

MARCH / APRIL 2016

# IOWA OUTDOORS

THE DNR'S MAGAZINE OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION

IN THIS ISSUE:  
**HIT THE ROAD**

TRAVEL THE GRANT WOOD SCENIC BYWAY TO MAHOUCKETA CAVES

# This is picture- perfect memory making.

#THISIS IOWA

In Iowa, memories are everywhere you turn. Like when you and your family hop on the Wabash Trace Nature Trail and pedal through small towns with cafés and shops that will welcome you with open arms. Or when you revel in the beauty of the Mighty Mississippi while cruising on a 19th-century replica paddleboat. Or even when you just sit back and share some laughs at one of the picturesque cabins in our state and county parks. You can practically feel the memories being made, can't you?

See what our great outdoors has in store for you at [traveliowa.com](http://traveliowa.com).

travel  
**IOWA**®

[TRAVELIOWA.COM](http://TRAVELIOWA.COM)



### CEDAR FALLS / WATERLOO

Trails upon trails wait for you in Cedar Falls and Waterloo, including single track, paddle and more than 100 miles of hard-surfaced trails. Our two vibrant historic downtown districts offer museums, locally owned restaurants and unique shopping for your entertainment pleasure. And did we mention we're home to Lost Island Water Park? It's Iowa's largest!

visitthecedarvalley.com | 800.845.1955



### CHARLES CITY WHITEWATER

Avid kayakers, paddle boarders and tubers will love Charles City Whitewater. Located at Riverfront Park, the one-quarter-mile rodeo course is rated at Class 3/III levels with three distinct features. The park also offers fishing, disc golf, play area and more!

ccwhitewater.com | 641.228.4234



### CLAY COUNTY

Fishing, swimming and camping aficionados know Clay County's best-kept outdoor secret - Schamburg Park, whose beautiful cabins book months in advance. While you're visiting, don't forget the "World's Greatest County Fair" held each September. We hope you Explore, Stay, Do Clay!

explorecraycounty.org | 712.580.TOUR (8687)



### CLEAR LAKE

Spend a delightful day on the lake, explore the beauty of Central Gardens of North Iowa, and bask in the glow of beautiful sunsets as you cruise aboard the *Lady of the Lake*. Complete your visit with a pilgrimage to the Surf Ballroom - a stage that brings music and history together unlike anywhere else.

clearlakeiowa.com | 800.285.5338



### CRESTON / UNION COUNTY

Have fun and enjoy our Three Mile and Twelve Mile Lakes, Green Valley State Park, our trail system and shooting range - along with festivities like our 4th of July Celebration and Annual Hot Air Balloon Days (3rd weekend in September). Fun for the entire family.

unioncountyiowatourism.com | 641.782.7022



### DECORAH / WINNESHIEK COUNTY

Enjoy more than 18 miles of off-road, single-track trails. Groomed, marked and ready for the more adventurous types. Towering bluffs, treescape rugged terrain and the invigorating smell of the wild all add to the ambiance of a real thrill ride.

visitdecorah.com | 800.463.4692



### DES MOINES

Catch Des Moines active. Outdoor exploration, biking trails and water slides. Experience edge-of-your-seat sports action. The thrill of crossing the finish line. The connection with nature. Choose your journey. Watch. Do. Engage. It's all here in Greater Des Moines!

catchdesmoines.com | 800.451.2625



### FORT MADISON

Watch a battle reenactment from the War of 1812 at Old Fort Madison. Catch a glimpse of the oldest prison west of the Mississippi. Saddle up for the Tri-State Rodeo. Enjoy unparalleled dining and shopping. And witness the beautiful views of the Great River Road. This is where Iowa began.

visitfortmadison.com | 800.210.TOUR



### GREATER DES MOINES BOTANICAL GARDEN

The Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden is a seven-acre public garden in the heart of Des Moines featuring (among others) a water garden, conifer garden, rose garden, an indoor tropical geodesic conservatory, a unique garden shop and Trellis Café.

[dmbotanicalgarden.com](http://dmbotanicalgarden.com) | 515.323.6290



### HOTEL PATTEE

Built in 1913, the fully renovated historic Hotel Pattee has been called one of the finest boutique hotels in the world. Each of its 40 rooms is decorated in a unique way that tells its own story. Located close to the High Trestle and Raccoon River Valley Trail, Hotel Pattee serves as the perfect weekend getaway. Just north of Des Moines.

[hotelpattee.com](http://hotelpattee.com) | 515.465.3511



### IOWA FALLS

Cruise on the *Empress Riverboat*, kayak or canoe down the beautiful Iowa River. Then explore the Calkins Nature Center, ride the recreational trails, and shop in our historic district. And recharge your batteries at our local B&Bs or motels.

[iowafallschamber.com](http://iowafallschamber.com) | 877.648.5549



### IOWA GREAT RIVER ROAD

Come alive outside along the Iowa Great River Road. Boat, fish, hike, paddle, bird and bike on/along the stunning Mississippi River. Explore, dine and stay in our historic and charming byway towns. We're Iowa's most visited coast and byway!

[iowagreatriverroad.com](http://iowagreatriverroad.com)



### IOWA'S COUNTY PARK SYSTEM

Iowa's 1,833 parks are ready for your next outdoor adventure. Explore more than 1,560 miles of trails. Discover one of 70 nature centers. And rest up at one of the many campsites and cabins along the way.

[mycountyparks.com](http://mycountyparks.com) | 515.963.9582



### JONES COUNTY

What do Grant Wood and motorcycles have in common? You can experience both in Jones County because we're the birthplace of artist Grant Wood and home to the National Motorcycle Museum. We also have the Starlighters II Theatre where you can watch a show. Come for sights – stay for the stories!

[traveljonescounty.com](http://traveljonescounty.com) | 800.393.0831



### LOESS HILLS

Experience majestic views, fascinating landforms and rare natural wonders at the Loess Hills, which were formed at the end of the last ice age. At strategically placed scenic overlooks, you'll witness magnificent panoramas of the fertile Missouri River Valley farmland, forested hills and vast grasslands.

[visitloesshills.org](http://visitloesshills.org) | 888.623.4232



### OKOBOJI

With abundant water recreation activities like boating, fishing and parasailing, our vast trails system, Arnolds Park Amusement Park, golf courses, museums, shopping, unique dining and more, it's no wonder we're called Iowa's #1 Vacation Destination! Make plans to bring the whole family to Okoboji, where memories are waiting to happen!

[vacationokoboji.com](http://vacationokoboji.com) | 800.270.2574



#THISIOWA

Visit [TRAVELIOWA.COM](http://TRAVELIOWA.COM)  
for more trip ideas.

travel  
**IOWA.**



#### PELLA

Find your outdoor fun! Enjoy biking through our Historic Dutch District out to Lake Red Rock where outdoor opportunities are everywhere: birding, boating, camping, fishing, geocaching, hiking, picnicking, snowshoeing, swimming, trail riding – something for all ages!

[visitpella.com](http://visitpella.com) | 888.746.3882



#### RIVERBOAT TWILIGHT

Offering one- and two-day Mississippi River cruises on the Victorian-styled *Riverboat Twilight*. Come aboard and experience traveling in style on the most elegant riverboat to be launched in the past 100 years. Let our captain be your guide to majestic eagles, towering bluffs and historic river towns.

[riverboattwilight.com](http://riverboattwilight.com) | 800.331.1467



#### VILLAGES OF VAN BUREN

You'll love the outdoor adventures that you'll discover in scenic Southeast Iowa. Lake Sapsucker is one of Iowa's premier fishing lakes with 574 acres of outstanding fish habitat and 1,600 acres of public hunting. Year-round cabin rentals and full-service campground.

[villagesofvanburen.com](http://villagesofvanburen.com) | 800.868.7822



#### WATTA WAY

Watta Way to See Pottawattamie County is a route that explores the county's treasures. Experience hiking trails in the Loess Hills, culinary delights, fine artisans, museums and wine. Thrill to a zip line, water adventure and photo-worthy sunsets.

[wattawayiowa.com](http://wattawayiowa.com) | 844.271.6909

# Contents

MARCH / APRIL 2016

## FEATURES

### 26 Gold Panning

There's no rush, but there is gold all over Iowa. Learn to find it with help from an Iowa hobbyist.

STORY BY *MARIAH GRIFFITH*  
PHOTOS BY *CLAY SMITH*

### 32 Find Fishing Fun in all 99 counties

Grab the gear and get going to the best 99 fishing spots in the state. There's one for every county, but hurry—everyone's got the secret now!

STORY BY *DNR STAFF*

### 42 Restore It and They Will Come

Peep at some elusive, clingy birds in Cedar County with help from a hundred-year-old haven.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY *LINDA AND ROBERT SCARTH*

### 52 Changing Seasons

Revel in the day-to-day beauty of nature in this vignette, reminding Iowans to appreciate the dramatic seasonal production outside our windows.

BY *ALAN FOSTER*

#### ABOUT THE COVER

Friends and family will love exploring Maquoketa Caves State Park this spring. Bring good shoes for walking and check out the scenic rock bridges, waterfalls and caves of this unique park. The largest cave, Dancehall, is lit and has handrails to help keep it accessible for all generations. *See pages 18-25 for more.*



## DEPARTMENTS

### 10 Together

*Hit the road for a half-year of travel destinations, from summer water fun to winter traditions; check out a booming new book on the elusive prairie chicken.*

### 17 Outdoor Skills

*Spruce up your fishing gear, save your favorite work gloves, learn a neat tarp trick and let your birding skills take flight.*

### 18 Lost in Iowa

*Rows of green and gold, picturesque farmhouses, forests, wildlife and state parks abound along Iowa's Grant Wood Scenic Byway. Stop along the 80-mile stretch to visit stunning Maquoketa Caves, create family memories, see sweeping views of three different rivers and end the day among the butterflies at Bellevue State Park.*

### 60 Flora & Fauna

*Meet an avian architect and aerial acrobat whose populations have tumbled 90 percent. Then check out the story on page 42 to see what some Iowans are doing to help them catch a break.*

### 61 Wild Cuisine

*Turn your spring catfish catch into something special with this succulent blackened recipe from Iowa City's Atlas World Grill.*

#### ABOUT THIS PHOTO

Sweeping views inspired artist Grant Wood to paint in his idyllic style. See this view and others for yourself along the Grant Wood Scenic Byway, starting near Anamosa and ending at the Father of Waters.

PHOTO BY KEN WEST

# Contributors



**KEN WEST**, a first time contributor to *Iowa Outdoors*, lives in Ames with his wife Anne. He has been awarded a Silver Master Angler Award by the DNR and is fortunate to spend many hours on lakes and rivers in Iowa, Minnesota and Ontario.



**LINDA AND ROBERT SCARTH** of Cedar Rapids have awareness of those magic moments when small objects become beautiful. With a focus on Midwest flora and fauna, their passion for the outdoors, coupled with patience and a keen eye to detail, allows them to capture dazzling images of nature up close. Order their book, *Deep Nature Photography from Iowa*, at 1-866-410-0230.



**JEN WILSON** is a travel and features writer based in Des Moines. Her work appears in *National Geographic Traveler*, *Frommer's Budget Travel*, *Midwest Living* and *Esquire*. Find her book, *Running Away to Home*, at [www.jennifer-wilson.com](http://www.jennifer-wilson.com).

# IOWA OUTDOORS

MARCH / APRIL 2016 • VOLUME 75 • ISSUE 2

## STAFF

Brian Button - **EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**  
 Alan Foster - **MANAGING EDITOR**  
 Jacob Zweibohmer - **ART DIRECTOR**  
 Jessie Brown - **COPY EDITOR**  
 Mariah Griffith (intern) - **WRITERS**  
 Jake Zweibohmer, Kati Balnter - **PHOTOGRAPHERS**  
 Julie Tack - **MARKETING AND PUBLICITY**  
 Kevin Baskins - **COMMUNICATIONS SECTION LEADER**

## STATE PRESERVES ADVISORY BOARD

Wayne Phipps, **Jefferson**  
 Loren Christensen, **Elk Horn**  
 Inger Lamb, **Polk City**  
 Bruce Trautman, **Des Moines**  
 Lynn Alex, **Iowa City**  
 Leesa McNeil, **Sioux City**  
 Dr. Kirk Larsen, **Decorah**

## NATURAL RESOURCE COMMISSION

Margo Underwood, **CHAIR**, Clear Lake  
 Dr. Sally Prickett, **VICE CHAIR**, Glenwood  
 R. Kim Francisco, **SECRETARY**, Lucas  
 Dennis Schemmel, **Grimes**  
 Conrad Clement, **Cresco**

Marcus Branstad, **Des Moines**  
 Phyllis Reimer, **Crescent**

## ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION COMMISSION

Mary Boote, **Des Moines**  
 Nancy Couser, **Nevada**  
 Joe Riding, **Altoona**  
 Ralph Lents, **Menlo**  
 Cindy Greiman, **Garner**  
 Robert Sinclair, **Sigourney**  
 Eugene Ver Steeg, **Inwood**  
 Chad Ingels, **Randalia**  
 LaQuanda Hoskins, **LeClaire**

## SUBSCRIBER SERVICES 800.361.8072

### ADVERTISING OFFICE

Associations Inc, Tonya Vitzthum at 515.669.3010 or [TVITZTHUM@ASSOCIATIONSINC.US](mailto:TVITZTHUM@ASSOCIATIONSINC.US)

### DNR EXECUTIVE STAFF

Chuck Gipp - **DIRECTOR**  
 Bruce Trautman - **DEPUTY DIRECTOR**

### DIVISION ADMINISTRATORS

Bill Ehm - **ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES** • Kelley Myers - **CONSERVATION AND RECREATION**

DNR Central Office, 515.725.8200 • TTY users contact Relay Iowa, 800.735.2942

*Iowa Outdoors* (ISSN 0021-0471) is published bimonthly by the Department of Natural Resources, 502 E. 9th St., Des Moines, IA 50319. Periodicals postage paid Des Moines, IA. SUBSCRIPTION RATES: \$15 FOR ONE YEAR,

\$24 FOR TWO YEARS AND \$30 FOR THREE YEARS. PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE. Include mailing label for renewals and address changes. POSTMASTER: Send changes to *Iowa Outdoors*, P.O. Box 37831, Boone, IA 50037-0831

Federal and state regulations prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex or disability. State law also prohibits discrimination on the basis of creed, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, pregnancy or public accommodation. If you believe that you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility as described above, or for more information, write: Director, DNR, 502 E. Ninth St., Des Moines, IA 50319-0034 or the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Washington, D. C. 20240

### DNR MISSION

To conserve and enhance our natural resources in cooperation with individuals and organizations to improve the quality of life for Iowans and ensure a legacy for future generations.

### EDITORIAL MISSION

We strive to open the door to the beauty and uniqueness of Iowa's natural resources, inspire people to get outside and experience Iowa and to motivate outdoor-minded citizens to understand and care for our natural resources.

### MAKE A DIFFERENCE

DNR volunteer programs help Iowans give back to lands, waters and skies. 515-725-8261 or [iowadnr.gov/volunteer](http://iowadnr.gov/volunteer)

### HOW TO DONATE

Charitable giving of land, funds, goods and services greatly enhances Iowa's outdoors. Call Kim Rasler at 515-725-8440.

### SHOW YOUR SUPPORT

Support wildlife diversity and REAP. Take your license plates and vehicle registration to your county treasurer's office to buy a pheasant, eagle, goldfinch, deer or trout natural resources plate.

### SUBSCRIBER SERVICES

To subscribe, or for any subscription issues or questions, call 1.800.361.8072 Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. or weekends 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. For ease in processing, please have an issue with a mailing label available at time of call. To purchase a single copy for \$5, call 515-725-8200.

### LEARN MORE

Buy licenses, reserve campsites or learn about our environment at [iowadnr.gov](http://iowadnr.gov). See our magazine television show at [iptv.org](http://iptv.org).



[facebook.com/iowadnr](http://facebook.com/iowadnr)  
[twitter.com/iowadnr](http://twitter.com/iowadnr)  
[pinterest.com/iowadnr](http://pinterest.com/iowadnr)





## ANGLERS ASKED TO HELP WITH STUDY ARE MUDPUPPIES DORMANT DURING WINTER?

At first glance, it's hard to know what to make of this creature. A head like a dragon, gills on the outside of a fish-like body...what is this thing? The mysterious mudpuppy is Iowa's largest member of the salamander family. It's mostly nocturnal, never leaves the water and unlike almost every other reptile or amphibian in Iowa, it's active in winter.

The DNR, in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Minnesota herpetologist Jeff LeClere, recently launched a first-of-its-kind study of mudpuppy populations on the Mississippi River. Over the course of the next several months, researchers hope to learn more about this mysterious creature and its habits on Pool 11 of the Upper Mississippi River near Guttenberg.

Historically, these fully aquatic salamanders have existed in this area based on reports of accidental catches by local anglers. But little else is known about how many exist. Researchers hope the information gathered will aid in better understanding local mudpuppy populations and what can be done to help.

Iowa anglers can assist by reporting mudpuppies they catch. Because mudpuppies are active in winter, they remain

susceptible to being caught on a hook and line. Although they are very slimy and hard to hold, they are completely harmless. If caught, send a photo and description of the location to researchers. Release the mudpuppy after the photo as they are threatened in Iowa and cannot legally be collected or killed.

### SEND PHOTOS AND LOCATIONS TO:

Kevin Hanson, Iowa DNR, P.O. Box 250, Guttenberg, IA 52052  
or email to [Kevin.Hanson@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:Kevin.Hanson@dnr.iowa.gov) 515-252-7156



## Ask THE Expert *What's the difference between hibernation and torpor?*

BY MARIAH GRIFFIN

Winters are tough in Iowa, particularly for warm-blooded wildlife. Food can be hard to find, moving through snow may be difficult and colder temperatures require more calories to keep warm. Hibernation and torpor are two strategies animals use to minimize bodily needs and survive harsh winters. Both reduce activity, decrease body temperature and conserve energy, but hibernation is generally more extreme and more likely to be used only in winter.

In **TORPOR**, an animal reduces its activity, heart rate and body temperature for a relatively short period of time—usually a few hours or overnight. Even in this short time, the change is drastic. A mouse, for example, may decrease its heart rate from 400 beats per minute to just five, and its body temperature may plummet more than 80 degrees. The exact rates and changes vary extensively, and can even happen year-round, depending on the animal. While in torpor, animals may appear to be sleeping or paralyzed, and incapable of responding to stimuli. However, intermittent periods of wakefulness allow animals like mice, bats and birds to forage for food and excrete wastes on a regular basis.

**HIBERNATION** is comparable to extended torpor. Animals that hibernate, like woodchucks or brown bats, are generally larger and have more fur and fat storage than those that experience torpor, and thus can sustain themselves for greater periods of time. However, some small mammals like ground squirrels and certain mice can sustain extended hibernation. Still, few animals truly hibernate throughout winter. Most wake up every few days or weeks to excrete wastes and eat before going back to sleep.



# Together

BY JOE WILKINSON

ACTIVITIES, TIPS AND EVENTS FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY


## OUTDOOR CHECKLIST



Explore these nooks, events and hotspots for things to see and do each month July through December. (Items for the first half of the year appeared in the January/February issue—available for \$5 at 515-725-8200.)


### JULY

#### HIDDEN AWAY



Fish the ponds pictured here in Shimek State Forest in Lee and Van Buren counties. The wooded areas in southeast Iowa are great for hunting, hiking and camping. However, if you want to fish where hardly anyone else does, this is it. Well, until now.

#### FLOAT THE BOAT



Better yet, do Shimek from a kayak, canoe or float tube. Of the four ponds, Bitternut and Shagbark ponds have ramps for easy access. Black Oak is just a short drag from the parking area. White Oak is a half- to three-quarter mile trek, and although doable, requires a bit more effort. The ponds are stocked with bass, channel catfish and panfish.

# GIVE THE GIFT THAT LASTS ALL YEAR

## 6 BIG ISSUES FOR JUST \$15

BILL ME LATER  CHECK ENCLOSED  
OR CALL 1-800-361-8072 TO SUBSCRIBE TODAY

SEND GIFT TO:

NAME (please print)

ADDRESS / APT

CITY / STATE / ZIP

FROM:

NAME (please print)

ADDRESS / APT

CITY / STATE / ZIP

6/15

U16A



Please allow 4-8 weeks for delivery.

