



DCCS Newsletter

Dubuque County Conservation Society

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

15969 Woodmoor Dr. Dubuque, IA 52002



If you don't stand for something, you will fall for anything. ~Alexander Hamilton



Ready for this summer's passport to adventure?

Download the [2026 State Park Passport](#) for a chance to win prizes as you visit parks and forests across Iowa!

- It's free to sign up -- the more parks you visit, the more chances for prizes!
- Mobile exclusive
- Instantly delivered via text and email
- No apps to download
- Explore Iowa's extensive State Parks network

Check In. Earn Prizes. Share your best photos!

Now through Oct. 31, State Park Passport holders can earn points by checking into nearly 60 state parks and forests. Get started by signing up and downloading the passport onto your mobile device. Look for the blue Sign Up button -- click to start the process. The Passport is free at check out!

Please note: If you signed up in 2025, last year's passport has expired. You must sign up again for the 2026 State Park Passport to participate. <https://www.traveliowa.com/iowa-state-park-passport-sign-up/>

New this Year: Photo Contest Opportunity!

Do you love to photograph state parks? We want to see your best work! As you explore Iowa state parks and forests, you can submit beautiful and iconic park photos into our [Photo Contest](#) for a chance to be featured on social media and publications! Login through your google account.



Honoring Revolutionary War Patriots

As the 250th anniversary of our country's founding approaches, we celebrate the spirit of service, resilience, and civic commitment of [Revolutionary War patriots buried in Iowa](#). Explore the lives and legacies of these patriots with [Stefanie Wager's digital repository](#). These stories honor the roles they played in the American Revolution and Iowa's history. Iowa's cemeteries are more than just resting places; they are vital sanctuaries that preserve our rich historical and cultural heritage. Growing within these sacred grounds are champion big trees that tell a story of resilience, history, and ecological importance. Four cemeteries are home to both Revolutionary War patriots and Iowa Big Tree Champions, with a notable concentration found at Aspen Grove Cemetery in Burlington.

Discover more about these remarkable champion trees with Iowa DNR's [Big Tree Viewer](#). The Big Trees of Iowa program, managed by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Forestry section, honors the largest specimens of every tree species in the state. Whether you are submitting a nomination for a new champion, researching the history of past winners, or simply marveling at the botanical diversity of our state, we invite you to explore and celebrate these extraordinary arboreal monuments.

Mosquitoes and ticks

Remember to use protection from mosquitos and ticks. One gardener purchased a beekeeper's suit to reduce the risk of getting bit. We should tuck our pants into our socks or boots, wear a hat and loose fitting, light color clothing which makes it easier to spot ticks. Mosquitos are not as likely to be attracted to light colors and it is also more difficult for them to bite through the loose-fitting clothes. Remove barberry and honeysuckle plants that provide the perfect habitat for disease-carrying ticks and weeds in neglected gardens that serve as resting spaces for hungry adult mosquitoes. Prevent them from breeding in your landscape by eliminating standing water where many lay their eggs.

Toss a Mosquito Dunk, an organic mosquito control, into your rain barrel, pond or other water feature. It will kill mosquito larvae but will not harm people, pets, wildlife and beneficial insects.

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Hummingbirds are Pollinators

Pollinator Week is observed the end of June and we want to focus on our beloved and often unrecognized pollinators, hummingbirds. While bees and butterflies are classic examples of pollinators, hummingbirds pollinate native plants across the Americas. As they dart from flower to flower for nectar, pollen clings to their feathers and bills and travels with them, actively reproducing the native flora that stabilizes soil, cleans our air, and feeds other wildlife.

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Native Plants – Source: Milorganite website

Native plants are the most effective plants for supporting pollinators and other beneficial insects since they all evolved together over time. Beneficial insects help [manage garden pests](#), and many pollinate much of our food, fiber, medicines, and other products we depend upon.

Native plants also help keep rainwater where it falls, reducing the risk of flooding, basement backups, and water entering our storm sewers and potentially polluting our waterways. This is especially critical in areas with limited green space to absorb the rainwater. Small lots and those in cities with high amounts of impervious surfaces like roads, buildings, driveways, and walks have limited space for water to infiltrate before entering storm sewers.

Adding these plants to your landscape helps slow water running off the roof, hard surfaces, and the lawn. The plants' deep roots also create pathways for water to infiltrate and travel through the soil to the groundwater. As the stormwater passes by these roots and through the soil, much of the dust and pollutants are removed before reaching the groundwater. Their deep roots also improve the soil. As older roots die, they add organic matter deep in the soil, supporting healthy plant growth.

