



DCCS Newsletter

Dubuque County Conservation Society

"Organized in 1933 for Protection of Soil, Forests, Waters and Wildlife"

P.O. Box 645 Dubuque, IA 52004-0645



A society grows great when old men plant trees in whose shade they shall never sit. ~ Greek proverb

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This feature of the Wildlife Diversity Program is educating us on how to support wildlife where we live. The Iowa DNR is focusing on areas where humans and wildlife can connect. They represent positive actions that can be taken to make your little corner of the world a little more welcoming to wildlife.

Do you enjoy watching the bats fly down the street and around your trees in the evening helping with insect control, but do not want to hear them in your ceilings or see them flying through your house. When you are sure all the bats have left, seal the places where they were getting in and place a bat house near the place of entry.

Evaluating what we can and can not live with and then educating ourselves on how to address problems that may arise is an important element of having a wildlife-friendly landscape!

Reduce Conflicts with Wildlife The impact we can have incorporating wildlife friendly practices throughout our lives is tremendous and beneficial to the natural world. But, what happens when those actions are too successful? What happens when we attract a type of wildlife that we'd rather not have at our home?

Wildlife conflict comes in a variety of forms from a feeling of uneasiness at something's presence to damage done to a house. Tips for avoiding conflict when putting wildlife friendly practices into action. Continued on page 5.

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Autumn brings a welcoming crispness to the air. Fun abounds statewide for those in search of fall color and good times outdoors. From fall festivals to apple orchards, Iowa has many fall activities to celebrate local traditions and create memories with your family. Start planning your autumn excursions today with these great resources:

- [Iowa State Park Passport](#)- discover your new favorite parks
- [Travel Iowa](#) - must-visit fall attractions, fall festivals, scenic drives and more
- [MyCountyParks.com](#) - attend a fun fall program for the whole family at a local county park
- [Activities for Families - Project Learning Tree](#) - explore trees in the woods, a local park or your own backyard (<https://www.plt.org/activities-for-families/>)
- A new DNR web page makes it easier to explore outdoor experiences that are accessible to all this fall. [Iowa's Accessible Outdoors](#) highlights locations across the state where visitors can enjoy accessible activities like trails, fishing piers, playgrounds, picnic areas, scenic views and overnight stays. Each experience has been reviewed in person by DNR staff to ensure there are accessible pathways, nearby parking, and—in most cases—restrooms.



[Sign up](#) to get fall color reports emailed to you weekly **starting Oct. 1** through the last week of October. Get details on where to see the best fall color in Iowa, along with fall travel ideas and other fun ways to get outside.

Iowa offers some stunning views during the fall months along with various ways to experience them - whether you're on a [bike or hiking trail](#), on the [water](#) or in a car. The northern third of Iowa peaks, depending on weather, the weekend closest to Oct. 10. The center third peaks the first to third weeks of October, and the southern third peaks the second through fourth weeks of October.

Why Do Leaves Change Colors in the Fall?

During the growing season, leaves get their green color from photosynthesis-generating pigment called chlorophyll. In the fall, lower temperatures and shorter periods of daylight trigger a response from trees that winter is coming, and they need to prepare for dormancy. They stop making chlorophyll in the leaves, which allows the other pigments to shine. The color depends on which pigment is most present in the leaves after chlorophyll production has stopped. Red and purple colors come from pigments called anthocyanins, while carotenoids yield oranges and yellows. How much of each pigment, and therefore the color of the fall leaf, depends on the tree variety and its location.

Trees and shrubs that exhibit early fall color could be a signal that the plant is suffering from root issues, stem rot from deep planting, disease or severe drought. Contact a certified arborist to determine the cause and determine a plan.

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Fall is a great time to plant many species of trees and shrubs. The Iowa DNR State Forest Nursery offers fall delivery in November for most hardwoods and shrubs. Visit our online store at Nursery.iowaDNR.gov to view seedling varieties and to place your fall order.