...und like much of a vacation, head to es. The chain features Iowa's largest st Okoboji, Upper and Lower Gar outdoor fun. The centerpiece of the 1 West Lake Okoboji. but keep in mind, East and West es substantial recreational boat traffic.



### AUGUST

#### TURTLES, SNAKES AND FROGS, OH MY

They don't get much attention. That's why it's a big deal that the nation's first Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Area is in Louisa County, south of Wapello. Dedicated in 2007, this ARCA is a combination of public and private land, where most of the reptiles and amphibians in Iowa—and the highest number of rare species—are found. See ornate box turtles, prairie king snakes, western hognose snakes, cricket frogs and more. Tag along while DNR wildlife diversity crews update their management plans or ask them about their research.



# Together

BY JOE WILKINSON

ACTIVITIES, TIPS AND EVENTS FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

## OUTDOOR CHECKLIST

Explore these nooks, events and hotspots for this month. (Items for the first half of the year appeared in the January/February issue.)



### JULY HIDDEN AWAY

Fish the ponds pictured here in Shimek State Forest in Lee and Van Buren counties. The wooded areas in southeast Iowa are great for hunting, hiking and camping. However, if you want to fish where hardly anyone else does, this is it. Well, until now.



PO BOX 37831  
BOONE IA 50037-0831

IOWA  
OUTDOORS

PLACE  
POSTAGE  
HERE



### FLOAT THE BOAT

Better yet, do Shimek from a kayak, canoe or float tube. Of the four ponds, Bitternut and Shagbark ponds have ramps for easy access. Black Oak is just a short drag from the parking area. White Oak is a half- to three-quarter mile trek, and although doable, requires a bit more effort. The ponds are stocked with bass, channel catfish and panfish.

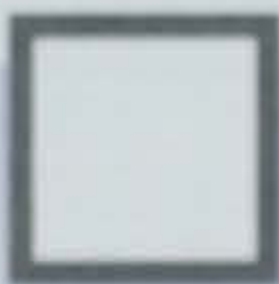




#### AUGUST

#### TURTLES, SNAKES AND FROGS, OH MY

They don't get much attention. That's why it's a big deal that the nation's first Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Area is in Louisa County, south of Wapello. Dedicated in 2007, this ARCA is a combination of public and private land, where most of the reptiles and amphibians in Iowa—and the highest number of rare species—are found. See ornate box turtles, prairie king snakes, western hognose snakes, cricket frogs and more. Tag along while DNR wildlife diversity crews update their management plans or ask them about their research.



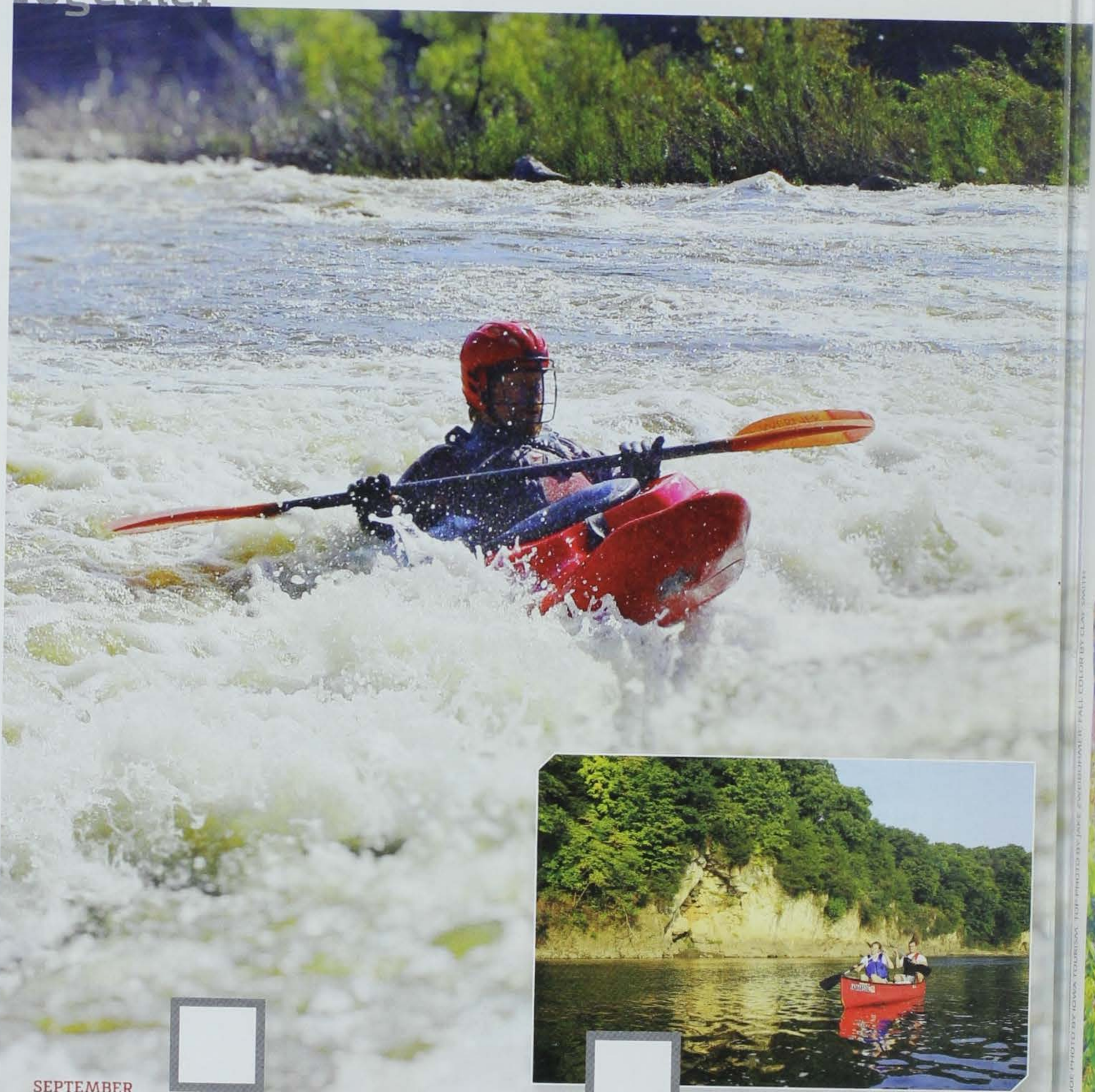
#### HEAD TO BIG LAKE COUNTRY

If hanging out with a bunch of snakes and turtles doesn't sound like much of a vacation, head to northwest Iowa's Dickinson County and the Iowa Great Lakes. The chain features Iowa's largest natural lake, Spirit, and five connected lakes—West and East Okoboji, Upper and Lower Gar and Minnewashta—providing the backdrop for year-round outdoor fun. The centerpiece of the 15,000-acre chain of lakes is the 134-foot-deep, spring-fed West Lake Okoboji.

All six lakes offer great fishing for a variety of species, but keep in mind, East and West Okoboji are two of the top water sport lakes and experiences substantial recreational boat traffic.



# Together



## SEPTEMBER

### PLYING NEW WATERS

I'll be paddling new water and looking up at the steep bluffs along the Boone or Upper Iowa rivers. Then, it's off to one of the new whitewater parks at Charles City or, maybe, Manchester or Quasqueton. Late summer water levels are usually a little low and more manageable. If the leaves are just starting to turn, so much the better. Lowhead dam "rebUILds" are going to be major recreation draws in Iowa. Get in on it early.



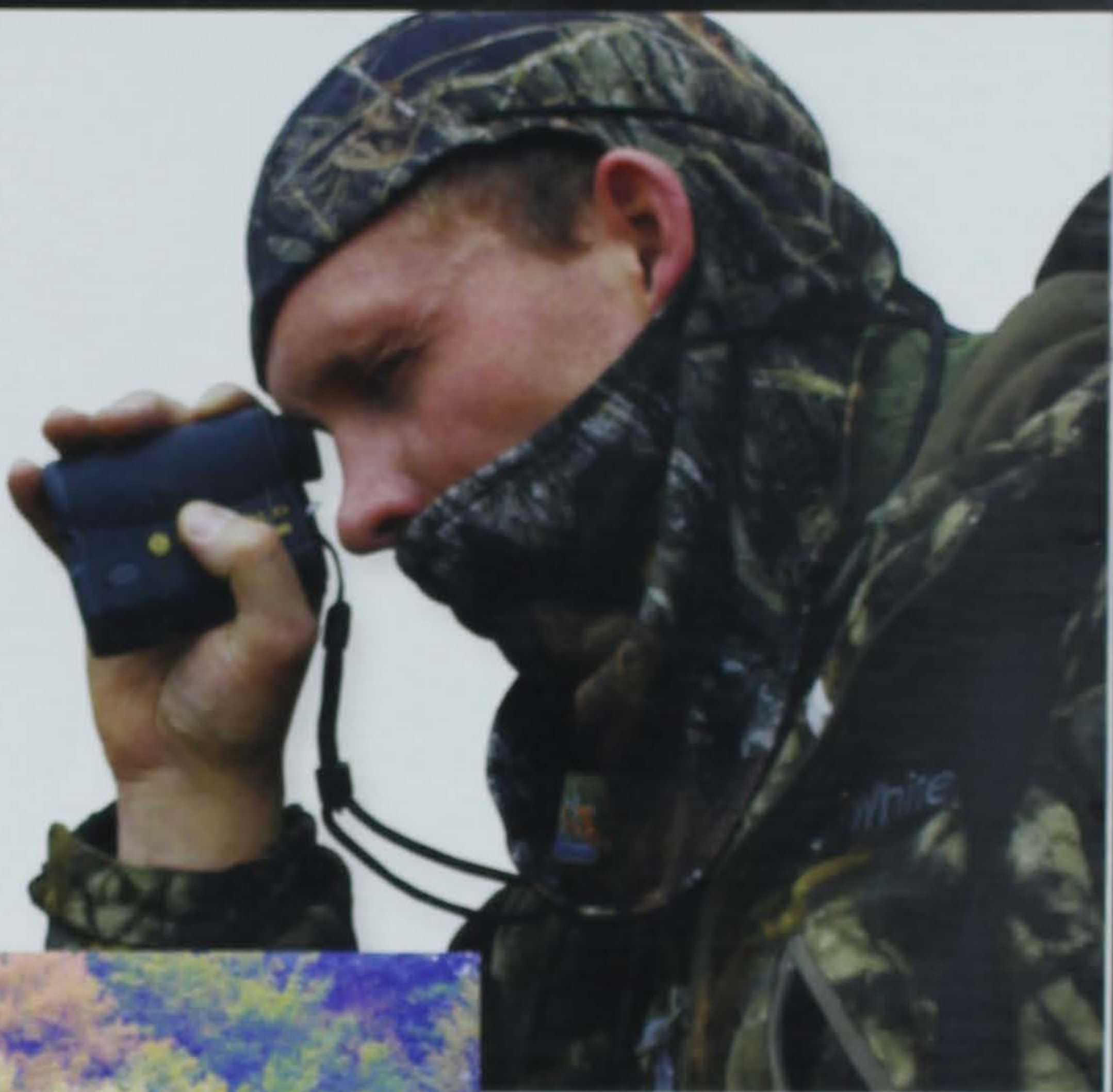
### A LITTLE MORE LAID BACK

If the thought of shooting one of these new whitewater parks leaves you a little green in the gills, Iowa offers roughly 900 miles of state-designated water trails that are a little tamer. Countless more undesignated miles are easily navigatable by canoe or kayak. Throw in your local state park or county lake, or one of the four expansive federal reservoirs, and paddling opportunities are endless; [iowadnr.gov](http://iowadnr.gov)

WHITewater PHOTOS BY CLAY SWAFF; CANOE PHOTOS BY IOWA TOURISM; TOP PHOTOS BY JAKE GOODENOUGH; FALL COLOR BY CLAY SWAFF

**OCTOBER**  
**UP A TREE**

This month has to be sitting in an early morning deer stand. For about a week, sunlight hitting the turning leaves creates a yellow glow in the woods. It's also a great time to pattern deer and watch other wildlife critters, unaware of the intruder. I'll be back in November for the peak of the rut, but it is hard to beat the mid-October woods.



**THE GREAT RIVER ROAD**

If you'd rather see trees from the comfort of the ground, in all their glorious color, the Great River Road National Scenic Byway is a fall must. The byway stretches nearly 3,000 miles from northern Minnesota to the Gulf of Mexico, but you can do the 328-mile Iowa stretch in a weekend. Experience world-class vistas, charming river towns, magnificent limestone bluffs and 16 national interpretive centers along the way. Hit it right, and this stretch of the Mississippi River Flyway, a major migratory bird corridor, can offer some of the finest wildlife viewing around.

# Together

## NOVEMBER

### BRING BACK TRADITION

Long shelved due to declining numbers, the traditional Thanksgiving Day pheasant hunt is back on the table. It might not be like the glory days of the 1970s and again in the 90s, but the thought of burning some calories and busting a rooster or two before the feast has me reliving my young adult past. With counts on the rise, it's time to resurrect the family tradition.



### AN EYE TO THE SKIES

Dozens of choices. A good bet, though? Watching the southwest Iowa snow goose migration. Though hit or miss recently—the migration seems to have shifted west—you can still look for thousands of snows winging overhead, settling in—or taking off—around the refuge at Riverton or at Forney Lake. Besides just watching, it has become, perhaps, Iowa's premier duck hunting locale.

[iowadnr.gov](http://iowadnr.gov)



PHOTOGRAPH BY JEFFREY W. HARRIS FOR IOWA OUTDOORS





#### BACKCOUNTRY SLEDDING

If you are looking for a little more speed and family fun, take a trip to Red Haw State Park near Chariton for some heart-pounding downhill sledding. Southern Iowa terrain is known for steep but not-too-long hills. A popular run at the park takes you out onto the frozen lake for an extended adventure (make sure the ice is safe). Reserve the Stone Shelter to warm up by the fireplace with hot cocoa and roasted marshmallows. [iowastateparks.reserveamerica.com](http://iowastateparks.reserveamerica.com).

#### CITY SLICKING

If you are on the east side of the state, stop in Mount Vernon—arguably Iowa's top sledding town. While some cities ban or restrict sledding on public property, Mount Vernon embraces it, and shuts down a street (Third Avenue North), barricades it and posts sledding hours anytime there is measurable snow, attracting dozens of kids for a quick ride downhill. On a really good run, the ride lasts about seven blocks. The tradition has been going since the 1880s.

#### DECEMBER SWAN SONG

Venture to Beemer's Pond. An aerator keeps a corner open on this 8-acre pond in Hamilton County, home to Iowa's largest winter population of trumpeter swans. Sit and observe North America's largest waterfowl. Extirpated from Iowa for 100 years, now you can see 100 swans or more—and listen to their melodic "French horn" calls. It's five miles west of Webster City on highway 20. Turn south on R-21 for a mile. The pond is on the left.



# Together



I believe if folks were asked to list the benefits of camping, solitude might be near the top. But over the last few months, I have witnessed another asset of camping—solidarity.

Last November, I took part in celebrating the 1985 Iowa State University women's cross country team. The coach of that squad, Ron Renko, started every season by taking his runners camping. It was an ideal way to create and reinforce the bonds of this sisterhood of runners. A trademark of those trips was a running stick figure sprayed onto the gravel that would guide those Cyclones down deserted roads. This "Running Girl" was Renko's mark; one he even incorporated into his signature. With flying ponytail and enigmatic smile, the art figure became a virtual team member—a reminder that they were not alone and were on the right track.

Coach Renko took his team camping to create a bond and initiate a routine to prepare them for the season. Thirty years later, team members still talk fondly of chopping wood, cots, hauling and then boiling drinking water, bare bones cabins and hardships that made them...them. They all arrived with a love of running, but camping created their trademark unity that season.

Later, the fruit of that camping trip was fully evident when that Cyclone squad earned one of the greatest achievements ever by any ISU team.

On Nov. 25, 1985, five ISU women finished the NCAA Championship 5,000 meter course (3.11 miles) in Milwaukee within 25 seconds of each other. It was a vision provided by Coach Renko and executed to perfection. On that day there was a narrow path shoveled free of snow. The temperature was 33 degrees and 15 mph swirling winds made it even colder. To pass, runners risked falls on hard packed snow. And yet the team's mood started out positive and ended in joy as their effort earned them a runner up national title—shocking the running world.

Later that day Renko, his assistant Pat Moynihan, trainer Stephanie Streit and runners Julie Rose, Sheryl Maahs and Sue Baxter boarded a small twin-engine airplane and would die along with pilot Burt Watkins just miles short of the Des Moines airport, crashing in a heavily forested neighborhood during freezing rain. In the history of sport, there has never been such an emotional gulf as the one dealt that day to surviving team members, family and loved ones.

That is why, to mark the 30th anniversary of that day, the Des Moines based Dam to Dam Race Committee joined the Waterbury Neighborhood Association, ISU Alumni, Temple B'nai Jesurun and others to create Iowa's newest memorial park near the crash site at the corner of Country Club and Shriver in Des Moines. Not just a tribute to the individuals, but to a spirit that finds joy in a warm wilderness camp and cold and snow-custed environment. A spirit that isn't capable of breaking the stride of determined young women.

The park concept is also a fitting tribute to the camping that helped bond, then strengthen, these young women. Parks and camping can easily be relegated to recreation. But the value is limitless—contributing to joy, teamwork and not just recreation, but re-creation.

To read more about the memorial park and this incredible team, go to [facebook.com/cyclonesxcw1985/](https://facebook.com/cyclonesxcw1985/).

**TIM LANE** is a nationally recognized authority on public health and physical activity. He is past president of the Iowa Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance.

## New Book Examines Life of the Endangered Greater Prairie-Chicken



For ten months of the year, the prairie-chicken's drab colors allow it to disappear into the landscape. But, in April and May, it is one of the most outrageously flamboyant birds in North America. Competing for the attention of females, males gather before dawn in an explosion of sights and sounds—"booming from the mists of nowhere," as Iowan Aldo Leopold wrote decades ago. There's nothing else like it and it is perilously close to being lost.

Skillfully interweaving lyrical accounts from early settlers, hunters and pioneer naturalists, writer Greg Hoch reveals that the bird played a key role in Midwest settlement, but as a result of overharvest and habitat destruction, its numbers plummeted. The book introduces readers to not only the species, but to tallgrass prairie and population ecology in a non-jargon manner.

The steep decline in the prairie-chicken population is one of the great tragedies of 20th century wildlife management and agriculture. However, Hoch gives reasons for optimism. These birds can thrive in agriculturally productive grasslands. Careful grazing, reduced use of pesticides, well-placed wildlife corridors, planned burnings and higher plant, animal and insect diversity are keys. If enough blocks of healthy grasslands are scattered over the midwestern landscape, there will be prairie chickens. Farmers, ranchers, conservationists and citizens can reverse the decline of the grassland birds and ensure that future generations will hear the booming of the prairie chicken.

**Booming From the Mists of Nowhere:** The Story of the Greater Prairie-Chicken by Greg Hoch. Bur Oak Books, University of Iowa Press, 158 pages, 10 b/w illustrations, soft cover \$19.95 ISBN 978-1-60938-387-9. Available at bookstores or [uiowapress.org](http://uiowapress.org) or 800-621-2736.

### GET INVOLVED

See spring booming on a lek in Ringgold County. The viewing stand is two miles west of Kellerton on 310th Avenue. Prairie Chicken Days is the weekend of April 2. Call 515-783-2166 for information on viewing or prospects for group tours.

TIPS, TRICKS AND MUST-KNOWS TO ENHANCE YOUR OUTDOOR FUN

## Spring Fishing Preparation

Late winter is tough—ice is iffy and open water is weeks away. Now's the time to prep gear. Repaint lures if needed, check for cracks and sharpen or replace hooks. Ensure eyelets or lips are tight. Organize similar lures—floaters, suspenders, divers, etc. Check tackle boxes for worn hinges and buckles. (No one wants to play 52-lure pickup while fishing.) Inspect rods, reel connection sleeves and line guides for cracks and fix or replace. Even if line was replaced last spring, it's not worth losing a big fish over \$7 of new line. Don't overfill spool to avoid "rats' nests." Check reel components—handles, nuts, balls, screws—for tightness. Look for lubrication points, but apply sparingly. A good reel oil is fine for warm-weather, but consider graphite during cold months.

