

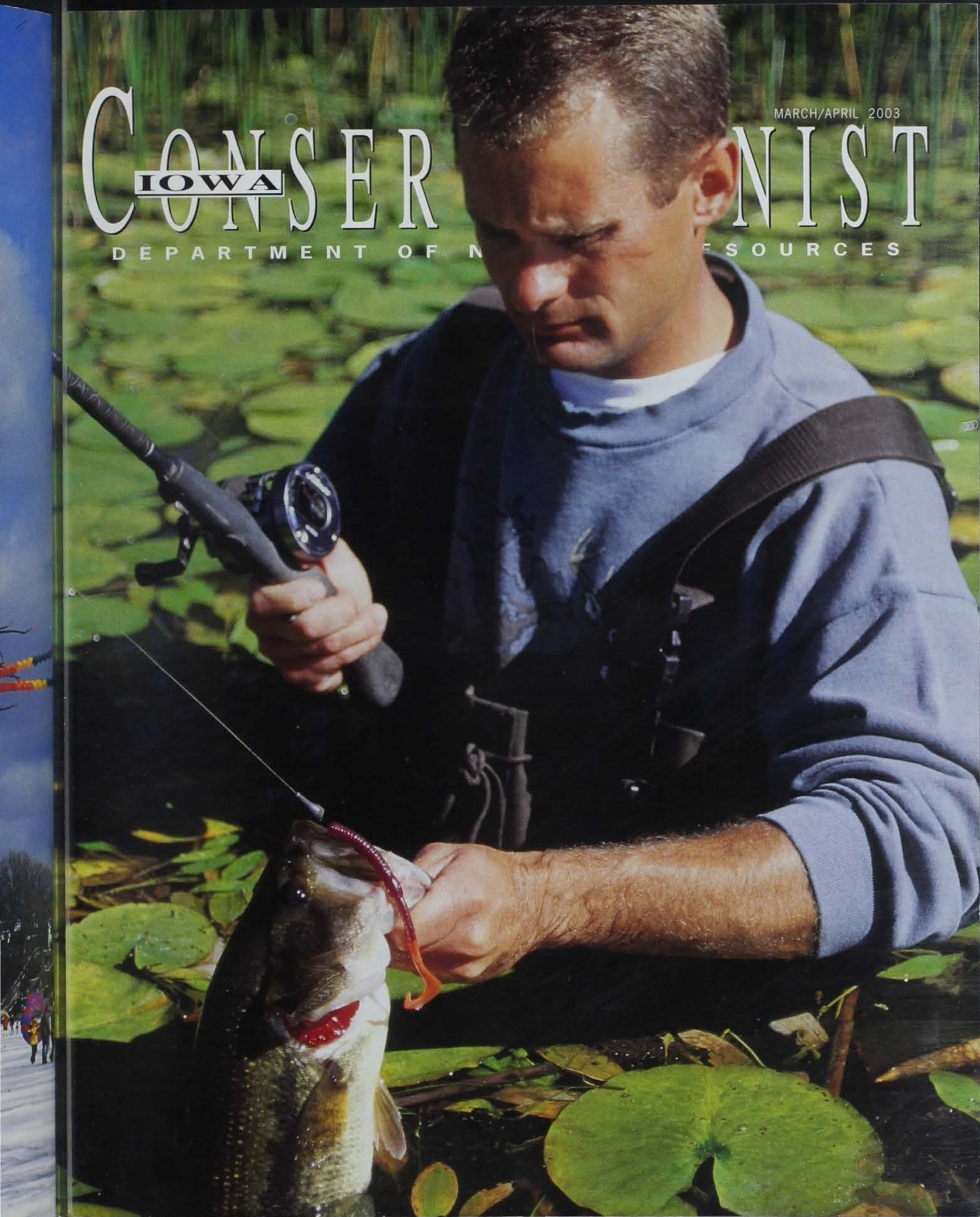
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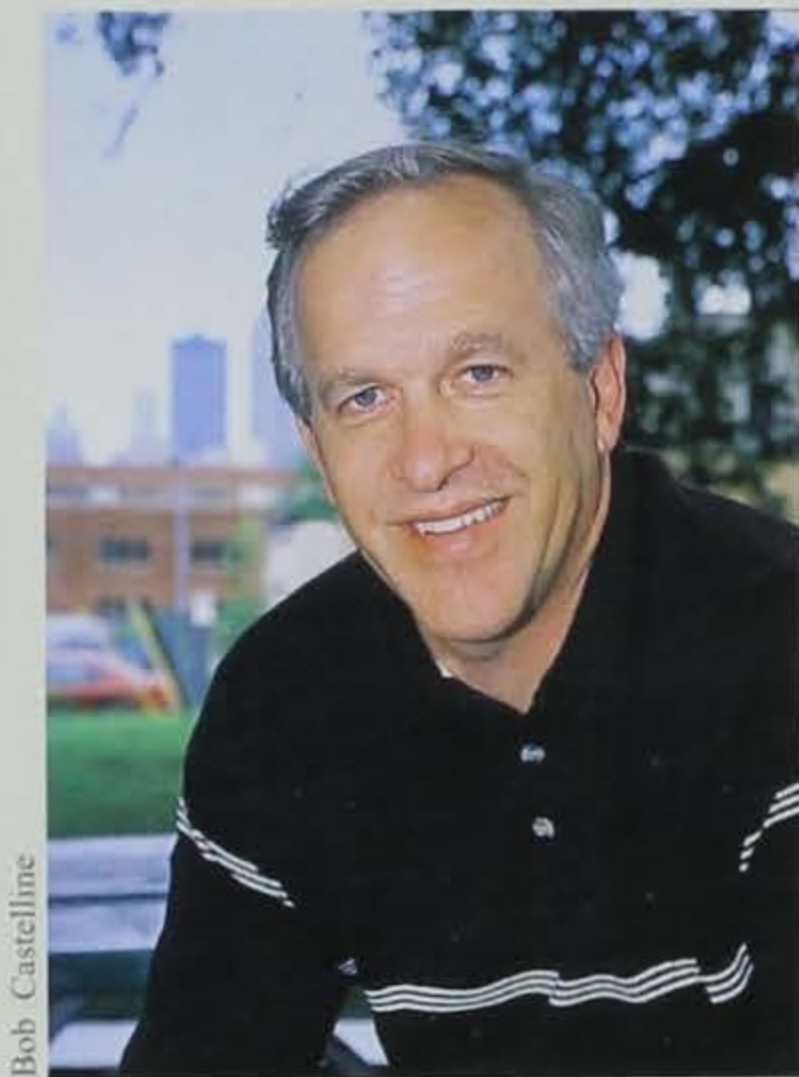
MARCH/APRIL 2003

NIST

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES



FROM THE DIRECTOR



Bob Castelline

Make the Most of Your Fishing Experience this Year ... Share It With Someone New

People who have been around serious anglers know they can be a secretive bunch. Trying to pry a favorite hotspot out of an angler can be about as easy as getting a poker player to show his hand before the final call.

Not wanting to broadcast a hot fishing hole is human nature and understandable. But anyone who has not shared their enthusiasm for the sport with a newcomer is missing out on one of the most truly enjoyable aspects of fishing. Witnessing the unbridled enthusiasm of a child catching a mess of bluegills or a neighbor getting his or her first

taste of a savory walleye can be every bit as satisfying as tying into a trophy fish of your own.

That is my challenge to the 500,000-plus anglers throughout the state who will wet a hook this year: Introduce someone to the sport of fishing who has never tried it before.

This issue of the *Conservationist* is as traditional and as anticipated for fishing enthusiasts as the first bobber of the spring being pulled under the water by a scappy bluegill. It is *the fishing issue*, a favorite hotspot that anglers from all over the state come back to every year at this time for insight from our experts, the fisheries biologists.

In this year's fishing forecast issue, we have added a number of new features aimed at encouraging participation from those who have not yet discovered the simple, stress-relieving sport of fishing.

As in the past, diehard anglers will find this year's forecast brimming with the fishing information they seek on the waters of Iowa. Many will find useful information on potential new fishing destinations and also learn a few new things about old favorite fishing holes.

But sometimes in the quest to provide the very latest, most detailed information to fishing enthusiasts, *potential* anglers can get lost in the shuffle. That's why

we've added additional features to this issue targeted at helping the novice get started in an endeavor that has provided joy and satisfaction to so many of us over the years. Among the features we've added are tips on best places around the state to take a kid fishing, out-of-the-way spots that offer the best of Iowa's scenic beauty and places where families can go to combine fishing with a number of other outdoor activities.

Nearly everyone who fishes today had a mentor somewhere along the way. It could have been a parent, grandparent, brother, uncle, neighbor or friend. One of the biggest allures to fishing is the time spent with a friend or family member away from the hassles of normal everyday living.

Share that experience with someone new to the sport this year, just as someone likely did with you when you started. It has often been said that the worst day fishing is better than your best day at work. Share that spirit with someone and find out how even more rewarding your own fishing experience can be.

Jeffrey R. Vonk

FRONT COVER: BASS FISHING BY LOWELL WASHBURN
BACK COVER: REDHEAD BY TY SMEDES



Ron Johnson

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by Bob Castelline

DNR pollution prevention interns are working with Iowa's business and industry to reduce waste and save money.

LETTERS

Ask the Warden

I really enjoy your magazine very much. It has many useful and interesting articles.

The first thing I read is Chuck Humeston's Wardens Diary with his humorous and not so humorous stories in the field.

At work and out hunting with friends the topic keeps coming up — is this legal?

This comes back to the Iowa Conservationist as a very informational magazine. And if there was ever a thought of a section called something like "Ask the Warden" where hunters and conservationists could ask questions that keep coming up in conversations that are probably asked elsewhere, and publish the answers.

Thanks very much for your time and keep up the good work.

Michael Culbertson
Dubuque

Mixed feelings on the 2003 calendar

I had to laugh at the letter in your most recent issue titled: "Calendar is Garbage." When I received the calendar in the mail I immediately put it up in my living room. I was also very careful not to bend or tear any pages as I plan on putting each one in a picture frame and hang them in my hallway at the end of the year. In my humble opinion, your calendars alone are worth my continued subscription to "The Conservationist." The latest one being particularly special.

Oh, but I must admit I did go

to the bank and pick up one of theirs for scribbling on.

Chris Hackman
Postville

I just received the 2003 Iowa Wildlife Art calendar from the Iowa Conservationist. Since moving away from Iowa three years ago, I have enjoyed hanging the calendar in my home each year to remind me of the state in which I grew up. While the paintings in this year's calendar are very nice, I don't think they do as much to capture the diverse beauty of Iowa's landscape and its wildlife as have the photographs of years past.

I will enjoy having this year's calendar on my wall, but I hope that next year's will return to having photographs.

Steven Riley
Carrboro, N.C.

To start with I think you have a great magazine and as you know you can't please everyone. The ATV ads don't bother me at all. I didn't pay any attention to (them) until the people started writing to you about them. Some people don't like ads in any magazine. I for one do.

Now for the 2003 DNR calendar. I think it is a great calendar. I DO have mine hanging in my living room. I like all of the pictures very very much. And I would never ever think about writing all over it. Mr. Lawson could have sent me his calendar. I could use another one. So you

hang in there and keep the calendars and magazines just the way they are.

Jim Smith
West Burlington

ATVs are not such a bad thing

In regards to the letter by Loren Lown about ATVs, I can't see ATVs as anti-environmental machines if used properly. True in some cases people abuse this privilege. In our cases my husband and I, we have each one. We are 69 years old and don't walk like we used to. These machines are a perfect way for us to get out to our hunting spots. We consider them a good old person's rig.

Also on the letter from Robert Lawson regarding the new 2003 DNR calendar. I thought the calendar was beautiful with the farmsteads and all, and its not nice to call it garbage. Anyone who gives you a beautiful calendar free should not complain about it. I'm sure the artists, printers and all worked hard on this calendar.

Marlene Peterson
Britt

Degradation with advertisements

I am very disappointed in the fact that you and the rest of the publishing hierarchy have chosen to put ads in the conservationist magazine. I think it degrades it very much. I thought with a change of commands in this magazine that some

new but not warranted changes would be made to no good. I think that you didn't need to bring so much color into the former good magazine. If costs were the problem I would have favored raising the subscription prices and leaving the magazine the old black and white. In fact you might be able to read the Warden's comments without all the color. I too am considering not renewing it after all these years that I was a member. Sorry.

