



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Iowa DNR News

Conservation and Recreation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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- [Public wildlife areas add to recreation options at Three Mile and Twelve Mile lakes](#)
- [Opportunity in Linn County to get acquainted with the rusty-patched bumblebee](#)
- [Celebrate a child's first fish](#)
- [Dalton Pond trout stocking postponed](#)
- [Olofson Shooting Range hosted 2019 Iowa State Scholastic Action Sports competition](#)

Public wildlife areas add to recreation options at Three Mile and Twelve Mile lakes



A pair of bobwhite quail, north of the Twelve Mile Lake Wildlife Area in Union County, had their morning walk interrupted and took flight almost as soon as this photo was taken. Other quail were heard whistling in cover nearby. Photo courtesy of the Iowa DNR.

The reputation of Three Mile Lake and Twelve Mile Lake as a fishing destination is well known around the Midwest – and beyond. These two lakes, separated by two miles, are

panfish and walleye heavyweights that draw anglers from Wisconsin, Illinois, Minnesota, the Dakotas, Missouri and Nebraska eager for a chance to fill their bag limits.

“It’s pretty crazy to have two high quality lakes like this, this close together,” said Chad Paup, wildlife biologist for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

But opportunities include more than fishing and extend beyond the water’s edge.

Three Mile Lake Wildlife Area has roughly 2,700 acres of public land surrounding the 880-acre lake, that is home to two campgrounds - one with cabin rentals, an enclosed fishing cleaning station, playground and shower house, the other is a more primitive campground with camping pads, electricity and new pit latrines. Three Mile Lake also has a swimming beach, picnic shelters, and a fishing cleaning station near the main boat ramp.

That’s an enviable list for any natural resources based public area and while fishing nets the headlines; Three Mile Lake Wildlife Area is a destination for other activities, too.

In early to mid-November, the area attracts bird watchers to the lodge on the hill overlooking the main basin to see thousands of waterfowl arriving from the north. The migration also attracts the attention of duck hunters.

“They’re all here – from divers to puddle ducks. People travel here from all over to hunt ducks on Three Mile,” Paup said. “The whole lake is a pretty popular duck hunting spot.” Three Mile Lake, however, is closed to Canada goose hunting.

Hunting is also available at Twelve Mile Lake, but it doesn’t have the same ease of access as Three Mile Lake.

The water board and City of Creston own Twelve Mile Lake, which, at 1,484 acres including a 635-acre lake, is smaller in size than Three Mile with less public land. Access to parts of the area is either by boat or securing permission from the private landowner.

On Three Mile Lake Wildlife Area, hikers, birders, mushroom hunters and regular hunters use the mowed fire breaks and maintenance lanes as a way to access the timbered areas. “The whole area is accessible on foot, either on the fire breaks or maintenance lanes,” Paup said.

The Three Mile Lake Wildlife Area has been a survey site for the Multi Species Inventory Monitoring program that documents what animals are on the area – from birds to butterflies, dragonflies and damselflies, reptiles, amphibians, mammals and more. It also is included in surveys looking for specific wildlife species, like bobwhite quail, bobolinks and Henslow’s sparrows. Henslow’s sparrows are considered a species of greatest conservation need and are listed as threatened in Iowa.

Twelve Mile Lake Avenue gravel road divides the two lakes. A network gravel roads connects anglers and hunters, hikers and kayakers and wildlife watchers to out-of-the-way boat ramps, parking lots and fishing jetties.

These are both great places to go kayaking, Paup said. Both lakes have a lot of coves off the main lake where kayakers can explore on calm water.

Hunting

At a stop sign on a gravel road heading north off Twelve Mile Lake, two bobwhite quail walk lazily along the edge where the gravel meets the grass. Once our presence was detected, it took only to a count of two and they were airborne. Other quail were nearby whistling from a field edge.

“That’s really good to hear. I haven’t heard that a lot this spring,” Paup said.

The Three Mile Lake Wildlife Area has different habitat types that support different wildlife species. Hunters come to Three Mile Lake to pursue wild turkeys, deer, pheasant, quail, ducks, doves and more.

The area has been frequented by rabbit hunters from Michigan, Florida, Tennessee and Alabama. Interested in hunting squirrels? Those are here too. The area is also popular with furharvesters.