## Extend Life of Work Gloves

If you wear holes in the fingers of your work gloves, take an old glove and cut leather sections—either a small square or strips. Scrub the cleanest side with a stiff brush. Apply a generous amount of superglue and adhere to areas where holes exist or are most prone to appear.



## Time Saving Tarp Fastener

Tarps are useful when camping for rain, sun or wind protection over tents and picnic tables, and of course to cover woodpiles. Save time by using a small, sturdy stick as a holder instead of knots. Put rope through the grommet, wrap the stick three times and pass into the grommet again, then repeat on other grommets.

## HOW TO TELL A Purple Finch FROM A House Finch

Most find females easier to tell apart than males. Female house finches have a blank, unmarked face. Female purple finches have very boldly patterned faces: dark cap, dark cheek, separated by a white eyebrow.

Males are very similar. House finches are a truer "red" while purple finches are more raspberry and purplish. Male house finches usually have a brownish cap and cheek that contrasts with the red, while purple finches tend to be solidly purple/red on the top of the head with a hint of bold patterning like the females. Male house finches have brown streaking on the belly and flanks, while purples are unstreaked or the streaking is the same purple/red color as on the head.

Purple finches are stocky with relatively shorter tails and somewhat peaked/crested heads. Houses are lankier with longer tails and very rounded heads.



## The Water Way

Traipse along Jackson County's Grant Wood Scenic Byway for a trip through Iowa's lifeblood.

There's a full moon over eastern Iowa. Cold, clear streams glisten like silver threads through fields and farmland. Moonbeams caress the southward pull of the Mississippi River. In this tiny swath of paradise between Maquoketa and Bellevue, man and nature have found a balance that sparkles on a chilly spring night.

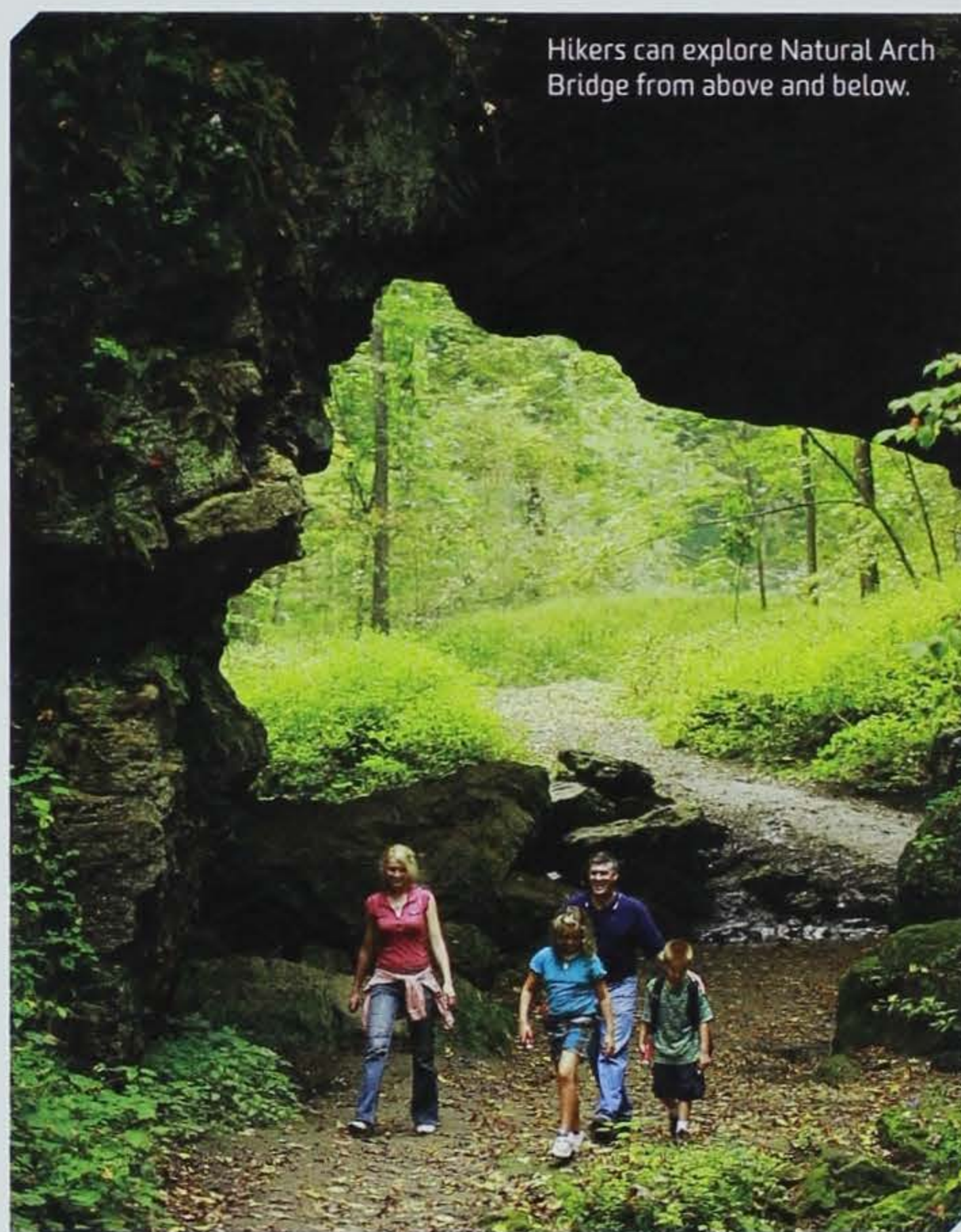
A road winds through this bastion of traditional farmscape. The Grant Wood Scenic Byway leads travelers past local limestone structures, dairy farms and undulating hills that interstate drivers will never know.

Water sets this place a notch above the rest. Anglers hook into brown and rainbow trout from stocked, spring-fed streams. Paddlers embrace the manageable Maquoketa River. The Mississippi snugs right up to Bellevue, a rare river town without railroad tracks obscuring the views. Water-carved Maquoketa Caves State Park, and panoramic river views are the ultimate payoff for hikes in Bellevue State Park.

In Jackson County, along the Grant Wood Scenic Byway, if you come for the scenery, you'll stay for the water.

### Small wonders

Rowdy owls romp through mature pine trees. Coyotes



Hikers can explore Natural Arch Bridge from above and below.

yap. Lest one forget that this is Iowa, a cow joins the chorus. In a tent, nighttime at Maquoketa Caves State Park is an aural hoe-down.

This petite park on 323 acres, seven miles northwest of Maquoketa, is a state favorite. All 13 caves, formed by rainwater erosion in the limestone, are fair game for exploration. Six hearty miles of trails pass limestone formations, rugged bluffs and photo-ready features like a natural stone bridge 50 feet above the Raccoon Creek and a 17-ton "Balanced Rock."

Judging by the arrowheads and pottery found long ago in the

caves, the location has been popular for millennia. An on-site interpretive center fills in historic details.


Jill and Kyle Gauley of Pella make their way through gigantic Dancehall Cave with sons Connor, 3, and Thomas, 6. The boys boulder over the chilly rocks, flashlights glinting into the dim depths.

"I see bats!" frets Connor.

"Bats won't hurt you," assures Jill. "Besides, there are no bats right here."

The boys cram their small bodies through a mud-brown wall crevice.

"Wow!" sounds Thomas' voice from within.



South entrance to quarter-mile long Dancehall Cave, one of 13 caves at Maquoketa Caves State Park. Dancehall features paved walkways and lighting, but some—Dug Out, Widemouth, Match and more—require crawling. Pack old clothes, flashlights and helmets. Drop by the interpretive center to soak up cave geology and history.

# Lost In Iowa



On the road between Anamosa and Stone City on the Grant Wood Scenic Byway, Meander down the nearly 80-mile byway to see surrounding countryside as a patch work of rolling farmland and limestone bluffs connecting three rivers—the Wapsipinicon, Maquoketa and the immense Mississippi. Wetlands too, dot the land and provide habitat for wildlife.

Rich timberland carpets the bluffs, housing diverse varieties of wildlife and providing bird watching and deer or turkey hunting opportunities. One trip is never enough. Seasonal changes make each voyage feel like venturing into uncharted territory.

T  
•  
T  
w  
o  
lo  
• U  
fis  
fis  
pu  
• E  
tha  
lea  
• W  
Wa  
• A  
sha  
low  
tha  
• Ca  
will  
• Tr  
curr  
fish  
• Th  
they  
caug  
salm  
craw  
the h

### TROUT FISHING TIPS

- Get your hands on the essential **Iowa Trout Fishing Guide**, from the DNR—its where the tips below are from. **View online or get a free smartphone version at [iowadnr.gov](http://iowadnr.gov).**
- Use the DNR guide to locate a good fishing spot. Always **ask permission** for fishing areas not specifically marked as public areas. Be a considerate visitor.
- **Bring light-action spinning or fly rods**, line no heavier than 6-pound test (try 4 or 2). For fly-fishing, use a tapered leader with 1- to 4-pound test tippet.
- **Wear rubber boots** to cross or wade streams. Waders aren't necessary, but they certainly look cool.
- **Approach the stream cautiously** and don't cast a shadow over the water you'll fish. When the water is clear, lower your profile by kneeling or crawling. Yes, trout are that easily spooked.
- **Cast delicately and accurately.** Polarized glasses will help you see the fish better.
- Trout face upstream and stay put by swimming against the current. **Cast upstream** so your bait floats by a potential fish hide-out.
- Though trout are exceedingly timid about biting in general, **they aren't necessarily picky about food.** Trout can be caught using cheese, sweet corn, synthetic baits, marshmallows, salmon eggs, night crawlers, worms and minnows. And crawdads. And water bugs like caddis flies or midges. And what the heck, try grasshoppers, crickets or ants, too.



# Lost In Iowa

## Help our winged friends

Monarchs are the only butterfly that makes a true migration—every generation born in late summer will over-winter in Mexico, where they become sexually mature.

“How they know how to get there, and back again, we don’t really know,” says park ranger Ron Jones of Bellevue State Park.

That migrating generation lives seven months—compared to the month-long lifespan of most monarchs. That’s about 500 years old in human years.

In short, they could use a little rest. Monarch resources are declining with ever-increasing land development and the widespread use of herbicides. Ninety percent of the monarch’s milkweed habitat (its preferred food and place to lay eggs) is found on the agricultural landscape, and that’s disappearing rapidly.

## Here’s how to supply food and shelter for egg-laying, according to Jones and the website [monarchwatch.org](http://monarchwatch.org):

- **Plant butterfly-friendly plants.** Using anything from a window box to a wild, untended acreage, plant any variety of milkweed, as well as nectar plants like purple coneflower, zinnia and prairie blazing star. Purchase individually, or order a seed packet from the Monarch Watch website for \$16 (800-780-9986). [monarchwatch.org](http://monarchwatch.org)
- **Encourage your local schools, Department of Transportation and municipalities to do the same.** Volunteer to coordinate the effort, if need be.
- **Do not use any insecticides or pesticides in your garden.** Quite simply, they kill butterflies.
- **Offer protection from wind.** “Butterflies don’t like windy days,” says Jones. “Tall trees, tall grass or prairie area gives them shelter.”
- **Create places for puddles so butterflies can drink—**try sinking a container of sand into the ground. Add rocks or sticks for perches.
- **Don’t overgroom.** Your butterfly plot needn’t be tidy. In fact, if it’s a little messy and weedy, it provides the winged ones more shelter.
- **Volunteer.** If you visit Bellevue State Park, call in advance and offer to spend an hour in the butterfly garden. The park is low on staff to maintain the site, which has been in operation since 1985. Call or stop by at South Bluff Nature Center in the Nelson Unit when you arrive (563-872-4019).





"Bats!" answers Connor.

The caves could easily swallow two days of rapt exploration. So it's a good thing that Bluff Lake Catfish Farm, a few miles west, serves all-you-can-eat dinners through the weekend. The hour-long wait is doable between the bar, the ducks and geese and a catfish pond where the Friday night special lurks.

### Elusive fish

The Grant Wood Scenic Byway stretches 60 miles between Anamosa and Bellevue. Steep hills, valleys, deep creek bottoms, high church spires and limestone buildings were inspiration for Iowa artist Grant Wood in the 1930s, who wrote: "A true art expression must grow up from the soil itself." The regionalist began Stone City Art Colony near Anamosa to honor, with art, the subtle beauties of the Midwest.

The area inspired classic paintings as "Stone City" and "Fall Plowing," but the drive is far from the county's highlight. Leaving from Maquoketa Caves, following the byway toward Bellevue, stocked trout streams such as Big and Little Mill creeks and Brush Creek are about the best way to see some of Iowa's best scenery.

"One thing about trout, they don't live in ugly places," says Bryan Hayes, the DNR fisheries biologist who keeps track of the streams. "This is spring-fed water, clear and cold, with rocky outcroppings, pretty trees alongside... nice country."

Surprisingly, you don't need a lot of equipment for trout fishing. Farm-style angling is not *A River Runs Through It* fancy (though it certainly can be). Trout fishing can be as easy as split-shot, Power Bait, rubber boots and the ability to be very sneaky.

Fisheries biologist Scott Gritters ties a spinner to his 2-pound light line along a section of Little Mill Creek. He points to a quiet pool just beyond a burbling riffle.

"I guarantee you there are 200 or 300 trout out there," he says.

As Gritters walks the bank, he keeps his distance from the water until he's ready to fish. If trout see you, they won't bite.

Trout swim facing upstream, and Gritters is essentially sneaking up on his catch. He casts—a feisty, quick swat—and allows his bait to flow back downstream toward him. He casts twice more, then moves on.

If they aren't biting, he says, they won't be changing their minds soon.

Gritters wends his way

upstream, though some anglers work one site all day, fishing a little, letting the water rest for a half-hour, then fishing it again.

Area farmers are generally open to sharing their stream access—just ask. The properties with permanent permission have DNR signs posted and wooden ladders across the fences. Consult a DNR trout map, which lists county plat numbers for public access points.

However you find your sweet spot, remember: It's good karma to leave sites cleaner than you found them and farm gates closed behind you.

### Small town charms

Bellevue is a wee town with a fascinating lock and dam, a municipal park hugging the Mississippi and tasty ice cream at Grandpa's Parlor on Main Street.

Bellevue's character is cemented by an idyllic red structure—Iowa's oldest gristmill—seated on the bank of Big Mill Creek. Retired Marshalltown doctor Daryll Eggers saved Potter's Mill when he purchased it, in decrepit condition, in 1980. The foundation and 11-foot-thick dam that powered the mill were built with limestone from bluffs across the creek. Local timber (hand-hewn walnut and oak beams) framed it out.

In 1985, Eggers and his wife, Carolyn, opened Potter's Mill as a restaurant. Today, new owners run bed-and-breakfast rooms upstairs and a barbeque and southern food restaurant with live blues and jazz. It's the go to place for grits, ribs, gumbo and other classics.

"Townpeople still thank us for saving this place," he says. "I have no doubt this building would not have been saved."

To appreciate Bellevue's status as an iconic Iowa town, see it from high above, in Bellevue State Park. The 720-acre beauty is known for panoramic views, Iowa's largest butterfly garden (see sidebar) and nomadic Woodland mounds.

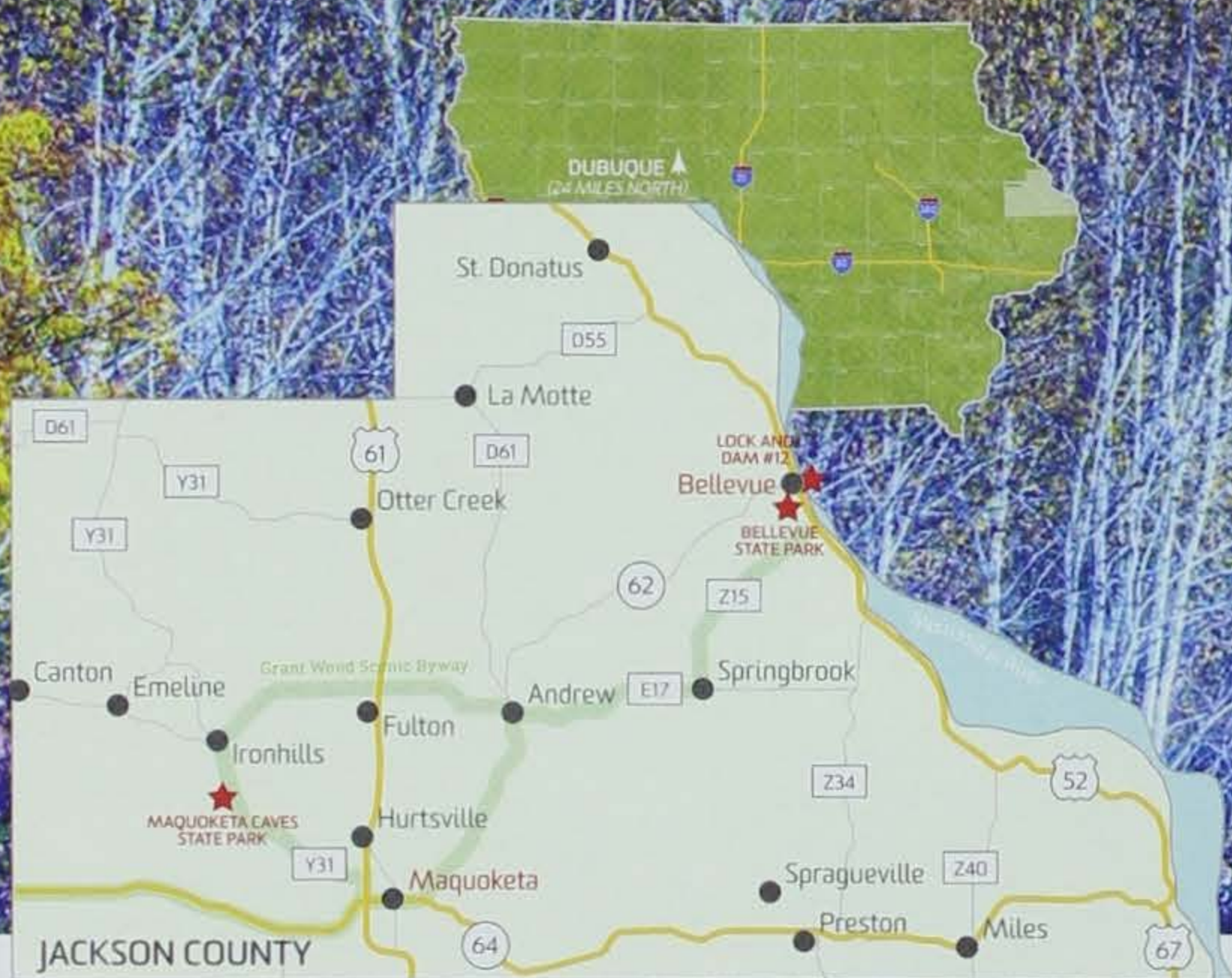
Oak and maple trees shimmer in the breeze, as park ranger Ron Jones explains the park once served as a golf course. "We still find golf balls up here," he chuckles. Eight miles of trail wind through.

"This is probably my favorite park," Jones says, looking out from Pulpit Rock near the main overlook, where groups pose for what'll likely end up in the family Christmas card. "You can just sit up here, and use your imagination as to what it was like in the days of the Native Americans."

Jones walks the chain-link fence protecting the mounds along a bluff. The local Native Americans honored



# Lost In Iowa



the sun, moon and river, he says, and burying their dead here was a logical choice.

"They built these mounds one basket of dirt at a time," he says. "Places like this got them as close as they could to their lifeblood."

And just like that, Jones sums up the mystique of Jackson County. For Iowans who wander its fields and farms, watered and buoyed by its river and streams, the attraction is Iowa's beauty—and the lifeblood that keeps it around.