Ray Wittenmeyer
Cedar Rapids

Nonresident licenses only for the rich

The Iowa DNR needs to rethink the exorbitant cost for nonresident licenses in our state. The DNR's image of nonresident hunters may not be exactly correct. I'm sure like most people they see a bunch of rich guys with their new Suburban, new gun and their L.L. Bean clothes doing anything they can to get a limit of pheasants.

The DNR is right. THOSE guys CAN afford the high price for Iowa's nonresident license. They are a minority and not the only nonresident hunters enjoying our state.

How about a grandfather taking his grandson who lives out of state on his first turkey or deer hunt? How about a young man who had

to move out of state to keep his job? This young man would love to carry on the family deer hunting tradition. Our state is making it extremely difficult for these cherished experiences to occur.

The cost for me to take my nonresident grandson turkey hunting including hunting license, habitat stamp and turkey license is \$189.50. I can only think of one word when I see fees like this, "GREED." I truly believe the bond that has been created in our families by our outdoor experiences over the years should be continued and affordable for years to come. The new experiences I want to share with my grandkids should be affordable even if they live in another state.

The state of Missouri now assesses an Iowa resident an additional \$25 fee for their nonresident license. Why? Because our state has raised our nonresident fees so high.

This is wrong. Not only is the Iowa DNR hurting nonresidents they are hurting residents as well. If the DNR does not want nonresident hunting then restrict the number of licenses but please do not make nonresident hunting only for the rich.

Gene Warner
Solon
(edited for length)

The *Iowa Conservationist* welcomes letters from readers. Printed letters reflect the opinions of the author. Letters may be edited for length and clarity. Letters can be emailed to alan.foster@dnr.state.ia.us.

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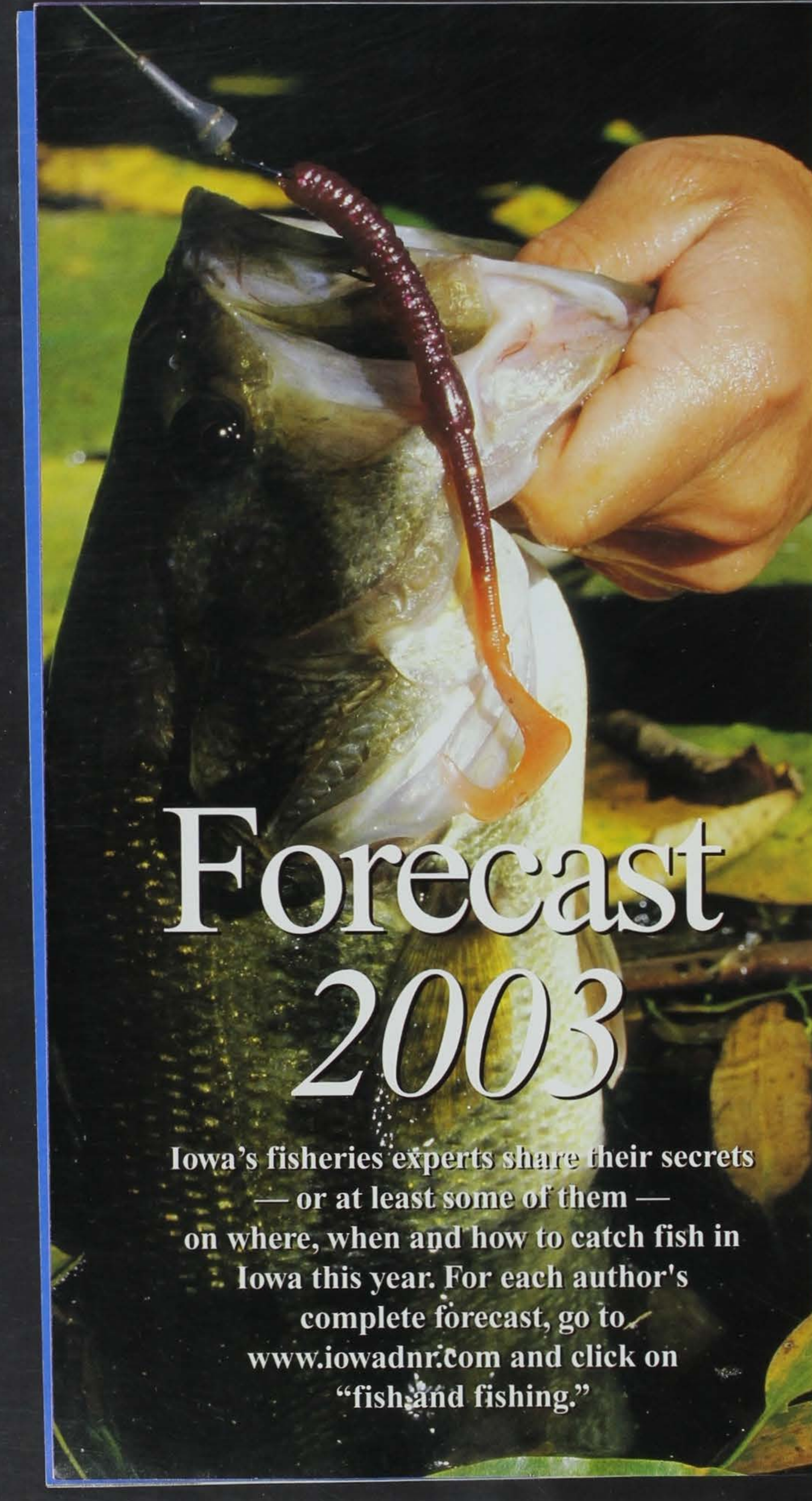
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Forecast 2003

**Iowa's fisheries experts share their secrets
— or at least some of them —
on where, when and how to catch fish in
Iowa this year. For each author's
complete forecast, go to
www.iowadnr.com and click on
“fish and fishing.”**



SOUTHWEST IOWA

by Andy Moore

Last year was the 26th and final time for Joe Schwartz to write this fishing forecast. Schwartz is enjoying the good life as a “retiree” and I was hired as his successor. One of Schwartz’ signature statements was “if the spring weather is good, fishing will be good.” His rule has not changed and I also expect good fishing in 2003 — if the weather cooperates.

Last year cool weather created inconsistent fishing in April. But as air temperatures, along with water temperatures, warmed in May, fishing improved dramatically and remained good through early June. Crappie fishing was very good at Three Mile Lake, Viking Lake, DeSoto Bend, Big Creek and Prairie Rose. In late May and early June, bluegill fishing exploded and stayed that way until mid-June. Largemouth bass fishing was also good during May and June. One of the reasons fishing is good during the spring and early summer is because fish are shallow, near the shore and more vulnerable to anglers.

As summer wears on, heat and humidity take over, precipitation is often spotty and fishing pressure and success typically drops. Anglers tend to stay home due to the uncomfortable conditions and the fish tend to move to deeper water where they are less accessible. However, in the cooler mornings and evenings, largemouth

bass and channel catfish move closer to shore to feed and can provide some exciting midsummer angling.

With good weather, I predict excellent fishing in southwest Iowa in 2003. For panfish, I recommend Big Creek, Three Mile, Meadow, Viking, Prairie Rose, Ahquabi, Hooper and Little River lakes, and Red Rock Reservoir (if water levels are fairly stable). Don Williams, Ahquabi and Hooper should be excellent for catch-and-release largemouth bass fishing. If walleye are your preference, I suggest Big Creek, Little River, Mormon Trail and Manawa.

Don't forget channel catfish, which are abundant in all our lakes, especially Prairie Rose and Easter, and our streams and rivers. For the more adventurous angler, don't overlook Three Mile Lake for muskie fishing.

The following tables should help guide you to your favorite fish. If that's not enough, contact the fisheries biologist in your area. Good fishing!!

Honorable Mention



Ahquabi, Warren; Badger Creek, Madison; Big Creek, Polk; Easter, Polk; Fogle Lake, Ringgold; Fulsom, Mills; Icaria, Adams; Littlefield, Audubon; Little River, Decatur; Manawa, Pottawattamie; Mariposa, Jasper; Missouri River, Pottawattamie; Mormon Trail, Adair; Orient, Adair; Prairie Rose, Shelby; Rock Creek, Jasper; Slip Bluff, Decatur; Twelve Mile, Union.

BLUEGILL

LAKE OR STREAM

Ahquabi, Warren

Carter, Pottawattamie
Fogle, Ringgold

Little River, Decatur

Nine Eagles, Decatur

Nodaway, Adair
Three Mile, Union

West Lake Osceola, Clarke

COMMENTS

Good for 8- to 12-inch redear sunfish. Challenge to catch. Good for 7- to 8-inch bluegill.

Fair numbers of 8- to 8.5-inch fish. Seven- to 8-inch fish are common. Redear up to 10 inches are a bonus. Seven- to 8-inch fish are common. Good bluegill fishing lake.

Little fishing pressure. Bluegills average 7 to 8 inches.

Good for 7-inch fish.

Tremendous population of 7- to 8.5-inch fish, some up to 9. Redear to 11 inches.

Seven and one-half- to 8.5-inch fish. Fish flooded timber edges.

Honorable Mention

The designation "honorable mention," means the lakes listed have good populations of the respective species, although the fish may average slightly smaller: Beaver, Dallas; Big Creek, Polk; Greenfield, Adair; Hooper, Warren; Littlefield, Audubon; Little River, Decatur; Meadow, Adair; Nine Eagles, Decatur; Nodaway, Adair; Viking, Montgomery.



CRAPPIE

Beaver, Dallas
Carter, Pottawattamie
DeSoto Bend, Harrison

Greenfield, Adair
Mormon Trail, Adair
Red Rock, Marion

Three Mile, Union

Viking Lake, Montgomery

West Lake Osceola, Clarke

Dandy 9- to 11-inch fish. Good numbers of 9- to 12-inch fish. Good fishing for 8- to 13-inch crappie. Best in early spring around structure. Nine- to 12-inch fish common. Eight- to 10-inch fish. Fish when water is clear, try feeder stream coves. Good numbers of 7- to 10-inch-plus fish. Good numbers of 8.5- to 10.5-inch fish with fair numbers of 11- to 13-inches. Good numbers of 8- to 9-inch crappies. Size is consistent with last year. Nine- to 10.5-inch fish with some up to 12.

LARGEMOUTH BASS

Badger Creek, *Madison*

Don Williams, *Boone*

Farm Ponds

Little River, *Decatur*

Meadow, *Adair*

Prairie Rose, *Shelby*

Red Rock, *Marion*

Three Mile, *Union*

Lots of 12- to 18-inch bass with an occasional lunker. Most fish are 13 to 17 inches, some lunker-size fish. Try points and woody structure in coves and northern portion of lake. Most private ponds in southwest Iowa are tremendous bass fisheries. Don't forget to ask for permission.

Try fishing submerged brush and trees. Good numbers of 2- to 3.5-pounders.

Good bass lake. Forty percent of the population is 15 inches or larger.

Large fish, 14 to 20 inches. Fish the stake beds and brush piles.

Best from mid-May to mid-July. Try Whitebreast area.

Tremendous fishing for 11- to 15-inch fish with good numbers of 16- to 19-inch fish. Our most popular tournament lake.

Honorable Mention

Ahquabi, *Warren*; Badger Creek, *Madison*; Beaver, *Dallas*; Big Creek, *Polk*; Easter, *Polk*; Greenfield, *Adair*; Green Valley, *Union*; Hooper, *Warren*; Hickory Grove, *Story*; Manawa, *Pottawattamie*; Mariposa, *Jasper*; Nine Eagles, *Decatur*; Saylorville, *Polk*; Twelve Mile, *Union*; Viking, *Montgomery*; West Lake Osceola, *Clarke*.



Andy's Picks

Andy Moore, southwest Iowa regional fisheries supervisor



EDITOR'S NOTE: We asked each of the four forecast authors for their picks on where in their district they would go if they had only one day to fish this year, the best place to take a youngster, the top family getaway destination and the region's "best kept secret."

BEST LAKE:

Three Mile Lake

Why: Three Mile Lake near

Creston has a wide variety of fish that can be caught at different times of the year. The lake has bluegill and crappie for spring and early summer fishing, largemouth bass and channel catfish for spring through fall fishing, and walleye and muskellunge for the specialty and trophy seeking angler.

Must have tackle: I would suggest crankbaits in a variety of colors from silver to fluorescent orange for bass, walleye and muskies; yellow and white jigs and minnows for crappie; black jigs and night crawlers for bluegill; and prepared baits and night crawlers for channel catfish.