Shooting range

The Union County Conservation Board has partnered with the High Lakes Alliance to develop a shooting range on the north side of Three Mile Lake Wildlife Area that can accommodate rifles shooting 50 yards to 650 yards as well as a special pistol zone and trap and skeet. It is a host site for competitive rifle shooting.

There is a field managed for doves that is near the shooting range clubhouse that hosts a mentored youth dove hunt on opening day.

Managing the land

Paup and his team at the Grand River Wildlife Unit have been working to reclaim grasslands from red cedars that have steadily been encroaching on the area. The combination of cutting trees and using fire has helped to knock back the unwanted cedars and regenerate and encourage the native plants. “We’ve really done a lot to enhance and improve the grassland here and we’ve improved thousands of acres across the unit using these same techniques,” he said.

Both lakes had fields of unproductive brome grasses that have been converted back to much more highly productive native prairie.

Local water supplies

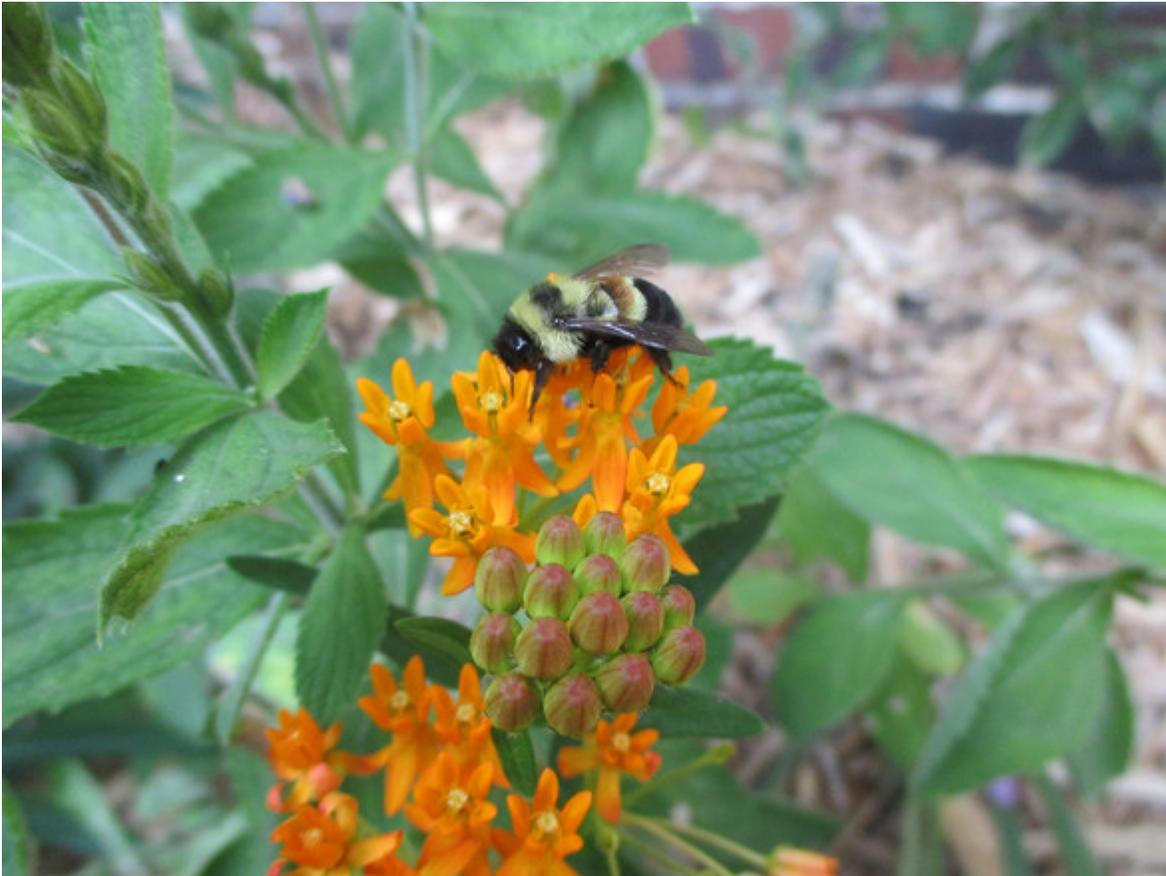
Both lakes were developed as water supplies for communities in and around Union County. The lakes rotate as the primary drinking water supplier during different times of the year.

Just down the road...

