



JOURNAL

Warren County Conservation Board

Spring 2021

Species Spotlight: Turkey Vulture

Cathartes aura



Harbingers of Spring. Once you see them slowly circling in the sky, with their dark feathers and bald heads, you know that spring is actually here. While robins have been known to completely over-winter, turkey vultures migrate to warmer winter climates.

Turkey vultures are a beneficial, often over-looked bird that calls Iowa home from spring to fall. They are large, dark birds with a bald, red head and a long wingspan of 66–70 inches. They have long, finger-like feathers at their wingtips and hold their wings slightly raised making a ‘V.’ Turkey vultures can be identified from the soaring flight pattern that they do. They don’t flap their wings very often unless they are just taking off and getting to soaring height. They fly in big circular motions, a lot of times riding thermals up to a higher vantage point. (Thermals are columns of rising air.) Turkey vultures may also glide low to the ground sniffing for carrion.

Turkey vultures, which have an incredible sense of smell, are carrion-eaters, or scavengers. Although the initial reaction to eating dead animals is kind of gross, they are important members of the clean up crew. As all of the winter snow, ice, and road kill starts to thaw out, the turkey vultures are there to start eating it and keeping our fields, ditches, and parks clean. Eating dead and decaying carcasses also prevents the spread of diseases and bacteria. They tend to eat the softest bits and organs first, and prefer freshly dead animals but due to their excellent immune system they will also feast on older carcasses without contracting diseases or illnesses.

Turkey vultures are known for their bald heads, but they aren’t just aging and losing their “hair.” Turkey vultures lack feathers on their head to help keep themselves clean and free of decaying material that could get stuck onto feathers. They will often stick their head completely inside of a carcass. They also commonly excrete their waste onto their legs, on purpose. There are two reasons for this, in warm weather it can help cool them down, and it is highly acidic and kills any bacteria and toxins that might have gotten on their legs while walking on a carcass.

When threatened, a turkey vulture might vomit its powerful stomach acids. This also might mean that if someone startles a turkey vulture on the side of the road and it vomits, it could end up on the car. That can be a stinky way to learn about a defense mechanism! Turkey vultures are really neat, beneficial animals. Be sure to check out some of these unique features the next time you pass a “TV.”



Meet A Member

Meet A Member: Friends of Warren County Conservation John Krogmeier

I'm John Krogmeier with the Friends of Warren County Conservation Board. I have been volunteering here for over 20 years, and have enjoyed helping with a number of the events.

It's been fun to visit all the parks of Warren County and view the wonderful diversity of the area. The geocaching events of the past several years have encouraged me to take a close look at all the areas.

My favorite place is the land around the Annett Nature Center, with its rolling hills, the butterfly garden and prairie. The vistas overlooking the valley are a great way to witness the changing of the seasons. It is truly a beautiful place to be.



The evening prairie burn is something I look forward to. It is a mesmerizing experience as the flames restore the prairie to its lush greens.

I received my bachelor degree in Fisheries and Wildlife Biology from Iowa State University and have been working at Blank Park Zoo since 1989, serving in direct animal care for 28 years, then moving into the commissary area where we prepare the animals' diets and keep the Zoo's supplies well stocked.

I was one of the team that created the first Conservation Committee at the Zoo in 1995, and became involved with the fundraising and selection of conservation projects all over the world to receive funding. Joining the Friends group, helping to fundraise for the needs of educational programming here in Warren County was a natural next step.



My wife, Kathy, and I enjoy adventuring to National Parks and National Wildlife Refuges across the United States. We're always in search of beautiful scenery and fascinating wildlife.



Exhibit Update

We are excited that our exhibit hall redesign is moving along. Thanks to support from our community, the first phase is getting built by the exhibit company right now! Our new climbable tree is almost finished and getting ready to be installed!

If you would like to be a part of our next phase, or want to read more about our plans, visit: <http://www.mightycause.com/story/ANC>



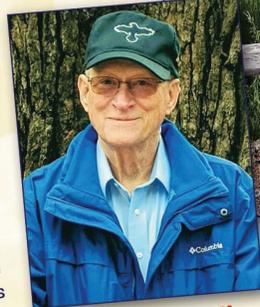
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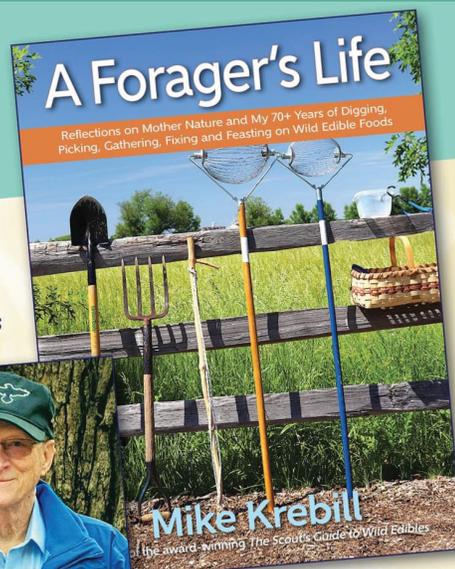
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Feasting on Wild Edible Foods



