



Keokuk County Conservation Board News

FALL/WINTER 2018-19

*Serving through education, recreation,
and conservation of our natural resources*

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Fall sunrise at south boat ramp on Lake Belva Deer

Director's Notes...

I hope everyone is having a great fall and winter because I know that I am. Well that might be just a little un-true do to the fact my wife and I are building a house. We do seem to be getting along fairly well despite all the spending and decision making that is taking place. It was time to down size and have no stairs to go up and down like the two-story we are leaving. It will be nice when it's done; I just can't wait until that grateful day arrives.

I am still on the learning curve with these new Directors' duties and the last nine monthes have been an absolute blast to be working at the Conservation Board. We had a previous summer ranger come back and work the summer with us and this turned into a blessing due to the fact there was virtually no training needed, he just hit the ground running. We had an over night RAGBRAI stay in Sigourney this past July and this made for a very busy couple of days in Belva Deer Park. It all went well do to the over preparation of the staff, an excellent team atmosphere, and the day and night went off without a hitch. The addition of Stratton Bond to the staff is a valuable asset due to his previous certification and experence and all the while keeping Brian and I on our toes. I am truly pleased to be working with men of such high standards and professionalism and can't wait to see what the furture brings. Have a great winter and be safe.

Director Pie Reighard



Belva Deer Rangers working RAGBRAI 2018

MONARCH BUTTERFLY

Danaus plexippus

One of the most beautiful and majestic butterflies on the planet, the Monarch butterfly is believed to have been named in honor of King William III of England, whose secondary title Prince of Orange makes reference to the butterfly's main color. The Monarch is a milkweed butterfly and is probably the most familiar of North American butterflies. It features an easily recognized black, orange and white pattern on the wings which span up to four inches.



Monarchs are migrating butterflies, traveling north and south on an annual basis to hibernate. In the fall, populations east of the Rocky Mountains travel to Mexico and parts of Florida. Populations west of the Rockies overwinter in parts of coastal southern California. It is interesting to note that although they are not the same butterflies each year, the same trees are used to roost by each returning new generation. They go through four stages during one life cycle and four generations in one year with the fourth generation being the one to migrate. In February and March, hibernating butterflies come out of hibernation to mate and travel north to find the milkweed plants needed to lay their eggs. Eggs are laid in March and April, hatching in four days. The larvae will spend the next two weeks consuming the milkweed plant and growing. It will go through four molts and increase its weight 2000 times over its birth weight. Once full grown, the caterpillar attaches itself to the bottom of a horizontal leaf, hanging by its hind legs. It molts a fifth and final time into an opaque blue green chrysalis. In warm summer temperatures it will complete metamorphosis in about two weeks, emerging as a fully formed adult butterfly. This first generation will live two to six weeks, dying after laying eggs for generation number two. The second generation will be born in May and June, the third in July and August. These Monarchs will go through the same life cycle as the first generation, living only two to six weeks. The fourth generation will be born in September and October. Unlike the previous generations, these will live six to eight months, allowing them to make the 2500 mile migration south to overwinter. The following February they will return to the milkweed patches of the north and the cycle repeats itself.

The larval stage of the Monarch feeds exclusively on milkweed. Milkweed is not found in the winter overwintering grounds explaining the need to return north each spring. The milkweed plant provides the caterpillar with everything it needs to grow at a truly astonishing rate but also provides another benefit. Milkweed is toxic and feeding on it causes a buildup of cardenolides, a steroid which causes the caterpillar to have a foul taste and sickening effect on predators who might attempt to feed on them. After metamorphosis, the steroid shifts to different parts of the body concentrating primarily in the wings and abdomen. As adult butterflies, Monarchs feed upon nectars, water and juice of many fruits. This liquid diet is sucked up with the butterfly's proboscis, a small straw which is coiled under the head at most times.

In recent years there has been concerns raised about declining populations of these beautiful butterflies. Some researchers estimate a reduction of up to 90% of the previous populations. One cause sited is the extensive use of glyphosate for weed control. When used in conjunction with glyphosate resistant crops, the milkweeds needed for reproduction are all but eliminated. In addition, the development of lands for human use further eliminates not only the milkweed needed for reproduction but also the roosting trees of the wintering grounds. The planting of pollinator plots will hopefully help provide the needed plant cover. Careful consideration of tree removal in overwintering areas will be beneficial as well.

Ranger's Report...

