



RIVER COUNTRY CONVERSATIONS

A Quarterly Publication of the Lee County Conservation Board

Fall 2008

2652 Hwy 61, P. O. Box 218 ~ Montrose, Iowa 52639

e-mail: conservation@leecounty.org

Volume 22 - Issue 1

Emerging Possibilities

by Tom Buckley

The Lee County Conservation Board recently received a matching grant for the acquisition of almost 900 acres of Mississippi River bottoms and wetlands. The Wildlife Habitat Stamp Grant that was awarded in mid-July is made possible through revenue funds derived from the sale of such habitat stamps and it is to be used within the state of Iowa for acquisition of land. To date, several local groups have committed to providing a portion of the remaining match amount. When the acquisition is completed, two new areas will be added along the Mississippi River Wetland Corridor that the Conservation Board has been working toward for over 20 years.

The areas to be acquired include two separate parcels. The larger parcel lies in the Ortho Pocket area and includes 459 acres. This area includes 77 acres of riverbank and wetlands with the remaining area submerged ground. If you've lived in the area for a long time you're probably familiar with the tremendous opportunity for duck hunting. As the Conservation

Board finalizes its management plans, the primary focus will be to assure that the area is available for all those interested in waterfowl hunting.

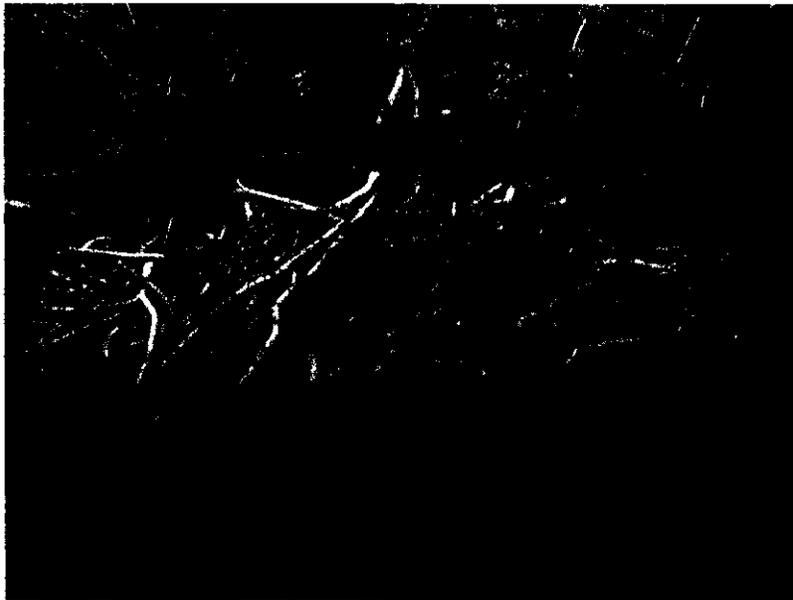
The second parcel is adjacent to the Linger Longer Rest Area and includes 434 acres of submerged ground that is in the slow process of emerging to the previous islands that dotted the river prior to the construction of the Keokuk dam. This emergent ground along with the majority of the area in the Ortho Pocket Parcel will eventually become an island again with key habitat for a variety of wetland species.

According to computer models that have been completed by Western Illinois University, much of this emerging ground will be populated by bottomland timber within the next 40-50 years. What that will offer to

threatened wetlands species will be a haven for critical habitat. What it will offer to outdoor enthusiasts is ideal hunting areas coupled with new areas to view the variety of wetland wildlife that currently migrate through and live in these unique river areas.

If you would like to support the completion of this project you can make a donation to the Three Rivers Conservation Foundation and designate it for the

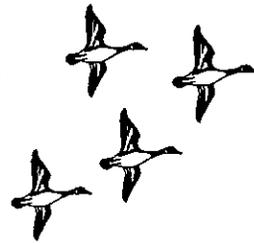
"Emerging Grounds Acquisition". We are excited about the new possibility this brings to Lee County, we hope you join us in this venture.