Hotspots: Spring fishing is good in wind-warmed coves and adjacent deeper water. Early summer fishing is good along weed lines and rocks in 3 to 5 feet of water. Mid- to late-summer fishing should be done in 4- to 12-feet of

water around heavier cover or underwater mounds or rock piles. Fall fishing can be done in 3 to 4 feet of water out to 12 feet around mounds or rock piles, depending on the water temperatures.

Must know: There is a concession on the lake, which is open May through September, that sells bait and other items. There is also camping and cabins for rent. Bass tournaments are frequent on weekends and the lake also has a power boating zone.

KID'S PICK:

Lake Ahquabi

Located southwest of Indianola, this lake has excellent bluegill, redear and crappie fishing, along with excellent shoreline access, fishing jetties and an enclosed fishing pier. There is not a large number of "snags" in the lake, which makes fishing with youngsters more enjoyable.

WALLEYE

Big Creek, *Polk*

Fifteen-inch minimum length limits, with one fish over 20 inches daily. Bag limit of three fish. Lots of smaller walleye, some approaching length limit.

Des Moines River, *Polk & Boone*

Fish below Corps dams, low-head dams and gravel riffles. Scott Street Dam is good in the spring.

DeSoto, *Harrison*

Best in spring. Fair numbers of 14- to 17-inch fish.

Little River, *Decatur*

Fish average 14 to 20 inches. Excellent population. Fish 12 pounds present.

Manawa, *Pottawattamie*

Should be good again in 2003. Mostly 14- to 16-inch fish. Fish up to 8 pounds.

Mormon Trail, *Adair*

Good population of half-pound fish.

Saylorville, *Polk*

Best in late spring. Fish sandy points, old river channel, old roadbeds, outlet from Big Creek Lake and tailwaters from lake.

Three Mile, *Union*

Try the flooded roadbeds and humps for 15- to 20-inch fish.

Twelve Mile, *Union*

Fish roadbeds and creek channel edges. Fish are 13 to 24 inches.

BULLHEADS

Big Creek, *Polk*

Medium-sized, 8 to 10 inches, with a few 12 inches.

Manawa, *Pottawattamie*

Nice size fish. Average 1 pound.

Rock Creek, *Jasper*

Fish are definitely keepers but not as many as in the past.

Springbrook, *Guthrie*

Medium-sized, not as many as in past years.

FAMILY FRIENDLY:

Don Williams Lake

Don Williams Lake, five miles north of Ogden, would be a good choice for family fun. The park has a good camping area, a small museum, shelter facilities, bait shop/café and an attached golf course. The lake is about 30 miles from Ames and the Iowa State University theaters and seasonal sporting events.

HIDDEN JEWEL:

Meadow Lake

Meadow Lake, just north of Greenfield, is a 42-acre lake that does not get a lot of attention because it is associated with a wildlife area. It has no beach or rest room facilities, but offers good fishing for largemouth bass, bluegill and crappie. Plenty of underwater brush piles provide good access to fish.

MUSKIES

Three Miles, *Union*

Fish up to 46 inches (20 pounds) and growing rapidly.

WHITE BASS/WIPERS

Red Rock, *Marion*

Fish midsummer, off of dam towards the beach or up towards marina. Good in the Des Moines River up to Scott Street Dam in spring. Good to excellent fishing in the tailwater area below dam. Good in reservoir and below dam. Try below spillway from Big Creek Lake. White bass average 8 to 13 inches with some to 16 inches.

Saylorville, *Polk*

CHANNEL CATFISH

Ahquabi, *Warren*

Nice fish, 18 to 20 inches common, with some up to 30.

Big Creek, *Polk*

Really nice fish, lots of them and not many catfish anglers.

Easter, *Polk*

Excellent for 12- to 20-inch fish.

Fogle, *Ringgold*

Great numbers of 2- to 4-pound fish.

Icaria, *Adams*

All sizes of fish up to 5 pounds.

Little River, *Decatur*

Many 2- to 8-pounders and some 10 to 12.

CHANNEL CATFISH, *cont.*

Manawa, *Pottawattamie*

Mormon Trail, *Adair*

Nine Eagles, *Decatur*

Prairie Rose, *Shelby*

SW Rivers

Three Mile, *Union*

Twelve Mile, *Union*

West Lake Osceola, *Clarke*

Good numbers, most 2 to 6 pounds.

Some up to 12 pounds.

Very good numbers of 15- to 18-inch fish.

Two- to 6-pound cats are abundant and under-used by anglers.

Good numbers of 3- to 6-pound fish, some up to 12. Some flatheads present.

Catfish are abundant in all rivers.

Good numbers of 2- to 6-pound fish.

Cats 2 to 6 pounds common, a few to 10 pounds. Good early on cut shad.

Two- to 4-pounders available with a few up to 12.



Honorable Mention

Carter, *Pottawattamie*;
Cedar, *Madison*; Green Valley,
Union; Littlefield, *Audubon*;
Marion County Board Lake,
Marion; Meadow, *Adair*;
Nodaway, *Adair*; Orient, *Adair*;
Red Rock, *Marion*; Rock Creek,
Jasper; Saylorville, *Polk*; Summit
Lake, *Union*; Viking, *Montgom-*
ery; Willow Lake, *Harrison*.



by Jon Christensen

The long winter has left you sickened with cabin fever waiting for the open-water fishing season. You have subdued your urge by prepping your gear and reading articles in fishing magazines. But spring has arrived, and now it's time to head to the water. You can hardly wait to feel that bite and land the first fish. The big question, though, stops you dead in your tracks. Where should I go fishing? Fortunately, southeast Iowa abounds with opportunity, from the Mississippi River, reservoirs and lakes to inland rivers and farm ponds.

Late winter and into early spring can offer great fishing opportunities



HARLAN
Swanson Marine
800-733-5188

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for walleye anglers on the Mississippi River. Walleye, and their close cousin the sauger, congregate below lock and dams and off wingdams. Larger jigs, one-half ounce or heavier, are needed to get near the bottom where these fish are located. Fishing can also be good in the fall near rocky areas and wingdams. Walleyes and sauger tend to migrate to deeper areas of the river in late fall. Lake Rathbun has also been a staple walleye fishery and offers opportunities to catch fish into the summer.

Channel catfish abound in the Mississippi River; however, our inland

rivers and lakes in southeast Iowa can also offer some great action throughout the year. Typically these fish are easy to catch, require no fancy equipment and can be caught from boat or shore on various baits.

Rathbun and Coralville reservoirs can be excellent in early spring after ice-out. Catfish congregate in the warmer shallow areas of these reservoirs to feed on dead fish during this pre-spawn period. Dead shad and cutbait are great early baits.

Fishing is also good in June when the catfish begin to spawn. Channel catfish tend to be more aggressive

biters during this time. Summertime can also offer good fishing. As the water warms, catfish tend to migrate to deeper pools and readily accept dipbaits, liver and other baits. Inland rivers such as the Wapsipinicon, Skunk, Cedar and Iowa also offer exceptional angling for both channel catfish and flathead catfish. Below drift piles and in deeper pools are good areas to start in these rivers.

Panfishing can be excellent, especially in the lakes and abundant farm ponds. The smaller, shallow farm ponds warm quicker than the lakes and offer some fast action for bluegills in the spring and early summer. Bluegill fishing will also be

Honorable Mention



Central, *Jones*; farm ponds; Hannen, *Benton*; Kent, *Johnson*; Miami, *Monroe*; Mississippi River pools 16, 18 and 19; Odessa, *Louisa*; White Oak, *Mahaska*.

good at Sugema, Geode, Wapello and Lake Iowa where they will readily accept small jigs and live baits.

Crappie anglers should find success and quality fish on Coralville, Miami, Rathbun and Odessa lakes. Look for crappies around brush in the spring. Crappies are easiest to catch during the spawning period when the water temperatures hit around 62 to 65 degrees. Fall can also be a good time to catch crappies.

Redear sunfish offer an added bonus. Try for redears in Lake Iowa, Diamond, Wapello and Geode in the

spring with a small worm or leech on a hook or jig near the bottom. These larger, handsome panfish are sure to offer a memorable outing.

Topwater baits can offer some explosive action in spring and summer for largemouth bass. Bass are almost always around cover, so cast around sunken trees, docks and vegetation. Having a good supply of topwater baits, diving crankbaits, jigs and soft plastic baits is sometimes needed to trigger fish to strike. Farm ponds are good areas to start catching bass; they warm up quickly, offering great action through spring and summer.

These small jewels can be your best bet for excellent action — and a trophy. Anglers are reminded to ask permission since most of Iowa's farm ponds are privately owned. Other areas to try for bass are Hawthorn, Geode, Sugema and Wapello.

Fishing is said to be one of America's favorite pastimes and it's easy to see why. It puts us closer to nature, it can be enjoyed in company or solitude by anyone no matter if you're a rookie or a pro. Why not try fishing southeast Iowa on your next fishing outing. More importantly get out there and enjoy the resource!

BLUEGILLS

LAKE OR STREAM

Diamond, *Poweshiek*
Geode, *Henry*

Hawthorn, *Mahaska*
Iowa, *Iowa*
Indian, *Van Buren*

Mississippi River, *Pool 17*

Sugema, *Van Buren*
Wapello, *Davis*

COMMENTS

Average harvest size 6 to 8 inches. Good numbers of 7- to 8-inch fish; a perennial producer of big bluegills. Good numbers of 6- to 8-inch fish. Good numbers of 6- to 9-inch fish. Excellent quality, with good numbers of 8- to 9-inch fish. Concentrate efforts in Big Timber, Cleveland Slough, Hidden Acres, Bogus Island, Blanchard Slough and Eagle Fill. Tremendous number of 7- to 9-inchers. Excellent number of 8- to 10-inch fish. Concentrate efforts near partially submerged timber and rock piles.

CRAPPIES

Coralville, *Johnson*

Darling, *Washington*

Indian, *Van Buren*

Macbride, *Johnson*
Miami, *Monroe*

Excellent numbers of 9- to 12-inch fish, with larger fish available. Dense population with several 10- to 12-inch fish caught. Good numbers of 9- to 11-inch fish with 12- to 14-inch fish available. Dense population of 7- to 9-inch fish. Excellent numbers of 8- to 11-inch fish, with trophy fish available.

Honorable Mention



Diamond, *Poweshiek*; Iowa,
Iowa; Keomah, *Mahaska*;
Mississippi River pools 16 and 18;
Pleasant Creek, *Linn*.

CRAPPIES, *cont.*

Mississippi River, *Pool 17*
Mississippi River, *Pool 19*
Odessa, *Louisa*

Rathbun, *Appanoose*

Sugema, *Van Buren*

Big Timber produces fish of all sizes.
Clover Slough has fish of all sizes.
Fish 9 to 12 inches abundant, with fish
14 inches and larger available.
Good numbers of 6- to 10-inch fish
with trophy fish available.
Good angling available with fish
averaging 9 to 10 inches.

LARGEMOUTH BASS

Geode, *Henry*
Hawthorn, *Mahaska*

Macbride, *Johnson*

Miami, *Monroe*

A real bass factory — good numbers of sub-legal fish.
Good numbers of 16- to 22-
inch fish and catch-and-
release fish in the 12- to 16-
inch protected slot size limit.
Fish of all sizes with good
numbers of 2- to 4-pounders.
Excellent numbers of
various sizes available.

Honorable Mention

Darling, *Washington*;
Diamond, *Poweshiek*;
farm ponds; Iowa,
Iowa; Keomah,
Mahaska; Mississippi River
pools 16, 18 and 19; Odessa, *Louisa*.



Jon's Picks

Jon Christensen,
southeast Iowa
fisheries
technician



BEST LAKE:

Lake Rathbun

Why: Lake Rathbun is definitely at the top of the list of consistent quality crappie fisheries. Abundant size classes of crappies are available and anglers should have success catching 12-inch-plus fish.

Crappie fishing tips: The best time to catch crappies on

Lake Rathbun is shortly after ice-out to the end of the spawning period. After ice-out, crappies begin migrating to the shallow warmer coves. The spawning period for crappies in Lake Rathbun begins when the water hits the lower 50s and runs through to the lower 60s, usually from the first to third week in May. Most crappies move off their spawning beds shortly after Memorial Day.

Hotspots: Find habitat and you will find crappies. Try fishing around trees, flooded vegetation and rock outcroppings. Boat anglers should have early success at South Fork and Bridgeview. During the peak of the spawn, fish Buck Creek, Honey Creek, Bridgeview and near the shoreline and coves throughout the lake. After the spawn, crappies can

be found around deeper water habitat. Shore anglers can find crappies at Island View, Bridgeview and Buck Creek.