AMES - The DNR State Forest Nursery is gearing up for fall 2025 and spring 2026 seedling orders. For more information, visit the online sales site at <http://nursery.iowadnr.gov/> or call 1-800-865-2477 during regular business hours, Monday – Friday. DNR’s expert nursery staff can assist with species selection and answer questions about your tree needs and nursery offerings.

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Lawn and Garden Tips

It is recommended to continue to cut grass at 2.5 or 3 inches to help make the roots stronger. It is also a good time to overseed while the soil is still warm.

It is the time to remove any undesirable fruits, vegetables, and weeds from your gardens/plant beds before the seeds create more work next growing season.

Wait until after Oct. 15 to prune oak trees. Add fallen leaves to your compost pile. Prune any dead or diseased branches from trees and shrubs and discard.

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Motus Wildlife Tracking Network – DCCS played a role in support of the Motus system in Mines of Spain. The Motus Wildlife Tracking Network (motus.org) continues to expand in Iowa, with over 30 automated radio telemetry receiver stations across the state detecting tagged migratory wildlife. The Motus system is a collaborative network of wildlife tagging projects and radio receiver stations across the Americas including Costa Rica, that communicate together and allow researchers to track long-distance movements of small animals, like birds and bats detected by a Motus receiver station in Iowa during spring migration. In 2024, Iowa Motus stations recorded 291 detections of 151 individuals from 24 bird species. From 2021 through December of 2024, Iowa Motus stations recorded 607 detections of 340 individuals from 39 bird species. The information gathered by Motus is helping us understand the migratory speed, timing, and habitat use of many bird species that migrate through our state. To learn more about Motus project in Iowa, and see bird capturing/tagging in action check out this video! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h31T3iM8J88>

Locher Recreation Area

Dubuque County Conservation Society board member Matt McQuillen, a self described Project Specialist (GSD) for Eastern Iowa Outdoors Foundation and Twin Rivers Pheasants Forever, has worked out details with 5 neighbors to clean up boundary lines and make the area more accessible. Matt and Twin Rivers Pheasants Forever took the lead on coordinating all the funding partners for Phase 1 of the acquisition and *Dubuque County Conservation Society* contributed more than \$100,000 for this great project. The plat to finalize the boundary changes is before the Dubuque County Supervisors. After approval, deeds will be exchanged and the resulting property will be transferred to Dubuque County Conservation Board for further development. Matt also met with Cascade Economic Development to discuss future plans.

Bard Concrete completed significant reclamation work this summer which greatly improved the site and in early September the shoreline was prepared for seeding then straw was applied and crimped. This improvement will make the lake area more user friendly – especially for families, seniors and their grandchildren. With seeding work being completed and people driving in areas not desired for traffic, signage has been placed to direct traffic ONLY to the parking area. If that fails to control traffic, the site will be closed during site development.

A design firm likely will be engaged to complete a site plan. Attached is a concept put together by Brad Mormann of Jones County Conservation Board. He is also a Twin Rivers Pheasants Forever board member, a group that was also involved in the purchase of the area. This is a CONCEPT simply for demonstrative use. This illustrates why it will be necessary to engage a firm to improve the site.



This property is a 3 phase project.

Phase 1-acquisition and preparation for prairie and wildflower establishment with transfer to Dubuque County Conservation Board. The purchase price is \$500,000 with an estimated value in excess of \$1M. Twin Rivers Pheasants Forever, Dubuque County Conservation Society and Eastern Iowa Conservation Foundation are leading the preliminary purchase of the property with many other partners committed to provide support, including the Iowa Audubon Society. Boundary adjustments, surveying, and sand mine reclamation.

Phase 2-internal development to include trail, parking area, and possible fully accessible fishing platform(s)

Phase 3-trail connection to Cascade

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Did you know? Just 2 hours outdoors each day lowers blood pressure by 10 points.

Household Battery Recycling - Residential

Improper disposal of batteries in the trash (landfilled materials) and recycling carts is a leading cause of solid waste and material recovery facility fires. Prevent fires and the release of hazardous chemicals by properly recycling of your batteries. Residents can bring their batteries in small sealable bags to the locations listed below:

The Regional Collection Center, located at 101 Airborne Road accepts All types of batteries, except Electric Vehicle (EV) Batteries, are accepted at this facility which is open by appointment only.