AN EXPERIENCE OF A LIFETIME

by Danny Henderson

When hired by the Lee County Conservation Board, one of my interview questions was "What could you offer to the department as an Assistant Naturalist? I thought long and hard and then responded back to them by saying, "An experience of a lifetime." What I meant by that was I wanted to offer a couple of disabled participants the chance to hunt Canada Geese at Pollmiller Park, during a special Goose hunt offer. So on April 8th, 2008, I went to the Lee County Conservation Board meeting and presented my idea of this dream come true. After my presentation of this topic, and a few questions by the board, my request was granted. I had received my chance to present an opportunity of a life time.



Lee County Conservation Board will be offering a two day special Goose Hunt for two disabled participants. All access to the park will be closed from sunrise to 9:00 am both mornings of the hunt. The selected participant will hunt on separate days.

At the current time, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources has not set the hunting season dates. The purpose of this article is to inform you of this hunting opportunity prior to the season dates. If you know anyone who might be interested and would qualify, please let them know. Requirements:

- Must be 16 years or older
- Must be permanently disabled with wheel chair dependency or mobility impaired
- Must have the ability to shoot a shotgun
- Must be able to obtain a valid hunting license, habitat fee, migratory bird fee, and federal duck stamp
- Must submit a 1 page or more essay on your background and why you want to participate in the hunt



Selection of applicants will be narrowed down to the final 4 after reading essays. The final 2 will be drawn at random. If you have any questions please contact Danny Henderson at 319-463-7673

Please mail your essay to: Danny Henderson, LCCB, PO Box 218, Montrose, IA 52639

LIFE-SUSTAINING MEMORIES

by Clint Oldfield

As we walk the winding road in this life, our memories tend to fade to some degree. Images may become distorted, occurrences tend to change, and events may be completely absent from our memory bank. To battle against memory loss, many entrepreneurs tend to search out herbs to offset the loss and even claim to improve memory. Yet, many skeptics look unto the "cures" to this natural aging process as being deceitful by using certain marketing practices. A skeptic may ask, "How can memory be improved if the specific memory itself has already been lost?" Whatever the side you may be on with herbal memory remedies, the key to life is to continue to make memories. We all will grow older and we all will lose some of our past memories, thus we all need to strive to create more memories with those we love.



With the days of summer fleeting, we need to be actively creating good, wholesome, and life-sustaining memories. These memories may be a day trip to a nearby county park to enjoy the bounties of what the lake has to offer; such as fishing, exploring, swimming, hiking, birding and much more. A memory may also be an overnight stay, such as camping. No person can deny roasting hot dogs on an open fire and the aroma of burning firewood isn't fun for all ages.



The year 2008 will be remembered for various reasons. These reasons may be memorable because of the massive flooding, the Olympics, it is a presidential election year, or the record high gas and fuel prices. No matter what other events in the world occur, the memories we will remember the most will be experienced solitary or with friends and family. So, don't let summer 2008 pass you by, get outside and explore, go camping, and create Life-Sustaining Memories.



BUGS CAN BE OUR BEST DEFENSE

by Rick Tebbs



Recently at our Outdoor Adventure camp for boys and girls we came across some very interesting insects floating in the pool. While some kids yelled, "Gross!", others were very interested in knowing more. As I explained some of the benefits of six legged creatures, I soon realized how we almost never hear good things about bugs. We are always talking about the bugs that destroy our crops, ticks that give us lime disease, and mosquitoes that give us west Nile disease. Even though odds are highly in our favor that we won't get sick from a bug bite while enjoying the outdoors, that seems to be the first thing we think about before leaving the safety of concrete.

Hopefully some new information will change that mindset just a little and show how, in the natural world, bugs can be our best defense.

Across the Midwest, scientists are fighting an invasion of exotic, fast-spreading plants with imported insects that have one simple mission, to eat and destroy. It's an old agricultural tactic known as biological control, used here in recent years to dramatically cut down the scourge of purple loosestrife. Researchers are now looking into new bugs to sic on other plants in the rogues' gallery of Iowa vegetation, especially garlic mustard and buckthorn.