Must know: Lake Rathbun is eight miles northwest of Centerville and there are several bait shops nearby. Camping and cabin rentals are available at Honey Creek State Park and through the Army Corps of Engineers.

KID'S PICK:

Kent Park

Kent Park, located west of Tiffin in Johnson County, offers plenty of opportunity for the young angler. Bluegills can be caught fairly easily from shore around brush piles. Small hooks tipped with a piece of night crawler and a small bobber work

LARGEMOUTH BASS, *cont.*

Mississippi River, *Pool 17*

Pleasant Creek, *Linn*

Sugema, *Van Buren*

Wapello, *Davis*

The Big Timber area contains all sizes, with trophy sizes available.

Minimum length limit 18 inches, excellent catch-and-release fishery with larger fish available.

Good numbers of various sizes. Anglers encouraged to harvest fish under 12 inches. There is a 12- to 18-inch protected slot size limit.

No-kill regulation; tremendous numbers of 12- to 17-inch fish.

WHITE BASS

Mississippi River, *Pools 16-19*

Rathbun, *Appanoose*

Macbride, *Johnson*

Pleasant Creek, *Linn*

Coralville, *Johnson*

Iowa River, *Johnson*

Good around locks and dams, and wingdams.

Excellent in summer around humps and points for 10- to 15-inch fish.

Try fishing in late summer for 12- to 14-inch fish.

Excellent fishing in summer with topwater baits.

Best in spring and late summer on spinners and shad-colored crankbaits for 10- to 13- inch fish.

Good in spring and summer below dams and flow areas.

REDEARS

Wapello, *Davis*

Diamond Lake, *Poweshiek*

Geode, *Henry*

Iowa, *Iowa*

Good numbers of 8- to 12-inch fish.

Abundant numbers of 9- to 11-inch fish with larger fish available.

Good for 8- to 10-inch fish.

Excellent year class of 8- to 9-inch fish.

especially well around late May and early June. Catfish are abundant and can be caught fairly easy on crawlers, liver and paste baits. Kent Park has shoreline access around the entire 26-acre lake. With playground equipment, hiking, swimming, camping and restored prairies, there is plenty of opportunity for a child's imagination to run free if the fishing is slow.

HIDDEN JEWEL:

Diamond Lake

Anglers looking for a good quality all-around lake can't go wrong with Diamond Lake in Poweshiek County near the town of Montezuma south of Interstate 80. Diamond Lake is a great panfish lake with good numbers of 7-inch-plus bluegills and 9-inch-plus crappies. Largemouth bass fishing is

also good, with many fish over the 15-inch length limit. The lake also has a noteworthy channel catfish population with fish in several size classes. Redear sunfish offer anglers an added bonus with many pounders available in the 9- to 11-inch bracket. Diamond Lake is a 98-acre lake with good shoreline access. Anglers should be aware there is an electric-only motor restriction and minnow use is prohibited. Electric and nonelectric camping with bathroom and shower facilities are available.

FAMILY FRIENDLY:

Lake Macbride

Lake Macbride offers ample opportunity for a family outing. It is known primarily as a good crappie and catfish lake. Crappies are easily caught in the

spring from shore and by boat off of brush piles around early to mid-May when the water temperature hits the lower 50s to mid 60s. Catfishing can be excellent, especially during June when catfish come into the shallows to spawn. The lake has good shoreline access and several boat ramps. If the fish aren't biting, Lake Macbride State Park has boat rental, a playground, beach, picnic areas and a great trail system for hiking and biking. It has campgrounds available with both electric and nonelectric camp sites. Coralville Reservoir borders a portion of the park for added opportunities. Lake Macbride is located just outside Solon and close to Cedar Rapids and Iowa City.

CHANNEL CATFISH

Coralville Reservoir, *Johnson*
 Darling, *Washington*
 Hawthorn, *Mahaska*
 Macbride, *Johnson*
 Miami, *Monroe*
 Mississippi River, *Pools 16-19*
 Rathbun, *Appanoose*
 Cedar, Iowa, Skunk and
 Wapsipinicon rivers

Exceptional fishery, all sizes available, excellent post ice-out and summer fishing.
 Lots of nice stringers of fish caught in late summer.
 Excellent fishery with fish up to 25 inches.
 Good for all sizes.
 Excellent for all sizes.
 Excellent fishing all sizes available.
 Excellent fishery, post ice-out exceptional.
 All are good producers of catfish.
 especially during the summer months.
 Fish are usually in deep holes or near
 drift piles.

Honorable Mention

Bob
 White,
 Wayne;
 Corydon
 Reservoir, *Wayne*; Kent,
Johnson; Keomah, *Mahaska*;
 Wapello, *Davis*.



FLATHEAD CATFISH

Mississippi River, *Pools 16-19*
 Coralville, *Johnson*
 Rathbun, *Appanoose*
 Cedar, Iowa, Skunk, and
 Wapsipinicon rivers

Best below locks and dams, wingdams, drift piles and side channels.
 Good for larger fish.
 Fair for 2- to 20-pounders; try the Bridgeview area in late spring and early summer.
 Good for all sizes, look for big fish in holes during the summer. Also try drift piles
 and bridge pilings.

WALLEYES

Mississippi River, *Pools 16-19*
 Sugema, *Van Buren*
 Rathbun, *Appanoose*
 Des Moines River, *Wapello*

 Macbride, *Johnson*
 Coralville, *Johnson*
 Iowa River, *Johnson*

Try around lock and dams, and wingdams. Also good for sauger.
 Good for 15- to 19-inch fish and 24-inches.
 Excellent fishery! Large numbers of 15- to 21-inch fish available.
 Quality angling below the Ottumwa Hydropower dam; trophy fish available. Best
 fishing is in late winter and early spring.
 Good numbers of 14- to 20-inch fish; concentrate around rock reefs.
 Good in spring and fall in the upper end around the I-380 bridge.
 Quality angling below Coralville Dam and lowhead dams in Iowa City for 12- to
 16-inch fish.

Tom's Picks

*Tom
 Gengerke,
 northwest
 Iowa regional
 fisheries
 supervisor*



BEST OVERALL LAKE:

West Okoboji

Why: West Okoboji in Dickinson
 County has a highly diversified fish

community (47 species). There are at
 least 10 species of commonly caught
 sportfish, from panfish to predators, so
 the probability that something is biting is
 high. Bluegill and smallmouth bass fish-
 eries are excellent.

Must have tackle: I suggest
 small jigs, either green or black
 (possibly tipped with a piece of night
 crawler) for bluegill. Use jigs that are
 1/32 to 1/16 ounce. Wax worms or
 wigglers will also work. Smallmouth
 bass fishing is also good using a

variety of presentations. Crankbaits
 (Shad Raps, Rapalas), 1/8- to 1/4-
 ounce jigs or leeches fished under a
 slip bobber are all appropriate.

Hotspots: Boat anglers should
 target rock reefs in 12 to 18 feet of
 water early in the year and move to
 the weed lines by early July. Emerson
 and Miller's bays are favorite loca-
 tions for bluegill anglers. Fishing close
 to docks can also be productive.

Must know: There are bait shops
 near the lake, including Oh Shucks

NORTHWEST & NORTH-CENTRAL IOWA

by Thomas Gengerke

When anglers think of fishing in northwest and north-central Iowa the first fish that comes to mind may not be the channel catfish. However, summer and catfish fishing go hand-in-hand all across Iowa, and rivers and streams represent some of the best opportunities. In fact, our large-to-moderate-sized streams are particularly under-used. They support excellent self-sustaining populations. Riverine catfish typically average one to two pounds; however, larger individuals exceeding 10 pounds are not uncommon.

Knowledgeable anglers look for brush piles and deep pools during the summer. Because catfish are omnivorous and therefore opportunistic in their feeding habits, many

different types of baits will work. Prepared baits, chicken livers and crayfish are extremely popular with successful catfish anglers. If you fish in the evening, riffle areas can be productive. Fish often move from the adjoining pools to the riffles to feed at this time of day.

Where are some of the best areas to find riverine channel catfish in our part of the state? Try the East and West Fork of the Des Moines River in Kossuth and Humboldt counties. Research conducted in the 1980s found more than 400 pounds per acre of catfish in the Des Moines River near Algona. The area from Estherville north to the Iowa-Minnesota border, the Little Sioux River from Buena Vista County to the Woodbury-Monona county line, the Boone River from Webster City to the confluence with the Des Moines and the Iowa River in Hardin County are all excellent. The abundant habitat in these river reaches contribute to consecutive strong year-classes as well as providing the angler with readily accessible locations to harvest these fish. As you move downstream

on the Des Moines (Webster County), the river becomes wider and anglers should search out the deeper pools, particularly those on outside bends. A bonus in this section is the flathead catfish. Each year, flathead in the 20- to 40-pound class are caught. Anglers pursuing flatheads frequently use green sunfish, chubs and goldfish for bait.

The North Raccoon River in Sac, Calhoun and Carroll counties offers the angler a variety of habitats and plenty of fish. Anglers should not overlook the rock rubble fishing riffles or cutbanks along this river reach. Many of the fish in the "Coon" are one to five pounds or larger.

Specific locations on the Big Sioux include the reach from Gitchie Manitou to the Klondike Dam (Lyon County), the area from the Rock/Sioux access to Oak Grove State Park in Sioux County and the Plymouth County accesses located at Big Sioux Park and Millsite.

Channel Catfish! A good fight! Excellent table fare! Lots of fish! Fish your rivers and enjoy a great outdoor adventure.

near the south end, and three state parks on the lake. May is a popular time for tournaments, and recreational boating activity picks up throughout the summer.

FAMILY FRIENDLY:

Beeds Lake

Beeds Lake (100 acres) is about one mile north and two miles west of Hampton. The lake has excellent opportunities for crappies, largemouth bass and channel catfish. There are

five jetties, a nice campground with a playground, a concession (paddle boats, bait, etc.) on the lake and a nicely restored shelter for visitors. It's also close to Mason City, just in case shopping is on your agenda.

KID'S PICK:

Upper and Lower Pine lakes

Upper and Lower Pine lakes, located near Eldora, offer great opportunities for bluegill and crappie fishing. Lower Pine Lake has lots of

access. Nice bluegills (6 to 7 inches) and crappies (8 to 10 inches). There is a state park adjacent to the lakes.

HIDDEN JEWEL:

Dog Creek

Dog Creek (28 acres), located near Sutherland in O'Brien County, offers crappie, largemouth bass and bluegill fishing. Camping, a swimming beach and a universally accessible dock are available.

WALLEYES

LAKE OR STREAM

Clear Lake, *Cerro Gordo*

Spirit Lake, *Dickinson*

Storm Lake, *Buena Vista*

North Twin, *Calhoun*

COMMENTS

Good fishing in 2002 with nearly 6,000 fish harvested averaging 17.5 inches.

Expect another good season in 2003.

Most fish will average 14 to 20 inches.

Good numbers of 18- to 20-inch fish will be available during the 2003 season.

Many 12- to 14-inch walleyes will fuel good catch-and-release fishing. Early anglers will find fishing after dark will produce the best results. Later in the year the emerging weed growth is a good producer. Jigging a minnow through the weeds or casting and retrieving a night crawler above the weeds are both good producers at this time of year. Good growth of walleye through the summer will provide good opportunities for the wading angler during the fall.

Year class strengths have increased since the annual stocking of 6-inch fingerlings began. Trolling crankbaits in May and June is still the best way to catch walleye in Storm Lake. Don't forget the 15-inch length limit.

Walleye fishing was excellent in 2002 for nice-sized walleye and fishing should be even better in 2003. Lots of walleyes in the 18- to 21-inch range. Trolling crankbaits in the middle of the lake proved to be a deadly tactic.

Honorable Mention

East

Okoboji,

Dickinson;

Five Island, *Palo Alto*; Silver Lake,

Dickinson; West Fork Des Moines River, *Humboldt*.



YELLOW PERCH

Silver Lake, *Palo Alto*

Spirit Lake, *Dickinson*

Little Swan Lake,
Hamilton

Anglers will see an upswing in the fishery with angler-acceptable size fish caught. Persistence and patience will be rewarded with good catches of 8- to 10-inch fish during the spring.

Continued good growth should carry through and provide good fishing during the fall.

Last year anglers caught good numbers (more than 75,000) of angler-acceptable perch from Spirit Lake. Good numbers and growth throughout the summer will produce excellent numbers of large fish for the fall. To quickly locate fish, look for the flotilla of boats because they often indicate the daily hotspots.