Examples include:

Single use batteries	Rechargeable batteries (Ni-Cd,	Battery Containing Devices
Alkaline	NiMH, Li-Ion, etc.)	(Tablets, Cell Phones, Laptops,
Zinc air (hearing aid)	Auto batteries (not EV)	Greeting Cards)
Lithium	Battery Back-ups	

Other Community Residential Battery Drop-off Locations

- ❖ *Carnegie-Stout Public Library, 360 W 11th St. Dubuque, IA 52001*
- ❖ *Dubuque County Library - Asbury Branch, 5290 Grand Meadow Dr. Asbury, IA 52002*
- ❖ *Dubuque County Library - Peosta Branch (NICC), 8342 NICC Dr. Peosta, IA 52068*
- ❖ *Dubuque Municipal Services Center - Lobby, 925 Ct. Dubuque, IA 52001 Email: publicworks@cityofdubuque.org*
- ❖ *Dyersville City Hall, 340 1st Ave E. Dyersville, IA 52040*

Iowa Hunting Seasons - <https://www.iowadnr.gov/things-do/hunting-trapping/iowa-hunting-seasons?>

2025 Small Game Season Dates

Rabbit (Cottontail): Aug 30, 2025 - Feb 28, 2026	Rooster Pheasant (Youth): October 18-19, 2025
Squirrel (Fox and Gray): Aug 30, 2025 - Jan 31, 2026	Rooster Pheasant: October 25, 2025 - Jan 10, 2026
Ruffed Grouse: Oct 4, 2025 - Jan 31, 2026	Bobwhite Quail: October 25, 2025 - January 31, 2026
Gray Partridge: Oct 11, 2025 - Jan 31, 2026	Iowa's rabbit, squirrel season opened Aug. 30

The good news for Iowa's cottontail rabbit hunters is that Iowa's rabbit population is the highest in more than a decade, with the vast majority of Iowa considered to have good to excellent populations. Iowa's cottontail rabbit population estimates are included in the August roadside survey of upland wildlife species that will be posted at www.iowadnr.gov/pheasantsurvey by early September.

"It should be a really good year for rabbit hunting not only for experienced hunters, but for young or novice hunters who can learn necessary skills with little competition," said Todd Bogenschutz, upland wildlife research biologist for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

Rabbit is a lean, low fat meat and popular table fare considered a delicacy in many culinary circles.

The daily limit is 10 rabbits with a possession limit of 20. Jackrabbit season is closed. While wearing blaze orange clothing is not required to hunt rabbits, it is recommended. Shooting hours for rabbits is sunrise to sunset.

Local squirrel populations vary depending upon nut production and it appears to be a good nut year in many areas.

Squirrel hunting is an inexpensive and exciting way to get introduced into hunting. Those new to hunting can gain valuable woodsmanship skills as squirrels will twist and turn hunters through the woodlands. It's also an opportunity to meet new landowners.

Hunters looking for places to go rabbit or squirrel hunting should use Iowa's online hunting atlas at www.iowadnr.gov/hunting, with more than 600,000 acres of public land that allows hunting.

Hunters have the opportunity to hunt these species on additional acres of private land enrolled into the popular Iowa Habitat and Access Program (IHAP). The IHAP allows hunters access to the portion of the property covered by the agreement, from Sept. 1 to May 31. Conservation officers will provide assistance and enforcement, if needed.

Media Contacts: Rabbits - Todd Bogenschutz, Upland Wildlife Research Biologist, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 515-979-0828. Squirrels – Jim Coffey, Forest Wildlife Research Biologist, Iowa DNR, 641-774-2958.

