



JOURNAL

Warren County Conservation Board

Winter 2019

Seasonal Splendor: The Snowys

Snowy Owls are a sight to behold! Weighing 4–6.5 pounds, they are North America's heaviest owl. They are vibrant, white birds, with varying amounts of black or brown markings. Adult males tend to be a paler white with less markings than the juveniles and females, which might have a lot of dark markings on their body and wings. They are large, round-headed owls, with no ear tufts. However, they are not a resident of Iowa.

Snowy Owls live in the Arctic Circle in the summer. There, the days have 24 hours of sunlight that the owls can spend hunting for lemmings, ptarmigan, and other prey. When lemming populations boom, the Snowy Owls' does too, allowing them to rear 10 or more chicks. In these years, the owls irrupt from their typical winter habitat, and these are the years when we are lucky enough to have a few Snowy Owls visit Iowa.



Snowy Owls like wide-open areas such as fields and shorelines. They also enjoy a high vantage point such as hay bales, fenceposts, sign posts, buildings, and grain elevators. They also might sit on a hilltop. They can camouflage in Iowa cropfields quite well with their dark brown to black markings mimicing dirt poking up through a blanket of snow. Snowy Owls are very territorial of their breeding range, and sometimes winter range, so it is most common to find a single owl in an area. They mainly eat small mammals, and smaller birds. A Snowy Owl can hear a mouse rustling under the snow. They are one of the more agile owls, and can catch birds in flight!



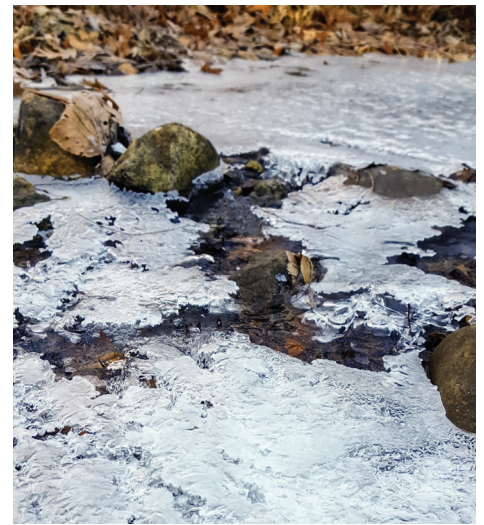
Snowy Owls spend a lot of their time sitting—hours at a time. They expend a lot of valuable energy and calories to take flight to go after prey or evade a predator. While it can be very exciting to see a Snowy Owl, it is important to remain respectful of them, as with all wildlife. Make sure to give them plenty of space. If the owl is turning to look at you, you are too close and should retreat to a distance where the owl seems less concerned by your presence. A lot of raptors gather near roadways as it is an attraction to mice and other small rodents. Because of this there is also a chance of the bird getting hit by a car, especially if it has taken off in fright and may be paying more attention to what startled it than the cars. Remember, take a step back and enjoy them from a respectful distance, and feel free to share any photos you might take of these splendors of the snow!

Winter Safety

Winter invites a lot of snow and ice play and admiration! While we definitely recommend getting outside, even in the winter, it is important to stay safe while enjoying the great outdoors. Keep these safety points in mind while you explore everything the winter wonderland has to offer.

General Winter Safety

- Dress appropriately for the weather. Layers, a wind-resistant coat, mittens, hat, scarf and waterproof boots help to keep you warm and dry. Remember that exposed areas (face) will be more prone to extreme cold and wind, making them susceptible to frostbite.
- Be careful not to get too warm and start sweating. Sweat can create a layer of moisture between the skin and clothing, which once you stop being active can get cold and pull away your body heat. Pace yourself and take frequent “breathers” when working or playing vigorously.
- Take a buddy along on your adventure, or at least make sure someone knows where you are going and when you should be expected back. If you are going to be gone for long, or a long distance away from transportation and warmth, take along an emergency kit. Carry a cell phone for emergencies.
- Learn the signs of frostbite and hypothermia, and what to do in those situations.



