



JOURNAL

Warren County Conservation Board

Summer 2020

Species Spotlight: Spittlebug (Froghoppers) Family - *Cercopidae*



Have you ever been walking along a trail and noticed a mass of spit on the stem of a plant? Then noticed another one, and another, and wondered who was walking in front of you spitting on the plants? What you were probably seeing was the foamy home of the spittlebug.

Spittlebugs are the nymph form of froghoppers. Spittlebugs get their name from the foamy “spit” that they live in. These masses can be up to $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch. The nymphs have soft, elongated bodies that can be orange, yellow, or green. As an adult, they will grow to $\frac{1}{4}$ inch long and have enlarged hind legs for jumping. Adult froghoppers lay their eggs in plant debris in September and October, where they will overwinter. The nymphs (spittlebugs) will come out in late April or early May and will mature into an adult in 5 to 8 weeks. There is only one generation each year.

Spittlebugs feed on plant fluids from the xylem of plants, which is the tissue used to transport water and dissolved nutrients from the roots upwards to the stem. Since the fluids are very watery, the spittlebug has to consume a large volume in order to get the nutrients they need to survive. That also means that they have an extraordinary amount of liquid waste, or urine, at a rate of 150-280 times their body weight every day. For comparison, that would be 2,700 gallons a day for a 150 pound human. Since there is a massive amount of liquid waste, it makes sense to repurpose it into a protective shelter. Spittlebugs create their foamy home by mixing air emitted from their abdomen with watery urine and sticky fluid secretions. This foam shelter keeps them safe from predators, from drying out, and insulating them from extreme temperatures. Spittlebugs breathe by breaking the surface of the foam with the tip of their abdomen, using it almost as a snorkel.



Spittlebugs feed on a variety of plants. They feed on fluids from plants, but they don't cause a significant amount of damage. If you see them in your garden, or down a walking path, don't worry about the plant. Instead, see if you can find the little spittlebug in the midst of the foam. Maybe you can even see the spittlebug creating more bubbles for its spit-home!





Meet A Member

Meet a Member: Staff Kevin Brown, Conservation Technician

Kevin Brown is one of the newest full time staff members at Warren County Conservation Board. Kevin is a Conservation Technician with the Warren County Conservation Board. Kevin has worked as a seasonal with WCCB for 8 years and has performed many tasks such as yard maintenance, building maintenance, and keeping our parks clean. Kevin has also helped out with many projects around the county, like building a new retaining wall at Zo-El Annett Woods, building fish habitat structures for ponds at the Annett Nature Center and Hickory Hills, and harvesting, drying, and sorting prairie seed. Kevin's most memorable project was being a part of the construction of the Lester Davison Memorial Pavilion.



Kevin grew up in New Virginia, Iowa. He has always enjoyed an outdoor lifestyle which is what inspired him to work in the conservation field. He is passionate about creating more habitat for fish and wildlife here in Iowa. In Kevin's free time, you can find him out in one of his favorite hunting or fishing spots. Hickory Hills and Rolling Thunder Prairie are his favorite Warren County Parks.

"I love getting the opportunity to work with really great people that are interested in the same things as I am."



Prairie Picnic Online Auction

The Friends of Warren County Conservation voted at the June Meeting to postpone the in-person FWCC Prairie Picnic to 2021. This decision was made to keep everyone safe during the Covid-19 pandemic.

This year FWCC will be offering an online auction with Putney Auction. Auction items will be listed and available for bid **September 12-19, 2020**. Items will be similar to those auctioned at the in person event. All proceeds will benefit the redesign of the exhibit hall space at Annett Nature Center. If you would like to donate directly to this project visit <https://www.mightycause.com/story/Abfkeg>

We are in the process of working out the details for this online event. You will need to set up a free online account at Putney Auction. So save the date and check our website and Facebook page for updates and a link to register to bid. Your support is greatly appreciated.



COVID-19 Information

Updated June 2020

At the June 10, 2020 meeting of the Warren County Conservation Board, the Board set July 1, 2020 as the date for reopening WCCB campgrounds, restrooms, shelters, and pavilions. WCCB programming will resume with safety measures that will be announced for each program. The Annett Nature Center will remain closed at this time.