Avian Influenza Found Among Geese in the Dubuque Area

A article in the September 24 issue of the Telegraph Herald, reported that public health officials announced the highly contagious H5N1 avian influenza, also known as bird flu, was detected in dead geese in the Dubuque area. Infected Canada geese were discovered at Heritage Pond north of Dubuque and at Bergfeld Pond in the Chavenelle Road industrial park. Dubuque County Conservation Executive Director Brian Preston said there also have been "numerous

other reports” of dead birds at John Deere Marsh and along the Mississippi River.

The chance of transmission to humans is very low, but the disease can spread fast through wild flocks as well as backyard and commercial poultry farms. Although an avian flu outbreak in southwest Minnesota affected a flock of 25,000 turkeys, the virus has not shown up yet this year in Iowa poultry farms.

“It’s hard to remain vigilant all the time,” said Rachel Ruden, a wildlife veterinarian at the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. “When we have indicators, it helps everyone prepare.”

Canada geese are the primary species impacted by a recent increase in sick and dead wild birds in Iowa, though mallard, red-tailed hawk and “possibly wood duck and American white pelican” also are affected, according to a joint press release Dubuque city and county officials and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

Most of those birds have shown signs of highly pathogenic avian influenza: *irregular head and neck movements, swimming in circles or tremors*. Other symptoms include lethargy or cloudy eyes.

“Typically, geese will swim in circles, their heads will wobble,” Preston said. “Those are kind of clinical signs of avian influenza.”

“Late this summer, we had several raptors that people called (about) and reported that they were injured or not doing well, so we picked them up, took them to rehab (and) a couple of those ended up being positive for avian influenza also,” he said. “So it is affecting the eagles and red-tailed hawks and other species, as well.”

Hunters should avoid sickly birds and wear disposable gloves when field-dressing waterfowl, away from any domestic poultry. Wash hands and use a dedicated set of tools and boots when in the field. Offal and feathers should be double-bagged for disposal. More information is available at tinyurl.com/HPAIhunters.

Poultry owners should make sure food and water containers are kept clean and coops are kept clear of wild bird nests. People should also wash hands and boots in between visits to the flocks. Poultry producers or those with backyard flocks who suspect a case of avian influenza are advised to immediately contact their veterinarian. Possible cases must be reported to the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship at 515-281-5305.

Officials emphasized that residents should not handle sick or dead birds.

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Chronic Wasting Disease

Chronic wasting disease is caused by infected prions, which are naturally occurring proteins in the body, and is fatal to deer and elk. Over time, the infected prions damage neural and lymphatic tissues in the deer, though it can take between 18 and 36 months for clinical signs to appear in the deer.

This is why DNR has stressed the importance of testing deer for the disease if hunters plan on eating their game.

While the disease has never been reported in humans, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has said ingesting infected meat would be the most likely way a human could contract the disease.

The disease, which was first detected in Iowa in 2013, spreads across deer populations through bodily fluids, like saliva. These prions can persist for several years after they are shed, which means the disease can be prevalent even in areas without dense deer populations.

Each year, the DNR tracks the number of infected deer from deer samples submitted by hunters.

In 2024, DNR reported 136 wild deer with the disease. Since 2013 when the first case was reported, there have been more than 520 reported cases in 29 counties.

To manage and monitor the disease, DNR has been testing for the disease and has established deer management zones and chronic wasting disease zones that have additional hunting tags and management practices in place to help control the populations.

Plan Ahead to Reduce Conflicts with Wildlife Continued from page 1

1. Include Your Human Neighbors:

Let your neighbors know what you are doing, talk to them. This will provide a heads-up when they start seeing changes and can prepare them for seeing more wildlife in the area, whether that is more pollinators, birds, or other wildlife.

2. Where You Put Habitat Matters:

Thick vegetation and tall plants shouldn’t be up against the house: the plants will hold moisture and rub against the siding which can cause issues. Also, the mice that like that thicker vegetation will naturally want to seek warmer shelter, such as your house, when it gets cold. The thing to know about wildlife is that where one animal goes others will follow. So, after mice be ready for other critters like: insects, voles, snakes, chipmunks... Leave plenty of room between buildings and water sources or native plantings.