Insects travel and sustain themselves so they can be a herbicide-free way to stop marauding plants on public and private property alike. For area homeowners it could mean getting control of their yards without putting down gallons of spray. But the strategy is not without risk. Some alien insects are only moderately effective while others have become nuisances, chewing up flora they were not supposed to eat and spreading far beyond their intended boundaries. It leaves even some practitioners of biological control uneasy about the potential consequences of unleashing new waves of miniature mercenaries. Biological control uses an outsider to beat an outsider. When purple loosestrife, a flowering weed native to Europe, began taking over fields and forests in the Midwest, officials turned to an insect that loved snacking on the plant back in the old countries. *Galerucella californiensis*, a tiny brown beetle, was released across the Chicago area in the mid-1990s. Its success was dramatic. The purple tide receded where it had crowded out native species, and plants such as wild iris, Joe Pye weed, blue joint

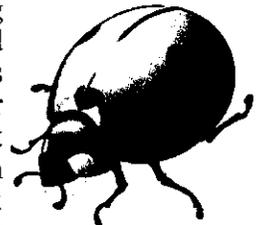
grass and turtlehead began to return. The loosestrife campaign led to plans to take on other Midwestern plagues. The next target on the hit list is garlic mustard. Imported from Western Europe as a delicacy in the 1860s, the piquant herb gradually spread out of control, covering forest floors like a carpet and smothering already established plants.

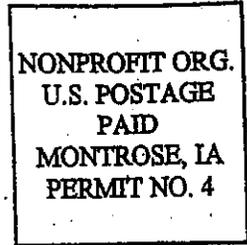
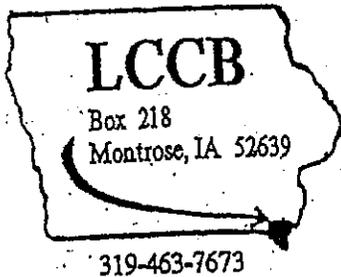
Within a year, researchers in Minnesota hope to unleash a German weevil that devours garlic mustard from root to leaf. They've been looking at the bug for a decade, plying it with dozens of other plants to learn whether it might eat anything else. Much of the research on use of the German weevil is being done at Cornell University. Scientists have also looked for insects to combat teasel, an up-and-coming nuisance that has blanketed Iowa, Illinois, and Missouri during the last 20 years. They have found contenders among European fleas and butterflies. But the

king of all plant invaders--buckthorn, an aggressively spreading shrub that starves native species of sunlight—might be the most resistant to an insect assault. The University of Minnesota is researching buckthorn's insect enemies and has rejected 50 species of insects it has tested because they eat other vegetation. Most of these insect species have been found in Europe. The most notorious local example of biological control gone haywire is the multicolored Asian lady beetle, a bug brought to the U.S. as early as 1916 and used to control aphids on Southern pecan trees. With no natural predators in this country—birds don't care for the foul-smelling goo within the beetles—they multiplied quickly, becoming an inescapable annoyance.

Experts say biological control will expand as global trade brings more invasive plants to the U.S. Some say the risks should be measured against the environmental damage of herbicides and the certain toll of inaction. One thing is for sure: exotics will continue to come in to the U.S. Our water and soil are just full of them. They're changing the dynamics of our natural systems. And our best defense might just be that old insect enemy a plant had where it originated, some hungry chew happy bug.

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Thank You !

Thank you to all of our friends for your assistance and donations. Your donations are placed in the Three Rivers Conservation Foundation account unless specified otherwise.

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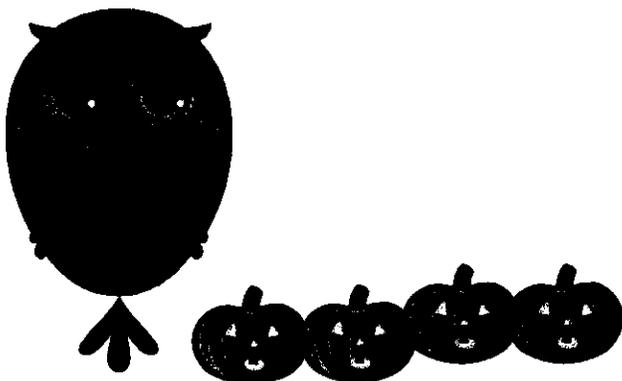
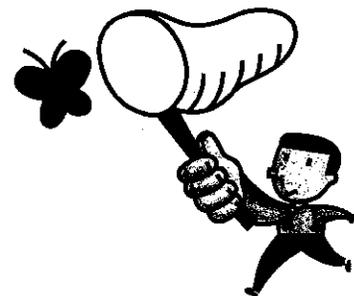
Eleanor R. Denning

We also want to thank the following people for their help with other projects:

Lauren Pawling for helping paint the registration booth

Jr. Scholarship Fishing Tournament Finals

Sandra Queisner
James Queisner



We Are On the Web !