Last year's survey indicates good numbers of 8- to 10-inch fish. Anglers typically fish from the boat ramp dock using minnows under a bobber.

Honorable Mention

Lake

Cornelia,

Wright; Ingham

Lake, *Emmet*; Little Wall Lake, *Hamilton*.



BULLHEADS

Clear Lake, *Cerro Gordo*
Ingham Lake, *Emmet*

Lost Island Lake, *Palo Alto*
Silver Lake, *Palo Alto*

Bullheads averaging 10 inches should provide excellent fishing in 2003.

Anglers will harvest excellent numbers of large fish during 2003. This lake has the potential to provide fast and furious action during the peak spring period.

This traditional producer will again provide large fish for anglers.

Good numbers of 10-inch bullheads. An added bonus will be yellow bullheads, found in significant numbers during 2002 lake survey. Plenty of shoreline access along the northwest, east and southeast corners.

BULLHEADS, *cont.*

Spirit Lake, *Dickinson*

Trophy bullheads! Surveys reflect fair to good numbers of large, plump fish approaching 14 inches.

CHANNEL CATFISH

Iowa River, *Hardin*

Recent population survey revealed good numbers of one-half- to 2-pound fish from Alden to Eldora. Snags and deep holes produce well, but don't overlook shallow water riffle areas.

Storm Lake, *Buena Vista*

A perennial catfish hotspot, Storm Lake produced excellent catfish in 2002. Most fish will be in the 2- to 5-pound class, with some up to 15. May, June and July are the best months, however lots of fish are taken in September on stinkbait. For real excitement, drift cutbait on the bottom during July and August.

Lake Pahoja, *Lyon*

Survey results reflect excellent numbers of keeper-size (18 to 21 inches and larger) fish. Superb fishing, mainly in the evening using traditional baits, have again proven the success of the cage catfish program.

Five Island, *Palo Alto*

The opportunity is there to harvest good numbers of 20-inch channel catfish. Abundant areas exist for shore anglers to explore and find that secret place. Traditional baits are in order; however don't overlook live bait like night crawlers. With this versatile bait, an angler may end the day with a multi-species catch.

Honorable Mention

Black Hawk
Lake, *Sac*;
Center Lake,
Dickinson; Dog Lake,
O'Brien; Rice Lake, *Winnebago*;
Silver Lake, *Worth*.



Honorable Mention



Black Hawk, *Sac*;
Boone River,
Hamilton; Center
Lake, *Dickinson*;
Crystal Lake,
Hancock; Little
Swan Lake,
Dickinson; Silver
Lake, *Dickinson*.

MUSKELLUNGE

Clear Lake, *Cerro Gordo*

Outstanding survival of yearling stockings has produced excellent numbers of muskie between 25 and 35 inches. Look for this lake to provide good opportunities for muskie anglers in the near future.

West Okoboji, *Dickinson*

West Okoboji has been coming on the last couple years and 2003 will be better than last when some fish in the 35- to 39-inch range were caught. Fishing will be better and the fish bigger. Fall is the active time for muskies.

Spirit Lake, *Dickinson*

This largest of natural lakes has been producing record netting catches of sub-legal muskies for the Spirit Lake Hatchery the last two years. Small fish usually lead to larger fish and if this holds true, Spirit Lake muskie anglers better be ready to do battle with a number of fish just below the legal size limit (40 inches). Remember, there are a few big fish that may surprise even the seasoned muskie angler.

BLUEGILLS

Nelson Park Lake, *Crawford*

Fisheries survey in 2002 showed a good population of nice bluegill between 8.5 and 9 inches. May and June are the best months.

Yellow Smoke Lake, *Crawford*

Last year found anglers harvesting a large number of 9-inch bluegill. Due to good recruitment, 2003 should provide good fishing for plate-sized gills.

BLUEGILLS, *cont.*

West Okoboji, *Dickinson*

Minnewashta, *Dickinson*

Upper Gar, *Dickinson*

Again bluegills will provide anglers with plenty of excitement and fine table fare in 2003. Action starts early after ice-out in the canals as fish seek out warmer water. Docks and hoists provide good habitat for these feisty panfish, but remember to be courteous of individual dock owners. As the season progresses look for rock piles and weeds on the main lake for the best action.

The bluegills cooperated in 2002 and will again in 2003. This season may produce a few less fish but the size will make up for it with 7- to 9-inch fish caught. The brushy area off the east side of the lake is a good starting point. This little lake produced some dandy bluegill action in 2002, which will continue in 2003. Submerged vegetation provides the cover for these panfish.

Honorable Mention

Briggs Woods, *Hamilton*;
Beeds Lake, *Franklin*; Center Lake, *Dickinson*.



SMALLMOUTH BASS

Iowa River, *Hardin*

Spirit Lake, *Dickinson*

West Okoboji, *Dickinson*

Surveys show the greatest density of bass between Alden and Steamboat Rock. Good numbers of 12-inch-plus fish, up to 18 inches were collected.

This lake has a fine population of "smallies." Action begins shortly after ice out on shallow rock piles on sunny, calm days with jigs and minnows. As the water warms the fish move to deeper rock piles and emerging weeds, and can be caught with live bait and artificials. The action peaks when the fish are on their beds. The 2003 season will be better than in 2002 with smallmouth growing into the 15-inch-plus size range. Rocks are the key early in the season. Rocks, weeds and weed lines are productive in the summer. Live bait starts the action in the spring and slowly gives way to crank baits as the water temperature gets into the mid-60s. Leeches are a good summer bait to fish in the vegetation.

LARGEMOUTH BASS

Brushy Creek, *Webster*

Upper & Lower Pine, *Hardin*

Dog Creek Lake, *O'Brien*

West Okoboji, *Dickinson*

Although this lake receives a lot of fishing pressure, growth rates and numbers are excellent. Several year classes present, with fish up to 5 pounds.

A 2002 electrofishing survey showed excellent age structure in these lakes. Fish greater than 15 inches are common, along with a few exceeding 5 pounds. Good opportunities exist to catch large bass approaching 21 inches in this small lake. Anglers will continue to notice a decrease in the catch rates; however, those with determination will not be disappointed. Use weedless baits such as plastic worms, surface lures, and jig and pigs among the submerged brush piles. The outlook for 2003 looks bright with many sub-legal (less than 15 inches) bass boated in 2002. Shallow bays and the canal system are early producers, with docks, hoists and weed lines productive throughout the summer and fall.

Honorable Mention

Mill Creek Lake, *O'Brien*; Center Lake, *Dickinson*; Beeds Lake, *Franklin*; Briggs Woods Lake, *Hamilton*.



WHITE BASS

Storm Lake, *Buena Vista*

Thousands of white bass were caught in Storm Lake in 2002 and plenty more remain. Fish from 10 to 18 inches were reported with most of the fish being caught on crankbaits or twistertails.

Yellow Smoke, *Crawford*

Although an unlikely white bass lake, lots of large white bass were harvested from this 40-acre lake. Casting to surfacing schools of fish in the evening hours is an excellent method to catch these scrappy fighters.

YELLOW BASS

Clear Lake, *Cerro Gordo*

Excellent fishing during 2002 for these scrappy panfish. More than 50,000 harvested averaging 8.5 inches. Expect another good year, with average size increasing to more than 9 inches.

NORTHERN PIKE

Winnebago River, *Winnebago, Hancock and Cerro Gordo*

Stocked annually to supplement natural reproduction, this stream produces good numbers of northern pike every year, particularly during the early spring. Fish during March and April with spoons or chubs/suckers if you prefer using live bait. Year in and year out this lake is a good bet to produce some nice-sized fish (greater than 25 inches). Best time to fish is early spring using cut bait fished on the bottom. Action will continue until water temperatures reach 70 degrees, then shut down until the cool temperatures of fall when the fish go on the feedbag getting ready for the approaching winter.

Trumbull Lake, *Clay*

West Swan Lake, *Emmet*

This lake is on the rebound since the winterkill of 2001. Survey results indicate good numbers of northern pike up to 3 pounds. These fish will provide plenty of consistent action from when the ice leaves the lake throughout the spring.

Tuttle, *Emmet*

Fingerling stockings and good growth should contribute to good fishing in this 2,300-acre natural lake.

CRAPPIES

Crystal Lake, *Hancock*

A spring 2002 population survey showed excellent numbers of white crappie averaging 9.5 inches. Fish near downed or overhanging trees on the southwest shoreline in May for the best results.

Beeds Lake, *Franklin*

Drift fishing with a 1/32-ounce jig tipped with a small minnow during the summer

Silver Lake, *Palo Alto*

months has produced good catches of 7- to 9-inch crappie the past several years. Anglers fishing the shallow-water habitat throughout the spring season will catch white crappie from 8 to 10 inches. Cast a 1/16-ounce mini-jig to find active fish. Several year classes detected during recent surveys will provide constant angling for this species for the upcoming season. Good growth throughout the summer season will carry the fishery through the winter season.

Dog Creek Lake, *O'Brien*

Brushy Creek, *Webster*

The first year class of 9-inch crappie was caught in moderate numbers last year. More and larger fish should be available in 2003.

Honorable Mention

Lower Pine Lake, *Hardin*; Badger Lake, *Webster*.





by Dave Moeller

The open-water season is finally here. It's time to start curing that case of cabin fever by getting out on the water and pursuing some denizens of the deep. Anticipation is running high and you just can't wait any longer. So let's get out there and hit the water!

Listed in the accompanying tables are the waters where northeast fisheries biologists expect angling for the major sportfish species to be good this year. However, if we can coincide our efforts with certain key periods and conditions, our success will be greatly enhanced. Let's take a look at when to concentrate our angling efforts for each species.

As soon as the ice goes out in the spring, channel catfish go on a feeding binge on fish that have died during the winter, so fishing with cut-bait or dead minnows is often excellent. Catfishing is also very good on a rising river following a rainy period. The summer and early fall months of low and stable river flows are also good times for chasing catfish.

The pre-spawn period from just after ice-out to when the water temperature reaches about 45 degrees is an excellent time to fish for walleye just below the Mississippi River navigation dams and the low-head dams on our larger, interior rivers. Chances of catching a trophy are also best at this

time. Late spring, summer and early fall often finds walleyes on the wingdams and along riprap areas on the Mississippi when the river flows are low and stable. Late fall and winter again finds them in the dam tailwater areas on the Mississippi and the deepest pools on the interior rivers.

The catchable trout streams are generally good throughout the April-through-November stocking season. The fall months are also very good when angling pressure and streamside disturbances are reduced. An excellent time to fish the more wary stream-reared trout in the special regulation and put-and-grow streams is just after a moderate rain when the normally crystal-clear water has a slight color. During this brief period, the angler has an advantage and this is when the biggest trout are caught.

By far the best time for largemouth bass is the pre-spawn, normally in May, when the water temperature ranges from 55 to 62 degrees and the fish are actively feeding in shallow water. The fall months from mid-September to when the water cools to about 50 degrees are also good when the bass are again foraging in the shallows before the winter months.

A close cousin of the walleye, sauger are found primarily in the

Mississippi River. The tailwaters below the navigation dams are often loaded with saugers from October and November right on through the winter months and into April, just before they spawn. Concentrate your efforts on the wingdams and along the borders of the main channel.

The weeks just before and after the spawn, when water temperatures are around 75 degrees, are the best for bluegills. The males are aggressively guarding their nests in shallow water and will attack any small bait or lure that comes near. Mid-summer months are also productive, but in deeper water areas with structure. During the lowest summer flow conditions, the Mississippi River wingdams frequently produce lots of big bluegills. The first few weeks after ice-up is another peak time for some of the year's biggest bluegills.

Like their cousin the bluegill, male crappies are very aggressive during the pre-spawn and spawning period (58 to 62 degrees), normally in May. The cooler fall months can be very good near under water structure.

When the streams and rivers are clear enough, the pre-spawn period from 50 to 60 degrees, from late April through May, is an excellent time for smallmouth bass. The clear and stable water conditions of summer and fall also result in

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good success for smallmouths, often with good action into November.

Immediately after ice-out in the spring, cast lures along the Mississippi River backwater shorelines for big northerns. The hot months of July and August, however, are often the best. Big-bobber fishing with a live chub in the deeper backwater areas is very effective.

Also during these hot months, seek out areas where cooler tributaries or a trout stream flows into pike-holding waters. These cooler waters are a magnet for northerns.

Freshwater drum (sheepshead) are most cooperative during the late spring and summer months. They love current, so the Mississippi River's main

channel borders are very productive.