### Travel notes:

- **The Grant Wood Scenic Byway** travels Highway 62 from Maquoketa, to E17 in Andrew, then Z15 to Hwy. 52 into Bellevue.
- **Canoe access spots** at [jacksonccb.com/Sfork.html](http://jacksonccb.com/Sfork.html), or

in Nate Hoogeveen's book, *Paddling Iowa* (ISBN 978-0-615-57947-4; \$22.95); at local bookshops or buy online at [amazon.com](http://amazon.com).

- **Maquoketa Caves State Park** 10970 98th St., Maquoketa. Savvy campers reserve spots well in advance, or arrive on Thursday for first-come, first-serve offerings.

**563-652-5833**; Reserve a site at [reserveioparks.com](http://reserveioparks.com).

- **Bluff Lake Catfish Farm:** Don't be alarmed if Mapquest directions take you on a Level B Maintenance Road. You're on the right path—but find an alternate route if it's muddy. Open weekends for dinner, Sunday for all meals. 9343 95th Avenue, Maquoketa. **563-652-3272**.

- **The Decker Hotel Restaurant and Lounge.** Casual dining, plus a Sunday breakfast buffet, in a beautifully restored



On the Grant Wood Scenic Byway between Andrew and Bellevue



1875 Inn. Lodging from \$79. 128 N. Main St., Maquoketa. [563-852-6654](tel:563-852-6654)

• **The Main Street Café.** Standard, inexpensive small-town breakfast, lunch and dinner joint. 130 S. Main St., Maquoketa. [563-852-6679](tel:563-852-6679)

• **Bellevue State Park.** 24668 Hwy. 52, Bellevue. 220 acres of public hunting ground, 45 campsites and organized youth group site. [563-872-4019](tel:563-872-4019); [reserveisparks.com](http://reserveisparks.com)

• **Grandpa's Parlor.** 306 S. Riverview Rd., Bellevue. Ice cream delicacies named after river facts—or vote with your mouth on the Hawkeye or Cyclone breakfast specials. [563-872-4240](tel:563-872-4240)

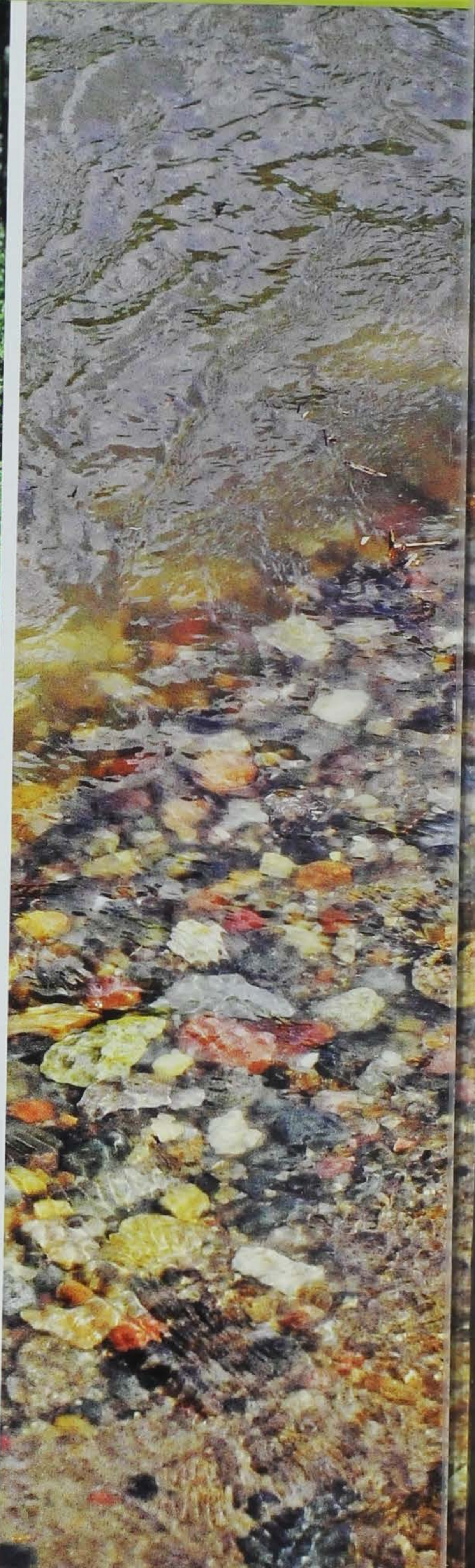
• **Moon River Cabins.** Rustic lodging with a fine location,

right on the Mississippi River in Bellevue, with direct river docking. Prices range between \$150-\$200 per night. 905 S. Riverview Dr. [563-872-5443](tel:563-872-5443); [moonrivercabins.com](http://moonrivercabins.com)

• **The Inn at Potter's Mill.** Beautifully restored historic mill, with a blues and BBQ restaurant below four rooms from \$165 per night. 300 Potter Dr., Bellevue. [563-872-3838](tel:563-872-3838); [pottersmill.net](http://pottersmill.net)

• **Whispering Meadows Resort.** Three cabins on 200 country acres, plus a fishing pond and free hayrack rides upon request. The best of the bunch—the Patriot—sleeps 10 at \$250 per night. Camp for \$18. Pets. 34580 100th St., Spragueville. [563-357-3784](tel:563-357-3784); [whisperingmeadowsresort.com](http://whisperingmeadowsresort.com)

When searching a spot to prospect, look for a mid-speed river or creek and places where the water's surface is disrupted. Colorful rocks in the bed and visible obstacles to the current are also good signs.



I  
gol  
put  
fore  
tree

# GOLD Panning

BY MARIAH GRIFFIN PHOTOS BY CLAY SMITH

**D**an Weber parks his car in a sunny glade of Cold Springs State Park, next to a scuffed brown park sign that reads "Rock Cut."

"Most people don't think of there being gold in Iowa, but there's some in every county," he says, putting on sturdy shoes and some bug spray.

To the right of the sign, a gated path veers off into forest. To the left, a stream peeks through the grass and trees. Except for the occasional passing car and bird

trills, the glade is quiet.

Weber is a young environmental specialist who started working in conservation before he graduated college, and joined the DNR in 2014. He likes his office, but like most DNR employees, Weber says he joined to get outside. Recently, he started gold panning in his free time as another reason to go explore the outdoors.

Weber knows what he's doing, even though he's just getting started. He picked up an interest in gold panning

You don't have to dig deep to find flour gold. Usually straight-flowing rivers deposit gold flecks in a V-shaped pattern following obstacles in the river bed. A more winding river will leave the gold on the slower, inside edge curves. Sharp irregularities like crevices or drops may also catch gold particles.





as a kid from hearing about the bustle and short-lived glory of gold rushes, and he grins while remembering his first time trying it.

"When I was a Cub Scout we did all sorts of things, but I particularly remember going to a rock and mineral show, which I thought was neat," Weber says. "There was a man who brought all the equipment for a booth where we could try panning in a basin full of water, rocks and sand, and I was just fascinated."

He added that now he knows gold panning is about the fun, not the money.

"If you came out here and put in eight hard hours of work, you might find one or two dollars' worth of gold," he says. "I just look for the heck of it. It's peaceful."

A boyish excitement lights up his eyes while walking through the woods, despite being followed by a cloud of mosquitoes. Weber says not all the places where he looks for gold are pretty, but for today he's scoped out a scenic spot to try along the shore of the East Nishnabotna River.

The little sandbar is littered with walnut-sized rocks and tiny shards of old shells. In the background, the stream gurgles happily over a few couch-sized boulders, and a monarch butterfly flits around the bill of Weber's baseball cap.

This part of the river is also a state-designated water trail, where paddlers come for the infrequent, fun bits of whitewater Iowa has to offer. Strolling along, Weber explains natural whitewater spots are excellent places to look for gold.

"When the glaciers came down, they pushed down all this gravel from Canada. That's where the gold came from," Weber says.

Places where the glaciers deposited large, heavy materials, like the boulders that make for whitewater, are likely to be relatively rich in tiny—very tiny—particles of gold as well. Over time, long-standing boulders help slow down and divert the current of the river, which helps heavy gold particles settle and accumulate nearby.

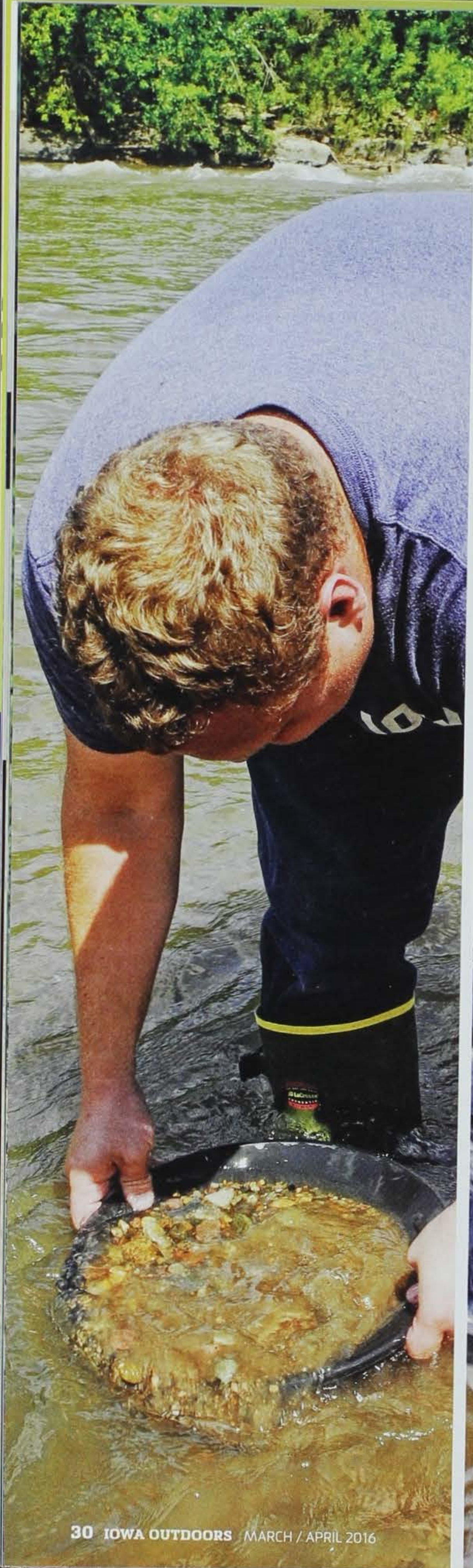
On the edge of the sandbar, Weber takes a black plastic pan and a green army surplus trowel out of his backpack, using the little shovel end to gesture toward the rocks at his feet.

"When you go panning you're looking for different colored rocks and certain things like granite and quartz, as opposed to Iowa limestone and sandstone," he says. "If it's colorful, it's not from here, at least not originally."

Looking closely, the rocks at the edge of the river are mixed together in an almost fruity bouquet of reds, blues and oranges. Weber slips into a pair of green knee-high rain boots and strolls into the water, ladling three thick scoops of sand into his pan. It's approximately the size of a frying pan, with a series of three parallel ridges, called riffles, running halfway around the side.

Weber scoops up a splash of water and swishes the pan contents in a circle as he talks, carefully dumping some out over the riffled side every so often.

"A couple years ago, I went on a trip with some friends



Riffles on the pan help separate different sand components by size and weight. As the pan is tipped, large rocks and light sand tend to tumble out while heavier ferrous sand and gold particles are caught on the riffles and retained. Avoid picking out rocks smaller than a quarter by hand, as gold particles can stick to oils on your fingers.





to Colorado. I knew I wanted to try gold panning while we were there because the gold is a lot more abundant, and looking for it is pretty common," Weber says with a grin. "I actually bought my pan in a hardware store out there for something like 10 bucks. When I went to use it I ran into a couple other gold panning tourists from New York who taught me how to do it well."

He tilts the pan forward toward the riffles, letting a generous number of rocks and some light-colored sand tumble out over the ridges with the water. Taking another cup or so of water from the river, he swishes the pan a few times and dumps off another handful of sand.

"The hardest part is getting the motion and the technique down, but that comes with practice," he says, carefully picking up and tossing out a couple of the largest remaining rocks by hand. "You're trying to get the rocks and sand particles to rub against each other and settle into layers, not do a fancy chef's flip."

It's harder than it looks. Keeping the pan level, Weber swirls the sand right, then left, then shakes it back and forth like he's loosening an omelet from a sticky pan. After 30 seconds or so, he drains a little more sand and most of the water over the riffles and holds out the pan.

What's left inside is about a quarter cup of fine black sand, interspersed with tiny red and pink rocks the size of a pencil point. Weber says these are pieces of garnet and other gemstones. He swirls the nearly-empty pan gently, spreading the little rocks and sparkles out over the black plastic. The sand is dark because it's rich in iron, which also makes it heavy and harder to pour out of the pan.

"I do try to save the sand for someday, just in case, but I'm not particularly possessive or protective of 'my gold,'" Weber says with a shrug. "If I don't find much or I just go out for a little while, I sometimes just dump it back into the river anyway. I've never gotten near enough to try and measure it out."

That's because Iowa has what's known as "flour gold" as opposed to the iconic nuggets of gold rushes. These tiny particles can still be profitable for commercial producers, but only if they process large amounts of sand and soil using large, more intensive equipment like dredges, sluice boxes, screens and vacuum hoses. Weber said he prefers a small pan because he's a hobbyist and doesn't want to leave extensive impacts on the sites he visits.

"It's not something that a small-timer is ever going to make money at in Iowa, but it's a good time," Weber says. "It's more about getting outdoors and exploring than finding anything of monetary value."

He says panning is a great secondary sort of hobby, something to bring along on assorted fishing, paddling and hunting trips with old friends.

"My buddies and I feel like a bunch of old guys, just ambling around and having adventures," he laughs. "But the gold panning is always neat—it's good for jokes and a little competition, but it's also a nice little thing to do while you're catching up on what everybody's up to." 🍷



909

COUNTIES  
OF FISH!

LEFT PHOTO COURTESY ANDY JANSEN. 12 MILE LAKE. UPPER RIGHT PHOTO COURTESY BRYAN HAYES.

# Top Picks in Every County From Fisheries Biologists

*From easy access to family-friendly to off the beaten path, these are the places insiders go. So get started and **FIND YOUR FUN.***

**ADAIR COUNTY**—Mormon Trail, Nodaway, Orient and Meadow lakes are always popular, but fisheries biologist Bryan Hayes favors Greenfield City Reservoir, a family spot with crappies, bluegill, largemouth and cats. The city park has a paved walking path, playground, picnic shelters and disk golf.

**ADAMS COUNTY**—Lake Icaria is a family fishing destination with excellent shoreline access, a ski zone and camping in a well-maintained county park. Cast for bluegill up to 8 inches and crappie up to 12 on fish mounds using small jigs and minnows. Troll crankbaits along the dam or points for 20-inch-plus walleye, or cast the fish mounds or cedar tree piles with jigs or plastics for largemouth, some exceeding 20 inches.

**ALLAMAKEE COUNTY**—With gin clear water and wary, wild brook and brown trout, unstocked French Creek makes for challenging fishing—a paradise for avid anglers to test their skills. Its plentiful public areas are artificial-lure-only and brown trout is catch-and-release only.

For warm water, the Mississippi River rules. In May, tempt flatheads from deep holes with golden shiners or bluegill below the dam near Harpers Ferry. Fish the dock or use the boat ramp in Harpers to fish the slough for crappie and cats. Fish vegetation for yellow perch and slow currents for drum. In Lansing use the new easy access fishing walkway above the river bridge and another downriver where Village Creek empties in (From the river road head inland on Harpers Ferry Road and take first left).

**APPANOOSE COUNTY**—Iowa's largest water—Lake Rathbun—is a perennial favorite for crappie. It will be a banner year for 9- to 11-inch fish, with bigger possible. White bass and hybrid striped bass are back, too. "When



you hit white bass, the action is fast and furious," says fisheries biologist Mark Flammang.

**AUDUBON COUNTY**—Littlefield Lake, the county's only public water, is well manicured with good shoreline access. Catch 15- to 20-inch-plus channel cats, 8-inch bluegill and 9- to 10-inch crappie. Bring the family and take advantage of camping, a beach and playground.

**BENTON COUNTY**—Kids will revel in catching and releasing 8- to 12-inch bass (15-inch minimum) at Hannen Lake, southwest of Blairstown. Shoreline access is excellent and you can fish right outside your camper, says fisheries biologist Paul Sleeper. A small playground, swimming beach and 180 acres of woodland and prairie surrounding the lake will entertain the whole family.

**BLACK HAWK**—Cedar River. Walleye here come in all sizes, mostly 15 to 18 inches, with catches topping 20-inches regularly taken. Find a nice population of smallmouth bass 16 inches and higher, especially above Cedar Falls, along rocky areas in summer and fall. "It's a big river; most fishing is from small boats," says fisheries biologist Dan Kirby. "Channel cat numbers are super strong and underused with 12-inch to mid-20s summer and fall. There is good shorefishing downtown for cats."

**BOONE COUNTY**—"Great place to take kids," biologist Ben Dodd says of Don Williams Lake, based on the

# 99 COUNTIES OF FISH!

abundance of crappie (7 to 9 inches) and bluegill (6 to 7 inches). While smaller, anglers will catch fish in numbers. Campground, beach, golf course and cabins don't hurt either. Best fished from a boat.

**BREMER**—Cedar River and Sweets Marsh. The whole Cedar is really good here, but for less-fished areas with "consistently awesome walleye populations," head near Plainfield for a float, walk-in or John boat trip. Or forego the river for Martins Lake, a pool in the Sweet Marsh wildlife area near Tripoli known for 15- to 20-inch bass. Small boats help to navigate vegetation.

**BUCHANAN**—The Wapsipinicon is super for smallmouth bass, mainly below Independence to the county line. Walleye numbers are down a tad, but still good, says Kirby. Trek to the county's northwest corner and the Wapsi offers wild, self-sustaining northern pike. Its small water is hard on motorboats, so paddle or walk in.

**BUENA VISTA**—The go-to is Storm Lake—tons of public access and family-friendly parks. Expect high catch rates of walleye, says fisheries biologist Ben Wallace. There are plenty of "eaters," but anglers revel in large numbers of catch-and-release slot-limit fish (17 to 22 inches). April through June, fish live minnows under a slip bobber or white twister tails from shore or toss or troll shad-colored crankbaits. The main forage fish are shad and emerald shiners, so anything silver works. After ice-out, target windblown shorelines with shad guts or cutbait for cats.

**BUTLER**—For years, the Shell Rock River has produced outstanding walleye—trophies up to 28 inches and lots of 15- to 20-inchers. Use small John boats or float while casting jigs, crankbaits or live baits. In spring, target schooled fish below dams, obstructions and cobble rock. In summer, cast a jig and crawler, or try crankbaits.

**CALHOUN COUNTY**—Keep kids busy for hours with an enormous population of smaller yellow bass at North Twin Lake. A paved trail makes easy access. Decent-size walleye and catfish supply dinner. Cabin rentals available.

**CARROLL COUNTY**—A fishkill at Swan Lake temporarily knocked it down a peg on the list. So head four and a half miles south on Mahogany Ave to 4-acre Tigges Pond—built and stocked several years ago with largemouth, catfish and bluegill that exceed 8 inches. Hike in 1/4-mile. "It's gets you off the beaten path," Wallace says.

**CASS COUNTY**—Summertime drift fishing for bluegill and crappie at Lake Anita is great for beginners, says Hayes. Drifting allows novices to fish without casting or bobbers. Hang a 1/32nd ounce jig tipped with worm over the side, let out 30 feet of line and hang on.

**CEDAR COUNTY**—Experience lake and river fishing at Cedar Valley Quarry, west of Tipton. Cast for bluegill in two limestone quarries inside Cedar Valley County Park. A concrete boat ramp provides Cedar River access for catfish. Hike trails, picnic, camp or simply enjoy the view.

**CERRO GORDO**—Find fishing nirvana at Clear Lake—known for its yellow bass and walleye—and good shore and boat angling. "It's one of Iowa's better walleye fisheries," says biologist Scott Grummer. Make it a weekend, camping at adjacent Clear Lake State Park or McIntosh Woods State Park (with a handy fish cleaning station). Anglers typically catch 14- to 20-inch walleyes (14-inch minimum) with trophies running 8 pounds and up. Fish walleye after ice out to mid-June and yellow bass from the end of April to mid-June.