You can now read River Country Conversations on the Lee County web site ~ leecounty.org. Click on Conservation, then on newsletter.

We want to know your thoughts about reading the newsletter on the web site.

If you no longer wish to receive a paper copy, let us know.



FALL 2008

Labor Day ~ September 1 ~ County Holiday ~ LCCB Office closed.

LCCB Meeting ~ September 9 ~ LCCB Office, 7 pm ~ The public is always welcome at LCCB Meetings.



Monarch Tagging ~ September 13 ~ Heron Bend Conservation Area ~ 9 AM

Join the naturalists to learn about monarch butterflies, their migration to Mexico, and life cycle. The best part will be chasing through the prairie to catch a monarch, gather information, tag it with a special sticker, and release it on its journey. There is no cost for this program and participants should meet directly behind the office. Tennis shoes or hiking boots are recommended and you may bring an insect net if you have one. There will be a limited number of nets available for use.

Horseback Ride with the Westercamp Family ~ September 13 ~ Shimek State Forest ~ 2 PM

Join the LCCB naturalist and the Westercamp family on a 3 hour horseback ride through Shimek State Forest. Horses and snacks are provided. All participants are required to sign a waiver form and the fee is \$25 per rider. Participants must be at least 7 years old. *Pre-registration is required and spaced is limited to 12 riders.* To register call LCCB at 319-463-7673. Directions will be given upon registration. In the event of rain, we will contact each rider to reschedule.



LCCB Meeting ~ October 14 ~ LCCB Office, 7 pm ~ The public is always welcome at LCCB Meetings.



Horseback Ride with the Westercamp Family ~ October 4 ~ Shimek State Forest ~ 2 PM

Join the LCCB naturalist and the Westercamp family on a 3 hour horseback ride through Shimek State Forest. Horses and snacks are provided. All participants are required to sign a waiver form and the fee is \$25 per rider. Participants must be at least 7 years old. *Pre-registration is required and spaced is limited to 12 riders.* To register call LCCB at 319-463-7673. Directions will be given upon registration. In the event of rain, we will contact each rider to reschedule.



CALENDAR



Halloween Hike ~ October 25 ~ Wilson Lake ~ Every 1/2 hour from 6Pm-9 PM

Join the LCCB and volunteers for a non-scary hike through the woods. This years theme is still in the works, but it's not too soon to reserve your group time. There is a suggested \$1 donation per person to help cover costs of refreshments and costume rental. Groups will leave every 1/2 hour from the large shelter. **Pre-registration is required!**



Edible Insects Tasting ~ November 8 ~ Location and time to be announced ~

Yes, you read it right, edible insects! Learn a bit about edible insects and sample one. Not up for a little snack, join us anyway for the presentation and watch others feast away. Pre-registration is required and there is a suggested donation of \$5 per family for the cost of insects and other snacks. Call LCCB at 319-463-7673 for questions and to register.

LCCB Meeting ~ October 14 ~ LCCB Office, 7 pm ~
The public is always welcome at LCCB Meetings.



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Three Rivers Conservation Foundation**
where your gift can make a difference for the future.

Membership Categories:

Contributing Member ~ \$10 - \$99
Supporting Member ~ \$100 - \$499
Sustaining Member ~ \$500 - \$999
Life Member ~ \$1,000

- * You will receive the River Country Conversations, LCCB's quarterly newsletter.
- * TRCF is recognized as a 501(c)3 organization.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Amount enclosed \$ _____

_____ I want to volunteer to help
_____ I want to receive the newsletter

Make checks payable to:
Three Rivers Conservation Foundation
Mail to: TRCF, Box 218, Montrose, IA 52639