The small town of Afton sits on U.S. Hwy. 34, just a few miles southeast of Three Mile Lake Wildlife Area. It has a number of restaurants, from BBQ to Mexican to sandwiches or a bar and grill, plus a convenience store and bait shop.

Media Contact: Chad Paup, Wildlife Biologist, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 641-783-2166.

Opportunity in Linn County to get acquainted with the rusty-patched bumblebee



A rusty-patched bumblebee works along the flowers on a butterfly milkweed in a garden in downtown Boone. It was the first time since the 1960s when the rusty-patched bumblebee was recorded in Boone County. This rare bee is named for the rusty colored patch on its back. Photo courtesy of Stephanie Shepherd.

Cedar Rapids – Iowa is one of the few states remaining that is home to the rusty-patched bumblebee, the first bee to be listed as federally endangered in the United States. Biologists have been working to identify the species' status in the state and on August 3rd, they are asking for the public's help.

The rusty-patched bumblebee (*Bombus affinis*) was put on the U.S. Endangered Species List in March of 2017 and has exhibited an estimated 87 percent decline over the last 20 years. It is present in only 0.1 percent of its original range and Iowa, along with a few other upper Midwestern states, seem to be serving as the species last stronghold. Last year, these rare bees were found in eight counties in Iowa, three of which, including Linn County, were “new,” meaning they hadn't had any or only very old records of rusty-patched bumblebees.

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation and Linn County Conservation Board are inviting interested citizens to the Wickiup Hill Learning Center, near Toddville, on August 3rd from 9:30 a.m. to noon to learn about bumblebees, especially the rusty-patched, and then spend some time in the prairie searching for the rare bee. Coordinators hope to not only determine whether Wickiup Hill is home to the rusty-patched, but that people will take what they've learned

and search their neighborhoods for the bee. Somewhat surprisingly, the rusty-patched bumblebee seems to flourish in urban-suburban habitats and is often found in people's flower gardens.

"A large number of the records for this rare bumblebee have come from reports by people who discovered the bee in their flower garden," said Stephanie Shepherd, wildlife biologist with the Iowa DNR. "In fact, I found several visiting my native garden in downtown Boone which was the first record in that county since the 1960s."

Another hope is that participants will be inspired to create habitat for the struggling bumblebee. Flowers with heavy stores of nectar and pollen, especially native species and those that bloom both early and late in the year are especially attractive.

Sarah Nizzi with the Xerces Society points out that, "Native pollinators are incredibly important to our food chain, ecosystems, and human health. There are multiple conservation actions anyone can take to help maintain our native pollinators and their habitats whether it's on a farm, in a yard, or within a city."

Pre-registration is required for the event which will be appropriate for ages 12 and up. Find more information on the event and a link to register online at xerces.org/events. Participants should wear long pants, boots, hat and bring along a camera, bottle of water, insect repellent, and sunscreen for survey time outside through the prairies around the learning center. Deadline for registering is July 27.

Media Contact: Stephanie Shepherd, Iowa DNR, 515-230-6599, stephanie.shepherd@dnr.iowa.gov | Sarah Nizzi, Xerces Society, 641-792-4116 x305, sarah.nizzi@xerces.org | Jenny Corbett, Linn CCB, 319-892-6485, jenny.corbett@linncounty.org

Celebrate a child's first fish

Preserve the memory of your kid or grandkid hooking their first fish this summer with a special certificate. Print the certificate yourself from an electronic file posted online or request a printed certificate.

Apply for a first fish certificate online at www.iowadnr.gov/firstfish or complete the form in the *Iowa Fishing Regulations* and mail it in.

It's easy and free to participate. There are no size, species or age requirements – only that it is the fish the angler has successfully landed.

Family and friends can join in on the celebration by viewing the first catch photos of their children and other budding anglers on the [First Fish webpage](#) once the entry is approved.

Fishing is a great way to enjoy being outdoors with families and friends. Follow the simple tips for taking kids fishing on the Iowa DNR website at fishing.iowadnr.gov to help keep the experience fun and positive for the whole family.

Media Contact: Holly Luft, Fisheries Bureau, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 712-769-2587.

Big Creek boat ramp temporarily closed for emergency road repairs

POLK CITY, Iowa -- Emergency repairs are needed after recent rainfall damaged NW 100th Street leading up to the boat ramp at Big Creek. The repairs are expected to take up to one week and will require the road to be temporarily closed during this time and will restrict access to the boat ramp located at the end of the drive.