**CHEROKEE COUNTY**—Hit the Little Sioux River where average channel cats run 2 to 6 pounds and walleyes span 15 to 25 inches. Wescott Park in Cherokee has great shoreline access and a boat ramp. Try twisters for walleyes and cutbait for cats, or float a live chub for both.

**CHICKASAW COUNTY**—For easy shore access, try Airport Lake northwest of New Hampton. Boat ramp, beach, camping and picnic area. Hook into largemouth, crappie, channel cat and an occasional yellow perch.

**CLARKE COUNTY**—Last spring locals left West Lake near Osceola with limits of 9-inch crappie, says biologist Andy Jansen. Plus, some bass exceed 19 inches. Shore access is limited, so bring a boat and use the paved ramp.

**CLAY COUNTY**—Due to park development, 15-acre Scharnberg Pond always finds itself in demand. "It's a great example of how even small ponds can offer opportunities," biologist Mike Hawkins says. Good bass and bluegill fishing, handicapped-accessible pier, concessions, beach, modern camping, cabins. Stocked with trout when the weather chills.

**CLAYTON COUNTY**—After visiting Big Springs Trout hatchery, families enjoy trout fishing the adjacent Turkey River or the hatchery ponds. Youngsters go nuts for the kids-only pond. (They can even borrow rods from the hatchery.) Primitive camping available on the river banks. Below Elkader, the Turkey is good for smallmouth, walleye, rock bass, channel cat and suckers. Many entry points provide easy access for canoe or kayak fishing.

**CLINTON COUNTY**—Plenty of borrow pits and ponds dot this county, but biologist Chad Dolan gives his blessings to Hagenson Pond off highway 67 south of Camanche. Small and off the beaten path, it's great for

Wildlife supervisor Pete Hildreth with a 46-inch muskie caught at BRUSHY CREEK



kids. Good numbers of 12- to 15-inch bass and 6.5-inch bluegill, along with catfish. "This is one kids can take advantage of," Dolan says. "It will keep them busy."

**CRAWFORD COUNTY**—Tough call here. Yellow Smoke is known for big bluegill. "If you catch six to eight bluegill you'll be doing good," Wallace says, "but they will be monsters. Wallace leans towards Nelson Park and a "good population of really nice, big bluegill." The county lake has good water quality, lots of amenities and ample shoreline fishing, especially on the dam.

**DALLAS COUNTY**—Beaver Lake produced a pretty good crappie population recently with fish still ready to bite. While numbers dipped a bit, size is up. Crappies range 10 to 11 inches with bluegill 7 to 9 inches. "It's a fun little place to fish with lots of standing timber," Dodd says.

**DAVIS COUNTY**—For "unmatched bass fishing," plus good bluegill and improving crappie numbers, hit Lake Wapello State Park, says Flammang. A revamped, rebuilt campground reopens this spring.

**DECATUR COUNTY**—Catch 16- to 20-inch walleye, 9-inch bluegill, 10-inch crappie and lots of bass (some beyond 20 inches) at Little River Watershed Lake west of Leon. Rock and dirt mounds, reefs, spawning beds and cedar piles added in 2011. For spring walleye, troll crankbaits along points or rock structure. For summer bass, cast crankbaits along weed lines or plastics near cedar piles.

**DELAWARE**—Catch brook and rainbow trout on Spring Branch Creek at Baileys Ford County Park three miles southeast of Manchester. Keepers are stocked twice weekly April through October. Use small spinners, jigs or prepared baits. Fly anglers like the upper end to hit an almost self-sustaining population of wary browns. To make it an overnighter, camp at the park, use the boat ramp and fish the adjacent Maquoketa River. Head downriver and hit the upper end of Delhi for walleyes and smallmouth.

**DES MOINES COUNTY**—Big Hollow north of Burlington is only six years old but is the "best spring crappie spot around," producing 11-inch-plus crappie. And 9-inch-plus bluegill are hard to beat, too. When crappie spawn, "You can't keep them off your line," Dolan says. Excellent bass lake for 15-inch-plus

fish. Use a 32nd-ounce jig with a 1-inch paddletail body. Lots of timber, hidden coves and structure, so bring plenty of jigs.

**DICKINSON COUNTY**—Plenty of fishing gems dot this county, from big water to those better suited for kayaks, waders and small watercraft. None are brighter than East and West Okoboji. Aquatic plant life is exceptional, providing excellent habitat for slab bluegill, nice crappie and 9- to 10-inch perch and yellow bass. Walleye range from younger year class to slot limit to trophy size. Smallmouth fishing is some of the best in the Midwest. "Any skill level can have success on anything from bluegill to muskies," Hawkins says. Use a boat in summer to avoid shoreline vegetation.

**DUBUQUE**—The river is king here with pools 11 and 12—the latter more frequented from downtown to the Massey County Park for every type of fish. Walleyes 15 to 18 inches common. A slot protects fish 20 to 27 inches. Hit tailwaters below either dam in spring and wing dams in summer with crankbaits or three-way rigs for walleye, sauger and cats. Fish the flats with a little current between the wing dams with a worm and sinker for drum. In summer, hit the main channel with a split shot and worm around rock or brush for bluegill. In fall, cast near sunken wood and brush in side channels for white and black crappie up to 12 inches. For trout, head to Swiss Valley County Park four miles southwest of the city for Catfish Creek's bows and brookies.

**EMMET COUNTY**—For walleyes and cat, hit the West Fork Des Moines River. "I get nothing but excellent reports on walleyes there," Hawkins says. The entire stretch is good, but easier access around Estherville. Canoe and kayak fishing opportunities abound.

# 99 COUNTIES OF FISH!

**FAYETTE COUNTY**—Explore Echo Valley State Park east of West Union and cast for trout on Glovers and Otter creeks. Both stocked weekly April thru October and have excellent wade and bank fishing. A new universal fishing access at Glovers enhances bank fishing. The park offers primitive camping, hiking and biking.

Volga Lake is known for panfish and bass, but supports an overlooked cache of catfish with fish up to 23 inches common. Surrounded by Volga River State Recreation Area, it's an easy weekend getaway with camping, hiking and equestrian trails and wildlife watching.

**FLOYD COUNTY**—Twelve-acre Rudd Lake has a hard surface boat ramp and lakeside trail plus largemouth, channel cat and bluegill. It's a former borrow pit that provided aggregate for Highway 18, which runs adjacent.

**FRANKLIN**—Beeds Lake; good shore access and family friendly, with bluegill, crappie, largemouth bass and catfish. Camp at Beeds Lake State Park and enjoy a walking trail and good access around the lake, which is no-wake. Quiet and peaceful fishing in a pretty setting.

**FREMONT COUNTY**—Summer Missouri River flathead catfishing is a great Iowa tradition. Go with an experienced river angler—fast currents can be intimidating. Hit the pools below wing dams using live green sunfish or creek chubs. Move often to find feeding fish. Here, 20-inch-plus catfish are common, with chances for trophy 40-pounders.

**GREENE COUNTY**—Spring Lake—lots of catfish. “Fish anywhere from shore and catch cats,” Wallace says. “This is a place to go to fish right from your camper.”

**GRUNDY COUNTY**—Created when borrow material was needed for a highway project, Grundy County Lake was transferred from state to local ownership in 2002. Easily accessed off highway 20 and the T-55 interchange in Dike. Catch 6- to 7-inch bluegill and 12- to 16-inch largemouth bass (15-inch minimum). Fish off the jetties, let the kids burn energy at the playground or set up camp. A paved trail connects Dike to the lake, so bring a bike.

**GUTHRIE COUNTY**—Crappie fishing in the Middle Raccoon River below the Lennon Mills Dam in Panora will surprise you, says biologist Bryan Hayes. Local anglers took limits of 9- to 10-inch crappies last summer. Fish jigs under a bobber in eddies below-dam. The county park has access. A few walleye or smallmouth lurk about, too.

**HAMILTON**—Briggs Woods. Fun family fishing abounds at Iowa's second oldest county park. Camp or rent a cabin and take advantage of good water quality to cast for largemouth bass, bluegill, crappie and catfish. Good water access from lakeside trails. End the day with 18 holes of golf or a long hike in timbered forest.

**HANCOCK**—West Branch Iowa River. Hike for pike along the wildlife area where East Twin Lake flows into the river. Good spring and fall fishery when there is flow from the lake. “Walk-in fishing is a unique opportunity for anglers who seek northerns,” says Grummer. In spring, pike leave the river for the wetland and lake to spawn. Fish the eddy where the lake enters the river with lures, jigs and minnows or spoons.

**HARDIN**—Iowa River. Float past dense forested hills and limestone cliffs for smallmouth bass, walleye, northern pike and catfish. Put in at Steamboat Rock and float to Pine Lake State Park, or use several other city and county accesses to customize your trip. Good shore angling.

**HARRISON COUNTY**—Willow Lake, tucked into the Loess Hills in a county park, is a great family spot. Water clarity is second to none, says Hayes. “Fish can easily be spooked with the clear water.” Cast for 8-inch-plus bluegill, 10-inch redear sunfish and 17-inch catfish.



LEFT PHOTO COURTESY ANDY JANSEN; UPPER RIGHT PHOTO COURTESY BRYAN HAYES

**HENRY COUNTY**—Beautiful Lake Geode State Park is “right up there with Belva Deer” for bass, and has one of the best bluegill growth rates in Iowa, Dolan boasts. “You catch twice as many bass per hour than Belva Deer, they’re just not as large.” Bluegill bigger than 9 inches and redears close to that. Target plentiful points, outcroppings and fallen timber with a Wolly Bugger on a flyrod or beneath a bobber with a slow retrieve.

**HOWARD COUNTY**—The county’s only trout stream is Bigalk, a small wadeable stream with good bank access. It holds fish year round with weekly stocking thru October.

Find good populations of bluegill, crappie, largemouth and channel cat at Lake Hendricks County Park. Pack the family, too, as this park has a campground, hiking trails, beach, excellent shoreline access and concrete boat ramp.

**HUMBOLDT**—West Fork Des Moines River. Public river access abounds from the dam in Rutland through the city of Humboldt down to Frank Gotch County Park for walleye, smallmouth and channel cats. It’s a tailor-made float trip with many accesses and boat ramp in Humboldt.

**IDA COUNTY**—At 62 acres, Crawford Creek is one of the larger impoundments around and the spot for jumbo bluegill, large crappie and an occasional big perch. (Plus a solid largemouth population.) Rental cabins available from the county, too.

**IOWA COUNTY**—Lake Iowa County Park, a quiet spot north of Millersburg, is best for master angler-size redear sunfish (10-inch-plus) says Sleeper. Cast also for bluegill and crappie. Some hiking trails meander around the lake through native prairies and woodlands or run shoreside for easy access. Camping, beach and nature center.

**JACKSON**—Mississippi River pools 12 and 13 are good for walleye, channel cat, crappie, bluegill and drum. Easy boat access below the dam at Bellevue—a pretty river town with blufftop camping and great views at Bellevue State Park south of town. River access, camping and marina north of town at Spruce Creek County Park. For trout, head to Big Mill for wild browns and stocked ‘bows and brookies. The South Fork Big Mill is in a narrow valley with forested hills.

**JASPER COUNTY**—On the east side of the county and easy to get to is county-owned Jacob Krumm Nature Preserve. “It’s a really nice bluegill and crappie fishery,” says Dodd. Crappie approach 13 inches, and bluegill 8. Underwater structure attracts fish with a pier on the north end. One mile north of Lynesville exit on I-80. Follow Jacob Avenue east to entrance.

**JEFFERSON COUNTY**—Pleasant Lake, a former



Fairfield water supply reservoir, is a local favorite for oodles of big bass. Plenty of 16- to 18-inches-plus, and bluegill. Channel cats stocked every other year. Good shore access and small watercraft launch available. Hop to Bonfield Lake and Walton Lake, two more former city reservoirs, for more fishing.

**JOHNSON COUNTY**—Lake Macbride State Park is “the best walleye lake in the area,” Sleeper says. Cast for trophy wipers (10-pounds-plus) and catch and release 30-inch-plus muskies (40-inch minimum). Handicap accessible pier. Pontoon, motorboat, canoe, paddle boat or kayak rentals available. A five-mile multi-use trail runs lakeside from Solon to near the park entrance.

**JONES COUNTY**—Keep kids busy catching and releasing 12- to 14-inch largemouth (15-inch minimum) at Central Park Lake west of Center Junction. Catch 6- to 8-inch bluegill. Hike wooded trails and past restored prairie and wetlands. Playground, beach, sand volleyball court and horseshoe pits provide entertainment for all ages.

**KEOKUK COUNTY**—Lake Belva Deer is “the hottest bass lake,” Dolan claims—“big fish and big numbers.” Plenty exceed 20 inches, bluegill to 9.5 and pound and a half redears. “It’s nothing to catch 15 to 20 bass an hour. For spooky redears, use a teardrop ice jig, tip with a spike and limit movement. A steady rise and fall action is best.”

**KOSSUTH**—Family friendly, 60-acre Smith Lake has a well-kept county-run campground, beaches, playgrounds, fishing docks, boat ramp and piers. Educational too, with

# 99 COUNTIES OF FISH!



NODAWAY LAKE

Water's Edge Nature Center located on shore. North of Algona, the lake is a crappie and bluegill factory. Bass have an 18-inch minimum, so large fish abound.

**LEE COUNTY**—Five ponds dot Shimek State Forest near Ft. Madison. Dolan's favorites are White Oak and Shagbark lakes. White Oak requires hiking to reach, but offers 8- to 9-inch bluegill and 9- to 10-inch redears. Fish off the dam, or float a bellyboat to inaccessible shores. Shagbark has 9-inch bluegill, a shore trail lake and can be driven to. Enjoy the massive white pines throughout.

**LINN COUNTY**—Admire the scenery at Pinicon Ridge Park while fishing for smallmouth, walleye and northern pike in the Wapsipinicon River west of Central City. Take a canoe trip in secluded back areas—rent a canoe at the concession. Climb the observation tower for a view of the Wapsi valley, or tour the 5-acre Alexander Wildlife Area.

**LOUISA COUNTY**—Venture to Lake Odessa—a Mississippi River backwater—for trophy 10- to 12-inch-plus crappies. Fish a crawler under a bobber or jig and 1-inch paddletail plastic body. Plenty of shoreline access, boat ramps and habitat.

**LUCAS COUNTY**—Red Haw State Park is known for bluegill, but also holds great crappie. Bluegill run 8.5- to 9-inches, with redear up to 11. Large numbers of quality largemouth, too. Morris and Ellis lakes in nearby

Chariton have great bass fishing and good crappie.

**LYON COUNTY**—Working together, the county and DNR produced an “amazing fishery” at Lake Pahoja, says Hawkins. “This is one of the premiere county parks in northwest Iowa.” Plenty of 8-inch bluegill and small to medium size bass. Plenty of trails, camping, cabins. “For kids and beginners, this is where I would send them.”

**MADISON COUNTY**—Groomed shorelines at Criss Cove County Park south of Winterset provide easy access to a 9-acre pond. Catch largemouth, bluegill and an occasional crappie. Small campground near the pond.

**MAHASKA COUNTY**—Hawthorne Lake is a “bass angler's dream” with huge populations up to 20 inches. “Twenty-five fish a day is normal,” Flammang says. Bluegill are improving. Nearby White Oak Lake near Rose Hill is no slouch either. Fish both in a day.

**MARION COUNTY**—Red Rock Reservoir is a perennial favorite for giant crappies. Target the Whitebreast arm and marina for black crappies pushing 14 inches. When white bass and hybrid whites run, action is furious. Look for birds hovering over surfacing bait fish and toss silver-colored lures into the frenzy. From February through May, head below dam for a variety of species, most notably walleyes.

**MARSHALL COUNTY**—A former quarry, Sand Lake on Marshalltown's east side has good shoreline and boat access, jetties and trails. Cast for 6- to 7-inch bluegill. Trout stocked spring and fall in the north-most quarry.

**MILLS COUNTY**—Kids love the abundant bluegill and crappie at Glenwood Park Pond, along with 18-inch-plus largemouth bass and 14- to 17-inch catfish. It is well stocked with catfish, says Hayes. “Whenever we have extra catfish available, (Glenwood) is on the list to receive some.”

**MITCHELL COUNTY**—Just north of St. Ansgar, explore Turtle Creek and its two miles of public fishing. Stocked with rainbow and brook trout weekly from April through October, it also boasts wild browns and easy angler access. Several Cedar River access points allow floating and fishing along mossy cliffs and wooded banks for smallmouth, walleye, northern pike, rock bass and suckers. See the fishing regs for



details on a catch-and-release river section for black bass.

**MONONA COUNTY**—Fish all by yourself at Oldham Lake outside Soldier. It offers great crappie numbers and nice bluegill “if you hit the spawn right.” Little public access, so use a small boat, float tube, canoe or kayak.

**MONROE COUNTY**—A favorite—Lake Miami—is still worth a visit despite a recent lake renovation (fish populations are improving but still one to two years away to peak). Instead, hit the upper and lower Albia Reservoir for 60 acres of water. The city park has “amazing bluegill fishing...we are talking 10 inches,” Flammang says, with boat ramps and shoreline access.

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY**—In spring, cast off jetties at Viking Lake State Park for 10-inch crappie. Catch bass up to 20 inches and 18- to 20-inch channel cat in summer. Lakeside campground, beach, restaurant and trails.

**MUSCATINE COUNTY**—Deep Lake County Park—an old quarry—holds excellent bass, crappie (9 to 10 inches) and bluegill (6.5 to 7 inches). Fisheries staff raised 30 to 35 bass from one submerged log. Redear sunfish and muskies, too. Channel cat stocked every two years. Some amenities, more planned. Watch six-lined race runner lizards and ornate box turtles in this sand prairie.

**O'BRIEN COUNTY**—Mill Creek Lake near Paulina responded well to renovation 10 years ago. Big bluegill and nice bass keep kids busy. Family fun with camping, cabins, concessions, lodge and hiking and biking.

**OSCEOLA COUNTY**—Ocheyedan Pond is kid-friendly as well. The small, former surface mine offers decent largemouth, bluegill and catfish, with good shoreline access, picnic area, beach and trails.

**PAGE COUNTY**—Hidden south of Clarinda, Ross Area Pits County Park is a fishing oasis amidst cropland. Once a limestone quarry, it features deep, clear-blue water pits surrounded by trees. Among sunken boats, catch bluegill exceeding 8.5 inches and 10- to 12-inch bass.

