



Lone Star Tick



Deer Tick



Dog Tick

JOURNAL

SUMMER 2025

SPECIES SPOTLIGHT:
TICKS

This season's creature feature is the well-known creepy crawly of the woods: ticks! More than a dozen species of ticks can be found in Iowa, but there are three that are most common: the black-legged tick, also known as the deer tick, the American dog tick or wood tick, and the lone star tick. Ticks are parasitic arachnids, identified by their eight legs and a hard, shield-like structure on their backs, called the scutum. They come in all sorts of colors like brown, black, grey, and white, can vary in size from a seed (larvae) to a small pea (adult), and are active from March to November.

Diet:

Blood! Bleh! These are the Draculas of our local environment. Ticks don't discriminate—they'll happily feed on a variety of mammals, birds, reptiles, and amphibians, relying on their sense of smell, carbon dioxide, vibrations, and body heat to guide them. They wait for unsuspecting critters or humans to pass by and then crawl onto their unsuspecting victim (also known as their host!)

**Habitat:**

Ticks are found in wooded or grassy areas, in the edges where woods and lawns meet, in leaf litter and ground covering plants, and around wood piles where small mammals may live. They're generally found in vegetation at the height of their preferred hosts.

**Ticked Off?**

You should be—those bites can bring disease! If you find a tick on you, it's important to identify the species and remove it. It is also suggested to circle the area it was attached to and watch for symptoms. The black-legged tick, or deer tick, is the most important to know of in Iowa. Seed-sized deer ticks are the most dangerous to humans because these tiny suckers can go unseen and transmit bacteria that causes Lyme disease if attached for 36 hours or more, with symptoms setting in 3-30 days after the bite. Dog ticks, the most commonly encountered tick, can carry Rocky mountain fever. Lone-star ticks, identified by their distinct white spot on their bodies, can carry the bacteria that causes rabbit fever and alpha gal. Wear long sleeves and pants, light colored clothing for seeing them better, and use a deterrent with deet. Prevention is crucial!

Life Cycle

Lasts 2-3 years for most species, going through four life stages; egg, six legged larva, eight legged nymph and then adult. They need blood at every stage, preferring different hosts for each of these stages. As they feed on different creatures, they pick up pathogens that can be passed onto their next meal, meaning humans and our pets can catch diseases from being bit.

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 hannahh@warrencountyia.org

Geocaching

Carole Rowland
Becky Dietenbeck
Carla Kuehl-Purdum

Donations/ Sponsors

Halterman Live Bait- Minnows

Blake Hildreth- Bird houses

FWCC- Sponsor for Kids Fish Day and Wild Outdoor Women

Scheels- Kids Fish Day Donation

Winners Circle- Kids Fish Day Trophies

Jeff Bolton- Kids Fish Day Prizes



Volunteer Opportunities for 2025

SUMMER

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

Farm to table (Berry foraging): We are looking for volunteers to assist us in harvesting fresh berries for our upcoming farm-to-table event. Help us gather the freshest ingredients for a locally grown culinary experience.

FALL

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

Halloween Hike: Halloween hike is a family hike, where characters are placed along the trail. Participants will have the opportunity to interact and learn about each living thing. They will also have a snack and do a craft. As a volunteer you would have the chance to play one of these fun characters, lead a hike, help in the craft room or help with snacks. Help us make this a fun filled experience for our local families!

Farm to table (Decorations): Are you skilled at arranging decor? We are seeking assistance in decorating for our upcoming farm-to-table event. Join us in creating a beautiful atmosphere that showcases the elegance of farm-fresh ingredients.

MEET-A-MEMBER

Monty Freeman

Friends Member/ Seasonal Naturalist

Hi, my name is Monty Freeman. I am from Warren County and have lived here most of my life. I graduated from Indianola High School and Northwest Missouri State University.

My wife Lori and I raised our two daughters while living south of Indianola. I taught Vocational Agriculture and Jr. High and High School Sciences. In 2015 after 34 years of teaching I retired, and I now enjoy two part time retirement jobs. I also serve on three volunteer Boards: Friends of Warren County Conservation, Warren County 4H Foundation, and Hoosier Row Community Center. Lori and I enjoy attending and serving at Grace Church in Indianola.



I have been involved with the Warren County Conservation Board for many years. As a part-time summer helper and volunteer. One of my fun part-time jobs has included helping with the summer Nature Camps for 35 years, and I am starting to see second generations of kids come through the camps. I hesitate to call it a “job” since I get to work outside with kids, showing them the wonders of nature all day. I am a founding member of Friends of Warren County Conservation (FWCC) and am active both as a Board member and as a volunteer. I consider this a great opportunity to give back to my community.