Many native plants can break through and improve compacted and heavy clay soils. Use these native plants for those types of difficult locations. White false indigo (*Baptisia alba*), Purple (*Echinacea purpurea*) and Pale purple (*Echinacea pallida*) coneflowers, bergamot (*Monarda fistulosa*), Rattlesnake Master (*Eryngium yuccifolia*), Blue vervain (*Verbena hastata*), Culver's Root (*Veronicastrum virginicum*) and prairie ironweed (*Vernonia fasciculata*) are just a few plants that will grow in and help improve clay soils. Visit [Prairie Nursery's website](#) for a more extensive listing and plant profiles of clay-tolerant plants.

No plant is maintenance-free, but with proper plant selection and post-planting care, you'll spend less time maintaining these plants once established. Always check the plant tag or catalog description to see how fast the plant will grow and spread, and its mature size. Select the best plant suited to your growing conditions, available space, and landscape design for less ongoing maintenance. <https://www.milorganite.com/blog/garden-landscape/add-native-plants-your-landscape>

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How to Top Tomatoes

<https://joegardener.com/video/how-to-top-tomatoes-what-to-do-when-tomato-plants-get-too-tall/>

1. Identify the general area to make the cut. Then select a section of the branch just above the last set of fruit you want to leave on the plant and make the cut just about that.
2. Leave some shade. When making your cut, it's important to leave some shade from overhead or neighboring branches to prevent sun scald (a condition that will burn your tomato fruit due to direct exposure to the sun).
3. Monitor future growth. To maintain current height, monitor branches for new suckers that will continue to emerge from each branch. Remove as necessary to maintain height.

Take comfort in knowing it is always traumatic to remove perfectly good, tomato-laden branches from healthy plants. But rest assured in knowing that the remaining fruit will continue to ripen, aided by the shade of overhead foliage..



**CLEAN
DRAIN
INITIATIVE**

Help us protect Iowa lakes and rivers from aquatic invasive species by [cleaning, draining and drying your boat and equipment](#) everytime your boat leaves the water.
Learn more about aquatic invasive species on the [DNR webpage](#).

Iowa Fireflies and The Firefly Atlas

What's more evocative of a beautiful summer's night outside, then the twinkle and flash of fireflies? Most of us have seen them, marveled at them, enjoyed them and maybe even caught them and admired them in a jar.

"For many people, fireflies keep special memories alive, strengthening our ties to the people and places we love. As if that weren't enough, they also play important ecological roles in grasslands, wetlands, forests and gardens, and can be indicators of healthy soil," said Xerces Society firefly conservation biologist Richard Joyce.

But most of us also know very little about these "lightning bugs" that make our summer evenings magical and cozy. For example, you may be familiar with the adult form of the firefly, which lights up our backyard but did you know that some fireflies don't light up? Or that they can spend 1-2 YEARS in the larval life stage, way longer than the few weeks they spend as adults? That females often signal from the ground and in some species cannot even fly?

If you did know these things, that's wonderful! For the rest of us here is a crash course in fireflies:

Firefly Facts

- Fireflies are beetles having a "complete" life cycle with 4 life stages from egg, to larva, to pupa, and finally adult.
- The longest life stage is as a larva which are often referred to as glow worms and yes, most do light up as larvae.
- Most larvae live in the leaf litter or soil and are predators, consuming slugs, snails, other insects or earthworms.
- They are segmented and have an armored appearance, sort of like the insect version of an armadillo!
- The light displays in the air are mostly put on by males and are used to signal to any females in the area. The females will usually reply from a stationary position, often from the ground or the vegetation. This is why some females are flightless.
- There are some day-flying fireflies that do not light up but instead use pheromones to find a mate.
- Most fireflies seem to like moisture with several species occurring in wetland habitats. Early, wet springs after a mild winter can lead to a good mating season in the summer.
- There are roughly 178 known species of firefly in the United States and Iowa has 17 known species, most from historic records, and this is likely not a complete list!
- Fireflies are facing a lot of threats currently including artificial light at night, pesticides, habitat loss and a changing environment.

"When you pay closer attention to fireflies, one of the rewards is an appreciation for their diversity. A healthy habitat in Iowa might have half a dozen species, each blinking a luminous love song like different instruments in a band.

Community scientists have a vital role to play in understanding firefly species and how to best conserve their populations," Joyce said.