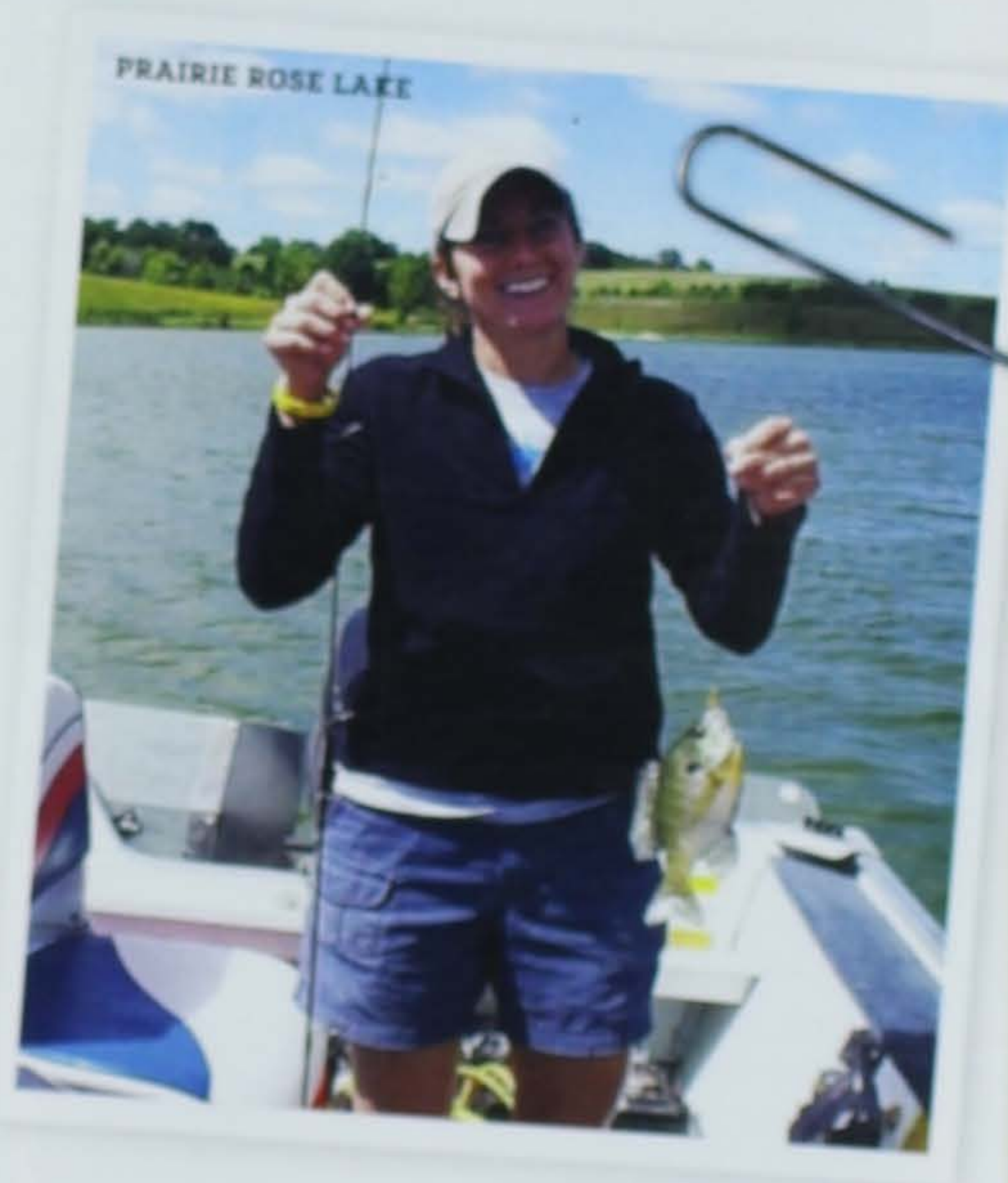
**PALO ALTO COUNTY**—Lost Island Lake is one of Iowa's bigger natural lakes and is undergoing restoration. With 1.2 million pounds of carp and buffalo removed, dramatic water quality gains and aquatic plant growth followed. Crappie, perch and yellow bass responded favorably, and bluegill and bass—which need clean water and habitat—are showing up. Shoreline access early spring, then best fished with a boat.

**PLYMOUTH**—Leave the crowds for good fishing, primitive and modern camping and cabins at county-run Hillview Recreational Area. It's nestled in the loess hills,

surrounded by open grasslands, reconstructed prairie, woodlands and wildlife habitat.

**POCAHONTAS COUNTY**—Newly renovated Lizzard Lake has lots a wildlife viewing plus perch and northerns. Its abundant habitat limits shoreline access so “you could really have fun canoe or kayak fishing,” says Wallace.

**POLK COUNTY**—Walleye stocked the past few years in Big Creek to reduce shad populations are reaching “eater size,” and Dodd says anglers should do well on 15- to 17-inch fish the next couple years. Bluegill are also “real nice.” Target May through early June.



**POTTAWATTAMIE COUNTY**—Farm Creek, east of Carson, has a farm pond vibe on county property. Catch 9-inch bluegill, 10-inch crappie, up to 18-inch bass and 20-inch cats. A new paved boat ramp makes access easy.

**POWESHIEK COUNTY**—Catch abundant 7- to 9-inch crappie at Diamond Lake west of Montezuma. Fish from your campers in some areas. Eleven jetties provide excellent access. Fish cleaning station and paved trails.

# 99 COUNTIES OF FISH!



BLACK HAWK LAKE

**RINGGOLD COUNTY**—Turn kids loose on bluegill, bass, wipers, channel catfish and crappie at Fife's Grove Pond north of Mount Ayr. It's a well-kept county park with a gazebo and shoreline access. Hike trails and explore a historic one-room log cabin nestled in an oak savanna where many trees are well over 150 years old.

**SAC COUNTY**—Black Hawk Lake, renovated in 2012, "has something for everyone," Wallace says. Half the shore is public, with plenty of trails, parks and beachfront to explore. "The walleye population is coming on, and really nice bluegill." Catfish, too. Walleyes push 20 inches, bluegill are 8 inches-plus and catfish are in the 20- to 22-inch range. "Muskie are coming on, but not yet 40 inches," he says. Head to Town Bay on the west end for walleye, and Drillings Point off the state park marina for catfish right after ice-out. If fishing slows, give nearby Arrowhead Lake or Black Hawk Pits a cast.

**SCOTT COUNTY**—Lost Grove Lake is Iowa's newest impoundment, and large at 400 acres. Bluegill push 7.5 inches and crappie 9 to 10. Bass and walleyes are

plentiful running 10 to 13 inches. Muskie are 24 inches. Tons of amenities, fishing jetties and paths, three ADA-fishing platforms, lots of flooded timber. If you can't find a place to fish here, you are not looking very hard.

**SHELBY COUNTY**—Bluegill are big in recently renovated Prairie Rose Lake southeast of Harlan. Abundant bass provide great catch-and-release fishing (15-inch minimum length limit). Shore access is limited with an abundance of aquatic plants—fish from a boat, kayak or jetty. Look for structures like rock piles and reefs added during renovation.

**SIoux COUNTY**—Find good numbers of bass, bluegill and cats, and improved shore access, at Big Sioux Recreational Area. Concrete ramp and beach, too.

**STORY COUNTY**—Dakins Lake, built and stocked in 2014, is showing excellent growth rates, with good numbers of bluegill and bass. Some bluegill will near 8 inches, and a high concentration of bass will keep kids busy. Good shoreline access.

**TAMA COUNTY**—Celebrate Memorial Day by catching 7- to 9-inch yellow bass at Otter Creek Lake. Fish will be next to shore spawning and easy to catch. Bluegill, bass and crappie available. Fish cleaning station near the boat ramp. Hike the three-mile scenic lake trail, visit the two-acre native prairie or tour the nature center.

**TAYLOR COUNTY**—Enjoy a day of family fun at Lake of Three Fires State Park, northeast of Bedford. Catch bass, some exceeding 17 inches, bluegill up to 8 inches and crappie over 12. Located in the area's most scenic park, with eight miles of trails, a large picnic area under trees close to shore and three rental cabins.

**UNION COUNTY**—Experienced anglers and families head to Green Valley Lake north of Creston for 14- to 18-inch bass, 8-inch bluegill and 12- to 15-inch walleye—some top 20 inches. Enjoy a picnic, walk lakeside trails, swim or rent a pine log cabin. If things are slow, hit nearby Twelve Mile Lake east of Creston for 10-inch bluegill, 12-inch crappie, jumbo yellow perch up to 13 inches and 14- to 18-inch walleye. Shore access here is limited so bring a boat.

**VAN BUREN COUNTY**—Lake Sugema boasts loads of county park amenities for families and campers plus quality largemouth, crappie and bluegill angling. And hilly, forested Lacey Keosaqua State Park lies just minutes away. Camp or rent a cabin, fish Keo lake—teeming with bass, cats and bluegill—or cast for just about any species on the Des Moines River adjacent the park. Clean your fish, then stroll the rustic Villages

of Van Buren County—a tourism destination.

**WAPELLO COUNTY**—Sturgeon are willing biters—especially in spring on the Des Moines River. Bounce a 'crawler and slip sinker off the bottom. "They fight like crazy," says Flammang. On the river, don't forget walleye, white bass and superb channel and flathead cats.

**WARREN COUNTY**—Easy to get to on the south side of Indianola, Lake Ahquabi State Park is a nice family place, Dodd says. Good shore access and plenty of park amenities. Heaps of year-around bluegill and "really big" redear sunfish fished during spawn in May and early June. They are bottom feeders, so normal bluegill fishing techniques should work. Don't forget Hooper Pond, just south of the lake, for quality bass and catfish.

**WASHINGTON COUNTY**—Newly renovated Lake Darling has phenomenal growth rates—bluegill pushing 7.5 inches and bass over 15. Larger fish from watershed ponds are showing up. Mile-long ADA-compliant fishing trail from upper arm to campground and many revamped jetties. "Those who visited Lake Darling before the restoration won't recognize it now," Dolan promises.

**WAYNE COUNTY**—Humeston Reservoir is top dog, with great crappie, good bluegill and high quality bass. "A hard-core bass angler's dream," says Flammang. Oh, and camping and golf, too. Nearby Seymour Reservoir is also a good bet for bluegill and crappie.

**WEBSTER COUNTY**—"I think Brushy Creek is the best kept walleye secret," says Wallace. "If you want monster catfish, we got 'em." Plus 40-inch muskie. There's not much letdown with bass, bluegill and crappie, either. While shorelines are good during spring spawns, Brushy is a boat anglers' paradise to explore its vast habitat.

**WINNEBAGO**—Recently restored and stocked in 2013 with yellow perch, largemouth bass, bluegill and walleye, look for even better angling in coming years at Rice Lake. "This is definitely a fishery to keep an eye on," says Grummer. "This will be the first year for good sizes and will get better towards fall," he says. Hook into 8- to 9-inch perch and 8.5-inch bluegill.

**WINNESHIEK COUNTY**—Recent surveys show more than 1,000 fish per mile at Coldwater Creek, oft overlooked for the popular North and South Bear to the east. Coldwater's wild browns are bolstered with weekly stocking April thru October of 'bows and brookies.

For warm water fishing, 60 miles of Upper Iowa River runs through the county. Along limestone forested bluffs cast for smallmouth, walleye, rock bass, suckers and

occasional trout. Use 16 public accesses to launch canoes and kayaks (rentable locally.) Riverside public camping is made for multi-day floats. Target weekdays as weekends are very busy, especially in summer.

**WOODBURY COUNTY**—is loaded with small lakes, but for a "farm pond experience" on public property, hit the Southwood Conservation Area near Smithland and its two small ponds nestled near loess hills, open grasslands and timber. Both have good bluegill, crappie, bass and catfish populations plus camping and hiking.

**WORTH**—Silver Lake. Once known for chocolate brown and green water, it is now clear thanks to renovations. It is ripening with bass, bluegill and yellow perch, all stocked in 2013. This year should start to payoff in keepers and will only improve as the season progresses.

**WRIGHT**—Lake Cornelia. Hit the north end with good shore access on the fishing jetty, boat ramp, docks, beach and county campground. Catch yellow, white and largemouth bass, channel cat, crappie, yellow perch, bluegill and an occasional walleye. "The yellow bass population is strong, running about 8 inches," says Grummer. 🐟

#### INSIDER TIP

Find interactive fishing atlases and maps, road and lake contour maps, and locations of 1,000 fish structures at [iowadnr.gov](http://iowadnr.gov)



#### LAKE ANITA





An adult chimney swift brings a stick to a nest under construction. A special glue-like secretion in the saliva adheres not only the sticks together, but to a vertical wall surface inside a tower. **OPPOSITE:** The chimney swift tower was built in 1915 on direction from Althea Rosina Sherman, who had switched careers from art teacher to respected ornithologist, published in numerous scientific journals. The tower was restored in 2013 after decades of decay. She used the tower to observe swift nesting and behavior from a spiral staircase that surrounds a false chimney in the tower's center.

STO  
V  
return  
carin  
Rosin  
ornit  
This  
story  
talent  
She u  
and t

# Restore It AND They Will Come

STORY AND PHOTOS BY LINDA AND ROBERT SCARTH



One hundred years ago in 1915, a 62-year-old woman had a tower built to study chimney swifts (*Chantrelle pelagica*). She had been an art teacher until returning to care for her aging parents at age 42. While caring for her parents and after their deaths, Althea Rosina Sherman changed careers and became a respected ornithologist, published in scientific journals at age 54. This might seem like the beginning of a transformational story, but it is a story of a woman who used her innate talents and acquired skills to span two disciplines. She used her observational and drawing skills to teach, and then present the science of ornithology in careful

data and charming prose to gain the respect of an audience—in that era—not usually accepting of women.

It took three years before the first pair of chimney swifts built a nest in the tower, and for the next 10 years, Sherman climbed the stairs encircling the false chimney in her tower whenever the swifts were in residence. She had designed it to observe the home life of the chimney swift. The infirmities of age stopped her studies some seven years before her death in 1943.

Sherman also studied many other birds, and her work on eastern screech owls was a resource Arthur Cleveland Bent used in his article on the species in his 21-volume *Life Histories of Familiar North American Birds*. For

more than 30 years, Sherman published her carefully documented observations and drawings in scientific journals and was admitted to prestigious scientific associations, including the American Men of Science.

Today the tower sits on the Bickett-Rate Farm, an Iowa pioneer property, owned by the Cedar County Historical Society. The tower also has an interesting life history. Built next to the Sherman home in the hamlet of National, by the time of Sherman's death, the village had all but disappeared. About 20 years later, the tower fell into disrepair and was rescued and moved to Harpers Ferry as a tourist attraction for many years. In 1992, it was to be demolished, but the Johnson County Songbird Project rescued it. A committee formed, and the Althea R. Sherman Project stored the tower until a suitable site was found to restore it in 2009. By June 2013 the tower was again ready to accommodate a chimney swift family.

As photographers, our involvement began in 2014. Barbara Boyle, project director, was checking the tower and found a nest with five eggs in the false chimney on Aug. 2. There had not been a nest in the spring and early summer when one would have been expected. Several days passed and three chicks hatched. When the *Cedar Rapids Gazette's* Orlan Love did a story on Aug. 8, four had hatched, and Iowa Public Television videographer Chris Gourley recorded the family in the tower.

A few days later at the start of our photo project, the fifth egg hatched and we named the chick "the little bald one." It became one of our favorite subjects for the next five weeks. This chick was always a few days behind the others. It was the last one to fledge and would come

back after flying to rest more often than did its siblings. Sometimes a sibling would also return to hang beside it.

Sherman noted "real incubation" begins several days before the last egg is laid, with one hatching later than the others. This is why we found the little bald one when others had seen only four chicks. In 2015, three of four eggs hatched on the same day while the fourth egg did not hatch and was pushed out after the chicks filled the tiny nest.

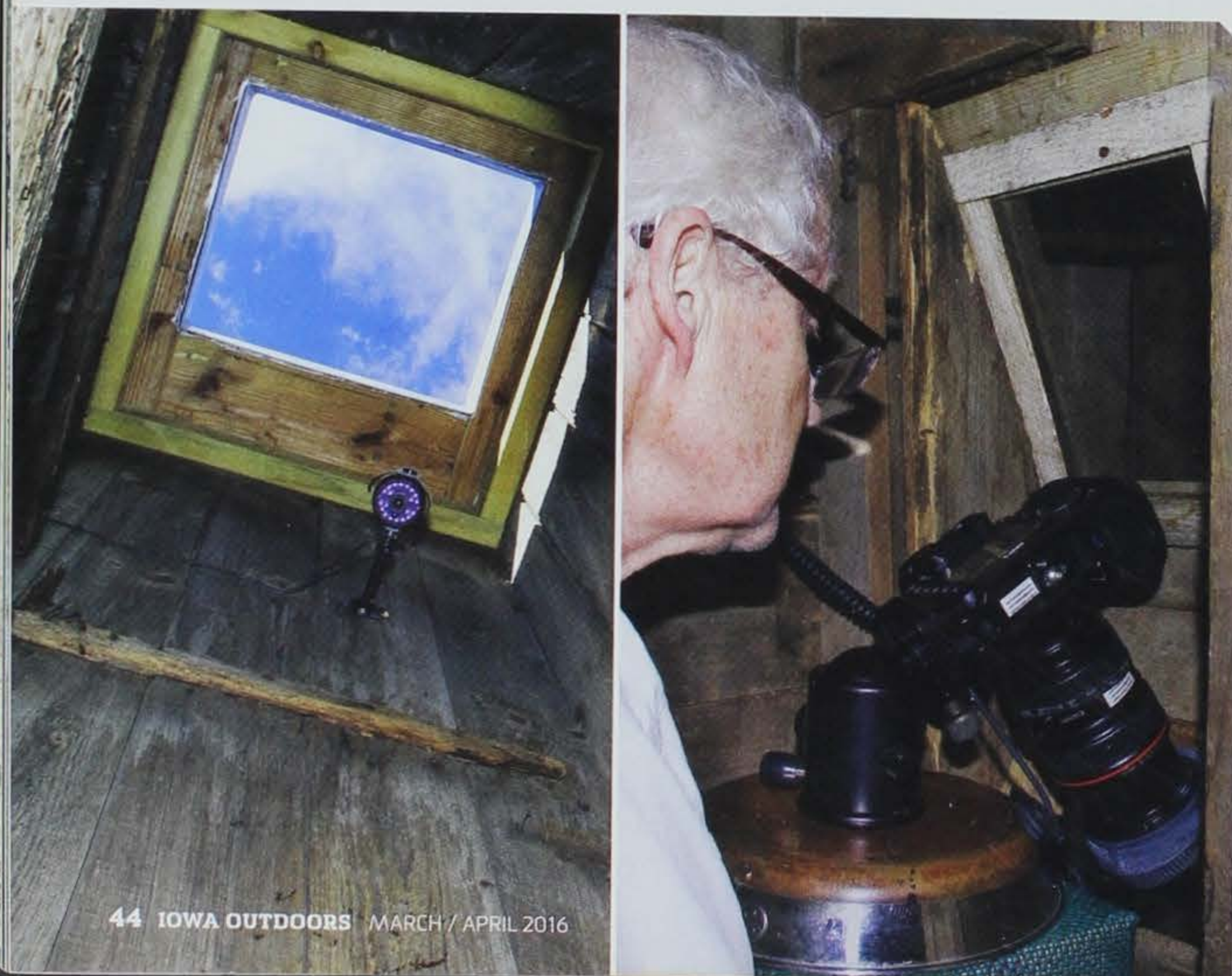
After the experience of 2014, we were eager to see if the swifts returned in 2015. We visited to check the tower and sweep away flies and ladybugs that accumulated on the stairs and landings over the winter. When we got word that the parents had glued a few sticks to the wall beneath last year's nest, our second photographic vigil began. This time we would see the nest in progress and follow the family until the chicks fledged.

The late nest in 2014 was probably because the pair had lost a nest earlier in the summer and happened upon the tower and decided to try again. Sherman found the first nest in 1918 in June and noted it was probably a replacement nest of a pair that lost its nest in another site. She also felt a proprietary northern flicker had kept chimney swifts from occupying the tower for the first three years.

Sherman's favorite bird group was the woodpeckers. Her work describing the development of young northern flickers was published in *The Wilson Bulletin* in 1910, years before she had the tower built to study chimney swifts. The tower was innovative and she proudly stated that she "failed to see how any improvements could have

been made in the planning of it." For us, the small sloping windows on two walls are useful for observation and some photography. We think another small window and larger peek holes would have been an improvement to the small peek holes that she (and we) used. The windows have shutters and the peek holes have covers.

Like us in 2014, she did not see the nest being built that first summer in 1918. Both the 1918 and 2015 nests were very flat rather than cup-shaped. In 1918 a newly hatched chick rolled out and in 1919 an egg was lost. The 2014 nest was larger and deeper than the 2015 nest. The original 1918 nest in the tower was used for six years, its walls raised slightly over time. That was not the case in the restored tower.



**BELOW LEFT:** A view up the false chimney with a wide angle lens. A webcam is visible, placed inside for researchers. With little room for photography, Robert Scarth uses a short zoom lens on a box to shoot through a small observation window. Long exposures and fast ISO speeds helped capture images inside the dark false chimney. Swifts are unable to perch on horizontal surfaces and can only cling to vertical faces.





A chick nicknamed "the little bald one" was several days behind its siblings in growing feather quills. It preferred to be under the pile, but for this photo had been pushed up and out by squirms from the larger chicks.

In 20  
the  
as a  
and  
two  
those  
Cl  
third  
espe  
cann  
surfa  
cave  
gland  
durin  
Sh  
time  
days)  
range  
days  
the ti  
numb  
climb  
a vert  
She  
chinn  
simil  
order  
We ob  
well be  
their b  
adult w  
adult t  
the oth





Several days old, but one egg still to hatch.