Effective until further notice, the following restrictions on are placed Conservation Board facilities and services:

- Warren County Conservation Board meetings remain open to the public, but will be held electronically—see the agenda on the Board Meetings page for details
- The Annett Nature Center and the WCCB maintenance facility will be closed to public access unless an appointment has been made. Group access will be prohibited. Call the WCCB at 515-961-6169 to see if arrangements can be made.
- WCCB staff are working on programming opportunities and how they can be safely conducted. Watch the Warren County Conservation and Annett Nature Center facebook page for those developments.
- Facility rentals and reservations are cancelled through June 30, 2020. Any paid Annett Nature Center rentals cancelled by Warren County will be refunded through the monthly WCCB meeting schedule.
- Restroom facilities are closed through June 30, 2020.
- Shelters and campgrounds are closed through June 30, 2020.
- Warren County Conservation parks and trails **WILL REMAIN OPEN**. Please practice the Center for Disease Control's social distancing guidelines while getting fresh air and enjoying Warren County's outdoor spaces!



Events

***We will be updating our events and programming as new information becomes available with the current impacts of COVID-19. Check our website or facebook page for updates and registration information:**

www.warrencb.org/events

July

Storywalk @ Woodland Mounds

Wednesday, July 1st | 8 a.m. | Woodland Mounds

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. Call us ahead of time if you want to know the exact location of the StoryWalk within the park (515-961-6169).

Forest & Nature Therapy Walk @ Buxton Park

Saturday, July 11th | 9 a.m. | Buxton Park

Warren County Conservation and Indianola Parks & Recreation will be hosting a nature & forest therapy guided walk. We invite you to unplug, slow down, and experience mindfulness in nature. This gentle three-hour walk will focus on using all your senses to explore Buxton Park. A certified guide with the Association of Nature And Forest Therapy will lead you through nature explorations. This walk is based on Shinrin-yoku or forest therapy that can provide many positive health benefits such as lowered blood pressure, decreased anxiety, increased focus, relaxation, and a connection with nature.

Please come prepared by wearing comfortable walking shoes and dress in layers for the weather. You might want to bring a light snack and drinking water. A small backpack, sunscreen, and bug repellent may be useful. You are welcome to bring a mat to sit on or small camping chair. There will be small sit mats available for use. We will hike if there is light rain, so bring rain gear. Please meet at the gazebo. This program is geared towards those 16 and up. No pets.

The cost is \$20 per person which will be shared between Indianola Parks & Recreation and Friends of Warren County Conservation. Registration is required by July 9, 2020. There is limited space and a minimum of 4 participants is required to host this walk. If you need to cancel please call 515-961-6169 so someone else may join. Please visit our website for Covid -19 requirements.

Outdoor Wellness Day

Thursday, July 16th | 9 a.m. | Annett

Nature Center

Join WCCB staff and Young Living Essential Oils for wellness day at Annett Nature Center. Hike the trails with an outdoor scavenger hunt, fun run, participate in outdoor yoga, and make essential oil items (listed below) that promote wellness and are perfect for outdoor adventures. Wrap up the morning by hiking the trails at your leisure. This is a come and go as you please event. Registration required below or by calling 515-961-6169. Please register by July 14, 2020.

Yoga will start at 10:15 please bring a mat or towel for outdoor yoga. The cost is \$25 per family and includes one of each item: After sun care cream, bug spray, roller bottle, fruit & veggie spray, and hand sanitizer. Additional items may be purchased while supplies last. Please visit our website for Covid-19 requirements.

Breakfast Dutch Oven Cooking

Saturday, July 18th | 8:30 a.m. | Annett

Nature Center

****Please note due to recent Covid-19 restrictions there is a chance this event will be cancelled or held virtually. Should the event be cancelled you will be notified by email. Check back for updates.** 6/12/20**

Are you in need of an easy, filling, and delicious recipe for your next camping trip or outdoor adventure? Learn to prepare scrumptious breakfast recipes that will feed a crowd. Participants will prepare recipes, cook them in the Dutch oven, and learn how to care for Dutch oven cookware. The best part is breakfast & coffee are included.

The cost is \$5 per person. (If this event is held virtually there will be no charge) This program is geared towards those 12 and older. Space is limited, please register by July 16, 2020.

This program will be cancelled if there is significant rain in the forecast as the cooking takes place outdoors. If you need to cancel, please contact the office at 515-961-6169 so we can open your spot to another participant.

News



***We will be updating our events and programming as new information becomes available with the current impacts of COVID-19. Check our website or facebook page for updates and registration information: www.warrencb.org/events**

July cont'd

Forest Therapy with Essential Oils

Saturday, July 19th | 2:30 p.m. | Annett Nature Center

Immerse yourself in nature and experience the benefits of being fully present in the medicine of the forest. Essential oils will be incorporated to support wellness, focus, and relaxation during your walk.