There is so much more to learn about fireflies and community scientists can help increase our knowledge. The Xerces Society coordinates a project that teaches about fireflies and enables Iowans to get involved in their conservation by filling in knowledge gaps for national and state scientists. This project is called the Firefly Atlas.

The Xerces Society is a non-profit organization with a mission to conserve insects. The nationwide Bumble Bee Atlas was launched here in Iowa two years ago, thanks to the Xerces Society's efforts. Xerces also coordinates a national Firefly Atlas and anyone that is interested can get involved. The Iowa DNR would love to learn more about the state's fireflies, so we are encouraging interested Iowans to get involved.

The first step is to visit the Firefly Atlas website to learn more about it.

https://www.fireflyatlas.org/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

Advocate for Iowa's land, water and wildlife this summer!

Even though the legislative session is over, there's still opportunity for you to make your voice heard when it comes to Iowa's natural resources!

IWILL Grassroots Organization (https://www.facebook.com/iowaswaterandlandlegacy?utm_source=INHF)

In 2010, voters overwhelmingly approved a constitutional amendment to create the Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund, a permanent and protected funding source for Iowa's communities and natural places. Over 15 years later, the Trust Fund sits empty, requiring a sales tax increase of 3/8 of a cent for funding. If funded, the Trust Fund would generate at least \$249 million annually and provide farmers, local communities and state agencies with reliable and accountable funding.

Proven Projects, Growing Opportunities: REAP Projects in Action

Iowa's premier funding program for outdoor recreation, conservation and historic preservation will be the focus of 19 meetings across the state, where Iowans can share ideas and visions for their county and communities.

Established in 1989, the Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) program has funded nearly \$430 million in projects, including water quality improvements, habitat protection, roadside prairies, historical development, park and trail development, and conservation education. Check out REAP County Expenditure Data to discover projects close to home.

For over 35 years, REAP has supported more than 15,000 projects that protect natural resources, create public open space, provide conservation education, and preserve cultural and historical resources.

Every two years, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources hosts a series of public meetings to engage local citizens and community leaders in a discussion about the impact REAP has had in the region and how the program's policies can best serve Iowa. This summer, there will be regional assemblies exhibiting some of REAP's most successful & beloved projects.

- **July 8, 5:30 p.m., Dubuque, Eagle Point Park Riverfront Pavilion, Memorial Lane, in Dubuque, for residents of Cedar, Clinton, Delaware, Dubuque and Jackson counties.**

What to Expect:

The Showcase: Each region will highlight a local project, and discuss how it was realized through REAP funding, providing a blueprint for what is possible in your own backyard.

The Citizen Idea Wall: We invite you to add your ideas to a regional "Citizen Idea Wall." What does your region need next? Your input will form the basis of your regional recommendations and inform your county's 5-Year REAP plan.

The Civic Mandate: Per Iowa law, this is your opportunity to review REAP expenditures and recommend changes to state policy. You will elect five delegates to carry these ideas to REAP Congress, held on August 29, at the Iowa State Capitol.

Success is built. Our resources. Your voice. Endless opportunity. "Join us to see what we've built together and help us decide what we will achieve next," she said. For more information on REAP, go to www.iowareap.com.

Media Contact: Michelle Wilson, REAP Coordinator, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 515-446-0535 or Michelle.Wilson@dnr.iowa.gov.

Urban Wildlife [Wildlife Landowner Assistance](#) | [Department of Natural Resources](#)

Since European settlement, larger and larger pieces of the Iowa landscape have been altered to provide habitat for just one animal: people. With the conversion to towns, subdivisions, roads and other development, wildlife have much less habitat.

Just as they do on the farm, conservation practices on nonagricultural land can help increase food and shelter for birds and other wildlife, control soil erosion, reduce sediment in waterways, conserve water and improve water quality, inspire a stewardship ethic, and beautify the landscape. Imagine if the space currently dominated largely by lawns that provide very little habitat was landscaped with wildlife in mind? Our yards could become healthier places for wildlife, and more interesting spaces for us.

By providing sources of food, water and cover, you can turn your yard into a lively place full of songbirds, toads and frogs, butterflies and other wildlife. The links below provide information on wildlife-friendly landscape design to help you reconstruct your own wildlife landscaping. Whether you have rural acreage, a suburban yard, or a city lot, you can help protect the environment and add beauty and interest to your surroundings.