3. Avoid Supplemental Food:

Let wildlife eat from what nature provides. This is especially important in areas where bears have been located. Any sort of additional attractants such as corn piles, pet food, or mineral is going to congregate more than what would naturally come through the area. More is not necessarily better. These type of feeding events connect humans (human smells, sounds, dwellings, etc...) with a reward.

4. Embrace The Unexpected:

Nature cascades and cycles. If you're putting in more plants that will flower and seed you will attract pollinating insects and critters that eat seeds. Then, animals that eat those smaller critters may come looking. At some point, that may attract a bigger predator that is interested in those animals. Be ready for nature to shift and appreciate those dynamics. Seeing a fox or a bobcat can be a wonderful experience (and can help control those squinnies)!

Native prairie plants = flowers and seeds. Flowers and seeds = insects and mice. Insects and mice = bats and snakes and fox. None of these are a bad thing, even though initially it might take some getting used to. This is a great opportunity to learn more about wildlife like snakes and bats that are incredibly important to the landscape.

Steps for Addressing a Conflict with Wildlife -- <https://www.iowadnr.gov/programs-services/wildlife-landowner-assistance/>

- **Exclusion:** Utilize fencing or other structures to keep wildlife out of specific areas. Well placed fencing can be the most effective solution. Creative landscaping placement and design can work as well.
- **Hazing:** It is illegal to harm or kill most wildlife but some targeted actions to frighten and drive away specific animals is okay. Introducing a negative experience to unwanted animals can train them to avoid the area. This could be a loud noise, a frightening light, an unexpected spray of water, or the presence of a "predator". Example: if a coyote is hanging out in the backyard when you need to let out the dog then turn on the lights, yell at the coyote, wave your arms to make yourself look big, and spray it with a hose.
- **Repellents:** Repellents are a smell or taste applied to areas where animals are not wanted or specific plants that need to be protected. These are often based on spicy chemicals (capsaicin), uncomfortable reaction, or strong unpleasant smells (egg solids, blood meal, ammonia). Example: a grape extract chemical (Methyl anthranilate) sprayed on grass deters geese by irritating sensory receptors when they eat the grass and encourages the geese to go elsewhere.
- **Habitat:** Habitat, or the place they live, is the strongest force attracting an animal to an area. Carefully consider the different places animals live and if you want it to be close by. Example: a brush pile from cleaning out old hedge rows will attract skunks—if you don't want skunks then clean up that brush pile as soon as possible or place it as far away as possible from your house.
- **Removal:** Sometimes removing individual animals that are causing an issue is the next step to take if other efforts are not successful. Removal can also include normal hunting activities that help manage wildlife populations. Important things to consider are the ethical treatment of the animals involved as well as predicting whether or not another animal may just move into the area and continue the unwanted activity. NOTE: check statewide DNR regulations and local city ordinances to make sure actions are legal where you are at. <https://www.iowadnr.gov/programs-services/wildlife-landowner-assistance/nuisance-wildlife-control/>
- [Iowa DNR Nuisance Wildlife Control Operators](https://www.iowadnr.gov/media/1615/download?inline) (<https://www.iowadnr.gov/media/1615/download?inline>)

[Wild Ones: Native Plants, Natural Landscapes](https://wildones.org/) - <https://wildones.org/>

Connecting people and native plants for a healthy planet

Wild Ones promotes native landscapes through education, advocacy, and collaborative action.

Free Webinar: "Next Steps for Nature" with Doug Tallamy - October 16th at 6:00 PM (CT)

Weimerskirk Workday -- Thursday, November 6, 2:00-4:00 p.m. – near Bellevue

Join INHF for an afternoon of woodland restoration at the Weimerskirk property, just outside Bellevue. This 450-acre landscape features oak-hickory woodland, row crop, and pasture, and is especially known for its two miles of cold-water trout streams — Mill Creek and Storybrook Hollow Creek.

Following the workday, staff and volunteers are invited to gather at River Ridge Brewing to celebrate the day together.

Both **Dubuque County Conservation (DCCB)** and **Jackson County Conservation** offer many free family activities.