In 2015 the new nest was constructed a few inches below the 2014 nest, rather than reusing what appeared to us as a very well-constructed nest. This new nest was small and flat and an egg was lost over the edge after the first two eggs were laid. Four more eggs were laid and one of those also rolled out. This left four for incubation.

Chimney swifts start laying when a nest is about two-thirds done. The 2015 nest did not seem to get much bigger, especially when compared to the 2014 nest. Chimney swifts cannot perch horizontally and can only grasp a vertical surface. They glue sticks to a wall in a chimney, building, cave or hollow tree with a very viscous special saliva. The glands that make this "glue" greatly enlarge before and during nest construction.

Sherman kept copious notes and data, including the time from first egg-laying to nest-leaving (averaging 46 days). The 2015 interval was 48 days, which is within the range she observed. The 2015 incubation period of 18 days was typical of her observations. She also counted the times she went up the tower, multiplied it by the number of stair steps, and in 1928, reported she had climbed approximately 12,000 steps that year, more than a vertical mile.

She compared developmental observations between chimney swifts and northern flickers and noted many similarities, excluding feeding behavior—calm and orderly for swifts, and quarrelsome and loud for flickers. We observed swifts being fed and were struck by how well behaved they were. Youngsters might be exhibiting their buzzing call, like a stick in an electric fan, when an adult would come in. The noise stopped immediately. The adult then selects a chick to feed by regurgitation, and the others remain still and quiet. The next time an adult

came in, another chick is fed, again without any fussing.

The nests are equidistant from the corners of a wall, just as Sherman observed. She also stated swifts have left-hand inclinations. Parents usually roost to the lower left of the nest and come up to feed. Chicks are likely to leave the nest to the left side and hang to the left or below and to the left. Mostly we did see this inclination. However, the first chick to leave the nest in 2015 exited just above the nest to the right with its tail remaining in the nest. In one of our better photographs of a parent with the 2014 youngsters, the adult is to the right of the chicks, though everyone is just underneath the nest.

One difference between the 2014 and 2015 chicks was those in 2014 stayed close together, overlapping wings and bodies even after leaving the nest. The "little bald one" usually pushed itself under and into the middle of the group. These chicks did not have or want much personal space. After leaving the nest, the 2015 chicks were more likely to line up side by side with their wings just touching rather than being in a movable pile. They also used more of the chimney up and down for their practice flights. Sometimes the 2015 group would fly out of view onto the wall beneath a sloping window where we put the "panpod" camera support. The 2014 chicks stayed on two walls and were easier to photograph.

We think that one of the 2015 parents was a repeat from the year before, and the second was a new, possibly younger female. One of the birds in both years had distinctive epaulettes or wing coverts. Rather than the uniform color usually described, the coverts were paler and graduated from darker to lighter. We thought this one was the male though there is no color difference between males and females. He came to tolerate our



presence more quickly in 2014 and accepted us in 2015. The new female was more wary, as were her offspring.

Reading Sherman's accounts with many visitors and her long hours in the tower, her swifts were tamer than those in the restored tower. In her notes, adults and fledged chicks spent more time in the tower. Sherman would open the chimney door and touch the chicks on occasion. It is very quiet at the tower's new location and without much local activity, the birds are wary of visitors.

Photographing inside the tower provided challenges, mostly because it is dark and camera positions are very limited. The only light is from the opening at the top. The nests are four to five feet from the bottom of the 14-foot false chimney that starts in the "room" at the top of the stairs. Though 9 feet square on the outside, two walls are lined with cupboards and one is over part of the stairway. The chimney occupies the center. There are several steps up to the shelf over the stairway where Sherman sat to observe through a small slanted window, sketch and make her notes.

The shelf seat is where we put a small box and our "panpod." This is an old frying pan with handle removed and a ball tripod head attached. The camera was angled down to look at activities in and near the nest. The cameras needed to be secure because long shutter

speeds (even at high ISOs) were needed due to dim lighting. Tripod legs at the peek holes and at the other slanted window could not be completely spread. At times they and we looked like we were in yoga positions.


We used small LED flashlights with orange tissue paper as filters to light through the tiny peek holes. One lightbeam shown through a peek hole would help allow enough illumination to focus the camera lens. The built-in flash or a small off-camera flash provided light to create the images. None of the birds startled when using the flash. Animals rarely even notice flash, as people often do. If flash usage was harmful to the birds—or any other creature—it would be against the law to use it.

Sherman would sometimes use what she called "big metal lamps" to light the chimney at night. She was the researcher who established that swifts do not feed their youngsters during the night—a common belief prior to her work. We did not visit at night because these birds were more wary than the ones she described.

Our experience photographing the life of the swifts in the restored Althea R. Sherman chimney swift tower may be found on our blog connected to our web site, [scarthphoto.com/wp/chimney-swift-archive](http://scarthphoto.com/wp/chimney-swift-archive).



Robert and Linda Scarth photographed nests in 2014 and 2015. Here, five chicks from the 2014 nest rest beside a parent with light colored wing coverts—markings that a parent had in 2014, leading the Scarths to believe it had returned to the tower again in 2015. **OPPOSITE PAGE.** A tripod sits at one of three knotholes, covered by a scrap board when not in use. The growing chicks, out of the nest, cling to the vertical surface.



**THIS PAGE:** Studio portrait of Althea R. Sherman taken 1916. **OPPOSITE PAGE:** In a photo taken by Sherman, four nests line the wall inside the chimney, June 5, 1926. Althea Sherman, left center, and sister, Amelia Sherman, right center, gather outside the chimney with neighborhood children, 1923. Sherman viewing birds through binoculars in the yard near the chimney, 1928.

NEST PHOTO COURTESY ALTHEA R. SHERMAN COLLECTION, ALTHEA R. SHERMAN PROJECT, REMAINING PHOTOS COURTESY OBERLIN COLLEGE ARCHIVES, OBERLIN, OHIO

### The Life of Althea Sherman

Althea Sherman (1853-1943) was born in Clayton County and when older, often travelled 40 miles to attend an academy at Upper Iowa University to prepare for college, which she attended at Oberlin College in Ohio to study classical art. She graduated in 1875, and taught art at the collegiate level and institutes. In 1892 she was supervisor of drawing at Tacoma Public Schools in Washington state, but three years later returned to Iowa where she would remain the rest of her life after caring for her ailing parents. In the early 1900s, after 20 years as art teacher, she changed careers to emerge as a respected ornithologist, publishing more than 70 articles spanning 38 species over the next 30 years.

Although lacking formal science training, she doggedly self-educated herself, studying science journals at home in northeast Iowa. Her art study aided her in several ways. The classical art education afforded her a background of Greek and Latin, widely used in science literature, and her observational powers from art study gave her great insight when trained on birds.

In 1915, she had a 28-foot tall, 9-foot square tower built to attract and study chimney swifts. A staircase and peepholes into a false chimney allowed her to be the first person to observe and document the chimney swift lifecycle. She collected 18 years of data and more than 400 pages of intricate details. Learn more at [altheashermon.org](http://altheashermon.org)



ALTHEA SHERMON: COURTESY OF THE IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES; BINOCULARS: COURTESY OF THE IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES; TOWER: COURTESY OF THE IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES



# Changing Seasons

BY ALAN FOSTER

The sprawling non-fruiting crabapple centered in the neighbor's front yard looks more like a giant golf umbrella than the harbinger of spring—the first to showcase its winter-ending glory.

Although not the first sign spring is just around the corner, on this quiet little stretch of urban life, it is the most dazzling. Seemingly days after the first rich, green leaves emerge, tiny white petals follow. Along with the chill in the air comes the fruity, sweet smell of the flowering buds. If only you could bottle that smell, spring would last an eternity. Within days, the petals wither and fade, blanketing the ground with what looks like a light, late season wet snow.





PHOTOS BY ALAN FOSTER

co  
a  
of  
re  
en  
ma  
gr  
de  
sp  
the  
one  
pai  
ser  
the  
be  
  
of t  
of t  
red  
bran  
muc  
The  
driv  
umb  
mak  
the  
com  
  
In  
mon  
brea  
neig  
case  
  
W  
spec  
in th  
meth  
Thou  
gentl  
spinn  
a hel  
they  
when  
and c  
drifte  
Durin  
U.S.  
air dr  
loade  
pounc  
on the  
as an  
they a  
a nuis



Just across the street, the ash is next to awaken. A couple weeks behind, teardrop-shaped leaves unfurl, adding more welcome green to the landscape. Many of the ash trees lining the right-of-way on the quiet residential street are destined for removal soon. The emerald ash tree borer has arrived in Iowa, and is making its way across the state. The pesky little metallic green beetle likely spells death for any ash tree it decides to call home. But for now, the healthiest trees sport metal tags, about the size of a dog tag, indicating they will be saved at least temporarily. The not-so-lucky ones—those showing sign of weakness—are spray painted. They will be the first to go when the tree services invade. Eventually all will likely go. But for now, they are a welcome breath of fresh air, and will no-doubt be a major player in the fall foliage show.

The last stalwart of the urban landscape—the king of the hill on this block—remains quiet through much of the early show. Nearly bare branches indicate the red maple is a late sleeper. Soon the thick, muscular branches will support thousands of leaves, providing much-appreciated shade to the house and front porch. The smaller branches stretching part way across the driveway will provide an umbrella from rains as I make the mad dash from the vehicle to the dry comfort of my home.

In those fleeting months of spring, all three breathe new life into the neighborhood. In some cases, too much.

While the other two species are inconspicuous in their propagation methods, the maple is not. Thousands of whirlybirds gently drift to the ground, spinning like the blades of a helicopter. As a youth, they provided amusement when launched in the air and chased as they gently drifted to the ground. During World War II, the U.S. Army developed an air drop supply carrier loaded with up to 65 pounds of supplies based on the maple seed. But as an adult landowner, they are somewhat of a nuisance. They land in flower

gardens, vegetable gardens, even caves where they sprout new, unwanted life. In my tiny, postage-stamp urban world, they are pulled from the soil just as the dandelions are. But in a sprawling woodlot, they are new life. A chance to flourish undisturbed, grow and replace. Thanks to the new seed, the woodlot will stand for generations to come, providing countless benefits to our children and grandchildren.

The calendar pages flip to June. The emergence in full-leaved glory is complete. July brings unnoticed changes. No doubt the trees are evolving, but I can't see it. August brings oppressive heat and humidity. The three towers stand tall, nearly forgotten. The noticeable change they brought in spring is gone. No flowers blooming to provide nature's Febreze. They are just trees. Filling the airspace between me and the neighbors. Nature's privacy fence.

But quietly, unknowingly, they are doing what they do best. The massive maple and the strategic location of the crabapple cast a daylong shadow against the front picture windows. The air conditioner runs less. I have been told my trees may be reducing cooling costs by as much as 30 percent. Sure, the shade feels good against the summer sun, but there is more going on

here. Water evaporating through a few thousand leaves lowers the ambient air temperature by a few degrees. Evaporative cooling at its best. At the same time, shade is cooling the ground surface temperatures, as much as 36 degrees difference from unshaded ground.

Virtually unnoticed, the air around my house is cleaner. The tree is absorbing carbon dioxide and producing oxygen.



The massive root system, stretching two to three times past the dripline, reduces storm water runoff when the rains come. I know when it is time to move, the tree will help sell my house.

In the meantime, the flowers of the maple provide nectar for the early pollinators, like bees. The neighborhood squirrels and the chipmunk that has made home under my porch no doubt enjoy the seeds of the ash and maple. The squirrels use the trunk and the lower branches to play a brief but rousing game of tag, chattering the whole time. They perch from the largest branch and scold me when I interrupt their game. Chickadees flit from branch to branch. Cardinals stop by and serenade me with their melodious song. Robins love the protection of the dense canopy. A owl once even lit in the lowest branch for a closer look at the puppy outside. The dog wasn't impressed. Cicadas leave their exoskeletons on the trunk and stout branches.

October arrives, and the earliest actor bows first. The leaves of the crabapple turn light yellow, dry and surrender their grip on the branches. The leaves of the ash and maple are still green, although minute hints of yellow and red are showing up. Long before the other two start to drop, the crab tree will be bare.

It's a race to see which remaining tree gives up their fight against fall first. Both the ash and the maple start the metamorphosis in sync. It's a slow, yet noticeable progression. Before the earliest hunting seasons are in full swing, the ash is in full glory. Time it just right, like noon on a sunny fall day, and they look almost like giant street lights. The glow of the autumnal sun bouncing off the golden leaves cast an almost spiritual glow on the streets. Although the show lasts only a few days, it leaves lasting memories.

Although the race started in unison, the maple is last to leave the party. It's tamed its transformation for as long as it can, but shorter and cooler days are taking their toll. Chlorophyll production is dropping and

essential sugars it produces as food fades. It starts on the outermost branches. Patches of light orangish leaves appear here, then there, much like an aging man's hair. It's almost debonair. Days add up, the light red patches intensify and the show gathers steam. Now golden and dropping, the leaves of the ash compliment the reds of the maple.

Late October ushers in even shorter and cooler days. The maple leaves give up their lust for life—a few here, a few there drift slowly, and quietly, to the ground. They fall at a rate easily handled by the mulching mower. The carbon boost will no doubt be beneficial come spring.

November hits, the deer rut is in full swing and my thoughts are on treestands and sticks and strings. But Mother Nature has other plans. Fall rains and winds force the last maple leaves to lose grip, dropping at rates akin to a brown snowstorm. A solid foot of leaves cover the ground, and must be removed before snow cements them to ground and chokes out the grass. Raked and mulched, they will become the base for next year's compost.

I watch this months-long trilogy from my front porch. Act 1—spring. Act 2—summer. Act 3—fall. I ponder if the show is being played out in theaters across the state. Next year I promise to rack the bike and lace the hiking boots and see for myself. In April, I head to Red Haw

State Park near Chariton. Sure, hawthorns, oaks, maples and pines are abundant, but it's the redbuds that steal the show. Next it's the Boone Forks Bird Conservation Area in Hamilton and Webster counties to see first-hand how woodland nesting birds are so dependent on the hardwoods. Later on, it's skipping across the state for the very changing foliage that has spawned several fall festivals, like the Madison County Covered Bridge Festival, the Scenic Drive Festival in Keosauqua, and my favorite Iowa-destination, McGregor for the Fall and Leaf Arts and Crafts Festival.

Yep, the show is being televised across the state. 🐾





**Act 1**—spring.  
**Act 2**—summer.  
**Act 3**—fall.”

## SPRING CLEANING >>>

Shake off those winter doldrums and rejuvenate the home with a good spring cleaning. But don't dull the shine of your good deed by improperly disposing of cleaners or unwanted items that could be reused around the house or community.

### MEDICINE

Disposing of expired or unused medicine, including over-the-counter products, can be a headache. Trashed meds could end up in the mouths of children or pets, causing poisoning. Those flushed or rinsed down the drain can end up in lakes, streams and water supplies. Meds in waterbodies may harm fish, wildlife and habitats, says the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. To properly rid meds:

Follow specific disposal info on drug labels or patient information. Do not flush down sink or toilet unless label advises to.

Call your pharmacy to see if it or another community entity employs a drug take-back or mail-back program. Search "drug disposal" at [fda.gov](http://fda.gov) for links to authorized collectors nearby. Or check with city or county waste services to learn disposal options.

If there are no specific disposal instructions and no authorized collectors in your area, place meds,

including liquids, in a plastic bag or can. To make them less desirable, cover with kitty litter, ash, coffee grounds or sawdust. Place in trash.

### HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE

**CLEANERS:** Determine if the product is hazardous. Look for words like "Danger," "Caution," "Warning" and "Toxic." Use product up and dispose of container per label instructions. Take leftover hazardous materials to your local Regional Collection Center (RCC).

Opt for less harmful, nature-based products, like coconut or lemon



oil. Look for products that can do more than one job. Less toxic, DIY "green" cleaners can save money, too. Countless home recipes exist using baking soda, hydrogen peroxide, vinegar, essential oils and herbs.

**PAINT:** Oil-based paints contain Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) and must be disposed of at an RCC. Small amounts of latex paints may be disposed in the trash, but first remove the lid to allow paint to dry or mix with kitty litter. RCCs also accept latex. Or reuse quality paints by donating to neighbors, church groups or others in the community. Many RCCs operate swap shops. To locate the nearest RCC, go to [SafeSmartSolutions.org](http://SafeSmartSolutions.org). To minimize future waste, determine how much is needed by adding the length of each wall to establish perimeter.



## SPRING CLEANING

Shake off those winter doldrums and rejuvenate the home with a good spring cleaning. But don't dull the shine of your good deed by improperly disposing of cleaners or unwanted items that could be reuse

### MEDICINE

Disposing of expired or unused medicine, including over-the-counter products, can be a headache. Trashed meds could end up in the mouths of children or pets, causing poisoning. Those flushed or rinsed down the drain can end up in lakes, streams and water supplies. Meds in waterbodies may harm fish, wildlife and habitats, says the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. To properly rid meds:

Follow specific disposal info on drug labels or patient information. Do not flush down sink or toilet unless label advises to.

Call your pharmacy to see if it or another community entity employs a drug take-back or mail-back program. Search "drug disposal" at [fda.gov](http://fda.gov) for links to authorized collectors nearby. Or check with city or county waste services to learn disposal options.

If there are no specific disposal instructions and no authorized collectors in your area, place meds,



including liquids, in a can. To make them cover with kitty litter grounds or sawdus

### HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE

**CLEANERS:** Determine if the product is hazardous. Look for words like "Danger," "Caution," "Warning" and "Toxic." Use product up and dispose of container per label instructions. Take leftover hazardous materials to your local Regional Collection Center (RCC).

Opt for less harmful, nature-based products, like coconut or lemon

## SUBSCRIBE AND SAVE!

- 3 YEARS, ONLY \$30
- 2 YEARS, ONLY \$24
- 1 YEAR, ONLY \$15

## 33% off!

THREE YEAR SUBSCRIPTION

NAME (please print)

ADDRESS / APT

CITY / STATE / ZIP

BILL ME LATER  CHECK ENCLOSED

OR CALL 1-800-361-8072 TODAY TO SUBSCRIBE

*please allow 6 - 8 weeks for delivery*

6/15

JLB A



## IOWA'S BEST OUTDOOR MAGAZINE

Small amounts of latex paints may be disposed in the trash, but first remove the lid to allow paint to dry or mix with kitty litter. RCCs also accept latex. Or reuse quality paints by donating to neighbors, church groups or others in the community. Many RCCs operate swap shops. To locate the nearest RCC, go to [SafeSmartSolutions.org](http://SafeSmartSolutions.org). To minimize future waste, determine how much is needed by adding the length of each wall to establish perimeter.

Multiply perimeter by ceiling height for square footage. Subtract square footage of unpainted areas like windows and doors. On the paint can, use coverage data to see how much to buy using square footage.

**OIL/FILTERS:** Oil doesn't wear out, it just gets dirty and can be reused. Never dump oil down drains, sanitary sewers or in the trash. It can be hazardous to human health and the environment. Some auto-related businesses serve as drop-off points, or take to your local RCC. For business locations that accept used oil and filters, visit [lowadnr.gov/FABA](http://lowadnr.gov/FABA).

**ELECTRONICS:** So how to junk that old flip phone and mega-pound desktop computer? Some electronic retailers, including big-name stores, offer drop off programs. Some even offer store credit. Check retailer websites for details. Nonprofits and local governments often sponsor recycling. Visit [Call2Recycle.org](http://Call2Recycle.org) for a location in your area. Manufacturers, like Apple, Dell and Toshiba, offer recycling options—sometimes even company credit or free shipping.

**BATTERIES:** Some 180,000 tons of batteries are thrown out each year,

adding harmful cadmium, cobalt, nickel-iron and lead to the environment. The Call2Recycle network accepts button, sealed lead acid, NiCd and Li-Ion batteries at no charge. Find your nearest collection site at [Call2Recycle.org](http://Call2Recycle.org). RCCs also recycle button, rechargeable and small or large lead acid batteries at no charge. Contact your solid waste agency or RCC for more details.

**LIGHTBULBS:** Lightbulbs of all kinds can be recycled. Many retailers accept them, or call your solid waste agency or RCC.

Switching from incandescent or halogen bulbs to efficient compact fluorescent lights (CFLs), or even more efficient light-emitting diode (LEDs) to save money on utilities.

