



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Iowa DNR News

Conservation and Recreation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Man shot during opening day of squirrel hunting

LEHIGH, Iowa – A man was shot on Saturday, September 1, while squirrel hunting at the Brushy Creek State Recreation Area.

Sao Bunpan, 55, was shot in the upper body by Khor Bunpan, 50, both of Webster City. The two brothers were hunting together with a party of four at Brushy Creek during opening day of squirrel hunting.

Sao Bunpan was taken to a Webster City hospital and then transported to a Des Moines hospital with non-life threatening injuries.

DNR conservation officers are investigating, but initially believe this is an accident and no charges have been filed.

Media Contact: Bill Spece, DNR Conservation Officer, (515) 571-0127, William.Spece@dnr.iowa.gov.

Several state parks impacted by recent heavy rains, flash flooding

Several state parks are experiencing impacts from the recent heavy rainfall forcing closures of the parks and many trails.

Currently, George Wyth State Park is completely closed due to flooding. The Cedar River is expected to crest midweek, likely causing flooding and cleanup throughout the

weekend. DNR officials advise the trails are covered by water and should be avoided for possible washouts or sinkholes.

Other parks impacted by the flooding include:

- Backbone State Park - north gate closed, trout stream bridges and areas near the river are closed off, trails are still open and campgrounds outside of gated area are open along with the south gates.
- Brushy Creek State Recreation Area - trails are closed due to wet conditions
- Lake of Three Fires - trails are closed due to wet conditions
- Ledges - Canyon Road is closed
- Stephens State Forest - equestrian trails are closed due to wet conditions
- Volga River State Recreation Area - equestrian trails are closed due to wet conditions
- Yellow River State Forest - the equestrian trails, Little Paint campground, Frontier equestrian campground, and Creekside equestrian campground are closed due to flooding

For a complete list of park closures or impacts, visit www.iowadnr.gov/Places-to-Go/State-Parks/Alerts-and-Closures.

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Ringgold Wildlife Area touts prairie, timber, ponds



The Ringgold Wildlife Area, south of Mount Ayr on the Missouri border, is 2,600 acres of prairie, timber, oak savannas and floodplains with a handful of fishable ponds mixed in.

“We’re pretty fortunate to have an area of that size,” said Chad Paup, wildlife management biologist for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. “It’s one of my favorite areas.”

The Ringgold Wildlife Area is home to a host of bird species, including an occasional prairie chicken wandering over from the nearby Kellerton. Five turkeys were lazily bugging in a field. A sharp shinned hawk flies low and tight to a row of shrubs looking for a meal. Goldfinches seem to be everywhere.

The area features reconstructed prairie as well as some prairie that’s never been plowed. Its forb heavy which benefits pollinators and birds who dine on the bugs attracted to the flowers.

Grassland management is the focus here; converting fields of brome grass into prairie. It requires a lot of attention to carry out the rotation of strip disking and spraying.

A field of seed producing common ragweed has appeared next to the row of shrubs on a part of Ringgold near the state line. Common ragweed produces seeds; shrub patch provides escape and winter cover.

“It’s a perfect mix for bobwhite quail and mourning doves,” he said.

Food plots dot the area rotating yearly from soybeans to sorghum to being left alone. Paup gets calls from nonresidents who want to know more about Ringgold as well as nearby Sand Creek and DeKalb wildlife areas as they prepare to apply for a deer license.

“They are using the hunting atlas to look at Ringgold from above and see the draws and valleys and the large timber tracks with grassy areas,” he said. “It catches their attention.”

Camping and fishing

Tucked in Ringgold’s rolling hills area a series of small ponds – some managed as a fishery and others are not. Visitors can drive right to some of the larger ponds with rustic boat launches and parking lots. Other ponds are only accessible by foot. These areas are open to fishing and no frills camping and paddling.

No street lights, road noise or neighbors. This is the definition of getting away from it all.

Large IHAP site borders Ringgold

Adjoining the Ringgold area on the northeast side is 300-acre site enrolled in the Iowa Habitat and Access Program that allows hunter access to private land in exchange for improving the habitat on their property. It’s marked with a series of orange IHAP signs.

Barn owl boxes

The recent increase in the number of barn owls across southern Iowa spurred a network of barn owl boxes to crop up on many areas, including Ringgold, as part of a coordinated effort to provide nesting to this state threatened species.

Barn owls have a long nesting season stretching from spring into the fall.

Grassland management research

The Ringgold area has been testing the rotational technique called patch burn grazing for vegetation management of using cattle grazing on one third of the area, burning one third of the area and allowing one third to recover and rotating every three years.

“We’re trying to create grass and flowers of different heights for grassland birds, reptiles, amphibians and other wildlife. It’s a challenge because tall fescue invaded southern Iowa a long time ago and it really impacts our native grasslands,” he said.

“We are working with several management techniques in order to keep tall fescue at bay.”

Research is wrapping up on the nine year study.

Media Contact: Chad Paup, Wildlife Management Biologist, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, (515) 238-5708.

Late summer cattail and floating-leaved plant control for ponds

Have the cattails in your pond taken over your favorite fishing spot or crowded you from one side of the dock or swimming area?

Late summer or early fall is the best time to kill cattails, Lotus lily and other emergent or floating-leaved plants that are on the pond's edge or are above the water. Spraying herbicides this time of year will kill the entire plant, and it will not regrow next spring. Since these plants die-back every year at this time and decompose slowly over the coming months, there is little risk of depleting the oxygen in the pond with treating these plants.

Starting in late summer, these plants move food to their roots to survive the winter, making systemic herbicides most effective. The most common active ingredient to use is glyphosate (a few brand names with labels for aquatic use include Aqua Neat, Aqua Pro, Aquamaster, GlyphoMate 41, Pond Master, Rodeo, Shore Klear and Touchdown Pro). Find these at local hardware, farm supply or garden stores or try an online search for "aquatic glyphosate."

Many of these herbicides need a surfactant or spreader-sticker added to the mix to help it stick to the plant's leaves. Read the label and check with your local or online retailer to select a surfactant that you can use in ponds. Spray the above-water portion of the plant until just wet and follow other instructions on the product label.

When you compare product brands, consider the amount of active ingredient, if a surfactant is needed, and size of the container. A product with a higher amount of active ingredient or one that does not need a surfactant added may provide a better value. The convenience of a ready-to-use (RTU) product that you do not have to mix or add a surfactant may outweigh price considerations.

Be careful to:

- Always read and follow the product label for application instructions and precautions.
- Spray when calm, or when winds are low and out of a favorable direction to avoid accidentally spraying other plants valuable to landscaping. Increase the droplet size of the spray to reduce drift.
- Spray early in the day with full sunlight to get the best results.
- Obey State law. Shoreline owners on public waters may not use herbicides to control aquatic vegetation without a permit. Contact the DNR fisheries office near you for rules and instructions for removing vegetation from public waters.

Learn more about aquatic plants in ponds at www.iowadnr.gov/pondplants.

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