This gentle walk offers a rich experience in nature that can improve mood and boost creativity. Shinrin-yoku or forest therapy offers researched based health benefits such as lowered blood pressure, decreased anxiety, and improved cognitive functioning.

This event will be lead by a Certified Association of Nature & Forest Therapy Guide. The cost is \$20 per person and space is limited. Please register by July 17, 2020. If you need to cancel please call 515-961-6169 so someone else may join. Please visit our website for Covid-19 requirements.



August

Storywalk @ Otter Creek

Saturday, August 1st | 8 a.m. | Otter Creek

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. Call us ahead of time if you want to know the exact location of the StoryWalk within the park (515-961-6169).

Skinning & Butchering Program

Saturday, August 8th | 1 p.m. | Annett Nature Center

So you got your pheasant/deer/turkey, now what? Come out to the Annett Nature Center and learn about the techniques of butchering the animal to get the most out of it to fill your freezer. This will be a learning and hands on program. We will have professionals with the Iowa DNR and here to teach these important skills.

This program is geared towards adults and due for the safety measures with the nature of this program, participants must be 16 years or older. Please be aware that clothing might get dirty, and bring your questions for the professionals that will be leading this opportunity.

The cost is \$15 per person to help cover materials costs. You will get to take the meat you butcher home with you. Registration is required, and space is limited but there is a minimum of 5 participants required to hold this event.

Forest Therapy Walk @ Grant Park

Saturday, August 29th | 5:30 p.m. | Grant Park

Warren County Conservation will be hosting a nature & forest therapy guided walk. We invite you to unplug, slow down, and experience mindfulness in nature. This gentle three-hour walk will focus on using all your senses to explore Grant Park. Certified guides with the Association of Nature And Forest Therapy Association will lead you through nature explorations. This walk is based on Shinrin-yoku or forest therapy that can provide many positive health benefits such as lowered blood pressure, decreased anxiety, increased focus, relaxation, and a connection with nature.

Please come prepared by wearing comfortable walking shoes and dress in layers for the weather. You might want to bring a light snack and drinking water. A small backpack, sunscreen, and bug repellent may be useful. You are welcome to bring a mat to sit on or a small camping chair. There will be small sit mats available for use. We will hike if there is light rain, so bring rain gear. Please meet at the shelter house. This program is geared towards those 16 and up. No pets.

The charge for this event is \$20 per person, please bring exact change or a check the day of the event. Registration is required at warrencb.org. Please register by August 27, 2020. There is limited space and a minimum of 4 participants is required to host this walk.



Events

***We will be updating our events and programming as new information becomes available with the current impacts of COVID-19. Check our website or facebook page for updates and registration information:
www.warrencb.org/events**

September

Monarch Tagging @ Annett Nature Center Sunday, September 13th | 1:00 p.m. | Annett Nature Center

Come discover more about monarch butterflies, their unusual lifestyle and life cycle and their miraculous migration to Mexico. A Warren County Conservation Naturalist will teach you how to catch and handle a monarch, determine gender, and properly tag them in the wild as part of a national research project. All monarchs will be released after they are tagged. Bring a butterfly net if you have one, or share a park net if you don't. There is a limited number of nets available for use. Fun for the whole family! Please register by September 11, 2020.

Please arrive promptly so you don't miss the instructions for tagging.

Monarch Tagging @ Buxton Park Saturday, September 19th | 1:00 p.m. | Buxton Park

Come discover more about monarch butterflies, their unusual lifestyle and life cycle and their miraculous migration to Mexico. A Warren County Conservation Naturalist will teach you how to catch and handle a monarch, determine gender, and properly tag them in the wild as part of a national research project. All monarchs will be released after they are tagged. Bring a butterfly net if you have one, or share a park net if you don't. There is a limited number of nets available for use. Fun for the whole family! Please register by September 17, 2020.

Please arrive promptly so you don't miss the instructions

Thank You!

Rick & Beth McGeough
for the donation of a barrel
for the rain barrel program.



Family Fun This summer

2020 has been a year to remember, already! While there have been a lot of concerns and closures, there are still lots of ways you can get out and enjoy this summer with your family. Every summer we put out a storywalk, and host a geocaching adventure. These are great activities that you can do with your families on your own schedule and as frequently as you want!

