



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 4, 2021

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Pine Lake State Park opens renovated campground this week

ELDORA, Iowa – The campground at Pine Lake State Park is open and ready for campers after a nine-month improvement project to update facilities.

Closed since August 2020 for renovations, the campground opened for overnight stays on May 3. In addition to new ADA-accessible shower and restroom facilities, visitors will notice more spacious campsites in the campground.

“Many of our campsites were too cramped for modern RVs and activities people enjoy in the campground,” said Park Ranger Andy Place. “By removing some sites, we created room for extra vehicles, boats, yard games, and for children to play.”

The number of campsites decreased from 120 to 76 for extra space.

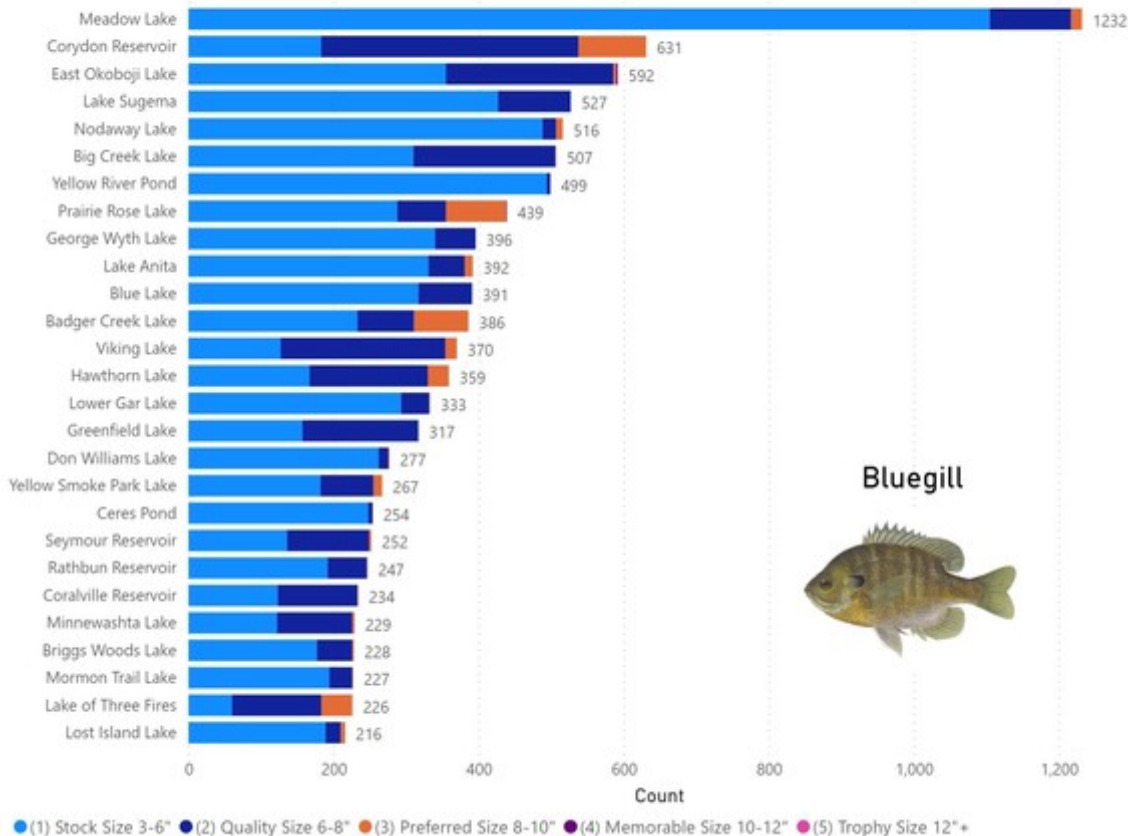
Along with the campground, Pine Lake State Park renovated its CCC-era stone cabins with updated kitchens and bathrooms. The popular cabins will open June 4, with reservations open immediately for that date or after. The park’s Circle Point Shelter is currently being replaced and will re-open mid-summer.

To make a campsite or cabin reservation, go to <https://iowastateparks.reserveamerica.com/>.

For more information, contact Pine Lake State Park at 641-858-5832.

Popular fish survey data returns to Iowa DNR webpage

Species Length by Survey Site



Iowa anglers can once again access fish survey data collected by Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) fisheries staff during electroshocking and netting surveys on lakes, rivers and streams.

Survey summaries from individual lakes and rivers, fish species lengths compared across lakes, and fish length and weight data can be viewed and downloaded from www.iowadnr.gov/Fishing/Fish-Survey-Data. Additional data and summaries will be available in the future.