Big Creek has four other boat ramps to provide access throughout the lake during this temporary closure. Users are encouraged to use one of the other boat ramps during this time.

Dalton Pond trout stocking postponed

PRESTON, Iowa – Trout stockings scheduled for the week of June 3 and on June 13 at Dalton Pond will be postponed to make repairs to a water control structure. Stocking will resume at Dalton Pond on Sept. 6 as planned on [the Iowa DNR Trout Stocking Calendar](#).

Water levels are currently lower than typical for Dalton Pond this time of year to prepare for the repair of the water control structure. Dalton Pond is stocked with about 3,300 catchable-sized trout each year. Postponement of the June stockings will not affect the number of trout stocked this year.

Media Contact: Dan Kirby, Fisheries Biologist, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 563-927-3276.

Olofson Shooting Range hosted 2019 Iowa State Scholastic Action Sports competition

Polk City, Iowa - More than 65 athletes from across Iowa and Wisconsin traveled to the Olofson Shooting Range, in Polk City this weekend to compete in the 2019 Iowa State Scholastic Action Sports Program.

Participants shoot a series of steel targets in the least amount of time using an optics rifle, iron rifle, centerfire pistol, rimfire pistol, 1911 model pistol, and pistol caliber carbine. Scores can be found <https://sssfonline.org>.

For information on how to form a team, contact Rachel Ladd, Hunter Education and Shooting Sports Program, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 515-729-6037 or Rachel.ladd@iowa.dnr.gov.

Rimfire Pistol

Non-Collegiate Open Division

1st Place - 201.54 - Iowa Dead Shots

Nate Gibson (Dysart)

Brice Jones (Van Meter)

Kaleb Klein (Dysart)

Hunter Russel (Cedar Falls)

2nd Place - 383.3 - Carroll Action Shooting Sports

Brady Nelson (Carroll)

Tyson Bordenaro (Carroll)

Ethan Light (Carroll)

Carter Wieland (Templeton)

3rd Place - 400.32 - Dubuque Scholastic Shooting Sports

Braelyn Kuro (East Dubuque, Ill.)

Micael Rankin (Epworth)

Tristen Clark (Monticello)

Madalyn Dutton (East Dubuque, Ill.)

Senior Division

1st Place - 325.33 - Carroll Action Shooting Sports

Tanner Onken (Glidden)

Lauren Snyder (Carroll)

Tyler Gore (Carroll)

Isaiah Podewils (Glidden)

Intermediate Division

1st Place - 396.11 - Carroll Action Shooting Sports

Dylan Onken (Carroll)

Brileigh Bock (Coon Rapids)

Kaisen Stypa (Carroll)

Wyatt Snyder (Halbur)

2nd Place - 523.03 - Carroll Action Shooting Sports

Lilli Schwarz (Carroll)

Grant Wendl (Carroll)

Will Sanders (Carroll)

Travis Hall (Carroll)

High Female - 61.82 - Sydney Vavroch (Gladbrook) - Steel Shooters of Traer

High Male - 34.94 - Nate Gibson (Dysart) - Iowa Dead Shots

Centerfire Pistol

Senior Division

1st Place - 264.3 - Union Grove Pistol Team

Max Heberling (Waterford, Wis.)

Luke Kowalczyk (Kansasville, Wis.)

Richard Rivers (Racine, Wis.)

Kyle Koenig (Racine, Wis.)

2nd Place - 295.59 - Montezuma Shooting Sports Club

Dillon Sanders (Montezuma)

Joel Kercheval Jr. (Montezuma)

Brett Pope (Deep River)

Garret Cross (Sully)

High Male - 47.38 - Max Heberling (Waterford, Wis.), Union Grove Pistol Team

Optics Rifle

Non-Collegiate Open

1st Place - 169.52 - Iowa Dead Shots

Nate Gibson (Dysart)

Brice Jones (Van Meter)

Kaleb Klein (Dysart)

Hunter Russel (Cedar Falls)

2nd Place - 224.49 - Montezuma Shooting Sports Club

Megan McClenathan (Deep River)

Tanner Vogt (Grinnell)

Michael Hudnut (New Sharon)

Cade Stone (Montezuma)

3rd Place - 226.93 - Dubuque Scholastic Shooting Sports

Trista Kuro (East Dubuque, Ill.)

Braelyn Kuro (East Dubuque, Ill.)