Having been armed with where the best fishing holes are in northeast Iowa and when the best times to pursue those species are, the only thing left is the fun part – the doing. I hope your fishing enjoyment this year is surpassed only by the beautiful surroundings of northeast Iowa's waters.

BLUEGILLS

LAKE OR STREAM

Alice Wyth Lake, *Black Hawk*
Casey Lake, *Tama*

Greenbelt Lake, *Black Hawk*
Koutny Pond, *Buchanan*

Lake Delhi, *Delaware*

Lake Hendricks, *Howard*

Mississippi River, *Pools 9-15*
South Prairie Lake, *Black Hawk*
Volga Lake, *Fayette*

COMMENTS

Abundant 7- to 8-inch bluegills. Fish near submerged structure in summer and fall. Abundant 7- to 8-inch bluegills. Concentrate on the shallow waters in May and June. Fish around the newly sunken brush piles in July and August.

Good numbers of 7-inch fish. Fish the brush piles in summer and fall.

Good numbers of 7-inch fish. Fish around the newly placed structure in May and June. Walk in or launch a small boat off the improved boat access.

Abundant 6- to 7-inch bluegills. Fish early morning and late evening hours around docks and in-lake structure. Avoid heavy boating traffic during daytime hours.

Quality angling for fish up to 8 inches. Try the shallow bays during the spawning period and the edges of deep vegetation in the summer.

Last year was another year with good vegetation. Bluegill sizes are still good.

Fish up to 8 inches. Fish shallow areas along west side in May and June.

Consistently holds 6- to 8-inch-plus fish. In early spring, try shallow brush piles, deeper brush piles in the summer.

CHANNEL CATFISH

Avenue of the Saints Lake,
Bremer
Cedar River, *Bremer*,
Black Hawk, *Chickasaw*,
Mitchell and *Floyd*
Maquoketa River, *Delaware*,
Jones and *Jackson*

Mississippi River,
Pools 9-15

Shell Rock River, *Butler*
South Prairie Lake, *Black Hawk*
Volga Lake, *Fayette*

Wapsipinicon River, *Buchanan*

Two- to 3-pounders very abundant in this 30-acre lake just west of Waverly. Good population from the Mitchell dam downstream. Fish the shallow riffle areas in late summer and fall.

Good populations from Manchester downstream to its confluence with the Mississippi River. Fish the brush piles and snags in July and August.

Numbers and average size continue to be very good. Drift shad baits along main channel border riprap from April to May. Fish stink baits and chicken liver near wingdams, tree piles and running side channels in June through August.

Good numbers of 14- to 20-inch fish. Try the shallow riffle areas in the fall.

Abundant 15- to 18-inch cats with some exceeding 5 pounds present.

Excellent population of cats exceeding 20 inches. Fish the riprap along the dam in mid summer.

Good population of large catfish below Littleton. Fish the shallow backwaters after ice-out, and tree and brush piles on the main river during the summer.

Honorable Mention

Lake

Delhi,

Delaware;

Lake Hendricks, *Howard*; Turkey River, *Clayton*; West Fork Cedar River, *Butler* and *Black Hawk*.



CRAPPIES

Casey Lake, *Tama*

George Wyth Lake, *Black Hawk*
Lake Delhi, *Delaware*

Lake Hendricks, *Howard*
Lake Meyer, *Winneshiek*
Mississippi River,
Pools 9-15

South Prairie Lake,
Black Hawk
Sweet Marsh Segment B
(Marten's Lake), *Bremer*
Wapsipinicon River, *Buchanan*

Good numbers of 9-inch fish; concentrate on the shallow areas during the May spawning season, and the deeper areas with structure in the fall.

Good number of 7- to 8-inch crappies.

Average-size fish abundant. Concentrate fishing in spring and fall around fallen trees or woody structure.

Late spring and early summer are best times for 9- to 11-inch fish.

Fish the edges of the shoreline brush for 8- to 9-inch fish.

Netting surveys indicate black crappie populations are strong. Lots of 8- to 9-inch fish with some up to 15. An excellent spawn in 2000, especially for white crappie. Move frequently to locate an active school. Minnows and small jigs under a bobber around brush and woody structure still produce the best catches. Drifting the edge of weed beds is also effective. Spring and fall are best for river crappies. Fair numbers of 7- to 8-inchers with a few over 9. Fishing starts early in the year at this lake.

Good numbers of 8- to 9-inchers, with some 10- to 12-inch white crappies present. Warms up early in the spring.

Fish in and around the brush piles in the backwaters from spring through fall. All sizes of fish present.

FRESHWATER DRUM

Mississippi River,
Pools 9-15

Massive numbers of all sizes of drum. Fish any current areas with a worm below a slip sinker. Hang on to your rod! They love to hit and run.

Dave's Picks

*Dave
Moeller,
northeast
Iowa
regional
fisheries
supervisor*



BEST OVERALL:

Turkey River (anywhere between Eldorado and Garber)

Why: This river supports not only a very good smallmouth bass population, but also a tremendous number of 14- to 16-inch walleyes.

Must have tackle: Preferred

artificial baits include small- to medium-sized diving crank baits in natural colors – crayfish, silver or gold. One-sixteenth-ounce black or white marabou jigs or twister tails are also very good. Best live baits are minnows in the spring and fall and night crawlers in the summer, fished on a jig along the bottom.

Hotspots: The Turkey is best fished by canoe. Canoe between the better-looking spots and get out and wade to fish each area thoroughly. There are nine access points between the Highway 150 bridge at Eldorado and the Garber bridge to provide float-trips of various lengths. The dams in Elkader and Clermont are the only spots you need to portage around.

Must know: Check first to make sure the river isn't high or flooding and that the water clarity is good for fishing. Canoes can be rented at Elkader and Clermont. Campgrounds are available at Clermont, Elgin and Motor Mill accesses. Stop and visit the Big Spring Trout Hatchery, located on the Turkey about seven miles upstream from Elkader on the east bank.

FAMILY FRIENDLY:

Bloody Run

A fishing trip to Bloody Run trout stream just west of Marquette would be an excellent choice for the entire family. More than 14,000 catchable-size rainbow, brown and brook trout are stocked twice per week from April

LARGEMOUTH BASS

Avenue of the Saints Lake,
Bremer

George Wyth Lake,
Black Hawk

Koutny Pond, *Buchanan*
Lake Delhi, *Delaware*

Lake Meyer, *Winneshiek*
Mississippi River,
Pools 9-15

Mitchell Lake, *Black Hawk*
South Prairie Lake,
Black Hawk
Sweet Marsh Segment B
(Marten's Lake), *Bremer*

Good population of quality size bass. Fish around submerged stumps along the shoreline.

Largemouths concentrate on the abundant sunken tree piles, pallet-bed structures, rocky areas and around the new jetties.

Good numbers of sub-legal fish available for catch-and-release angling.

Good population of largemouths along the undeveloped rocky shorelines and woody structure. Fish mornings and evenings to avoid heavy boating traffic.

Good quality bass population with all sizes of fish.

The *Big River* still supports the largest bass population in the state, due in part to the 14-inch length limit and increasing catch-and-release angling.

Excellent numbers, but most are less than 5 pounds. Strong numbers of 1- and 2-year-old bass will make angling even better in coming years. Fish along weed edges in the backwater lakes and in running sloughs near woody structure. As water levels drop during the summer, move out to the mouths of the backwater lakes or find slack water along the main channel border. On the lower portion of the pools, fish the pockets in the dense vegetation using a spinner bait or plastic worm.

Good numbers of quality-size fish. New boat access is now complete.

Abundant 12- to 17-inch bass, 18-inch minimum size limit. Be sure to check your boat and trailer for possible presence of Eurasian water milfoil.

Good numbers of quality-size bass. Be sure to check your boat and trailer for possible presence of Eurasian water milfoil.

through October. Camping is available near the stream at Bloody Run Park, or at nearby scenic Pike's Peak State Park and the Yellow River Forest. Other neat things to do include the hiking trails, history lessons and the majestic Mississippi River overlooks at Effigy Mounds National Monument. Also, an underground boat ride through Spook Cave is sure to be remembered by all.

KID'S PICK:

Alice Wyth Lake

Alice Wyth Lake is a 60-acre lake located at the far west end of George Wyth State Park in Waterloo. Fishing jetties are within easy walking distance from the parking lot. The

lake has a nice population of 7-inch bluegills and 8-inch crappies just waiting for the kids. Try a small piece of worm on a small hook about 3 feet under a small bobber to entice these fish. Camping, trails and swimming at the beach are available elsewhere in the park if you want to make it more than a day of fun.

HIDDEN JEWEL:

Minnesota Slough

Minnesota Slough in pool 9 of the Mississippi River in extreme northeast Iowa has an excellent diversity of backwater lake and running slough habitats, and a diversity of fish species to go along

with them. Look for walleye, small-mouth bass, channel catfish and freshwater drum. Bluegills, crappies and largemouth bass are not only found in the vegetated backwater lakes, but also in the fallen trees and brushpiles along the banks of Minnesota Slough. It is simply a remote and beautiful area. The boat access is located east of New Albin (just south of the Minnesota border) and the unique, two-mile access road to the boat ramp is across the long and flat Mississippi River floodplain forest. A word of caution; the Iowa/Minnesota border is less than one mile north of the boat landing, and your Iowa fishing license is not valid beyond the border.

NORTHERN PIKE

Cedar River, *Black Hawk
and Bremer*

Lake Meyer, *Winneshiek*
Maquoketa River,
Delaware

Mississippi River,
Pools 9-15

Wapsipinicon River, *Buchanan
Black Hawk and Bremer*

Moderate population of all sizes of pike can be found in the shallow backwater habitats.

All sizes of pike present with some exceeding 30 inches.

Fingerling stockings have resulted in a quality northern pike population. Fish exceeding 10 pounds are not uncommon. Recent surveys indicate good numbers of quality-size pike from Manchester downstream throughout Delaware County. Most fish are 3 to 5 pounds. Cast backwater shorelines in pools 9 and 10 right after ice-out. In the summer and fall fish large, live baitfish in the backwaters; fish near the mouths of coldwater tributary streams during the hottest summer months. Check the steep bluffs that may have pike-attracting springs present. Inside portions of wingdams can produce some good pike. Use large spinner baits or spoons. When they are finicky, try a small white twister.

Best fishing from Independence upstream. Fish the abundant deadfalls and connected shallow backwaters. Excellent numbers of all sizes of pike.

SMALLMOUTH BASS

Cedar River,
Bremer and Black Hawk
Cedar River, *Mitchell and Floyd*

Maquoketa River, *Delaware*

Maquoketa River,
Jones and Jackson

Mississippi River,
Pools 9-15

Shell Rock River,
Butler and Bremer

Shell Rock River, *Floyd*
Turkey River, *Clayton, Fayette,
Winneshiek and Howard*

Upper Iowa River, *Allamakee,
Howard and Winneshiek*

Volga River, *Clayton and Fayette*
Wapsipinicon River,
Buchanan

The best habitat and best bass numbers are downstream from Waverly and Waterloo.

From Halverson Park to the Otranto dam is a catch-and-release area. The best population is from Halverson Park to the St. Ansgar dam.

The catch-and-release area below the Lake Delhi dam supports one of the best smallmouth populations around. Fewer numbers of big fish, but still good numbers of quality-size fish. Big year-class of 10-inch fish coming on.

Fish rocky areas with crawdad-colored crankbaits during late summer and early fall. Fifteen- to 16-inch fish are not uncommon.

Excellent spawn in 2002. Fish rock structure in the current with either live or artificial baits. Fair numbers in the 15- to 18-inch range. Many 10- to 12-inches. Good smallmouth populations from Greene downstream to the confluence with the Cedar River.

Good numbers of smallmouths in this river reach.

There are smallmouth in the entire river, but the best populations are found in Fayette County.

Excellent fishing and scenery. Catch-and-release area from Decorah to the Upper Dam.

Access at Volga River Recreation Area. Small stream suitable for wader fishing. Littleton to Quasqueton has the best habitat. Good numbers of smallmouth larger than 12 inches with a few exceeding 18.

TROUT

Bailey's Ford, *Delaware*

Big Paint Creek, *Allamakee*

Stocked three times each week with catchable rainbow and brook trout. One of the most popular of the catchable trout streams. Easy access to newly installed bankhides. New handicapped-accessible site with fish structure.

A long stream on both private and public property. Stocked weekly in the spring and fall with rainbow, brown and brook trout.