### YARD WASTE

Many cities offer composting, charging a fee for large bins or small fees to pick up one-time-use bags. To save some green, go green and turn yard and kitchen waste into something that grows green with compost—a great soil amendment and fertilizer for gardens, lawns and flower beds.

Make it free using a 2x3x3-foot compost pile—a manageable size to turn and ideal for retaining heat while allowing proper air flow. Compost decomposes fastest between 120 and 160° F. Build the pile in direct sunlight.

Black compost bins help retain heat.



Re-use pallets to build a bin for free.

Compost should be roughly 30 parts carbon (browns) to 1 part nitrogen (greens). Good carbon sources include dry leaves, straw and dry hay, woodchips and sawdust from untreated wood, dried grass clippings, shredded paper, egg and nut shells, hair and animal fur, paper, shredded newspaper, paper towels and paper tubes. Good green choices are vegetable and fruit scraps, coffee grounds and filters, tea bags and leaves, fresh grass clippings and plant trimmings from the garden and yard. Do not compost fats, pet droppings, animal products, grease, dairy products, diseased plants or items treated with pesticides.

Keep piles damp but not wet—like a wrung out sponge. As you add material, ensure each layer is moist. Turn the pile often to speed decomposition. When finished, compost should look, feel and smell like rich, dark soil and you should not recognize the starter materials.

### PLASTIC BAGS

Check with your local recycle service for allowable material, since some items—like plastic grocery bags—aren't accepted in recycle bins. Return the bags to the grocery store for recycling. Consider avoiding them altogether by using sturdy, reusable cloth or plastic tote bags instead.



BY BRIAN BUTTON

## Chimney swifts

The scientific name for chimney swifts (*Chaetura pelagica*) comes from the Greek words *chaite* which means bristle and *oura* which refers to tail. All 10 feathers in the bird's tail end in bristly, spine-like points. *Pelagica* is derived from a Greek word meaning "of the sea" referring to its wandering, nomadic ways similar to an ancient Greek tribe called the Pelasgi and nothing to do with the ocean. The bird's common name refers to their favorite nesting site and swift airborne antics. When first named in 1758, taxonomist Carl Linnaeus classified it as a swallow. Famed ornithologist John James Audubon called it a chimney swallow as well.

### SPITTING SUPER GLUE

To create tiny nests which they affix to a vertical surface, they cement sticks together using a special gland under the tongue that produces a glue-like additive to their saliva. Both parents contribute to nest building.

### AERONAUTICAL ACROBATS

Swifts spend their lives airborne, except when roosting overnight or nesting. They nimbly maneuver to catch insects in flight, erratically twisting and banking in fighter jet fashion. Flying with nearly constant, stiff wing beats, they emit their distinctive chattering call. They even bathe in flight, swooping to smack a water's surface, bouncing off and shaking rid the water in the air. In flight, the silhouette of their slender, elongated bodies yielded the nickname "flying cigars."

### POO CLUES

University researchers in Ontario found a 6-foot pile of droppings in a chimney on campus. To date the droppings, they looked for cesium 137, an isotope dispersed worldwide during atomic tests done in the 1950-60s. Researchers focused on 1944 to 1992, when swift populations tumbled 90 percent. Studying insect wings, heads and legs in the droppings, they found the birds' diet switched from their favored beetle—made scarce by DDT—to less nutritive stink bugs. The chimney, capped in 1992, was reopened. Now 250 swifts use it—nowhere near the clouds of 4,000 birds it once housed in the 1940s.

### LOCAL JEWELRY

Discovering where swifts migrated for winter came by accident in 1944 when a native Peruvian was found wearing a necklace strung from metal leg bands. The bands were placed on swifts in the U.S. They winter in the Upper Amazon basin of Ecuador, Chile, Brazil and Peru.

### DEMISE OF BRICK CHIMNEYS

Chimney swifts naturally nest in caves, cliff faces and hollow trees. When settlers arrived, the birds took a liking to chimneys. As humans, cities and chimneys expanded in numbers, so did swift populations. Today's modern, covered chimneys and metal, narrow flues and loss of older, open bricked chimneys has caused swift numbers to plummet over 65 percent since 1966.

### LITTLE LEGS DO WONDERS

Swifts cannot grip horizontal perches and must hold onto sheer, vertical surfaces. Their short legs pack strong feet with tiny toes ending in sharp, curved claws. To clasp a vertical face, the back toe can swivel forward if needed. Unlike most birds, their legs are not covered in scales, but smooth skin.

### TAIL FEATHER SPIKES

Highly adapted to narrow spaces, the tail feathers have a special spined tip to help cling to vertical spaces.



PHOTO FROM WIKIPEDIA BY IIM MFCIII ICFH





## A Culinary Revolution AND Atlas World Grill

Atlas World Grill is a veteran of the Iowa City food and drink scene, having served the campus community for more than 15 years. But the partnership between co-

owners Jack Piper and James Adrian goes back way further. The two were friends at the University of Iowa during their college days, and stayed in close contact after Adrian moved

to Louisiana and Piper headed for Colorado. Their frequent talks on the phone always ended with "We should open a restaurant."

With impressive restaurant



re  
st  
hi  
n  
pl  
an  
on  
Dr  
At  
Ho  
Jan  
At  
  
dri  
high  
rev  
ing  
cre  
eat  
me  
des  
Ano  
me  
  
Cre  
blac  
at y  
jam  
Feb  
  
BLA  
4 cat  
1 cup  
  
Heat  
20 m  
camp  
smo  
side  
Place  
skille  
cook  
Rem  
shee  
until  
each  
Jan/  
with  
  
CREO  
3/4 cu  
3 tabl  
3 tabl

resumes, the two Iowa natives made that dream a reality in 2000. Adrian started cooking when he was 14, and had a stint as a chef at Louisiana's number one rated restaurant, the place that turned out Emeril Lagasse and Paul Prudhomme. With a patio on the corner of Iowa Avenue and Dubuque Street, just off-campus, Atlas is a perfect stop for a drink. House specialties abound, like the Jamaican Ten Speed, but in Iowa City, Atlas is known as the "mojito place."

Adrian and Piper stress food and drinks prepared from scratch, and high-end service. Daily specials revolve around locally-grown seasonal ingredients, like sweet corn ice cream. Truly an eatery where you can eat both home and abroad, an entire meal, from drinks and appetizers to dessert, can easily span five cultures. And if you can't find a salad on this menu, you won't find it anywhere.

With Adrian's roots in Cajun-Creole cuisine, his recipe for blackened catfish is sure to be a hit at your next fish fry. Serve it with jambalaya, featured in the January/February 2016 issue.

#### BLACKENED CATFISH

4 catfish fillets, 7 ounces each  
1 cup Creole seasoning

Heat a cast iron skillet over high for 20 minutes. Cook outside on a grill or camp stove as this produces a lot of smoke. Generously coat the internal side of the fillet with Creole seasoning. Place fillets spice-side down in hot skillet. Cook five minutes, flip, and cook an additional three minutes. Remove from pan, place on cookie sheet and place in 350° F oven. Bake until done, about 15 minutes. Place each fillet over one cup jambalaya (see Jan./Feb 2016 issue for recipe), drizzle with remoulade and serve with slaw.

#### CREOLE SEASONING

¼ cup paprika  
3 tablespoons onion powder  
3 tablespoons garlic powder

3 tablespoons dried leaf thyme  
3 tablespoons dried leaf oregano  
3 tablespoons white pepper  
3 tablespoons black pepper  
1 ½ tablespoons cayenne pepper  
¾ cup kosher salt

#### REMOULADE (NEW ORLEANS STYLE)

One lemon (juice and zest)  
½ cup stone ground mustard  
¼ cup Dijon mustard  
¼ cup prepared horseradish  
¼ cup white vinegar  
¼ cup worcestershire sauce  
½ cup ketchup  
1 tablespoon Louisiana hot sauce  
½ tablespoon minced garlic  
½ tablespoon kosher salt  
½ tablespoon black pepper  
1 ½ tablespoons paprika  
1 tablespoon celery salt  
¼ cup chopped flat leaf parsley  
2 green onions, chopped (both white and green part)  
2 cups mayonnaise

Zest and juice lemon. Combine with other ingredients in blender and blend until smooth. Remoulade is often used with seafood, especially fried fish and crab cakes, but is used in a variety of ways.

#### COLESLAW

1 head green cabbage, thinly sliced  
1 red onion, julienned  
4 stalks celery, thinly cut on the bias  
3 Granny Smith apples, cored and thinly sliced

#### COLESLAW DRESSING

1 cup mayonnaise  
¼ cup apple cider vinegar  
¼ cup sugar  
1 teaspoon celery salt  
¼ teaspoon black pepper

Whisk dressing ingredients together in a bowl. Toss in remaining ingredients.

#### Atlas World Grill

Open daily 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.  
127 Iowa Ave., Iowa City  
319-341-7700 • atlasiewocity.com



A SEASON FOR ALL

# KEOKUK IOWA



*Iowa's Only National Cemetery*

*Winter Home for Bald Eagles*

*Mark Twain Historic Sights*

*Year-round Birding Trail*

*Architectural Splendor*

*Hunt Keokuk Geodes*

*Historic Lock & Dam*

*Museums*

Don't Miss  
the  
Dailey & Vincent Show  
April 22  
Grand Theatre

KEOKUK AREA CONVENTION  
& TOURISM BUREAU  
[www.KeokukIowaTourism.org](http://www.KeokukIowaTourism.org)  
319.524.5599



**DRIVERS- \$7500 SIGNING BONUS  
CLASS A CDL NEEDED!**

- Regional Routes with More Home Time
- Weekends OFF!!
- GUARANTEED PAY & \$60k FIRST YEAR!!!
- Medical Benefits on DAY 1!
- Profit Sharing\*401k + match

**Call to schedule Interviews  
for Tuesday's 3 - 8pm  
507-664-3038**

**McLane Company  
1821 SE Hulsizer Drive  
Ankeny, IA 50021**

The McLane Company is one of the nation's leading distribution and logistics companies with 37 distribution facilities nationwide.

All loads dispatch and return to Des Moines, IA Loads are 16-24 hours long, & run Mon-Fri.

Email resume:  
[mhr@mcLANEco.com](mailto:mhr@mcLANEco.com)  
or Call Now!  
507-664-3038

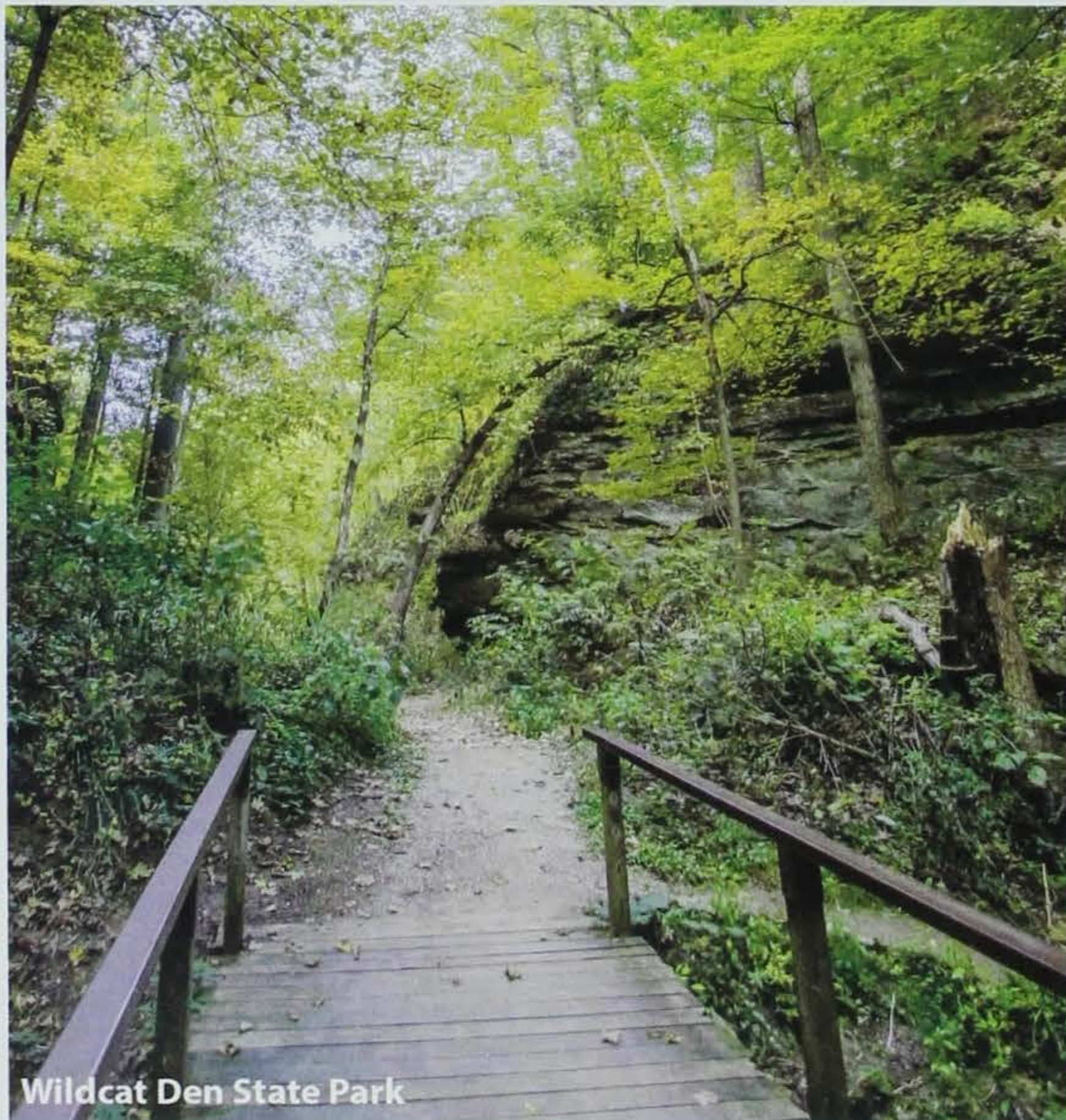


**EXPLORE**  
what's happening  
in Iowa's Outdoors

**FOLLOW US ON**  
Facebook  
Twitter and Pinterest!



[facebook.com/iowadnr](https://facebook.com/iowadnr)  
[twitter.com/iowadnr](https://twitter.com/iowadnr)  
[pinterest.com/iowadnr](https://pinterest.com/iowadnr)



Wildcat Den State Park

Meetings with  
Mother Nature  
are...

• MADE IN •

**MUSCATINE**  
IOWA

VISITMUSCATINE.COM

**#THISISIOWA**

VisitMuscatine.com

563-272-2534

# IOWA OUTDOORS

ADVERTISE IN IOWA OUTDOORS TODAY!

...reach over 40,000 subscribers each issue!

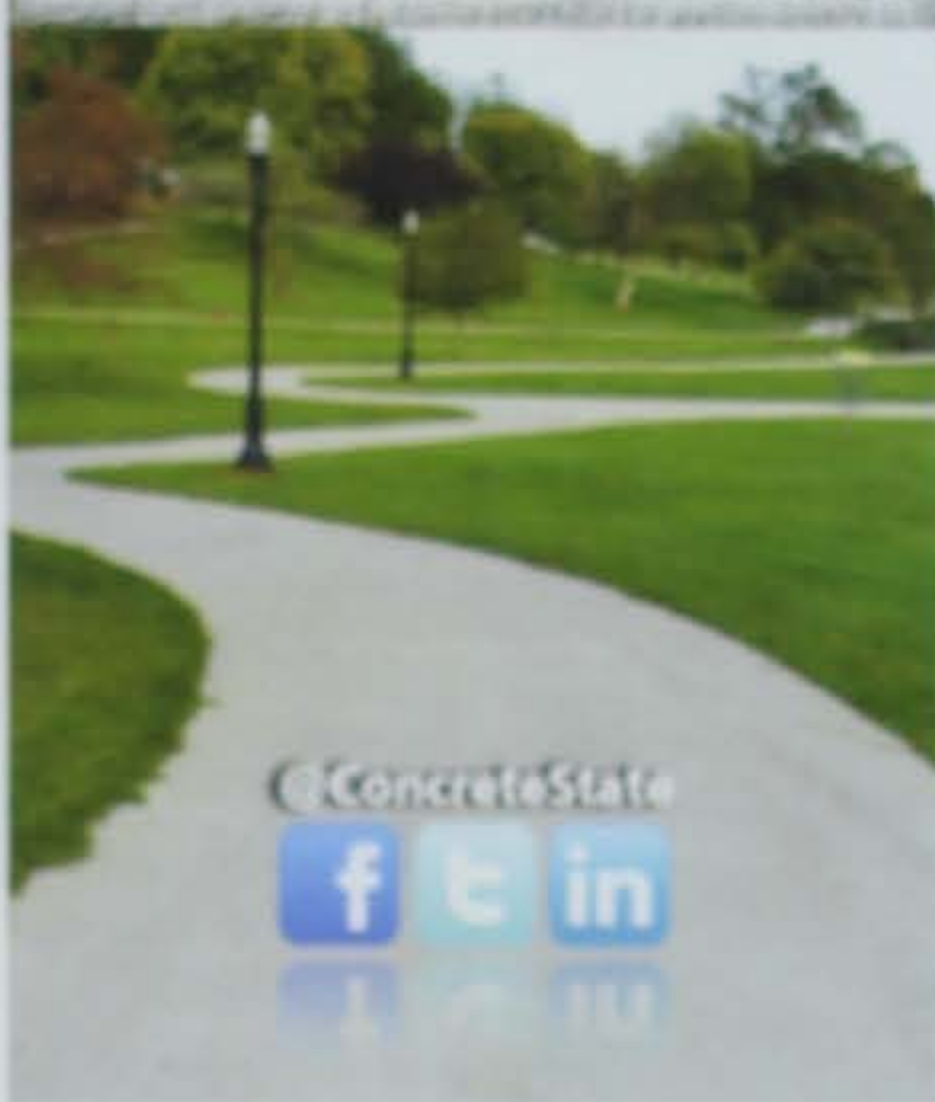
Contact: **TONYA VITZTHUM**

515-669-3010 • TVITZTHUM@ASSOCIATIONSINC.US

Count on  
**CONCRETE**



IOWA'S RESILIENT RESOURCE



ConcreteState



515.963.9908  
[www.concretepaving.org](http://www.concretepaving.org)



515.963.4375  
[iowareadymix.org](http://iowareadymix.org)

## UPPER IOWA UNIVERSITY CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT

- Experience classes with outdoor labs where concepts are integrated into real world management practices.
- Develop close working relationships with dedicated faculty in and outside of the classroom.
- Apply classroom skills and knowledge to field internships, conservation projects and your own senior research project.
- Broaden your education with our wide range of electives.
- Transfer of college credit—up to 78 credit hours (2-year institution) and up to 90 credit hours (4-year institution).



**VISIT UIU TODAY**

UPPER IOWA UNIVERSITY  
Established in 1917

**UIU.EDU/CONSERVATION**

## Cruising the Heartland of America

### 1 & 2-Day Mississippi River Cruises

The Twilight is the most richly appointed Riverboat to be launched in a hundred years. Reminiscent of the Riverboats Mark Twain called "Floating Palaces", the Victorian steamboat architecture inside and out pleases the eye. Let our Captain be your guide to discovering the Upper Mississippi River; home to Eagles, Pelicans, towering bluffs, and historic river towns. Come aboard and step back into time when the riverboat was the most elegant and relaxing way to travel.

Call 1-800-331-1467  
[www.RiverboatTwilight.com](http://www.RiverboatTwilight.com)

**2-DAY CRUISE**  
Departs Quad Cities, Overnight  
in Dubuque, IA & Return

**1-DAY CRUISE**  
Departs Dubuque North to  
Guttenberg, IA & Return

ABOARD THE RIVERBOAT  
**TWILIGHT**  
Cruising May through October



STATE LIBRARY OF IOWA



3 1723 02105 5868



Bluegill spawning starts late May and peaks in June. Distress marks on this males' fins are from digging out nesting hollows. Find the best bluegill spots in all 99 counties on pages 32-41.  
**PHOTO PROVIDED BY BEN WALLACE**

T  
C  
THE D  
IN THE  
Seek  
DISCOVER