



Warren County Conservation Board

Summer 2023

## Creature Feature: Raccoon

Also known as the trash pandas, these animals will be the first to find out you forgot to close your trash can lid. These fluffy bandits can be found in a wide variety of areas including forests, prairies, farm fields and urban areas. Despite them being a sneaky animal, due to the abundance of them it is likely you recognized this animal instantly.

**Home:** Raccoons will call a variety of places home. A raccoons dwelling is referred to as a den. Which can include tree hollows, ground burrows, abandoned buildings, haystacks and many more.

**Diet:** These creatures are very adaptable animals, one of the reasons they are able to thrive in different habitats is their diet. They are scavengers and omnivores. They can be found feasting rodents, fish, birds, carrion, fruits, nuts, and of course your week old pizza.



**Offspring:** Raccoons have between 2 and 5 kits in a litter. Kits are typically born in March and April and stay with their mother for up to a year before leaving. In the wild raccoons life span is up to 3 years, in captivity raccoons can live up to 20 years.

**Adaptations:** Raccoons' sticky fingers are an excellent adaptation for opening food or trash can lids, climbing, and causing mischief. They are typically nocturnal although they can be seen during the day. To aid them in their night time adventures they have great hearing and vision.

We often think of these animals as a nuisance but their habits are still very useful in our ecosystem. As they aid in distributing seeds and keeping populations down.

Make sure you stop by the nature center to welcome back Ricky the Raccoon! After a long vacation our taxidermy raccoon has finally returned to us.



# Thank You!

## Thank You!

Without the help of our amazing sponsors, donors, and volunteers we wouldn't be able to provide the programs and events that we do! If you or your business are interested in becoming a sponsor, donor, or volunteer please email [kelseylongnecker@warrencb.org](mailto:kelseylongnecker@warrencb.org)

### Plant Sale

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### Geocaching

Carla Kuel-Purdum  
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### Kids Fish Day

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Bob Hanson



## Volunteer Opportunities

- **Filling Geocaching Cards:** There are 25 Geocaching Adventure Caches hidden in county, state and city parks around Warren County. With your help we can ensure that our cards stay full for our adventurers!



# Meet A Member



## Angie Croll

Meet the newest Warren County Conservation Board member, Angie Croll. Angie has been a fan of WCCB since attending her first event in May of 2018 with her three children. Since then, the Annett Nature Center and all of the Warren County parks have become a big part of the summers for her and her family. A family favorite is the themed geocaching adventures. They have completed the last 3 adventures and are looking forward to completing the Mineral Adventure this year. Summer camps, Wild Women of the Woods, various WCCB programs and themed hikes also make their way on to the Croll calendar. Angie enjoys being outside observing wildlife and flowers around the area and being wowed by the natural world.



Angie and her husband, Doug, are from Urbandale and moved to Norwalk in 2017 with their children Lauren (13), Zach (11) and Collin (5). Zo-El Annett Woods is near their home and is a favorite because of the quick loop, suspension bridge and friendly farm dog that visits them on the trail. Angie is looking forward to learning all she can about conservation and encouraging staff to continue to provide quality programming and facilities for the public.



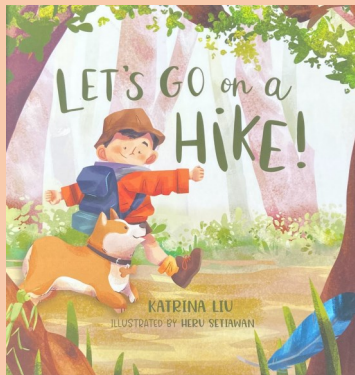
# Events

## July

### StoryWalk

#### **July | Woodland Mounds State Reserve**

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.



### Seasons Hike: Summer

#### **July 8 | Grant Nature Land**

Our walk will take us through a beautiful forest, and we will encounter a variety of vibrant wildflowers, butterflies, and birds. We will also keep a keen eye out for other fascinating creatures like bumblebees, dragonflies, and grasshoppers. Learn a variety of native plant species that are essential to the local ecology and their importance to wildlife.



### Conservation and Nature Book Club

#### **July 18 | Annett Nature Center**

Friends of Warren County Conservation will be hosting a bi-monthly book club. Simply read the suggested book and join us at the Middleswart Lodge for discussion followed by an extended activity related to the book. There is no charge for this program but participants will need to provide their own copy of the book. Please register ahead so we can have enough materials at [www.warrenccb.org/events](http://www.warrenccb.org/events).

### Stand Up Paddleboarding

#### **July 23 | Summerset State Park**

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 10 participants and registration is required.

There is a \$5 program fee for equipment. Fee will be due June 15th. You can send in cash or check to Warren County Conservation, 15565 118th Ave, Indianola, IA 50125.





# Events Cont'd

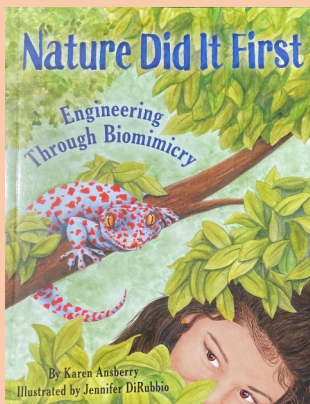


## August

### Story Walk

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



### Stand Up Paddle Boarding

#### **August 3 | Annett Nature Center**

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 10 participants and registration is required.