Mike Krebill




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New Book by Iowa's First Naturalist

If you are interested in foraging or midwest edibles, Mike Krebill is a wealth of knowledge. He is a former naturalist in Iowa, and was the first naturalist in the state. He is an inductee into the National Wild Foods Hall of Fame and is a well-known wild forager across the country. He has written several books, the latest being: *A Forager's Life: Reflections on Mother Nature and My 70+ Years of Digging, Picking, Gathering, Fixing and Feasting on Wild Edible Foods.*



Events

April

Warren County Geocaching Constellation Adventure

April 1st – November 1st | Warren County

There are 25 Geocaching Constellation Adventure Caches hidden in county, state and city parks around Warren County. Your challenge is to explore the parks and find them all using a GPS. Each constellation cache includes an instruction card, a logbook, and a stack of constellation trading cards. Sign the logbook to show that you found the cache and take a constellation trading card for your collection. Explore the night sky and see if you can spot a constellation.

After finding all 25 caches, take your 25 collectible cards to the Annett Nature Center. We will give you the coordinates to find the last cache challenge. All participants who finish the challenge by November 1, 2021 will receive a finisher's medal and will be added to our Geocaching Adventure Finishers Gallery.

FWCC Osprey 5K Trail Run/Walk

Saturday, April 10th | 9:00 a.m. | Annett Nature Center

Get your morning workout in at the Friends of Warren County Conservation Board Osprey 5K Trail Run. Run or walk the trails of the Annett Nature Center. All proceeds benefit new educational exhibits at the nature center.

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

The cost is \$30 by April 1, 2021 and \$35 after April 1, 2021. All participants will receive a finishers medal, long sleeve tech shirt and refreshments. Packet pick up will be April 10, 2021 at 8AM-8:45AM at Annett Nature Center.

If you run virtually register at the above link, then email karenjohlas-szalkowski@warrencb.org or call 515-961-6169 to arrange for contactless packet pick up at Annett Nature Center.



Worm Composting

Saturday, April 17th | 10:00 a.m. | Annett Nature Center

Let worms EAT your kitchen waste! All types of composting will be discussed and participants will make their own worm bin to take home with them and put their kitchen scraps to work! This program will be held at the new Middleswart Lodge, south of the Annett Nature Center.

The cost is \$8 per bin. Registration is required by Tuesday, April 13th. Register at www.warrencb.org/events

Evening Prairie Burn

Tuesday April 20th | 8:00 p.m. | Annett Nature Center

Join the Warren County Conservation Board as we light up the night sky! Learn about the valuable role fire plays in the prairie ecosystem, and why prescribed burns are used. Enjoy the beauty of watching the prairie burn against the night.

This program is dependent on weather conditions. Registration is not required for this event. Check for event updates on our facebook page or call the office at 515-961-6169.

Earth Day Trash Bash

Saturday April 24th | 9:00–11:30 a.m. | Swamp White Oak

Come out to Swamp White Oak, near Norwalk, to join in on a trash-bash clean up. Cleanups like this help reduce waste and plastic pollution, which help improve habitats, prevent harm to wildlife and humans, help improve water quality, and contribute to a healthier community overall. This is a great opportunity to get involved, get to know a Warren County Park, and be a part of a bigger movement.

Important Notes:

Garbage bags and plastic gloves will be provided. You are welcome and encouraged to bring work gloves of your own.

*Children and families are welcome, but please keep in mind that this event is self-supervised. Children should be with their parent/guardian at all times.

**This is a come-and-go event, you can come for the entire event or for a portion that fits with your schedule! Please register at www.warrencb.org/events if you are coming to ANY portion of the event so that we can have enough supplies!

May

Plant, Grow, Fly Program

Friday May 14th | 6:00 p.m. | Annett Nature Center

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 10 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 13, 2021. There is no charge for this event.

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

Events



May Cont'd



FWCC Native Plant Sale

Saturday May 15th | 8:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m. |

Annett Nature Center

Friends of Warren County Conservation will be hosting their annual native plant sale. Spruce up your landscaping with some native plants that the pollinators will love. There will be lots of native prairie and woodland plants available to choose from. A few favorites include a variety of milkweeds, purple coneflower, White Indigo, Prairie dropseed, New England Aster, Goldenrod, Coreopsis, Blazing Star, Columbine, Jack-in-the-pulpit, and many more. Quantities are limited. All proceeds from the plant sale will benefit WCCB educational programming.