Ice Safety

The biggest safety tip to remember about ice is that there is no such thing as 100% safe ice. There are many different factors that can affect whether or not ice has formed safely and is still safe. It is not feasible to go through all of the possible scenarios. You also should not go out on the ice alone, someone should be able to call for help. However, there are some general safety tips to be aware of. Thanks to the IDNR for these Ice Safety Tips:

- New ice tends to be stronger than old ice.
- There could be pockets of thin ice or places where ice recently formed so check ice thickness as you go out.
- Avoid off-colored snow or ice. It is usually a sign of weakness.
- Ice on moving water forms slower and might be thinner than ice on still water.
- The insulating effect of snow slows down the freezing process.

Check out more ice safety information through the Iowa DNR: <https://www.iowadnr.gov/About-DNR/DNR-News-Releases/ArticleID/360/Ice-Safety-Reminder-as-Iowa-Lakes-Freeze-Over>

News



Valentine's Cards

Looking for some fun, unique Valentine cards that aren't too expensive? Check out our education animal line of Valentine's Day cards! You can download these from our website and facebook page and all you have to do is print and cut to feature some of these cuties on your cards to your cuties.



Volunteering Opportunities

Are you passionate about the environment or education? Do you like to encourage children to explore and enjoy the outdoors? Then volunteering with WCCB could be the perfect fit for you! Volunteers opportunities include: front desk volunteer, Iowa butterfly survey, maintaining the trails, butterfly garden, or bird feeders, being a greenhouse volunteer, or event volunteer at one of our events like the Osprey 5K, Native Plant Sale, Halloween Hike, Kids Fish Day. If you are interested in volunteering, please email Karen at karenjohlas-szalkowski@warrencb.org or call 515-961-6169.

Events

January

Snowshoe Hike

Friday, January 18th | 3:00–4:30 p.m. | ANC

Bundle up and explore the trails on snowshoes. Snowshoeing is a great way to stay fit during the winter. We will provide general instructions and snowshoes. Dress for winter weather and wear warm boots. This event will be cancelled if there is not enough snow. Registration is required to have snowshoes ready.

February

Snowshoe Hike

Saturday, February 2nd | 1:00–2:30 p.m. | ANC

Bundle up and explore the trails on snowshoes. Snowshoeing is a great way to stay fit during the winter. We will provide general instructions and snowshoes. Dress for winter weather and wear warm boots. This event will be cancelled if there is not enough snow. Registration is required so we can have your snowshoes ready.



Owl Prowl

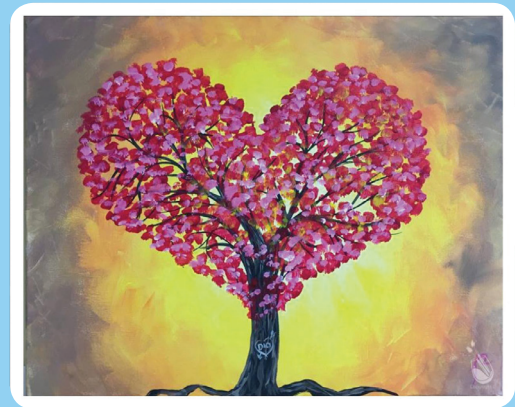
Thursday, February 7th | 6:30–7:30 p.m. | ANC

Join a WCCB naturalist to learn about the owls of Iowa. Meet a live educational screech owl, learn to identify owl calls, and hike down the trail to listen for owls living in the park. Winter is a great time to call for owls, but be sure to come bundled up for the cold February weather. Please register by noon on February 6th.