I am completely fascinated with nature, both in its complexity and its simplicity, realizing that everything has a purpose and is designed for its relationship with its surroundings. My motivation and satisfaction are the “aha” moments for kids (or adults) when they realize that there is a reason behind the various life in our world. Or simply them finding that there are aspects of nature that they have overlooked. That moment of discovery is what I look for and enjoy when working with kids.



MONTY MINK



EVENTS

July

Geocaching Disease Adventure Begins



April 1 | Warren County



There are 25 Geocaching Disease 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 disease cache includes an instruction card, a logbook, and a stack of disease trading cards. Sign the logbook to show that you found the cache and take a disease trading card for your collection. After finding all 25 caches, take your 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, 2025, will receive a finisher's medal and will be added to our Geocaching Adventure Finishers Gallery.

StoryWalk

July 1 | Otter Creek

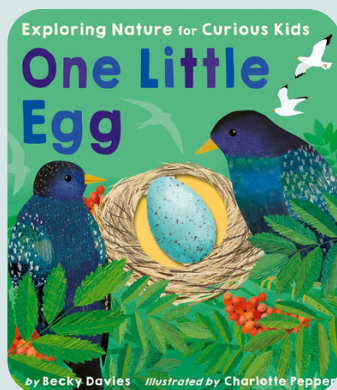


StoryWalk® is a fun idea to get communities outside and reading. Each month, we will put new nature-themed children's story along trails in different parks. Stories will all be nature-themed and fun to read! Bring your whole family out to hike and read a page of the story every few feet as you go along. Below is a schedule of where and when the books will be placed. A few days before the end of the month the storywalk will move to the next park.

Otter Creek

14400 Quebec Street

Indianola, IA 50125 United States



Extended Hours

July 17 | Annett Nature Center

Take advantage of our extended hours on the 3rd Thursday of each month to visit the Annett Nature Center! There may be new things to check out, an activity, or a chance to visit after school and work that might be harder during our regular office hours! No registration required!

Hours: 8am - 6:30pm



Summer SATURDAY Hours

July 19 & 26 | Annett Nature Center

This summer, we're excited to announce that the Annett Nature Center will be open to the public on 6 special Saturdays from 1-4pm! Stop by to explore the exhibits, enjoy the trails, and experience all the beauty nature has to offer.

Whether you're stopping by for a quick visit, a drink and a cool down between hikes on the trails, or planning a longer stay, we look forward to welcoming you!

Come visit us at the Annett Nature Center, 15565 118th Ave Indianola, IA.

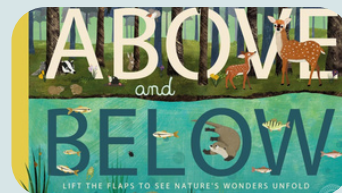
We're right across from Iowa DNR's Lake Ahquabi!

August

Story Walk

August 1 | Annett Nature Center

StoryWalk® is a fun idea to get communities outside and reading. Each month, we will put new nature-themed children's story 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. A few days before the end of the month the storywalk will move to the next park.



Iowa Trail Run

August 17 | Annett Nature Center



We're back for another round at Warren County Conservation's Annett Nature Center for a beautiful fall run on Sunday morning. Race, relax, and enjoy the beautiful August colors through the gravel paths, dirt trails, and prairie grass. \$3 from every registration goes to the Friends of Warren County Conservation who help keep ANC, and the other great public parks in Warren County, beautiful!

Register on their website: <https://iowatrailruns.com/>

Extended Hours

August 21 | Annett Nature Center

Take advantage of our extended hours on the 3rd Thursday of each month to visit the Annett Nature Center! There may be new things to check out, an activity, or a chance to visit after school and work that might be harder during our regular office hours! No registration required!

Hours: 8am - 6:30pm

EVENTS

Two Dates!

Summer SATURDAY Hours August 2 & 9 | Annett Nature Center

This summer, we're excited to announce that the Annett Nature Center will be open to the public on 6 special Saturdays from 1-4pm! Stop by to explore the exhibits, enjoy the trails, and experience all the beauty nature has to offer. Whether you're stopping by for a quick visit, a drink and a cool down between hikes on the trails, or planning a longer stay, we look forward to welcoming you!

Come visit us at the Annett Nature Center, 15565 118th Ave Indianola, IA.

We're right across from Iowa DNR's Lake Ahquabi!



September

Monarch Tagging September 13 | Otter Creek

Come to Otter Creek and discover all about monarch butterflies, their unusual lifestyle and life cycle and their migration to Mexico! A Warren County Conservation Naturalist will teach you how to catch and handle a monarch, determine its gender, and properly tag them 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 net at the park if you don't. Fun for the whole family!

Free event, but registration required by Friday, September 12, 2025.