<http://www.nrem.iastate.edu/wildlife/>

<http://mdc.mo.gov/landwater-care>

<https://www.nwf.org/backyard>

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<https://xerces.org/blog/how-to-identify-monarch-butterfly-and-tell-it-apart-from-lookalikes>

Cost-Share Programs Available for Private Landowners in Iowa

Several programs are available for cost-share reimbursement to private landowners engaged in forestry-related conservation work. Practices such as tree planting, forested riparian buffer installation, forest stand improvement, site preparation for natural regeneration, wildlife habitat improvement, and fencing may be eligible for cost-sharing on private lands.

Please contact your district forester to determine which of the following programs is best suited to your needs and goals.

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)

Administered by the [Farm Service Agency \(FSA\)](#), CRP provides cost-sharing for tree planting on highly erodible row crop and pasture land through general or continuous funding. All CRP programs pay landowners annual rental payments for up to 15 years. For more information, please contact your [county FSA office](#).

The Bottomland Timber Establishment (CP31) practice allows landowners to enroll some or all of their bottomland fields in continuous CRP. Planting hardwood trees and shrubs on land prone to flooding is an excellent way to control sheet, rill, scour and other erosion, among other benefits. Bottomland hardwood plantings provide financial incentives over the life of the CRP contract through annual rental payments; they also act as living retirement accounts that continually gain value, and which can ultimately be capitalized upon 50 or more years after planting.

Forested riparian buffer strips of perennial vegetation promote sustainable agriculture by reducing soil loss, improving water quality, stabilizing stream banks, increasing wildlife habitat and improving aesthetics. Known as CP22, the installation of such buffers allows landowners the maximum amount of land that can be enrolled in continuous CRP of any available program, up to one-third more than other options.

CRP Success Stories

The Conservation Reserve Program is the most successful tree planting and reforestation program in the history of conservation in Iowa, and that success is owed primarily to the people who participate in the program and the pride that they take in their conservation accomplishments.

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The [Iowa Wildlife Action Plan \(IWAP\)](#) outlines six visions for Iowa. The first of those visions is the **Vision for Iowa's Wildlife**: "By 2030 Iowa will have viable wildlife populations that are compatible with modern landscapes and human social tolerance." The Plan then describes three more specific goals that make up this vision, and a suite of conservation actions needed to achieve these goals.

Goals

- Common species will continue to be common.
- Populations of species of greatest conservation need will increase to viable (self-sustaining) levels.
- The abundance and distribution of wildlife will be balanced with its impact on the economic livelihood and social tolerance of Iowans.

How Does the Wildlife Vision Translate into Action?

The DNR has worked with conservation partners to raise the profile of Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN), to raise awareness of their needs and to spur conservation efforts, rather than provide legal protection. The plan helps conservationists focus limited time and resources on the species that stand to benefit most by identifying which plant and animal species are declining or otherwise reliant on conservation across various taxonomic groups: amphibians, reptiles, birds, mammals, fish, and invertebrates (mussels, butterflies, bumble bees, crayfish) and the types of activities that benefit these species.

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Help Slow the Spread of Invasive Species in Your Community

Iowa woodlands, wildlands and waterways draw hundreds of thousands of tourists and recreational users each year. Much of the spread of invasive species comes from people simply enjoying nature. Uninvited guests can hitch a ride on outdoor gear, shoes and clothes, travelling hundreds of miles in a single day.

Take these easy steps to stop the spread of invasive species in your community.

1. Verify that the plants you buy for your yard or garden are not invasive. Many non-native plants can become invasive. The [Forest Invasive Species Guide](https://www.iowadnr.gov/programs-services/forestry-resources/forest-tree-health/invasive-plants?) (<https://www.iowadnr.gov/programs-services/forestry-resources/forest-tree-health/invasive-plants?>) includes quick ID photos and common management techniques to control 19 invasive trees, shrubs and plants.

2. Look for spongy **moth egg masses** (https://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant-pests-diseases/spongy-moth?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery) on all outdoor equipment when traveling from a spongy moth **quarantined area**.
3. Clean your boots before and after you hike in a new area to avoid spreading seeds. This is a common way garlic mustard and other plants are spread.
4. Do not buy or sell firewood from outside your county. Firewood can contain emerald ash borer, Sirex woodwasp, Asian longhorned beetle, oak wilt and many more pests. Plenty of firewood is available locally near state and county parks. Make sure to burn all of the firewood at the campsite and not leave it or transport to a new area.
5. Work with your **District Forester** for plans to make your forests more resilient to invasive species.

Invasive species are everywhere and a constant threat to a healthy woodland as well as agroforestry practices like windbreaks, alley cropping and riparian forest buffers. Learn more about forest invasive species on the [DNR website](#).