Painting with a Twist - Valentine Tree

Friday, February 8th | 6:00–8:00 p.m. | ANC

Come out to Annett Nature Center to paint this festive Valentines Tree. Painting with a Twist will provide all the materials and instructions so you can leave with an artistic painting. This event is suggested for those 10 years and up. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Younger children are welcome, but keep in mind this is a 2 hour program. The class is \$30 per painter. Light snacks will be provided. Pre-register at: <https://www.paintingwithatwist.com/studio/des-moines-urbandale/event/1844297/>



Nature and Oils Bingo

Tuesday, February 12th | 7:00–8:30 p.m. | ANC

Come out for a fun evening of bingo with a nature twist. WCCB and Young Living Essential Oils are teaming up for nature and oils bingo. Similar to regular bingo, but you will learn about nature and essential oils each time you place your bingo marker. Bingo cards are \$5 each. Prizes will feature essential oils products (one essential oil product win per card, additional wins on that card will receive another prize). Please pre-register by February 11, 2019 so we can provide enough cards & prizes.

Snowshoe Hike

Saturday, February 16th | 1:00–2:30 p.m. | ANC

Bundle up and explore the trails on snowshoes. Snowshoeing is a great way to stay fit during the winter. We will provide general instructions and snowshoes. Dress for winter weather and wear warm boots. This event will be cancelled if there is not enough snow. Registration is required so we can have your snowshoes ready.

For more details and information, or to register for events, please visit www.warrenccb.org/events or call 515-961-6169.

Events

March

Day Camp Registration

Tuesday, March 5th | 8:00 a.m.

Naturalists lead summer camps that encourage children to explore and enjoy nature up close. Parents may register children for camp beginning Tuesday, March 5th at 8:00 a.m. Registration is limited and on a first-come, first-served basis. To register, come to the Annett Nature Center or call us at (515) 961-6169. Because of limited enrollment, children are asked to attend each camp only once. More camp details are available on our website: www.warrencb.org/education/daycamps



Trail Safety Program

Tuesday, March 12th | 6:30–7:30 p.m. | ANC

Spring is approaching, and that means that it is time to get back out on the trails and enjoy the beautiful offerings of our city and county parks. WCCB and Indianola Parks & Recreation invite you to a general trail safety and etiquette program, to freshen up on how to have a safe, respectful experience while hitting the trails. Our friends from the Warren County Sheriff's Office, Indianola Police Department, and Friends of Indianola Trails will share valuable information on how everyone can stay safe and enjoy the trails. This program is free, but requires pre-registration by March 10th.

Rain Barrel Workshop

Saturday, March 16th | 9:00–10:30 a.m. | ANC

Participants will learn the benefits, how to collect water, and make a rain barrel. You will be provided with the tools and instructions to make your own rain barrel for your yard. Please make sure that your vehicle can transport the finished 55 gallon barrel. The cost is \$50 per barrel. Space is limited to 15 participants. Please register by March 14, 2019 so we can provide enough materials.

Geocaching 101

Saturday, March 16th | 1:00–2:00 p.m. | ANC

Looking for a new outdoor hobby? Want to participate in our county-wide Geocaching Adventure? Come discover the fun and excitement of geocaching, the high tech outdoor scavenger hunt that uses a Global Positioning System (GPS) unit! Join a WCCB naturalist to learn about geocaching and how to use a GPS unit. Then head out in the park to find some "treasures" called caches. GPS units will be provided. Fun for the whole family!

Stories of Sasquatch

Saturday, March 30th | TBD a.m. | ANC

If Sasquatch/Bigfoot doesn't exist, then why are sightings still reported? Mike Havlik is a passionate naturalist, gonzo birder, amateur musician, and Sasquatch enthusiast. Enjoy an enlightening look at the information he has gathered on this great mystery. Mike will point out inconsistencies in Sasquatch stories and look at the science surrounding this elusive and intelligent creature.



