



JOURNAL

Warren County Conservation Board

Spring 2019

Strange Colors

Spring is a time when we think about the colors of nature coming back to life after the dormancy of winter. We use color to help us recognize and identify species. So what is happening when you see something that looks like the color was drained out of it? Nature has several varieties of color oddities! First, what is melanin? Melanin is a color pigment found in animals responsible for the color of skin, feathers, fur, and eyes. Melanin can produce a huge variety of color. Among other things, melanin and pigmentation helps protect the skin by blocking UV radiation, and can be used for camouflage.

Albinism is the absence of any pigmentation or coloration. It is a recessive hereditary trait, which means both parents must pass the mutation on to the offspring. This results in white hair, feathers, scales, skin, and pink (or very pale) eyes. Albinism can occur in mammals, fish, birds, reptiles, and amphibians. In the animal world, albinism can reduce the rate of survival due to the lack of UV protection, inability to hide from predators or prey, and since it also affects the eyes albinism can cause impaired vision. Due to the rarity of albinism in nature, many past cultures believed they were special and worshipped them, while other people believed them to be an omen and feared them.

Sometimes mistaken for albinism, leucism is a condition that reduces pigment in animals. Usually animals with leucism will have some portion of their normal pigmentation. Leucistic animals can also have completely white skin, fur, feathers, or scales, animals with leucism have normal eye color. Usually leucism is seen as a disadvantage, as the animal loses its ability to camouflage itself well. Leucism, like albinism, is a recessive genetic trait.

Melanism is the development of dark pigments of melanin, or extra melanin in their skin, feathers, or fur. Melanism is an adaptation some animals have developed for better survivability in their environment. Black panthers have better camouflage when they are hunting at night. There have also been studies showing that melanistic animals have higher health when in their habitat. Melanism is heritable, and is a dominant trait, which is why it is more likely to see a colony of animals that have developed the darker color, such as black squirrels. Melanism does not exist in humans, as some UV radiation is necessary for the production of vitamin D in the skin.



(Left) Albino Bullfrog
*Note the red eyes.



(Center) Leucistic Cardinal



(Right) Melanistic Squirrel

News

Nature Bites

Did you know that we send out an E-Newsletter called "Nature Bites" every month? This one-page publication is sent about a week before each new month. It is a brief reminder of all of the public programs coming up in the next month, and we have a featured event for each month. If you are interested in signing up for Nature Bites you can sign up by calling 515-961-6169 or by going here:

<https://goo.gl/forms/EVGr1fKh6wQBYfgJ2>



Species Spotlight: Crane fly

They have six long legs, they fly around, have long slender bodies and are about 1–2 inches long with a 2.5–3 inch wingspan. Don't worry, this isn't a giant mosquito, it also doesn't eat mosquitoes. It is a crane fly!

The crane fly is a completely harmless insect. The adult crane fly actually doesn't eat much, if anything at all. Some crane flies are able to sponge up sweet liquids, but that isn't seen very often either. Adult crane flies only live for a few days, spending most of their lives in their larval form in the water. In fact they can spend 6 weeks to 5 years in the aquatic larval stage.

There are hundreds of species of crane fly in North America alone, and there is a huge diversity in the larva of these crane flies. The larvae are typically .5 to 1 inch long with a tan, gray, or greenish color. They look grublike and have segments. They are aquatic or can be found in very damp soil. Crane fly larvae are important as an indicator of water quality. They are considered "moderately intolerant of pollution." This means that if a body of water is heavily polluted, you would not find crane fly larvae.

Crane flies are not only important pollution indicators, but they are also a necessary food source for many other animals. Crane fly predators include skunks, moles, turtles, fish, bats, and birds.

So if you find one of these bumbling insects has found its way into your home, rather than swatting it away like a giant mosquito, try to admire them and return them outside!



News



Meet a Member Mark Kickbush

Please help us welcome a new board member to the Warren County Conservation Board.

“My name is Mark Kickbush. I am the newest member of the Warren County Conservation Board. I am currently employed as an independent contractor, supporting the United States Armed Forces. I retired 2.5 years ago, as a Lieutenant Colonel, from the United States Air Force, Iowa Air National Guard. I served 30 years in the military, 20 as an Active Duty F-16 pilot, with 8 deployments to the Middle East during my service time.



I am a graduate of Indianola High School and Iowa State University, with a major in Fisheries and Wildlife Biology. During my time at Iowa State, I was a seasonal employee for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. I worked two summers in Manchester, Iowa, with the fisheries management division and worked a summer in Mt. Ayr, with their fisheries management division. I spent a summer at Spirit Lake, Iowa with the fisheries Research Branch, as well as the Army Corps of Engineers, as a fisheries technician, supporting Operation Fish Run, at the Little Goose Dam in Starbuck, Washington on the Snake River. After college, I also worked with the parks division at Lake Ahquabi.

