

## June 27 Iowa Outdoors

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June 27, 2017

- [Mountain lion killed Tuesday in Ida County](#)
- [Iowa fisheries biologist recognized for excellence in fish management techniques](#)
- [Lake Sugema Wildlife Area offers year round recreation](#)

### Mountain lion killed Tuesday in Ida County

Today, officers with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) were called to dispatch a mountain lion from a farm near Galva, in northeast Ida County.

The situation arose after a neighboring livestock producer discovered a dead calf that showed evidence consistent with an attack by a large cat late last week. Repeated calls were placed to 911 Monday evening by a nearby landowner who discovered the cat.

DNR officers use lethal action as the last resort option in these situations and every effort is made to humanely remove the animal.

“White-tailed deer and other wild animals, particularly the weak or injured, are often the preferred prey. But in this situation, it appears this mountain lion has targeted young livestock and livestock producers are well within their rights to protect their livelihood,” said Bruce Trautman, deputy director with the Iowa DNR.

This is the first confirmed female mountain lion in Iowa. There is no physical evidence that she has produced any young. The Iowa DNR will collect teeth, tissue samples for genetic analysis and examine the stomach contents of the 88 pound animal.

This is the fourth mountain lion killed in Iowa and the most recent since 2013 when a four year old male was shot in Sioux County. Since 1995, there have been 21 confirmed mountain lions in Iowa.

Western South Dakota and Nebraska have been the genetic source for the lions killed in Iowa.

Mountain lions are not listed as a furbearer and have no protected status in Iowa.

**Media Contact:** Vince Evelsizer, Furbearer Biologist, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 641-231-1522 or Mick Klemesrud, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 515-725-8280.

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## Iowa fisheries biologist recognized for excellence in fish management techniques

Iowa fisheries management biologist Mark Flammang was recognized as the Fisheries Biologist of the Year by the Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (MAFWA) at their annual meeting, June 26 in Ashland, Nebraska.

MAFWA, an organization of 13 state and three provincial Midwest fish and wildlife agencies, exists to share ideas and information, pool resources, and initiate action to benefit the management and conservation of fish and wildlife resources in the Midwest. This award is presented annually to a fisheries biologist that demonstrates unparalleled initiative towards the better understanding of fishes and their conservation.

Flammang, DNR fisheries management biologist for the eight county district in south central Iowa, was recognized for initiating new approaches to refine fish management techniques including how and when fish surveys are conducted, fish marking techniques, documenting fish movement behaviors and improving water quality through lake and watershed management.

“Mark has the skills and insight to conduct relevant fish research investigations including better sampling techniques for measuring channel catfish populations in Iowa lakes,” said Chris Larson, DNR fisheries management supervisor.

Flammang evaluated the use of baited tandem hoop-nets to standard gill net efforts to capture adult channel catfish. The results showed that tandem baited hoop-nets were much better than gill nets at capturing large numbers of channel catfish. This technique is now part of Iowa Fish Management Section’s standard operating procedures, and is used by other state agencies.

Flammang has taken an active role in improving other fish sampling techniques such as comparing catch rates for large 3’x6’ versus small 2’x4’ fyke nets, evaluating un-baited hoop-nets for panfish population assessments, and improvements to the fish management database.

Some of Flammang’s work has influenced the way fish management is done in Iowa and throughout the Midwest. “Mark continues to go above and beyond what is expected of him,” said Larson.

Rotenone is often used to control undesirable fish species and improve water quality. Flammang led a recent study to evaluate the effect of four different low concentrations of rotenone to remove gizzard shad while minimizing the impact on important gamefish populations. Results of this work provided a useful tool to help managers eliminate specific

problem species like gizzard shad with minimal impacts to important gamefish and lessening the need to remove all fish.

Recent higher flows at Rathbun Reservoir, along with declining walleye populations, motivated Flammang to study walleye escaping through the gates at Rathbun Reservoir. Since 2009, Flammang has tagged and monitored walleye at Rathbun Reservoir. His work confirmed that many walleyes are leaving the reservoir. This prompted further research, in collaboration with Iowa State University (ISU) and the US Army Corps of Engineers, on potential methods to minimize the escape of walleyes. Flammang and an ISU graduate student evaluated various fish barriers. Efforts are underway to secure funding for an electric fish barrier to minimize fish escaping from the reservoir.