TROUT, *cont.*

French Creek, *Allamakee*

Wild brown trout are increasing due to catch-and-release regulation. A naturally reproducing brook trout population has been established on the upstream end. Major habitat improvements the last three years. Stocked with catchable rainbow and brook trout weekly April through November, twice per week July and August. Natural reproduction of brown trout is steadily increasing.

Grannis Creek, *Fayette*

Catchable brown and brook trout stocked as well as fingerling brown and rainbows. A larger, more open trout stream. Fish the abundant in-stream woody structure — large brown trout lurk there. More bankhides installed in 2002. Please respect private property when fishing this area.

Maquoketa River,
Clayton and Delaware

Some of the best habitat you will ever see in a trout stream! Excellent wild brown trout population. Stocked weekly with rainbow and brook trout.

North Bear Creek, *Winneshiek*

Fourteen-inch size limit on brown, rainbow and brook trout and artificial lures-only. High-quality trout stream with easy and walk-in access.

Spring Branch, *Delaware*

Habitat project completed in 2002. Brown trout natural reproduction is resulting in increased population. Stocked weekly with catchable brook and rainbow trout. West of Dorchester, this stream is stocked weekly with rainbow and brook trout. The catch-and-release area downstream of Dorchester holds a very high number of 15- to 20-inch wild brown trout. A beautiful stream with beautiful fish!

Trout River, *Winneshiek*

Waterloo Creek, *Allamakee*

Honorable Mention



Ensign Hollow, *Clayton*;
Fountain Springs, *Delaware*; South
Fork Big Mill, *Jackson*.

WALLEYE

Cedar River, *Bremer*,
Black Hawk, Chickasaw,
Floyd & Mitchell

Fingerling stockings have made for good populations of quality fish from St. Ansgar downstream throughout this major river system.

Maquoketa River, *Delaware*

Good population of 15-inch and larger walleyes below Manchester and the Lake Delhi dams. An 11-pounder was sampled near Monticello in 2002.

Mississippi River,
Pools 9-15

The catch of walleyes is down from previous years; however this fishery is a major producer of walleyes in Iowa. Spawns in 2000 and 2001 have been very good so expect improved success in coming years. Key on tailwaters in the pre-spawn period in March and April and again in late fall. Work the wing dams in post-spawn and summer/early fall periods using crawlers and crankbaits. Anglers have been successful using crankbaits during the summer in the deeper, flowing sloughs such as Lansing Big Slough (Pool 9), Harpers and Wyalusing Sloughs (Pool 10) and Cassville Slough (Pool 11).

Shell Rock River, *Butler*

Good numbers of quality-size fish all through Butler County.

Turkey River, *Howard, Clayton,*
Fayette, and Winneshiek

A developing population resulting from fingerling stockings. Abundant 14- to 16-inch walleyes.

Upper Iowa River, *Howard,*
Winneshiek, and Allamakee

Walleye numbers are increasing throughout this river. Sauger also present below the Lower Dam.

Wapsipinicon River, *Buchanan*

Good numbers from Littleton downstream. Fish exceeding 10 pounds caught every year. Fish the deeper pools in late fall and winter using a jig tipped with a minnow or a night crawler.

Governor's Environmental Excellence Awards

2002

Iowans caring for natural resources

Five Iowa businesses and organizations are placing the health of the environment in their own hands. Caring for natural resources is more than an ethic for them; it's part of everyday life and how they do business.

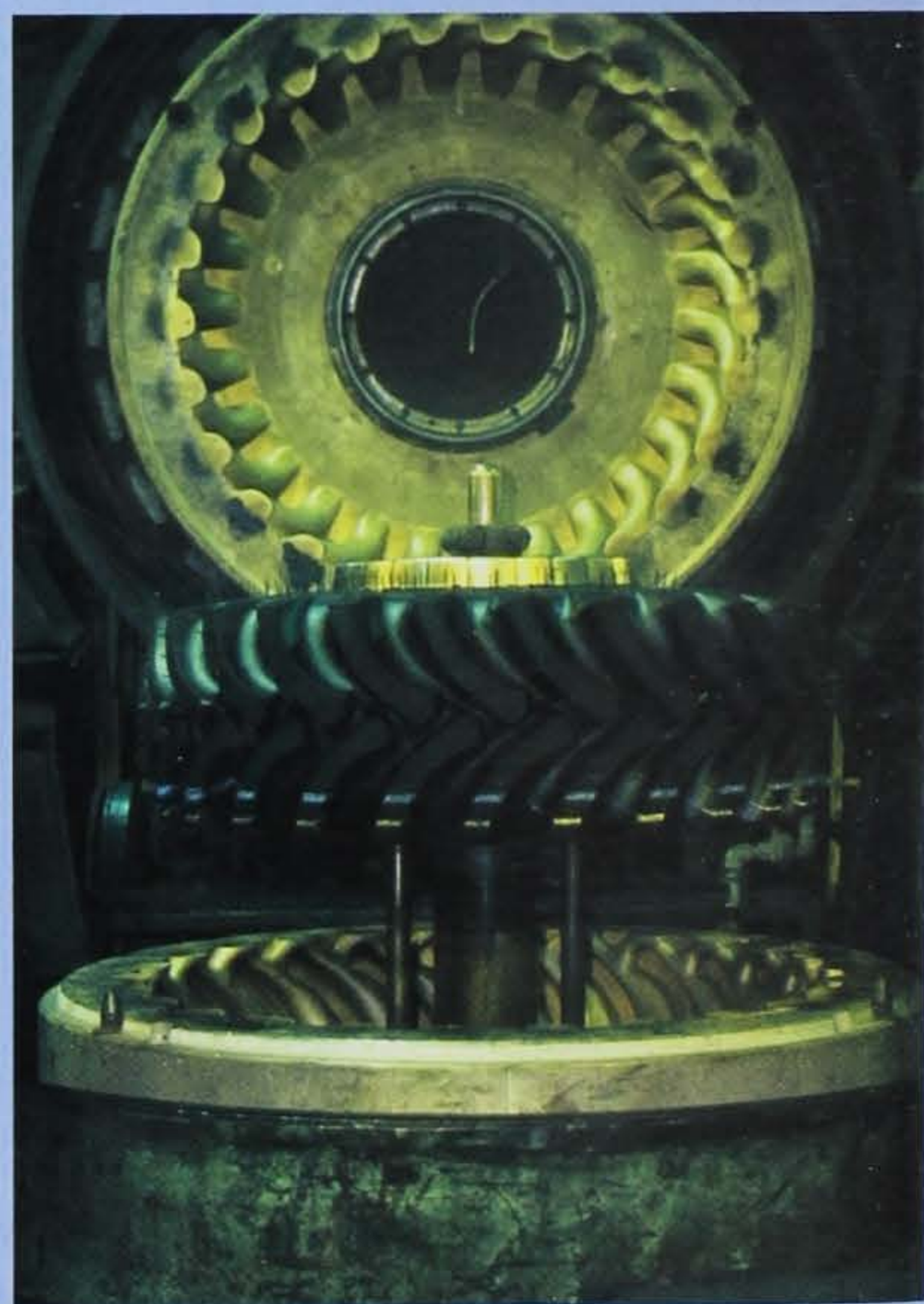
The State of Iowa congratulates these organizations, honoring them through the 2002 Governor's Environmental Excellence Awards. Here, we highlight their achievements.

Article by Julie Tack • Photos by Clay Smith

Environmental Excellence Award Recipient: *Firestone Agricultural Tire, Des Moines*

Firestone Agricultural Tire is serious about environmental responsibility. The company is a worldwide manufacturer and distributor of tires and rubber products for agricultural, recreational and forestry uses. With markets reaching around the globe, doing more to protect that globe is a top priority.

In an effort to reduce environmental impacts, Firestone Agricultural Tire has developed a certified environmental management system (EMS) as part



of its certification under ISO 14001 to document and address environmental challenges and opportunities. Firestone is the first tire manufacturer in Iowa to establish an EMS, and is a charter member of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's National Environmental Performance Program.

"Having a certified ISO 14001 environmental management system is part of Firestone's role as a business leader both in Iowa and throughout the world," said Mark Emkes, president, CEO and chairman of Bridgestone/Firestone North American Tire, LLC. "We are proud other companies are following our example and can see the benefits of having a certified EMS."

In the last two years, Firestone has initiated several programs to improve environmental practices. As examples of its effectiveness, Firestone has decreased the use of wood pallets in its manufacturing processes by 87 percent, diverted 1.1 million pounds of rubber from the landfill, and is recycling 68 percent of its own waste. The company is also saving \$164,000 in annual energy costs through dozens of improvement projects throughout plant facilities.

Environmental responsibility will continue to help define the success and vitality of this Iowa tire manufacturer.

Special Recognition in Air Quality and Special Recognition in Energy Efficiency/Renewable Energy: Five Seasons Transportation and Parking, Cedar Rapids

The sole organization receiving two environmental awards, Five Seasons Transportation and Parking is redefining how mass transit systems can operate in Iowa and the country.



Roger Hageman, maintenance supervisor for Five Seasons, fills the bus with biodiesel.

Five Seasons operates parking facilities in downtown Cedar Rapids and provides fixed-route bus service throughout the Cedar Rapids metropolitan area. In 2001, the mass transit department made a commitment to cleaner air by using renewable resources grown in Iowa. Director Bill



Firestone Agricultural Tire of Des Moines diverted more than 1 million pounds of rubber from the landfill and is recycling 68 percent of its own waste.

Five Seasons made a commitment to the environment and Iowa's ag-based economy by converting its entire fleet of busses to soy-based biodiesel.

Hoekstra said his department is committed to using biodiesel and reducing pollution because "it's the right thing to do."

"Because agriculture is still the cornerstone of Iowa's economy, I feel it is important to support efforts that will open new markets for the state's crops," said Hoekstra. "As for air

quality, we believe that reducing harmful tail pipe emissions is very achievable for other diesel-using fleets in the state."

Five Seasons became the first mass transit system in the state to convert its entire 50-bus fleet from diesel to soybean-based biodiesel. Along with a programmable fuel control system, biodiesel dramatically reduces fossil fuel emissions.

According to the company, biodiesel can reduce cancer-causing agents by 90 percent, while decreasing carbon monoxide, hydrocarbons and particulate matter. Five Seasons also has switched to hydraulic oil derived from soybeans in its bus power steering systems.

Along with using renewable energy the company operates electric and hybrid-electric buses, and has made several energy-efficient building improvements in its facilities.

It takes strong leadership and innovation to make changes, and Five Seasons Transportation and Parking exhibit both — in multitude.



Mirencos Salutes

FIVE SEASONS TRANSPORTATION

...winner of two 2002 Iowa Environmental Excellence Awards!

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Special Recognition in Waste Management: West Branch Middle School

Big ideas often come from practical minds, and that is how a group of middle school students spearheaded a community clean-up project in West Branch in 2001. A class of seventh-graders took it upon itself to research how oil filters were being disposed in their town — and ended with big environmental results.

"I am proud of these students because they believe their involvement does make a difference,"

said middle school science teacher Hector Ibarra.