I currently reside in Warren County with my wife, Nicole, and our two sons, Benjamin and Wyatt. We enjoy being out in nature and visiting our National Parks during the summer. I am humbled to be a part of the Warren County Conservation Board and feel my past experiences and education will bring ideas and perspective to the board.”

If you run into Mark, please say hello. You can also join us at our monthly board meetings on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 6:00p.m. at the Annett Nature Center.



Thank You Mick Kreidler!

We would like to thank Mick Kreidler for her time as a Board Member. She served on the Warren County Conservation Board from 2002–2018. We appreciate all of the time, energy, and passion she put into everything she did for the Warren County Conservation Board. She always had the best interest of the public and natural areas of our beautiful county in mind.



Events

April

Tree Geocaching Adventure Begins

Monday, April 1st | N/A | Non-initialized location

Grab your GPS, your hiking boots, and get ready to explore! Find all 25 geocaches and collect the trading cards, April 1, 2019 through November 1, 2019. There are 25 Tree Geocaching Adventure Caches hidden in county, state and city parks around Warren County. Your challenge is to explore and find them using a GPS.

FWCC Osprey 5K Trail Run/Walk

Saturday, April 6th | 9:00–11:00 a.m. | ANC

Join Friends of Warren County Conservation as we host the 10th Osprey 5K Trail Run/Walk event. The trails will lead you through the beautiful prairie and woodlands of Annett Nature Center. Participants will receive a long sleeved tech shirt, swag bag, and participation medal. All proceeds benefit environmental education programs and exhibits. Packet pick up is from 8AM-8:45AM and the race will start at 9AM. The cost is \$30 if registered before March 31 and \$35 after.

Register at: <http://getmeregistered.com/Osprey5KTrailRun>



Earth Day Egg Hunt

Saturday, April 13th | 10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. | ANC

Join us for this family fun come-as-you-want event getting outside this spring with our Earth Day Egg Hunt. Learn about the 2019 Earth Day theme, “Protect Our Species,” as you hunt for eggs on the beautiful trails of the Annett Nature Center. Children must be accompanied by an adult. There will be crafts in the Annett Nature Center and a basket for egg recycling. Egg hunters will also be able to register for a raffle to win a prize! Registration is required.

Evening Prairie Burn

Thursday, April 16th | TBA | ANC

Join the WCCB as we light up the night sky! Learn about the valuable role fire plays in the prairie ecosystem and watch how a prairie burn is done. This program is dependent on weather conditions.

Trivia with The Local Vine

Saturday, April 27th | 7–9 p.m. | The Local Vine

Join Warren County Conservation as we co-host trivia at The Local Vine. Form teams of 2 people and join us for a special night of nature related questions. No registration required. We will have 10 questions in each of our 5 rounds. Each round will be a different category. The winning team receives a week of bragging rights, 25% off food and drinks ordered the day of the contest, and a conservation themed prize.

May

Storywalk

May | ANC

StoryWalk is a fun idea to get communities outside and reading. Each month, we will put new nature-themed children's stories along trails in different parks. Stories will all be nature-themed and fun to read! Bring your whole family out to hike and read a page of the story every few feet as you go along.

Plant, Grow, Fly

Friday, May 17th | 6–7 p.m. | ANC

Join Blank Park Zoo & WCCB to learn about native prairie plants, pollinators, and how you can create your own butterfly habitat. Plant, Grow, Fly is a conservation initiative to help protect our native pollinators. You will also learn how to register your garden. Every plant helps, so the first 20 participants registered will receive a free native prairie plant.

This event is a kickoff to our Friends of Warren County Conservation Native Plant Sale. After the program plants will be available for purchase. All proceeds support environmental education programs and exhibits with Warren County Conservation.

Please reserve your seat, registration will be open until May 16, 2019. There is no charge for this event.

Events



May Cont'd

FWCC Native Plant Sale

Saturday, May 18th | 8a.m.–2p.m. | ANC

Spruce up your landscaping with some native plants. Join FWCC for the native plant sale. There will be lots of native prairie and woodland plants available to choose from. A few favorites are common milkweed, butterfly milkweed, purple coneflower, White Indigo, Prairie dropseed, New England Aster, Columbine, Jack-in-the pulpit, and many more. All proceeds from the plant sale will benefit Warren County Conservation Board educational programming and exhibits.