Business Members

<i>Artistic Cleaners</i> 109 Locust St.	<i>Sherry Horsfield</i> <i>Farm Bureau Financial Svcs</i> 20214 E Pleasant Grove Rd	<i>Pregler Electric</i> 216th Ave LaMotte IA
<i>Dennis Baumhover Ins.</i> 2615 Dodge St.	<i>The Friedman Group</i> 880 Locust St. P. O. Box 1780	<i>Premier Bank</i> 2625 Northwest Arterial
<i>Behrs Funeral Home</i> 1491 Main St.	<i>Hendricks Feed & Seed</i> 2040 Kerper Blvd	<i>Schuster Tree Service</i> 7273 Schueller Heights Rd Schustertree@gmail.com
<i>Breitbach's Country Dining</i> 563 Balltown Rd.	<i>Herbst Upholstery & Auto</i> 76 Main St	<i>Sisters of Saint Francis</i> 3390 Windsor Ave.
<i>Cedar Cross Overhead Door</i> 1040 Cedar Cross Rd	<i>Kaufmann Painting</i> 17368 S John Deere Rd.	<i>Skip Breithbach Feed</i> Balltown, IA
<i>Citizens State Bank</i> P.O. Box 50 New Vienna	<i>Klauer Optical</i> 1705 Delhi St	<i>Spahn \$ Rose Lumber</i> 250 Harrison St.
<i>Copper Kettle</i> 2987 Jackson St	<i>MidWest One Bank</i> 895 Town Clock Plaza	<i>Stecklein Tree Service</i> Epworth, IA
<i>Dubuque Arboretum & Botanical Garden</i> 3800 Arboretum Drive	<i>Miller Flooring</i> Box 125 New Vienna	<i>Therapeutic Massage</i> 2255 JFK Road
<i>Dupaco Credit Union</i> P.O. Box 179	<i>Okky Doky Food Mart</i> P.O. Box 300 Dubuque	<i>U.S. Bank</i> 270 West 7th
<i>DuTrac Credit Union</i> 3465 Asbury Rd.	<i>O'Meara Custom Products</i> 8915 N. Badger Rd. East Dubuque IL	<i>White Front Feed & Seed</i> 4290 Dodge St.
<i>Environmental Management Services - 5170 Wolff Rd #2</i>	<i>Origin Design</i> 137 Main St - Suite 100	<i>White Water Native Seeds</i> Epworth, IA
	<i>Pfohl's Blinds, Drapes Inc.</i> 335 West 1st Street	

Board Members

President: Dan Simon
 Vice-President: Mark Kaufmann 563.879.3452
 Secretary: Nick Kaufmann
 Treasurer: Connie Kintzle
 Facebook: Nick Kaufmann
 Newsletter: Connie Kintzle
 Website: Nick Kaufmann

Punkie Birkel
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 Gerda Hartman 563.588.0649
 Pat Hayes
 Paul Kaufmann 563.583.5030
 Tom Klinge
 Matt McQuillen
 Bev Rettenmeier
 Dan Simon Sr.
 Bob Walton

Reach any board member by email at dbqccs01@gmail.com

Dubuque County Conservation Society
PO Box 645
Dubuque, IA 52001



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DCCS meetings September thru May on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 6 p.m. at the National Guard Armory
Next meetings: Tuesday, October 14, November 11, and December 9.
Check for change in location by emailing dbqccs01@gmail.com one week prior to meeting date.

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Connect with the Iowa DNR - <https://www.iowadnr.gov/newsroom/social-media>

Dubuque County Conservation events and projects:

<https://secure.rec1.com/IA/dubuque-county-ia/catalog>

<https://www.facebook.com/dubuquecountyconservation/>

<https://www.mycountyparks.com/County/Jackson>

<https://www.mycountyparks.com/County/Jones.aspx>

Dubuque County Conservation Society website: <https://www.dbqccs.org/>

Conservation Society Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/dbqcntyconsoc>

DCCS online renewal link on website: <https://dubuque-county-conservation-society.square.site/>