projects will be both light and heavy duty. Gloves and bags will be provided. Volunteers will receive a T-shirt.

May 1 from 9:00-11:30 a.m. To learn more and to register, visit www.xstreamcleanup.org.



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 Birding with and ending in November.

March 27 from 8-10 a.m.

Cost: \$5 Members / \$10 Guests

Due to COVID-19, the Education Center is CLOSED to the public until further notice. Select programming will be offered in-person on a scheduled basis. Other programming will be offered online. Please check our calendar and Facebook page for upcoming programs. Pre-registration is strongly recommended, either online at www.nahantmarsh.org or by phone at 563.336.3370.

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION

by Cassie Druhl, Volunteer Coordinator

Despite the Education Center being closed for much of the year, in addition to programs being canceled, our volunteers have continued to shine and provide much needed assistance to the Nahant staff with several projects! We would like to give special shout-outs to the following volunteers:

- Hank and Becky Hartman have spent over 100 hours removing willows from the prairie in front of the Education Center, weed pulling at the Clarke property, seed harvesting, and planting native plants.
- Mark and Cindy Slater have helped nearly every week at volunteer projects including tree planting, seed harvesting, seeding cover crops, willow removal, mulching around trees, trail improvements, and seeding native prairie.
- Julie Malake, Britt Vickstrom, and Kathy Lenaghan have sacrificed sleeping in on Saturday mornings to arrive at Nahant at the break of dawn to count various bird species and other wildlife seen at the marsh for our ongoing survey lists.
- Julie Malake, Jolinda Burr, Mona Druhl, Randy Hervey, Bob Bryant, Kathy Bowman, Curtis Lundy, and Britt Vickstrom participated in a special stakeholder meeting to provide volunteer feedback on Nahant's new master plan.

Thank you to these volunteers, as well as our other Friends members and volunteers, who have continued to support us and our mission to protect, enhance, and restore the Marsh through education, research, and conservation.

WITH APPRECIATION

2020 DONATIONS

360 Steel **Active Endeavors** Adler Schermer Foundation Catherine Alexander Kathleen Alfano Lawrence and Kathryn Allen Ashley Allen American Water Charitable Foundation Anonymous Arconic Foundation John and Liz Arter Marilynn Bartels Bass Pro Shops Mark and Rita Bawden Linda Baxley The Bechtel Trusts Ken Beck Honey and Daniel Bedell Drake and Shannon Bernhard Barbara Biggs **BITCO** Blank Park Zoo Ellen Bluth John and Kathy Bowman Mary Elizabeth Brandsgard Rebecca Brooke Jane Broughton Paul and Kathy Brown **Bob Bryant Bucktown Revue** Denise Bulat Fred and Martha Burnham Jolinda Burr William and Dixie

Burress MaryLou Carlson Carousel Charitable Trust Roy J. Carver Charitable Trust Arnie Christian Circa '21 Mark and Lisa Cleve Terry Collins Anne Colville Continental Cement Linda Cook Nadine Kupresin Coon Oliver Williams and Linda Coot Jane and Les Cox Kody Craddick Rich Craddick Phil Crandall Crane and Pelican Paul Crosser Cru Susan Daley J Hobart Darbyshire Kory Darnall Laurel Davis Nicholas De La Cruz Barbara DeGraf Gary and Sharon Dembicki Kelsi and Andrew DeNoyer Naomi DeWinter Lynn Dixon Olivia Dorothy Cassie Druhl Kelly Drumm-Janoski

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

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Scott, Kevin Oetken

Excavating

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2020 DONATIONS (continued)

Modern Woodmen Sean Moeller Joel Mohr Norm and Janet Moline Moline Conservation Club Jason Moritz Kathy and Gary Morris Mumford Family Foundation Tim Murphy Muscatine Pollinator Project Thomas Nagle Necker's Jewelers Network for Good Lorrie Newman Jo Nicholson Nicolina's Turtle Company Kinsey Nielsen Pam Ohnemus Terry Ousley Nina Pagluica Leah Patton