There is a \$5 program fee for equipment. Fee will be due June 15th. You can send in cash or check to Warren County Conservation, 15565 118th Ave, Indianola, IA 50125.

### Stand Up Paddle Boarding

#### **August 12 | Summerset State Park**

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 10 participants and registration is required.

There is a \$5 program fee for equipment. Fee will be due June 15th. You can send in cash or check to Warren County Conservation, 15565 118th Ave, Indianola, IA 50125.

## SAVE THE DATES:

### Farm to Table

#### **August 26 | Annett Nature Center**

We will be hosting a Farm to Table dinner at the Middleswart Lodge. Chef Aaron Holt will prepare a local four course meal.



### FWCC Prairie Picnic

#### **September 16 | Annett Nature Center**

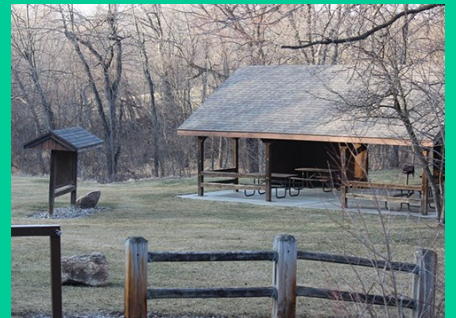
Join Friends of Warren County Conservation for an evening on the prairie with appetizers, drinks, and an auction. All proceeds support education programs and exhibits at Annett Nature Center.



# Summer Fun!

## Grant Nature Land

Grant Nature Land campground expansion is complete, 5 new camping sites have been added, to get 15 sites total. Electric is available at all sites. The biggest addition to the park is a shower house featuring two flush bathrooms and two single shower rooms with a hydrant outside the building. New rock on the campground road has been spread. We are happy to announce that the park is now open for camping! The camping rate is \$20 per night, cash only. Reservations are not accepted, but on a first come first serve basis. Registration is required and is available at the campground entrance. Enjoy your time camping with this 150 acre park in northeast Warren County features a picnic shelter, a secluded pond, and wonderful woodland trails! The picnic shelter is available for reservation by calling the WCCB office at (515) 961-6169.



## Turtle Crossing

During the summer turtles are crossing the road to get back home or to another body of water, they often also lay their eggs in the sand on the other side. It is important to watch for turtles while driving and avoid hitting them. If you see a turtle attempting to cross the road, you can help by safely moving it to the other side in the direction it was headed. Avoid picking up snapping turtles as they have long necks and a powerful bite. Be sure to handle the turtle gently and wash your hands afterward. Letting turtles lay their eggs safely is crucial to the survival of their species.





# Can't Touch This



## Iowa's Untouchables

The long wait is over! Summer is here, with the beautiful blue skies, colorful flowers, and bird songs comes some summer plants that we would rather avoid. Here are some common plants that can cause discomfort during the summer season:

**Stinging Nettle:** Contact with this plant causes itching, burning and swelling.

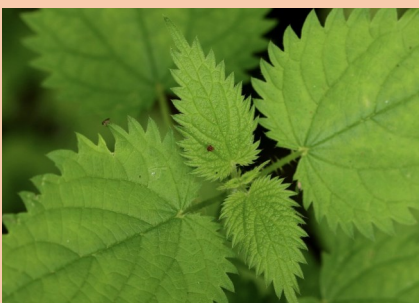
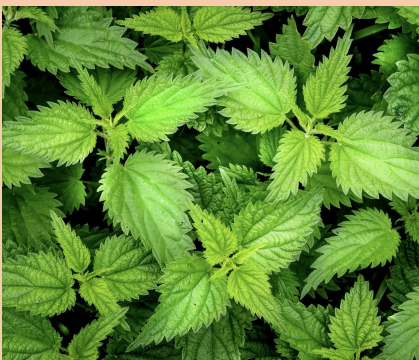
**Poison Ivy:** This plant contains a resin called urushiol that causes an itchy rash and blisters on the skin.

**Wild Parsnip:** When exposed to the sun after touching this plant results in burning and blistering of the skin.

These plants are found in a variety of different habitats and are found all over Iowa. Take a close look at these photos of the plants and be sure to have a picture on hand if you ever unsure about a plant. While these plants may make our summer less enjoyable, taking preventive measures can help reduce the risk of discomfort. Wearing protective clothing, and avoiding contact with poisonous plants can help prevent these uncomfortable situations. With proper planning and protection, we can enjoy all that summer has to offer!

### Stinging Nettle

Identification: The stem is square shaped with leaves growing opposite and serrated. The plant is covered in small, hair-like structures. Stinging nettle can grow up to 7 feet tall.



### Poison Ivy

Identification: Look for the leaves of three characteristic. Leaves are typically shiny green, they may have a small portion of yellow or orange on them as well. Poison ivy also grows as a woody vine with hair that grows up trees.



### Wild Parsnip

Identification: Can grow up to 5 feet with flat topped yellow flowers. Leaves on wild parsnip resemble large celery leaves.





# Summer 2023

## Warren County Conservation Board



The Warren County Conservation Board manages over 2,000 acres of land for the benefit of its citizens. Visitors can enjoy a variety of outdoor activities on areas being conserved

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