Tomahawks & Atlatls

Tuesday, May 21st | 6:30–7:45p.m. | Pickard Park

Join the WCCB naturalists and Indianola Parks & Recreation for an evening of educational fun to learn about tomahawks and atlatls. There will be a brief history of each tool, safety instructions, and participants will learn to throw each one. So get your arms ready for tossing a tomahawk and spear at our large cardboard bison & 3D targets. Children must be accompanied by an adult and be at least 9 years old to throw. Space & throwing time is limited. Closed toed shoes are required to throw. Please register by May 19, 2019.

June

Storywalk

June | Bank Swallow Bend

StoryWalk is a fun idea to get communities outside and reading. Each month, we will put new nature-themed children's stories along trails in different parks. Stories will all be nature-themed and fun to read! Bring your whole family out to hike and read a page of the story every few feet as you go along

Kids Fish Day

Saturday, June 1st | 9–11:30 a.m. | ANC

Celebrate Free Fishing weekend and have some fishing fun with us! Bring the whole family out to learn the art of fishing. Participants can learn the proper way to tie knots, cast and fish safely. The fishing competition will take place at Lester Pond. There will be awards and prizes given out as well as a free hot dog picnic after fishing.

Feel free to bring your own pole or borrow one of ours. Bait will be provided. A fishing license is not required for participants at Kid's Fish Day. Please register so we can plan for bait and hot dogs!

Terrariums Make & Take

Tuesday, June 4th | 7–8p.m. | ANC

Create your own mini world inside a glass container. Terrariums are easy to care for and look wonderful in your office or home. You will learn how to make, care, and maintain your terrarium at this program. You are welcome to bring your own small glass container or choose one that evening. The cost is \$20 per person for materials. Children 8 and older are welcome with an adult. Class size is limited.

Registration is required by June 1, 2019.

Wild Women of the Woods

Friday, June 7th | 6:00–9:00p.m. | ANC

Saturday, June 8th | 7:00a.m.–4:15p.m. | ANC

Would you like to meet other women with similar interests, attend classes to learn new skills and enhance older ones, or just kick back in the great outdoors? If so, this is the event for you. Grab your hiking boots and your gal pals and get ready for an exciting day in the outdoors! With so many exciting sessions to choose from, the hardest part will be deciding which to attend. Check our website for registration information.



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

News

June Cont'd

Stand Up Paddleboarding

Friday, June 14th | 3–4:30 p.m. | ANC

Get out on the water and give stand up paddleboarding a try. A WCCB naturalist will go over the basic equipment, paddle strokes, and get you paddling around at various areas. No experience necessary! An adult must accompany children and children must be at least 10 years old. Space is limited to 11 participants and registration is required.



Stand Up Paddleboarding

Saturday, June 29th | 1–2:30 p.m. | Lake Ahquabi

Get out on the lake and give stand up paddleboarding a try. A WCCB naturalist will go over the basic equipment, paddle strokes, and get you paddling around at various areas. No experience necessary! An adult must accompany children and children must be at least 10 years old. Space is limited to 11 participants and registration is required. Meet at the boat dock at Lake Ahquabi.

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

Thank You!

Essential Oils Bingo

Kathrin Herr

Sue Wilson

YMCA booth

Barb Ripperger

Steve Weaver

Steve Derman

FWCC Membership Mailing

Bob & Jackie Sarasio

Ace & Judy Hendricks

John Krogmeier

Randy Edwards

Steve & Mary Weaver

Steve Derman

Blair Lawson

Glass containers for Terrariums

Kathy Krogmeier

Hungry Caterpillar Packet

Adventures School of Discovery,

Greenbush Acres

Animal Care

Jenna Brown

Ashley D. Vanderflugh

Welcome!

Friends of Warren County Conservation
would like to welcome two new board
members:

Carla Kuehl-Purdum

and

Veronica O'Hern.

News



This year is the 10th Anniversary of the Friends of Warren County Conservation Osprey 5K Trail Run/Walk!

Hit the trails!! FWCC Osprey 5K April 6, 2019

- * 5K trail run/walk
- * Long sleeved tech shirt
- * Beautiful trails
- * Funds support environmental education programs

\$30 per person

www.getmeregistered.com/Osprey5KTrailRun
515-961-6169



**Annett Nature Center
Friends of Warren County Conservation
Indianola, IA
9AM**

Come help us celebrate this spring kick-off tradition!



Spring 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.

Subscribe to *Three Rivers Journal* via email!
Reduce waste and get frequent updates on
programs, parks, & projects:
subscribewccb
@warrencb.org



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Mark Kickbush	New Virginia

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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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