Hunter Education

March 7 | 6:00–9:00 p.m. | Izaak Walton League

March 9 | 8:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m. | Izaak Walton League

Hunter education is designed to introduce students to life-long skills important to the many different types of outdoor recreation. The course will teach students basic survival skills, wildlife identifications, the basics of wildlife management, hunting laws and firearm/archery safety. Hunter education also stresses the importance of individual responsibility and outdoor ethics. Registration at iowadnr.gov/hunting/hunter-education

For more details and information, or to register for events, please visit www.warrencb.org/events or call 515-961-6169.



Join Us! Become a Friend of Warren County Conservation in 2019

Pledge your support today for high quality, healthy living for Warren County through greater recreation and outdoor education opportunities, new and improved facilities, restored landscapes, and extended open space. In addition to supporting our important work, Friends of Warren County Conservation receive the following additional benefits:

- You receive half price rental of the Annett Nature Center once a year at the Benefactor Level
- You are put on the mailing list to receive current Warren County Conservation newsletters
- You support conservation and recreation projects in your own backyard

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2019 Friends of Warren County Conservation Membership Form

Name _____
Address _____
City/State/Zip _____
Company _____
Phone _____
Email _____

You can support the Friends of Warren County Conservation at a variety of membership levels by selecting one of the following:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Membership - \$20 | <input type="checkbox"/> I would like to volunteer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Joint/Family Membership - \$30 | <input type="checkbox"/> Contact me about donating property |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor Membership - \$50 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate/Business Membership - \$100 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime Membership - \$1000 or more | |

Facility

Reserve Today!

Looking for a beautiful, affordable site to hold your wedding, family gathering, or other event? Consider the classroom and pavilion at the Annett Nature Center, the barn at Hickory Hills, or the picnic shelters at Hickory Hills, Grant Park, Otter Creek, or the Great Western Trailhead. Call (515) 961-6169 for details.

Reservations for 2020 begins March 1st, 2019.



The Annett Nature Center

Open 8:00 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

Monday–Friday*

Open 12:00–4:00 p.m. Sundays,
March–October

Come visit to check out:

- Interpretive Exhibits
- Variety of live animals
- Butterfly Garden
- Trails through prairie, wetland, and forest
- Wildlife Viewing Blind
- Observation Tower

*Duties sometimes require all staff be out of the office, calling ahead is advised.

Thank You!

Halloween Hike (2018)

Monty & Lori Freeman

Rachel Riley

Ashley Vanderflucht

Lisa Niedermayer

Donna Fink

Kathy Disney

Barb Ripperger

Alison Rudolf

Jackie Sarasio

Gaige & Emily Mosher

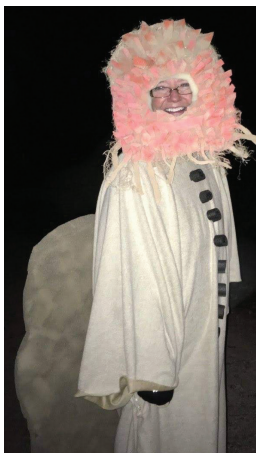
John Krogmeier

Mary & Steve Weaver

Paige Rader

Megan Waldbillig

Simpson College Students



Fall Hike Hike & Homemade Gifts (2018)

Sue Wilson

Kathrin Herr

Kim Watkins

Ashley Vanderflucht

Candy Cane Hike

Monty & Lori Freeman



Winter 2019

Warren County Conservation Board



The Warren County Conservation Board manages over 2,200 acres of land for the benefit of its citizens. Visitors can enjoy a variety of outdoor activities on areas being conserved for this generation and generations to come.

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@warrencb.org



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Doug Gaumer	Conservation Technician
Tyler Seufferer	Conservation Technician
Karen Johlas-Szalkowski	Naturalist II
Kelsey Longnecker	Naturalist I

The Warren County Conservation Board does not discriminate against anyone on the basis of race, color, sex, creed, national origin, age or handicap. If anyone believes he or she has been subjected to such discrimination, he or she may file a complaint alleging discrimination with either the Warren County Conservation Board or the Office of Equal Opportunity, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED