



JOURNAL

Warren County Conservation Board

Winter 2023/2024

Creature Features: Dormancy

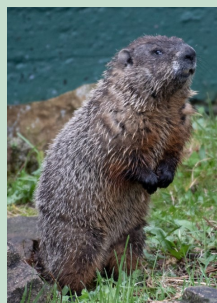
For this season's topic, we will dive into the process of surviving extreme temperatures. Unlike humans, animals do not have the option for heating and cooling systems in their homes. That is unless your home is also their home. They need a way to escape the daunting weather. There are several different processes to aid animals in their survival, including hibernation, torpor, and aestivation. Hopefully YOU stay awake as we dive into the world of dormancy.

When it comes to dormancy in animals let's start with the process of hibernation. Bears hibernate, that is the first animal we learn about when we learn about winter adaptations. But how does it work? Bears spend a lot of time in the fall eating to build up fat reserves. This fat will be used as an energy source during hibernation. Once the weather is no longer favorable for them they begin to slow down their heart rate, breathing, and metabolic rate. True hibernators are capable of lowering their body temperatures below 68 degrees. However, bears are not considered true hibernators because their normal active body temperature is 100 degrees. While their hibernation body temperature drops to 88 degrees. Despite this difference, bears are still able to conserve energy and prolong their hibernation period. The average heart rate of a bear is 80 to 90 beats per minute during active seasons, but during hibernation their resting heart rate will decrease to less than 22 beats per minute. This way they are using less energy and can stay in the hibernation state longer. Every once in a while an animal may emerge from this state to change positions to prevent sores and to better conserve heat. They will stay in their dwelling of choice until conditions begin to improve. A few of the animals that hibernate in Iowa are little brown bats, woodchucks, and plains pocket gophers.

Torpor is a state of dormancy that some animals enter to conserve energy when faced with drought, extreme heat or cold, and food scarcity. The body's metabolic rate is reduced significantly, allowing the animal to conserve energy. However, the body's temperature does not drop as significantly as it would if it were undergoing hibernation. While this process is very similar to hibernation the difference is that torpor is on a shorter time scale. Some animals go through daily torpor, the time could be during the night or inactivity. If torpor lasts for days or weeks it is referred to as prolonged torpor. Examples of animals that go through torpor are fox squirrels, American badgers, and black-capped chickadees.

Aestivation is a state of dormancy that some animals will enter during hot and dry periods. Their metabolic rate decreases, excess fur can be shed, or a protective outer layer of fur will be developed. The time at which an animal undergoes aestivation can range from weeks to months at a time. Some animals that aestivate are snails and earthworms.

Do you notice animals preparing for dormancy around you? Now is the time to see if you can notice if any animals look like they have packed on the much-needed fat reserves!



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 Kelsey@warrencountyia.org

Iowa State Fair

Martin Wells
Jocelyn Wells
Harper Wells
Brock Van Loon

Prairie Picnic

Monty Freeman
Lori Freeman
Kathy Krogmeier
John Krogmeier
Melissa Hanson
Deb Schiel-Larson
Carla Kuehl- Purdum
Blair Lawson
Linda Urbas
Ashley Vanderflight
Louis Sajovac
Steve Dergmand
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Farm to Table

Lori Freeman
Monty Freeman
Martin Wells

Seed Harvest

Blair Lawson
Ryan McPherson
Allison McPherson
Lisa Neidermayer
Linda Urbas
Carla Kuehl- Purdum
Lori Freeman
Ashley Vanderflight
Melissa Hanson

Iowa Trail Run Series

Carole Rowland
Linda Urbas
Brock Van Loon

Halloween Hike

Monty Freeman
Jackie Sarasio
Deb Schiel- Larson
Linda Urbas
Trent Butler
Mitch Anderson
Carla Kuehl- Larson
Steve Weaver
Mary Weaver
Amaya Sandquist
Janet Sinclair

Animal Care Assistance

Monty Freeman



Volunteer Opportunities

Hidden Heart Hike: Don't miss out on the excitement of this family event! Join us and contribute to the fun by assisting children in crafting activities. You can also help families find their way through the nature center, helping them discover the hidden hearts.

Geocache Adventure 2024: Contribute to our upcoming geocaching adventure by adopting a geocache! By adopting a geocache, you take responsibility for regularly restocking it and ensuring it remains in excellent condition.

Meet-a-Member



Friends Member: Ashley Vanderflight

Ashley has been apart of the Friends of Warren County Conservation since 2015.

I enjoy being a part of the Friends of Warren County Conservation and getting to volunteer along side others who enjoy the outdoors as much as I do. Warren County has so many beautiful parks managed by the Conservation Board. I learned about those parks while working for the Warren County Conservation Board as a seasonal staff employee from 2012 to 2014. When I moved on to a full time job, joining the Friends group was a great way to stay connected.

My favorite event we have as a Friends group is the Native Plant Sale. As a seasonal employee, I first learned about native prairie plants from my supervisor David Youngblut. I was thankful for rainy days where I could spend the day inside the greenhouse instead of mowing.

I have lived in Warren County my entire life, currently residing in New Virginia with my husband Luke and son Weston. Weston is my hiking buddy. We often go on hikes after I get off of work. On my days off, we often times go exploring all day outside. Kids can't bounce off the walls, if you take those walls away.

I enjoy gardening and keep finding new places in my yard to add native plants. Thankfully I have a supportive husband who isn't upset when he comes home to a new garden Weston and I have dug out in the yard while he was working. Although I live in town, it is amazing what pollinators you can bring to your backyard even with smaller gardens.

In my spare time, I also enjoy fishing with my family at my Uncle Murray's pond. He built a beautiful place for our family to make memories.





Events

December

Wood Cookie Ornaments

December 2 | Annett Nature Center

Elevate your celebrations this year by incorporating a touch of nature with a decorative wood cookie ornament. Take inspiration from our diverse range of designs and feel free to use your own artistic touch. People of all ages are welcome in this program. Sign up on our website to participate!

<https://www.warrencb.org/event/make-take-wood-cookie-ornaments/>

Candy Cane Hike

December 9 | Middleswart Lodge

Tis the season to bust out your favorite ugly sweater and candy cane stripes!

Come hike the trails at the Middleswart Lodge to find the candy canes hidden along the trail. Do you have the eyes to find them all? If so, enter your guess in the candy cane box for your chance to win a candy cane-themed goodie bag.

The winner will be drawn at noon, and you do not have to be present to win. Staff will have candy canes, hot chocolate, coffee, or hot cider for you to enjoy after your hike, while supplies last. Feel free to come and go as you please.

*Registration not necessary but it lets us know how many people to expect! Register at: <https://www.warrencb.org/event/candy-cane-hike-2/>

Don't forget to check out our awesome vendors at the Fall Nature Market inside the Middleswart Lodge and warm up by the fire when you go inside to drop off your guesses!

Fall Nature Market

December 9 | Middleswart Lodge

Warren County Conservation Board is hosting our annual local nature and craft related vendor fair. We want to support local merchants in our beautiful park setting. Vendors will have all sorts of items to get you ready for the upcoming holiday season.

Free To Enter!

Each vendor is selected based on how well their products fit into the following categories: nature-themed, hand crafted, up cycled or repurposed, Iowa based, photography, artwork, items locally grown or created, and items inspired by nature. Don't forget to walk down the trail to see how many candy canes you can find!



January

Snowshoe Hike Popups

January

We're excited for the arrival of the beautiful winter snow! The success of this program relies on the amount of snowfall we receive during this winter season, so let's hope for the best. Make sure to stay updated on our Facebook page for any snowshoe popup programs.

Iowa Mammals

January 4 | Indianola Activity Center

In this fun and educational program, we will explore the fascinating world of mammals and learn about some of Iowa's special mammals, their adaptations that help them survive the cold Iowa winters and which mammals don't love the chilly weather. Come join us on this exciting mammal adventure and let's explore the wonders of the animal kingdom together!

Conservation & Nature Book Club

January 16 | Middleswart Lodge

Friends of Warren County Conservation will be hosting a bimonthly 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. January's book is *The Eight master Lessons of Nature What Nature Teaches Us About Living Well in the World* by Gary Ferguson. Please register ahead so we can have enough materials at www.warrencb.org/events.

Animal Tracks and Sign hike

January 20 | Woodland Mounds

Come along with a naturalist on a hike and explore the fascinating realm of tracks and signs. Unravel the secrets of who passed by, their destination, and whether they were sprinting or strolling. This program will equip you with the knowledge to answer all these curious questions.

Snakes!

January 20 | Annett Nature Center

Slither off those winter blues and join a Naturalist from Warren County Conservation to learn about the splendid world of snakes! This is a chance to learn more about these helpful creatures that so often get a bad reputation, simply because they are misunderstood! Learn about snakes in general, and get a chance to meet one of our animal ambassador snakes!

Events



January Cont'd

Full Moon Hike

January 26 | Annett Nature Center

Have you ever desired to venture out beneath the starry sky and immerse yourself in the tranquil symphony of the nocturnal world? Now, you have the opportunity to be guided through the darkness by one of our experienced naturalists.

February

Snowshoe Hike Popups

January

We're excited for the arrival of the beautiful winter snow! The success of this program relies on the amount of snowfall we receive during this winter season, so let's hope for the best. Make sure to stay updated on our Facebook page for any snowshoe popup programs.

Owl Prowl

February 6 | Pickard Park

Come meet a WCCB naturalist and enhance your knowledge about the Owls of Iowa. Gain the skill to recognize different owl vocalizations and take a stroll along the trail to catch a glimpse of the owls residing in the park. February offers an excellent opportunity to engage with owls, so remember to dress warmly for the chilly winter climate.

Hidden Heart Hike

February 10 | Annett Nature Center

Bring your thinking caps for this hidden heart-hunt adventure, we're going to put your puzzle-solving skills to the test with a scavenger hunt. Your job will be to find 10 hearts both inside and outside the nature center. You will be given clues to find each of the hearts. Each clue will be about a living thing. You will need to figure out what living thing that is and where it is. At each heart there will be one piece you will need to pick up and take with you for a craft. Are you up for the challenge? This program is great for the whole family, the targeted age range will be 7 to 10-year-olds. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Please register on our website.



Owl Prowl

February 22 | Pickard Park

Come meet a WCCB naturalist and enhance your knowledge about the Owls of Iowa. Gain the skill to recognize different owl vocalizations and take a stroll along the trail to catch a glimpse of the owls residing in the park. February offers an excellent opportunity to engage with owls, so remember to dress warmly for the chilly winter weather.



Armadillos in Iowa

February 23 | Annett Nature Center

Can you believe it? Armadillos can now be spotted in Iowa! Don't miss out on our presentation about these fascinating creatures. There are many different characteristics that make armadillos a fun study! We invite you to join us for an enlightening presentation where we will delve into the world of armadillos and explore what makes them so unique.

March

Day Camp Registration

March 6 | By phone or at the Annett Nature Center

Parents may register children for camp beginning Wednesday, March 6, 2024 at 8:00 a.m. Registration is limited and on a first-come, first-served basis. To register, come to the Annett Nature Center (15565 118th Ave Indianola, IA) or call us at (515) 961-6169 (no e-mail registrations will be accepted.) Our camp sessions fill up very quickly. Parents or relatives may register campers. Learn more at: <https://www.warrenccb.org/education/daycamps/> Due to the popularity and limited space in our camps, children may only attend each camp one time.

Day Camp fees are non-refundable

These camps fill up quickly and we will be answering the phones as quickly as we can. If you cannot get through on the phone at first, it probably means we are currently on the lines.

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



Events Cont'd

March Cont'd

Rain Barrel Make & Take (Morning- 10am)

March 9 | Annett Nature Center

Come out to learn the benefits of rain barrels, how to collect water, and make a rain barrel of your own to take home. You will be provided with all the tools and instructions to make your own rain barrel for your yard. Bonus that you get to work with power tools! Please make sure that your vehicle can transport the finished 55 gallon large barrel. The cost is \$50 per barrel. Space is limited to 12 participants. Payment is due by March 3 to secure your spot. There is a morning and an afternoon session this year, to try to accommodate more people, this event is for the morning.

* Each person is limited to 1 barrel. You will learn the skills to make additional barrels on your own.

Rain Barrel Make & Take (Afternoon- 1pm)

March 9 | Annett Nature Center

Come out to learn the benefits of rain barrels, how to collect water, and make a rain barrel of your own to take home. You will be provided with all the tools and instructions to make your own rain barrel for your yard. Bonus that you get to work with power tools! Please make sure that your vehicle can transport the finished 55 gallon large barrel. The cost is \$50 per barrel. Space is limited to 12 participants. Payment is due by March 3 to secure your spot. There is a morning and an afternoon session this year, to try to accommodate more people, this event is for the afternoon.

* Each person is limited to 1 barrel. You will learn the skills to make additional barrels on your own.

Conservation Book Club

March 21 | Middleswart Lodge

Friends of Warren County Conservation will be hosting a bimonthly 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. March's book is *American Wolf A True Story of Survival and Obsession in the West* by Nate Blakeslee

Please register ahead so we can have enough materials at www.warrenccb.org/events.

Conservation & Nature 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. PLEASE REGISTER AT WWW.WARRENCCB.ORG/EVENTS.

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MARCH'S BOOK:  
"AMERICAN WOLF"  
BY NATE BLAKESLEE

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MARCH 21ST 2024,
6PM AT
THE MIDDLESWART LODGE

2024 Events Sneak Peek!

Warren County Conservation 2024 Events Calendar

JANUARY

- ___ Snowshoe Hike PopUps
- ___ 4 Iowa Mammals
- ___ 16 Conservation & Nature Book Club
- ___ 20 Snakes Program
- ___ 20 Animal Tracks & Sign Hike
- ___ 26 Full Moon Hike

FEBRUARY

- ___ Snowshoe Hike PopUps
- ___ 6 Owl Prowl
- ___ 10 Hidden Heart Hunt
- ___ 22 Owl Prowl @ ANC

MARCH

- ___ 6 Day Camp Registration
- ___ 9 Make & Take Rain Barrel
- ___ 21 Conservation & Nature Book Club
- ___ 23 Armadillos in Iowa

APRIL

- ___ 1 Geocaching Mineral Adventure Begins
- ___ 13 Self Defense
- ___ 16 Evening Prairie Burn
- ___ 20 Earth Day Trail Cleanup
- ___ 25 Geocaching 101

MAY

- ___ 3-4 Family Camp
- ___ 9 Dutch Oven Cooking
- ___ 17 Potting Bar
- ___ 18 FriendsWCC Native Plant Sale
- ___ 21 Conservation & Nature Book Club

JUNE

- ___ StoryWalk @ ANC
- ___ 8 Kids Fish Day
- ___ 21-22 Wild Outdoor Women
- ___ 27 International Mud Day



At the event, have a WCCB staff member initial to keep track of events you have attended.
Attend 6 or more events to win a mineral-themed gift!
*Programs are subject to change or cancellation

TO REGISTER VISIT: WWW.WARRENCCB.ORG/ACTIVITIES/EVENTS OR CALL (515)961-6169.

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



November 2023

Dear FWCC Members, Donors, and Volunteers,

It has been an exciting and eventful year for Friends of Warren County Conservation (FWCC)!

FWCC's two main events, the Native Plant Sale and the Prairie Picnic, were both huge successes as well as successful fundraisers. FWCC provided financial support as well as volunteer support for a number of Warren County Conservation events such as Earth Day Cleanup, Kid's Fish Day, Trail Run, and Halloween Hike. FWCC provided the funding for an All-Terrain Wheelchair that can be used at any Warren County Conservation facility. The FWCC scholarship process is now back in business and the FWCC Book Club had distinguished author Neil Hamilton attend a Q & A regarding his latest book.

All of these events were successful due to the hard work of the FWCC board members, the financial support of FWCC members, the financial support of donors, and the hard work provided by numerous volunteers.

Another exciting opportunity is being planned by Warren County Conservation! WCC has been working on plans for an upcoming inclusive nature playscape project. This is another opportunity for FWCC to provide funding as well as volunteer hours.

There is so much more that FWCC would like to accomplish but FWCC needs your help. FWCC needs more members and more volunteers. FWCC wants to hear your ideas as well. You do not have to be a FWCC board member to have your voice heard. The public is welcome to attend FWCC monthly meetings. Here are areas where you could become involved.

- FWCC has numerous committees that help organize the events for the year. You could become a member of a committee and become involved with the decision making process.
- FWCC wants to hear from families with children. How can FWCC provide family event opportunities?
- FWCC wants to hear from young adults. How can FWCC focus on events that interest young adults?

It has been an exciting and eventful year! FWCC wants to keep the momentum going and continue to support Warren County Conservation's efforts. Would you please join us?

Sincerely,

Louis Sajovec

FWCC President



Winter 2023/2024

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

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wccb@warrenccb.org



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 (515) 961-6169
www.warrenccb.org
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