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

WITH APPRECIATION

2020 HONORS & MEMORIALS

Patti Holmlund in memory of Ben

Mark Ackelson in memory of George W. Ackelson

Roland Caldwell in memory of Anne Corbi

Jane Cox in memory of SSG Nathan M. Cox

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Honey Bedell in memory of Melonee Docherty

Ellen Bluth in memory of Melonee Docherty

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Steven Fenton in memory of Melonee Docherty

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Kirk Laflin, on behalf of P.E.T.E. in memory of Melonee Docherty

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Blanche and Ken Sheinkopf in memory of Melonee Docherty

Gabrielle Temple in memory of Melonee Docherty

Ken Walz in memory of Melonee Docherty

Afton and Nick Myers in memory of Jon Hatch

Elizabeth Hodges in memory of Jim and Beverly Hodges

Jerry Skalak in memory of Caleb Neff

Terry Ousley in memory of Terry and June Ousley

Mary Lou Petersen in memory of Peter Petersen

Lee Ann Wille in memory of John Rakus

Art Jackson in memory of Bill Bollman and Randy Roberts

Reid Stamer in memory of Becky Stamer

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Joan and James Bennett in memory of Tony Redpath

Mary Jane Krahl in memory of Tony Redpath

Kathleen Logan in memory of Timothy Logan

Kelly Drumm-Janoski in memory of Donald W. Drumm

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Steve Kull in honor of Madeline Kull

John Pepke in memory of Frank G. Dexter III

Mary Figel in honor of Curtis Lundy

Susan Tate in honor of Curtis Lundy

Jason Moritz in honor of Mike and Pat Moritz

Nichollette Rider in honor of Kimberly Crest Veterinary Hospital Staff

Susan Thoreson in honor of Cal Werner

2020 ANIMAL ADOPTIONS

Nicolina's Turtle Co. adopted Picasso, Captain, Micheline, Ethel, Bob, Pancake, Squirtle, and Buddy

bob, i aricanc, oquirtic, aria buday

Cathy White adopted Captain and Squirtle

Marsha Loving adopted Sunny in honor of Bill Loving

Elizabeth VanCamp adopted Squirtle

Elizabeth Schramm adopted Rocky in memory of Shirley

Horstmann

Cassie Druhl adopted Buddy

Mark and Lisa Cleve adopted Captain

Grammy Camp adopted Buddy in honor of Vinny, Alivia, Jayden,

Michael, and Aliya

Patti Holmlund adopted Pancake

Terry Collins adopted Pancake

Rescued adopted Squirtle

Patty Gillette adopted Rizzo in honor of Guthrie, Laithe, Juniper,

and Cort Hul

Mark and Cindy Slater adopted Ethel

Jane Cox adopted Sunny in honor of Aryanne Encarnacion-Cox

Joe and Sally Stewart adopted Pancake

Vince and Melissa Lamb adopted Bob in honor of Ambrose Kerr

Kody Craddick adopted Bob

Jo Nicholson adopted Captain

Lee Ann Wille adopted Picasso in honor of the Rakus and Wille

Families

Susan Schwartz adopted Squirtle in honor of the Schwartz kids

Jonathan Jeschke adopted Picasso in honor of Connie Jeschke

Robert Thompson adopted Bob in honor of Judith Lee

Betsy Huston adopted Pancake in honor of Aletheia Hadjis

Betsy Huston adopted Micheline in honor of Adaira Hadjis

WITH APPRECIATION (continued)

2020 MEMBERSHIPS

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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!

Winter Tracks

Winter snow is the perfect canvas for examining animal tracks. Use this guide to see what's been trekking through the snow!







White-tailed Deer



Raccoon



Opossum



Coyote



Muskrat



Red Fox



Mink



Bobcat



Squirrel



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TRAIL NAME	LENGTH	TRAIL ACTIVITY	TRAIL FEATURES
1 Woodland Loop	0.4 mile	Hiking	Bottomland Forest, Tallgrass Prairie
2 Marsh Trail	0.4 mile	Hiking	Tallgrass Prairie, Marsh
3 East Trail	0.9 mile	Hiking	Sand Prairie, Bottomland Forest

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.