Try StoryWalk © in Our Parks!

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. Below is a schedule of where and when the books will be placed. Please sign our guest book at the end of each StoryWalk® so we know how many people made it out.



July – Woodland Mounds- Ricky, the rock that couldn't roll
written by Jay Miletsky and illustrated by Erin Wozniak
August – Otter Creek – Star in the Jar Sam Hay & Sarah Massini

Call (515) 961-6169 if you have questions about finding the start of the StoryWalk® within in a park.



Family Fun Cont'd

2020 Warren County Park & Trails Geocaching Fish Adventure

Grab your GPS, your binoculars and hiking boots, and get ready to explore! Find all 25 geocaches and collect the trading cards, April 1st- November 1st 2020.

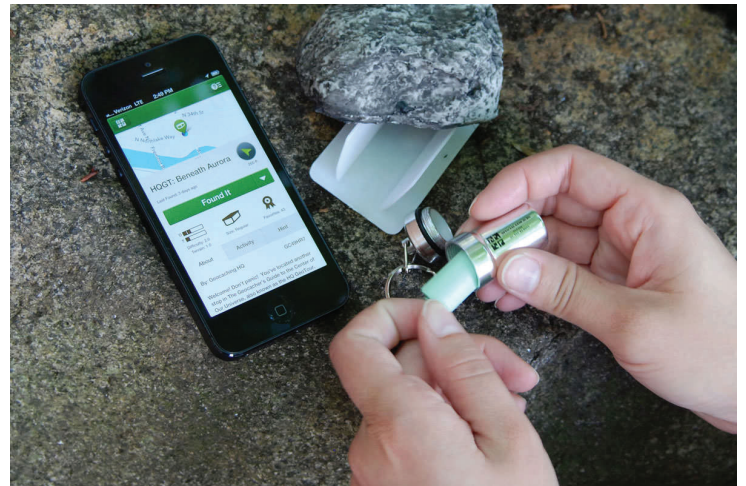
What is Geocaching?

Geocaching is a real-world, outdoor treasure hunt using GPS-enabled devices. Participants navigate to a specific set of GPS coordinates and then attempt to find the geocache (container) hidden at that location. It is a world-wide hobby!

What is the Geocaching Fish Adventure?

There are 25 Geocaching Fish Adventure Caches hidden in county, state and city parks around Warren County. Your challenge is to explore parks and find them all using a GPS. Each cache includes an instruction card, a logbook, and a stack of fish trading cards. Sign the logbook to show that you found the cache and take a tree trading card for your collection. Explore the park around you and you might get lucky and find a one of Iowa's many trees.

After finding all 25 caches, take your 25 fish trading cards to the Annett Nature Center. We will give you the coordinates to find the last cache challenge. Take a picture of yourself with the very last card or all of your trading cards. Feel free to include family, friends, your dog or anyone else that helped you finish the challenge. All participants who successfully finish the challenge by November 1, 2020 will receive a prize and your photo will be posted on our Facebook page as Geocaching Adventure Finisher. Then, take the winter months off and check back in the spring for the next geocaching theme.



Get Started Today!

- Download all the coordinates from below onto your GPS
- Use the GPS device to determine your location in relation to the cache. The GPS device will show you how far away and in what direction the cache is hidden.
- Find the cache, sign the logbook and take your trading card
- Create a free account on geocaching.com and log your finds. The 25 caches can be found by searching for "WC Fish Adventure" (You can also download coordinates straight to your GPS from here or use the Geocaching app on your smartphone to find them)

Rules of the Game

Keep geocaching fun, safe and ethical by following the common-sense rules:

- Stay on marked trails wherever possible
- Tread lightly on the land and minimize impacts on the environment. Caches were placed above the ground in relatively well-traveled areas. There should be no need to disturb natural features to find a cache.
- Never remove or relocate a cache. Once you find it, open it to claim your prize, but then put it back exactly where you found it.
- You may find small trinkets left by other participants inside the cache. If you find one, it's yours to keep. You can choose to leave a trinket for the next Adventure geocacher.
- Observe all laws and rules of the park.
- If you have trouble locating a cache, call us at 515-961-6169 for hints and tips.

2020 Geocaching Tree Adventure Coordinates will be active until November 1, 2020. You can get the coordinates on geocaching.com or enter on our website page at: <https://www.warrencb.org/parksandtrails/hiking-walking/geocaching/>

Summer 2020

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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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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