Fish survey data was removed from the DNR webpage in 2018, while a new data management system was acquired to capture and store fisheries data. The new data management system will be updated with new fish survey data faster than with the previous system.

Media Contact: Jeff Kopaska, Fisheries Bureau, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 515-204-8021.

Leave wildlife babies where they belong --- In the wild



It's as predictable as May flowers - from border to border, the Wildlife Baby Season has arrived in Iowa. From now until at least mid-June, DNR field offices across the state will be inundated with hundreds of phone calls and scores of deliveries regarding "orphaned wildlife."

Most calls begin with something like, "We were walking in the park when . . .," or "I looked out my window and saw. . ." In nearly every instance, the scenario ends with something [or several somethings] being rescued from their mother.

During a typical season, the species will range all the way from baby robins and squirrels to spindly-legged white-tailed fawns. At this time of the year it is not at all uncommon for biologists to discover that complete litters of baby raccoons, foxes, or even skunks have mysteriously appeared on their doorsteps.

Why this happens is no real mystery. From fuzzy yellow ducklings to tiny baby bunnies, nothing appears more cute and cuddly than a wildlife baby. But in reality, most of the wildlife reported to DNR field offices is not really orphaned at all. And while the people who attempt to "rescue" these babies have the best of intentions, they are in fact dooming the very creatures they intend to help.

The babies of most wildlife species leave their nests or dens well in advance of being able to care for themselves. Although broods or litters may become widely scattered during this fledgling period, they still remain under the direct care and feeding of their parents.

For many songbirds, the transition to independence comes quickly and may take as little as four or five days. For other species such as Canada geese, kestrels, or great horned owls, the young and parents may stay in contact for weeks -- even months.

At the beginning of the fledgling period, young birds appear clumsy, dull-witted, and vulnerable. The reason for this is because they really are clumsy, dull-witted, and vulnerable. But as the education process continues, the survivors smarten up fast, while slow learners quickly fade from the scene. Most birds have less than a 20 percent chance of surviving their first year. While this seems unfortunate or cruel, this is a normal occurrence in Nature. In the real out-of-doors, it's just the way things are.

Most mammals employ a slightly different strategy when it comes to caring for their adolescents. Since most mammals are largely nocturnal, the mother usually finds a safe daytime hideout for her young while she sleeps or looks for food. Consequently, it is perfectly normal for the young to be alone or unattended during the daylight hours.

Nevertheless, whenever a newborn fawn or a nest full of baby cottontails or raccoons is discovered by a human, it quite often is assumed that the animals are orphaned. The youngster's fate is usually sealed when it is promptly "rescued from the wild."

Many wildlife babies die soon after capture from the stress of being handled, talked to, and placed into the unfamiliar surroundings of a slick sided cardboard box. Should the animal have the misfortune of surviving this trauma, they often succumb more slowly to starvation from improper nourishment, pneumonia, or other human caused sicknesses.

Whether they are adults or young, all species of wildlife have highly specific needs for survival. "Rescuing a baby from its mother" not only shows bad judgment, it also is illegal.

Observing wildlife in its natural habitat is always a unique privilege. Taking a good photo or two provides an even more lasting memory. But once you've done that, let well enough alone. Leave wildlife babies where they belong -- in the wild.

A list of wildlife rehabilitators is available online at <http://www.iowadnr.gov/Conservation/lowas-Wildlife>.

Media Contact: Karen Kinkead, Wildlife Diversity Program Coordinator, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 712-330-8461 or Mick Klemesrud, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 515-490-5690..

Water level to drop at Hooper Lake in Warren County

INDIANOLA - The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) plans to start lowering the water level at Hooper Lake on May 5, to repair the drawdown structure. It is expected to take six weeks to completely drain the lake and construction will take place this fall. The DNR plans to refill the lake in 2022.

Media Contact: Ben Dodd, Fisheries Management Biologist, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 641-891-3795.

State Preserve Advisory Board plans tours of Lamson Woods and White Pine Hollow state preserves

The purpose of these two tours will be to view the preserves in the field as preparation for reviewing newly proposed management plans, which will be discussed at a Preserves Board business meeting to be conducted at a future date.

- May 7, 1:30 p.m. - Lamson Woods State Preserve, in Fairfield (Jefferson County), starting from the preserve entrance.
- May 14, 1 p.m. - White Pine Hollow State Preserve, near Luxumberg (Dubuque County), starting from the preserve entrance.

Contact: John Pearson, DNR ecologist, 515-669-7614, John.Pearson@dnr.iowa.gov