Children's Garden: Insect Symphony

Saturday May 16th | 4 p.m. | Buxton Park

Join WCCB naturalist at the Children's Garden in Buxton park for some buggy and musical exploration. Indianola Parks & Recreation and WCCB invite you to take a closer look at those small but mighty critters that are all around us! We'll listen to some of the songs insects make for us and try to make our own music back to the insects! This program is geared towards children in preschool–kindergarten and their adults. Please register at www.warrenccb.org for both the adult and child by Thursday, May 14 at noon so that we know how many participants to expect.

Birding Hike @ Hickory Hills

Sunday May 23rd | 6:30 a.m. | Hickory Hills

Join us for an early morning birding hike at Hickory Hills for a Building Better Birders and Citizen Scientist workshop! Hike the beautiful morning trails and learn tips about how to increase your birding knowledge. Bring along your own pair of binoculars or some will be provided!

This workshop will be conducted by Kelly McKay (BioEco Research and Monitoring Center), with assistance from Mark Roberts (Clinton County Conservation) and Brian Ritter (Nahant Marsh Education Center).

Funding for this workshop was provided by the Resource Enhancement and Protection – Conservation Education Program (REAP – CEP).

Please register at www.warrenccb.org so we can make sure we have plenty of binoculars and materials.

June

Storywalk @ Annett Nature Center

June | Annett Nature Center

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! Please sign our guest book at the end of each StoryWalk® so we know how many people made it out.

Terrariums with Ted Lare Gardens

Tuesday June 1st | 6:00 p.m. | Annett Nature Center

Terrariums involve planting a miniature world inside a glass vessel. In this class you will create your own beautiful terrarium using a glass container. Your class fee of \$30 includes free instruction, glass globe container, two terrarium plants, soil, charcoal, moss and other accents. Proper terrarium construction, care and maintenance will be demonstrated and discussed.

Register at <https://tedsgardens.com>

Kids Fish Day

Saturday, June 5th | 9:00 a.m. | Annett Nature Center

Bring the 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 door prizes given out as well as a free fish cleaning demonstration. Bring your own pole or borrow one of ours. Bait will be provided.

It's FREE, join us! A fishing license is not required for participants at Kid's Fish Day. Please register at www.warrenccb.org for each child so we can plan for bait and materials! This program is put on by Friends of Warren County Conservation and the Izaak Walton League.



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



FWCC

FWCC Osprey 5K Trail Run April 10, 2021

- * 5K trail run/walk
 - * Long sleeved tech shirt
 - * Beautiful trails
 - * Funds support environmental education programs
- \$30 per person**

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



<http://getmeregistered.com/Osprey5KTrailRun>

515-961-6169

Want to join us virtually? Register the same and email karenjohlaszalkowski@warrencb.org for packet pick up.



Thank You!

Indianola Parks & Recreation for partnering with us for the Hidden Hearts Hike

Warren County Health Department for partnering with us for the Hit The Trails Challenges

Events



June cont'd

Wild Outdoor Women

Friday June 11th & Saturday June 12th |

Annett Nature Center

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. With so many exciting sessions to choose from, the hardest part will be deciding which to attend. The registration fee is \$50 and itinerary includes: Friday night activities, breakout sessions on Saturday, silent auction, and a Wild Outdoor Women gift!



Forest & Nature Therapy Walk

Thursday June 17th | 6:00 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 positive health benefits such as lowered blood pressure, decreased anxiety, increased focus, relaxation, and a connection with nature. Registration required by June 15, 2021. Program fee is \$20 per person.

Standup Paddleboarding

Saturday, June 26th | 3:00 p.m. | **Hooper**

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.

In order to reduce last minute cancellations and no shows. Registration will open one month out from the date of the event. Thank you for your understanding.

National Mud Day Program

Sunday, June 27th | 2:00 p.m. | **Annett Nature Center**

Come out and help us celebrate National Mud Day with an invitation to get muddy and enjoy exploring mud with your kids! Discover, or rediscover, the messy joy that comes with a good mud pile. We will be watering down a mud pit at the Annett Nature Center to celebrate this holiday.

You can observe this holiday in any way you like, make a mud pie, have a mud bath, or a mud mask! Get as muddy as you can, we'll have a hose available for a quick rinse off after you are done enjoying yourself. Share your photos and tag us on Instagram or Facebook. Heads up though, you will want to wear clothing and shoes that you don't mind getting dirty or becoming your "mud clothes."

Please observe Covid 19 precautions and socially distance. This is a free, come-as-you-please event, but please register at www.warrenccb.org so we have an idea of how many people plan to attend.



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

Spring 2021

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:



wccb@warrenccb.org



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