Keep your trees healthy and hydrated this summer

Is your newly planted tree thirsty? You may need to water trees planted in the spring or summer one to three times a week in the first few months after planting. Water early in the morning or evening so the tree roots have a chance to absorb most of the water and the sun can't evaporate it away.

Check the moisture level in the soil near the tree's trunk (four to six inches below the surface) at least once a week, and more often during hot, dry weather. If the soil feels moist or damp you can hold off on watering, if it is dry you need to water your tree. The soil should be moist, but not saturated after watering.

Newly planted trees need regular and consistent watering for optimal growth and health. A gallon of water is equal to about one inch of rainfall. Water immediately after planting and mulching – 5-15 gallons, depending on container size and continue watering it weekly.

Avoid using landscaping fabric around trees or shrubs as it can prevent it from growing properly.

Be Happy Amongst the Trees this Summer

As Spring has turned to summer, take time to focus on yourself and improve your mental health by getting active outdoors amongst the trees. Research shows that interactions with nature have an impact on cognitive functioning, emotional well-being, and other aspects of mental health.

Share the benefits that trees provide by planting a tree this year. You can make a difference in your community with this simple step in your yard, local park, school, or city.

For more information on trees' connection to mental health, visit www.vibrantcitieslab.com.

Iowa DNR Nuisance Wildlife Control Operators

Nuisance Wildlife Control Operators (NWCO) are licensed by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. The Iowa Department of Natural Resources suggests that if you have a nuisance wildlife problem with your home, business or property; contact the NWCO nearest you. NWCO's are a private business, and are not an agent or employee of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

Any person interested in becoming a Licensed Nuisance Wildlife Control Operator (NWCO) can review the NWCO Manual/Guidebook to determine if he or she qualifies, based upon practical wildlife trapping experience or related education, training or coursework. <https://www.iowadnr.gov/programs-services/wildlife-landowner-assistance/nuisance-wildlife-control>

BRADLEY	RICK	BRADLEY ANIMAL DAMAGE CONTROL	22613 OAK ST, BERNARD, IA 52032	(563) 495-1839	BRADADC@GMAIL.COM
BURGER	JEFFERY	JEFF BURGER ANIMAL DAMAGE CONTROL	9565 MONTICELLO DR, DUBUQUE, IA 52003	(563) 542-4583	JEFFBURGER4@MSN.COM
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FREDERICK	JOSEPH		16287 BOY SCOUT RD, DURANGO, IA 52039		
MCDERMOTT	JAMES	ORKIN PEST CONTROL	5045 WOLFF RD STE 9, DUBUQUE, IA 52002	(563) 583-9779	JMCDERMOTT@ROLLINS.COM
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All individuals appearing on this list do not receive any funding from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources nor are they employees of the Department. If you are unable to reach someone on this list, please leave a message and they will respond as their time allows.

Business Members

<i>Artistic Cleaners</i> 109 Locust St.	<i>Environmental Management Services</i> 5170 Wolff Rd	<i>Origin Design</i> 137 Main St - Suite 100
<i>Dennis Baumhover</i> State Farm Ins 2615 Dodge St.	<i>Sherry Horsfield</i> Farm Bureau Financial Svcs 20214 E Pleasant Grove Rd	<i>Pfohl's Blinds, Drapes Inc.</i> 335 West 1st Street
<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>Lux Appraisal</i> 24751 Garryowen Rd, Cascade	<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>Oky 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. & Cascade
		<i>White Water Native Seeds</i> Epworth, IA

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Board Members

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Dubuque Trees Forever <https://www.dubuquetreesforever.org/get-involved>- at our neighborhood orchard. Watch our [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=dubuque%20trees%20forever) page for upcoming activities. <https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=dubuque%20trees%20forever>

DCCS meetings are held September through May on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 6 p.m.

Next meetings: Tuesday, September 14. Scheduled to be at the National Guard Armory.

Check for location by emailing dbqccs01@gmail.com one week prior to meeting date.

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Friends of the Mines of Spain Program Series

Programs are free of charge and are open to all ages held at noon at the EB Lyons Center, which is also open 10-2 on Weekends. This year EB Lyons Center is celebrating turning 50! <https://www.youtube.com/@minesofspain>

Jackson County Newsletter - https://mcusercontent.com/e8ffb8b3fa16ed88d13afed0d/files/6adf8132-5a38-97ee-f692-38c1a1f56e45/Summer_2026_JCC_E_Newsletter.pdf

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

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/>