My name is Stratton Bond and I am the new Ranger/Naturalist for the Keokuk County Conservation Board. I am very excited to be back working in the area that I grew up in. I am a graduate of Pekin Community High School, attended Indian Hills for two years then transferred to Iowa State University graduating with the degree of Animal Ecology. After graduation I applied for a position in Missouri with the Department of Conservation as a Conservation Agent. The academy lasted 6 months and I was assigned to beautiful Knox County in the Northeast region of the state two counties below the Davis County, Iowa line. When I caught wind of an opening at the park I jumped on applying. I had worked here for two summers for an internship while in college and knew that it would be an excellent place to work full time. I began my time with KCCB in March of 2018

I have attended two conferences so far while being here; CCPOA and IAN. CCPOA is the association for county conservation peace officers - here we get required mandatory training as well as other great instruction and resources to grow our abilities and effectiveness as rangers and law enforcement personnel in general. It is also a great time to speak with other officers with how they conduct business in their parks as the technology and way of enforcement are always evolving. IAN is the Iowa Association of Naturalists - which is all about environmental education and public programs. This marks the very first time that Keokuk County has had a naturalist as a member of the IAN and also the first time one of us had attended a conference. I was not sure of what to expect at it, but it was extremely productive, we touched on ways to give better programs, learned about lichens from a DNR ecologist, and I learned how to preserve types of animals to use in programs.

Along with all of that I was able to get to know and ask questions from some of Iowa's greatest and long-time naturalists. It is great to be connected to such a community. I am lucky to have a Director that encourages and supports the professional development and education of his staff and gives us the ability to expand our training. This position brings new challenges and opportunities every single day. I am excited for the progressive direction the board is now heading in multiple areas of the conservation field and cannot wait to see where we are in the coming years. I have included a great recipe for jerky that I was able to try at the IAN conference - I highly recommend giving it a try.

Beginning with the summer of 2019 you may notice the new patch on our uniform shirts. This new patch is modeled after the original Conservation Board patch from 1955. We feel this patch will more clearly identify us as law enforcement officers to the public.





Hen of the Woods Jerky

Makes about 2 cups marinade

- 1 cup sweet apple cider
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup soy sauce
- 2-4 cloves garlic, chopped
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. ground white pepper
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. ground/chopped fennel
- 5 Tbsp. maple syrup
- $\frac{1}{2}$ - 1 Tbsp. Sriracha chili-garlic sauce

1. Place all ingredients in a blender, puree 1 minute. Pour in glass container w/ cover.
2. Clean mushroom, make $\frac{1}{8}$ " thick slices of core and larger fronds. All parts can be used but dehydrate at different rates.
3. Boil mushroom for 10 min. and drain. Place Hen in marinade while still hot, refrigerate 4-6 hours
4. Remove from marinade, drain liquid off.
5. Dehydrate @ 120-130 degree F for 6-12 hours, until dried and leathery.



40th Annual 6th Grade Campout

On September 21st the annual 6th grade campout was held at Belva Deer Park. There were 55 students and 17 sponsors in attendance from Sigourney, Keota, EV, Tri-County, and Pekin School Districts. The evening program featured Audra Farley; a biology major from William Penn University. She presented a program on snakes of Iowa, but also brought a python for the kids to handle which was a huge hit.

Many thanks to the NRCS office of Keokuk County for sponsoring the campout.



6th Grade campers participating in an activity

Thank You!

The Keokuk County Board of Supervisors would like to thank the Washington County Riverboat Foundation for participating, through a grant, in the Lake Belva Deer Trail project located East of Sigourney. The completion of this project prepares the trail for the final phase to pave the trail and enjoyment of many trail users



Belva Deer trail looking north towards park entrance.



**BOY SCOUTS
OF AMERICA®**



A new Eagle Scout project at the South ramp features a kiosk that will hold our rules and information signage. The project was completed by scouts representing Troop 52 from Sigourney, Iowa.



Peiffer Ends Term with Conservation Board

Director Reighard presents outgoing board member Jay Peiffer with a plaque in appreciation of his service to the advancement of conservation in Keokuk County and its residents.



@keokukcountyconservation

Former Director Long in Retirement

David has been enjoying his newfound free time in retirement by spending ample hours outdoors. This winter he trapped this 62 pound beaver in between calling coyotes, duck hunting, and walking the fields for pheasants. We hope you enjoy it!



KCCB Board Members

Casey Thompson..... Sigourney
 Jay Peiffer..... South English
 Greg Dyer..... Richland
 Julie Wohler Sigourney
 Rex Greiner..... South English

Staff

Pie ReighardExecutive Director
 Stratton Bond.....Ranger/Naturalist
 Brian Ulin.....Maintenance/Ranger

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Keokuk County Conservation Board
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 Sigourney, IA 52591



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