Flammang has been active with numerous lake restoration projects within his district. Recent lake restoration projects completed at Hawthorn Lake, Lake Miami and Red Haw Lake have improved water quality and fishing at these popular lakes. Flammang is currently involved in three additional lake restoration efforts at Lakes Keomah and Lacey-Keosauqua, and Rathbun Reservoir, along with other smaller man-made lakes around his district.

**Media Contact:** Chris Larson, Small and Large Impoundment Fisheries Supervisor, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 712-250-0001.

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## Lake Sugema Wildlife Area offers year round recreation

Van Buren County historian Ralph Arnold is the person responsible for naming Lake Sugema and in a twist of mystery he refused to say what the name meant. Only upon his death in 2002 did a letter show up at the local newspaper, the Van Buren County Register, ending the mystery – according to Arnold, Sugema is a Native American word for Mosquito.

Lake Mosquito.

It makes for a snazzy bumper sticker.

What began as a project to prevent soil loss, provide a recreation lake and possible water supply for the town of Keosauqua, has become a popular wildlife area with more than 3,900 acres of timber, lake and grasslands that is home to the endangered slender glass lizard and Henslow's sparrow, and hundreds of plant species.

The area is part of the Lake Sugema-Lacey-Keosauqua Bird Conservation Area (BCA) that includes Lacey-Keosauqua State Park, county conservation managed land and private land that has become a destination for bird watchers from across the country.

It is also near the Shimek Forest BCA, increasing Van Buren County's stature in the birding community.

“I had a cerulean warbler land in front of me at Lacey-Keosauqua State Park, pick something up off the ground, and fly away,” said Jeff Glaw, wildlife biologist for the Lake Sugema area since 1999.

Glaw has been part of a team working to get Lake Sugema – Lacey Keosauqua BCA listed as a globally important bird conservation area.

“It’s the only time I’ve seen a cerulean warbler, but it was pretty neat,” he said. Cerulean warblers require large forests for nesting habitat and is considered a species of greatest conservation need.

Forest habitat is just one part of various landscapes at Lake Sugema, each requiring different management plans to achieve different outcomes.

For example, Henslow’s sparrows prefer older grassy areas. “Quail need the opposite,” Glaw said. “They prefer disturbed soil, bare ground and shrubby cover.”

Sugema is home to a booming quail population and it doesn’t take long before the distinctive ‘bobWHITE’ whistle hits the ear.

Pheasant are sharing the quail habitat and a population resurgence of sorts following a string of mild winters and average springs.

A few days ago, Glaw was driving on scenic and winding Iowa Hwy. 16 north of Douds when he saw a hen pheasant step out of the ditch, followed by a line of day old chicks. A truck coming from the opposite direction also stopped and the two drivers watched as the busy mother paraded her 19 chicks to the other side of the road. The stragglers at the end of the line drew a honk from the other driver to move it along as he was ready to be on his way.

“I can’t believe I didn’t take a picture of that,” Glaw said. “It was really neat to see.”

Pheasants aren’t the only species benefiting from the long term focus on developing quail habitat.

Rabbits prefer those areas, as well.

Glaw said rabbit hunters from Kentucky, North Carolina and other states from the south take multiple trips each fall to hunt Iowa cottontails at Lake Sugema. “We have a lot of rabbits here,” he said.

But probably the biggest draw is for trophy white tailed deer.

“The Lake Sugema area is really underutilized since the last outbreak of EHD (Epizootic hemorrhagic disease) in 2013,” Glaw said. “Bowhunters can go out on this area and not see anyone else.”

But not likely for much longer.

## **Lake Sugema Wildlife Area Supports Van Buren County**

### **Property Tax Payments at Lake Sugema Wildlife Area**

2017 \$9,292

2016	\$8,820
2015	\$9,342
2014	\$7,726
2013	\$8,146
2012	\$8,852
2011	\$7,624
2010	\$7,572
2009	\$7,410
2008	\$6,112
2007	\$6,358
2006	\$6,760
2005	\$6,732
2004	\$7,782
2003	\$7,572
2002	\$7,382
2001	\$6,222

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