Micael Rankin (Epworth)

Tristen Clark (Monticello)

Senior Division

1st Place - 172.48 - Union Grove Pistol Team

Richard Rivers (Racine, Wis.)

Ian Broadway (Racine, Wis.)

Luke Kowalczyk (Kansasville, Wis.)

Kyle Koenig (Racine, Wis.)

2nd Place - 206.23 - Montezuma Shooting Sports Club

Haley Roorda (Montezuma)

Ben McClenathan (Deep River)

Michael Cheney (Deep River)

Dillon Sanders (Montezuma)

3rd Place - 221.37 - Carroll Action Shooting Sports

Tanner Onken (Glidden)

Tyler Gore (Carroll)
Ethan Light (Carroll)
Tyson Bordenaro (Carroll)

Intermediate Division

1st Place - 213.62 - Carroll Action Shooting Sports

Dylan Onken (Carroll)
Wyatt Snyder (Halbur)
Grant Wendl (Carroll)
Carter Wieland (Templeton)

2nd Place - 334.66 - Carroll Action Shooting Sports

Lilli Schwarz (Carroll)
Kaisen Stypa (Carroll)
Brileigh Bock (Coon Rapids)
Jaydon Flug (Carroll)

High Female - 38.23 - Sydney Vavroch (Gladbrook) - Steel Shooters of Traer

High Male - 29.00 - Nate Gibson (Dysart) - Iowa Dead Shots

Iron Rifle

Non-Collegiate Open

1st Place - 152.22 - Iowa Dead Shots

Nate Gibson (Dysart)
Brice Jones (Van Meter)
Kaleb Klein (Dysart)
Hunter Russel (Cedar Falls)

2nd Place - 273.53 - Carroll Action Shooting Sports

Isaiah Podewils (Glidden)
Ethan Light (Carroll)

Tyson Bordenaro (Carroll)

Grant Wendl (Carroll)

Senior Division

1st Place - 187.88 - Montezuma Shooting Sports Club

Jared Theis (Montezuma)

Brett Pope (Deep River)

Joel Kercheval, Jr. (Montezuma)

Garret Cross (Sully)

2nd Place - 236.56 - Carroll Action Shooting Sports

Tanner Onken (Glidden)

Tyler Gore (Carroll)

Lauren Snyder (Carroll)

Brady Nelson (Carroll)

Intermediate Division

1st Place - 234.8 - Carroll Action Shooting Sports

Carter Wieland (Templeton)

Dylan Onken (Carroll)

Wyatt Snyder (Halbur)

Caleb Vanderheiden (Carroll)

2nd Place - 271.85 - Montezuma Shooting Sports Club

Caitlyn Sanders (Barnes City)

Laila Kercheval (Montezuma)

Samantha Bos (Montezuma)

Courtney Sanders (Barnes City)

3rd Place - 324.02 - Carroll Action Shooting Sports

Brileigh Bock (Coon Rapids)

Kaisen Stypa (Carroll)

Lilli Schwarz (Carroll)

Travis Hall (Carroll)

Rookie Division

1st Place - 390.03 - Montezuma Shooting Sports Club

Sara Bos (Montezuma)

Lindsey Henry (Deep River)

Kylie Van Weelden (New Sharon)

Dylan Vander Leest (Grinnell)

High Female - 48.79 - Caitlyn Sanders - Montezuma Shooting Sports Club

High Male - 28.59 - Nate Gibson (Dysart) - Iowa Dead Shots

1911 Model

High Male - 57.66 - Nate Gibson (Dysart) - Iowa Dead Shots

Pistol Caliber Carbine

Non-Collegiate Open

1st Place - 179.66 - Iowa Dead Shots

Nate Gibson (Dysart)

Brice Jones (Van Meter)

Kaleb Klein (Dysart)

Hunter Russel (Cedar Falls)

Senior Division

1st Place - 184.63 - Union Grove Pistol Team

Max Heberling (Waterford, Wis.)

Luke Kowalczyk (Kansasville, Wis.)

Richard Rivers (Racine, Wis.)

Kyle Koenig (Racine, Wis.)

High Female - 45.29 - Trista Kuro (East Dubuque, Ill.) - Dubuque Scholastic Shooting Sports

High Male - 34.39 - Nate Gibson (Dysart) - Iowa Dead Shots

For information on how to form a team, contact Rachel Ladd, Hunter Education and Shooting Sports Program, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 515-729-6037 or Rachel.ladd@iowa.dnr.gov.