Registration opens August 12, 2025.

Homeschool Wednesday:

Monarch Tagging September 17 | Annett Nature Center

Discover all about monarch butterflies, their unusual lifestyle and life cycle and their migration to Mexico! A Warren County Conservation Naturalist will teach you how to catch and handle a monarch, determine its gender, and properly tag them 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 net at the park if you don't.

This program is for all ages!

Registration opens August 17th, 2025.



Monarch Tagging

September 18 | Buxton Park

Come to Buxton Park and discover all about monarch butterflies, their unusual lifestyle and life cycle and their migration to Mexico! A Warren County Conservation Naturalist will teach you how to catch and handle a monarch, determine its gender, and properly tag them 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 net at the park if you don't. Fun for the whole family!

Free event, but registration required by Thursday, September 18.

Registration opens August 18th, 2025.

Extended Hours

September 18 | Annett Nature Center

Take advantage of our extended hours on the 3rd Thursday of each month to visit the Annett Nature Center! There may be new things to check out, an activity, or a chance to visit after school and work that might be harder during our regular office hours! No registration required!

Reminders/ Updates

In an effort to reduce our environmental impact, we're making some changes to how we distribute our newsletter. Going forward, we will no longer be printing the full version. Instead, we will be sending out a condensed version.

If you'd like to read the full newsletter, don't worry! It will still be available on our website for easy access.

Thank you for supporting our commitment to sustainability!

Homeschool Wednesdays are on summer break from June to August! Join us in September for our next program!



PARK UPDATES



Nature Has No Limits Neither Should We

Warren County Conservation Board is thrilled to announce the acquisition of a Terrain Hopper, an All-Terrain wheelchair. This will significantly enhance accessibility to the natural areas around the Annett Nature Center (ANC). This specialized chair will empower individuals with limited mobility to explore the scenic trails and enjoy access to the serene Lester Pond, experiences that may have previously been challenging or impossible.

This remarkable achievement was made possible through the collaborative efforts of several dedicated partners: the Class of 2025 Warren County Leadership Institute, the Warren County Izaak Walton League, and the Friends of Warren County Conservation (FriendsWCC). This collective commitment underscores a shared vision of inclusivity and ensuring that everyone can enjoy the beauty of Warren County's outdoors.

"This Terrain Hopper, an all-terrain wheelchair, represents more than just a piece of equipment; it's a gateway to nature for individuals who face mobility limitations," said Mallory Wells, Office Manager for WCCB. "We are deeply grateful for the incredible support and teamwork demonstrated by the Warren County Leadership Institute, the Warren County Ikes, and FriendsWCC. This truly was a team effort, and we are excited to open up these outdoor experiences to a wider range of our community."

The Terrain Hopper and Freedom Chair (manual use chair) will be available for guests to check out at the Annett Nature Center, located at 15565 118th Ave, Indianola, IA 50125, Monday through Friday from 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM. Reservations will need to be made prior to the day of use.





UN-BEE-LIEVABLE NEWS



The temperatures risin'



Have you seen the smoke signals? WCCB's park staff were hard at work this spring conducting prescribed prairie burns across the county. This year, the team burned just over **400 acres** at **11 different parks!**

Why is burning the prairie important?

Whether it's caused by lightning strikes or humans, prairie fires have historically been a part of the ecosystem. It has a heavy influence on the plant and animal life. There are a variety of benefits for doing this, including;

- Suppressing invasive species such as lespedeza or brome.
- Reducing excess plant litter.
- Stimulating growth by releasing the dead plants' nutrients back into the soil.
- Reducing encroaching woody plant species, such as trees that would shade out prairie plants that need full sun.



🎵 The bees are back in town 🎵

The **honeybees** have returned to the Annett Nature Center, and we couldn't "bee" more thrilled! A huge thank-you to Andy from Meadow Blazing Star Honey for making it possible!

You can now visit our observation hive, located in the Pollinator Room, and watch the bees in action. Keep an eye out for the queen; she's marked with a blue dot on her thorax to help you spot her among her busy workers.

Here are five fun facts about these new nature center members!

- Honey bees (*Apis mellifera*) are very important pollinators; they pollinate about 80% of flowering plants.
- With 170 odorant receptors, they can smell 50 times more powerfully than a dog!
- In nineteenth-century New England, a ritual known as "telling the bees", involved telling the bees about major life events in the beekeeper's life.
- Honey bees maintain 92-93 degrees Fahrenheit in their brood nest, regardless of the temperature outside.
- Queen bees can lay up to 2,000 eggs per day during their peak season. Peak season is typically late spring to early summer.



SUMMER 2025

Warren County Conservation Board

The Warren County Conservation Board manages over 2,700 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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