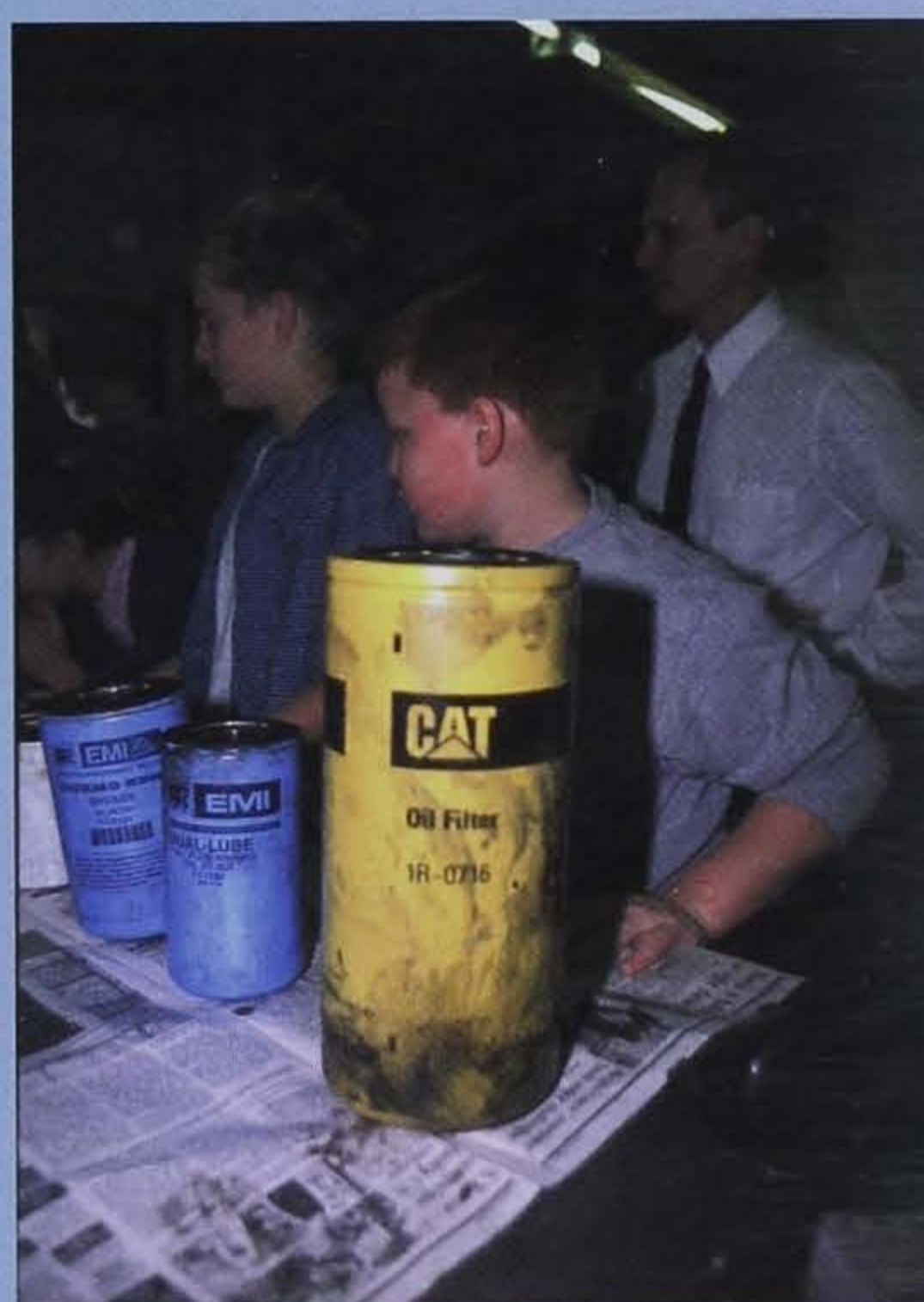
"They are leaders in caring for Iowa's environment."

Under the leadership of Ibarra, students surveyed their parents and discovered more than 50 percent discarded their used oil filters in the garbage. The students used a science-based approach to determine the best methods of collecting, pressing and disposing the filters while recycling the used oil.

The students learned that 6.6 million used oil filters are discarded annually in Iowa, most going to the landfill. They gained community support to obtain equipment for pressing used oil filters, and in the 2001-2002 school year collected 265 oil filters and recycled more than 37 gallons of motor oil.



These West Branch middle school students are teaching a few lessons in environmental leadership to Iowa.



Students in Hector Ibarra's West Branch Middle School class took it upon themselves to collect, press and dispose of 265 used oil filters, while recycling the 37 gallons of resulting used motor oil.

**Special Recognition in
Water Quality:
*The Iowa Children's
Water Festival***

Since 1997, the Iowa Children's Water Festival has engaged students in appreciating a critical natural resource — water. The festival is

organized by water-resource and education professionals who believe today's students are tomorrow's caretakers of the environment.

"Iowa will benefit from these students who will become the leaders and policy makers of the future," said Linda Kinman, a coordinator of the festival who works for Des Moines Water Works. "They will understand the need to be stewards of Iowa's natural resources as they grow up and live here."

The one-day event is held each May at the Des Moines Area Community College in Ankeny. Each year through the festival more than 2,000 students from elementary schools across the state learn the importance of water quality to Iowa. Dozens of organizations help sponsor the event, and more than 300 volunteers share their expertise through science-based presentations, experiments and activities.

Educational topics through the festival include: how human activity affects water resources; the relationship of water to the ecosystem; what constitutes "safe" water; the water cycle and watersheds; and much more.

Students also see water professionals in action, demonstrating future employment and career path opportunities in environmental fields.

The education of these students will have a lasting impression on Iowa's environment for years to come. Complete details about the Iowa Children's Water Festival are available at <http://icwf.cfu.net/>.



Experiments, presentations and games help teach the value of Iowa's water resources at the Iowa Children's Water Festival.

Photos by Paul VanDorpe



Special Recognition in Habitat Restoration and Development: *City of Decorah and the Decorah Prairie Committee*

"Partnerships for Prairies" could be the slogan for Decorah's efforts to revitalize and protect their local natural resources. With the commitment and encouragement of hundreds of town people, a portion of Decorah's land will generate environmental dividends for generations.

The City of Decorah is surrounded by the beauty of the Upper Iowa

River, and is visited by thousands of tourists each year. In 2001, the city council and other community leaders decided to protect and transform an area where a cornfield was planted to the banks of the river.

"This prairie project creates multifaceted benefits," said Rick Edwards, Decorah parks and recreation director. "Aesthetic beauty,

recreational opportunities, educational value and protecting our natural resources all help make this a widely supported project for our community."

A coalition of businesses and organizations, along with community leaders, raised more than \$55,000 for the project. The community developed an 11-acre filterstrip, 24 acres of prairie with 73 different plant species,

and a half-acre butterfly garden. The butterfly garden is handicapped-accessible and contains 99 plots to be cared for by local citizens. The area is also used for environmental study opportunities for school children.

Decorah and its citizens truly reap the rewards of community pride and involvement.

*Ion Exchange
thanks the City
of Decorah
for using our
products, and
congratulates
them on win-
ning the Special
Recognition in
Habitat award.*

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Decorah community volunteers helped protect a portion of the Upper Iowa River by transforming a cornfield into a prairie, butterfly garden and filterstrip.

Iowa's Trout Are Going Wild

by Bill Kalishek

Wild populations of brown trout have greatly increased in the last 20 years in Iowa.

Wow, look at that beautiful fish. It was a wild brown trout. About as colorful a fish as can be found in the Midwest. The colors were so vivid it seemed as if there was no way this fish could blend in with its surroundings, using its coloration for natural camouflage as fish have evolved to do. But when the brown trout was returned to the water and rested over the gravel stream bed, it seemed to disappear.



Lowell Washburn

draining into it. The majority of a trout stream watersheds are private ownership, and the dominant use of these private lands is cultural.

The 1970s was a time of intense cultural production in the Midwest. "We must feed the world," was the mantra of numerous farmers, and many parcels of highly erodible, original farm ground were converted to rowcrop production. It takes one small crop field with a steep slope to divert literally hundreds of tons of soil into a stream. This is true even if the field is several miles from the permanent flowing portion of the stream.

Soil erosion from a crop field into a stream can wipe out all natural spawning. Trout must have clean gravel to deposit their eggs. These eggs lie in the stream bottom for up to several months before hatching, the longest egg incubation period for any species in Iowa. Any silt deposited on the eggs during this time will kill the spawning fish.

Today, we are a long way from the 1970s. Conservation practices



Trout need clean stream bed gravel for spawning areas and as an attachment point for insects, their primary food.

Bass, smallmouth (minimum 4 lbs. or 20")

4lbs 4oz	8/28	Jess Kraayenbrink, Sioux Center	West Okoboji/Dickinson
4lbs 6oz	11/17	Royce Bandy, Manchester	Mississippi/Clayton
4lbs 8oz	8/10	Dana D Dowd, New Hampton	Upper Iowa/Howard
4lbs 10oz	4/28	Rick L Olson, Indianola	Des Moines/Polk
4lbs 14oz	7/15	Mark Isley, Waterloo	Private Pond/Black Hawk
7lbs 12oz	9/90	Rick Gray, Dickinson	West Okoboji, Dickinson

NO NEW ENTRIES

Bass, rock (minimum 1 lbs.)

1 lb 8 oz	6/73	Jim Driscoll, Dubuque	Mississippi/Dubuque
22	5/24	Noah B Johnson, Elkhorn	Schley Park/Harrison
22	6/20	Jim Buckley, Omaha	Lake Anita/Cass
22	5/4	Dennis Novotny, Tama	Lake Sugema/Van Buren
22	8/31	Fred H Smith III, Eldridge	Lake Malone/Clinton
22	6/8	Arthur Stockstrom, Indianola	Sun Valley Lake/Ringgold
22	6/28	Casey Walker, Red Oak	Local Pond/Montgomery
22	5/4	Brett K Monteleone, Dallas	Green Valley Lake/Union
22	4/7	Steven J Walker, Red Oak	Pond/Montgomery
22.5	5/26	Clifford D Morris, Augusta	Farm Pond/Ringgold
22.5	7/28	Randall Brady, Des Moines	Farm Pond/Polk
22.5	5/15	Dan Smith, Pleasantville	Farm Pond/Marion
23	9/1	Justin C Johnson, Red Oak	Farm Pond/Page
23	8/30	Dirk Rawson, Omaha	Farm Pond/Fremont
23.5	8/11	Tom Monroe, Sigourney	Farm Pond/Keokuk
24	9/13	Tom Preston, Omaha	Pond/Taylor
24	7/6	Jason Smith, Council Bluffs	Private Lake/Mills
24	5/27	Dave Strom, New Hampton	Farm Pond/Chickasaw
26	5/17	Robert Erickson, Le Claire	Farm Pond/Monroe

Released

Bill Kalishek

2lb 15oz	1/8	Paul Donnenwerth, Spirit Lake	East Okoboji/Dickinson
2lb 11oz	9/8	David M Reis, Lawton	West Okoboji/Dickinson
2lb 11oz	5/27	Shaw Ladoux, Spirit Lake	East Okoboji/Dickinson

Bass, wiper (minimum 4 lbs.)

18lb 15oz	9/97	Don Ostergaard, Des Moines	Des Moines, Polk
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NO NEW ENTRIES

Bass, yellow (minimum .75 lbs.)

1lb 9oz	4/91	Bill Campbell, Council Bluffs	Lake Manawa, Pottawattamie
1lb 9oz	5/00	Michael Grandick, Underwood	Lake Anita, Cass
12z	7/21	David Kruger, Plainfield	Clear Lake/Cerro Gordo
12z	9/29	Wayne Lubbert, Manly	Clear Lake/Cerro Gordo

Buegill (minimum 1 lbs.)

3lb 2oz	7/86	Phil Algreen, Earlham	Farm Pond, Madison
1lb 14oz	1/20	Patrick J Prothman, Algona	Farm Pond/Humboldt
1lb 3oz	3/30	Chris Stone, Moravia	Farm Pond/Appanoose
1lb 3oz	7/24	Nathan D Flynn, Mason City	Farm Pond/Clayton
1lb 7oz	5/24	David Pendroy, Monroe	Farm Pond/Marion
(released)			
1lb 6oz	5/21	Darin Pendroy, Prairie City	Farm Pond/Marion
(released)			
1lb 6oz	6/16	Tom Osterkamp, Cedar Rapids	Wapsipinicon/Linn
(released)			
1lb 6oz	9/10	Marcia Nichols, Baxter	Diamond Lake/Poweshiek
1lb 5.5oz	1/6	Josh Tjaden, Olin	Farm Pond/Jones
1lb 5oz	6/18	Kevin L Smith, Waterloo	Mitchell Pits/Black Hawk
1lb 5oz		Irma Mrazek, Cedar Rapids	White Oak/Lee
1lb 4oz	5/24	Luke Pendroy, Monroe	Farm Pond/Marion
(released)			

Wild populations of

G
Iowa's

Historically brook trout were the only trout species native to the coldwater streams of northeast Iowa. But as more and more settlers moved into Iowa and land changed, the naturally spawning brook trout began to decline.

Brown and rainbow trout stocking started in the late 1800s to replace the already dwindling brook trout numbers. Eventually, most of the 105 coldwater trout streams in Iowa were

dependent on stocking hatchery-reared trout. As late as the 1980s, wild, naturally reproducing trout were relegated to just six streams in Iowa. Five had wild brown trout and one had a wild brook trout population.

The last two decades, though, have seen those numbers quadruple. Today, 20 trout streams support naturally reproducing brown trout, and four support natural populations of brook trout. What caused these improvements in such a short period?

Water Quality is the Key

A coldwater stream is a very complex natural system. The quality of the stream is affected by the watershed that drains into the stream, the land use along the stream and the physical characteristics in the stream itself. High quality trout streams don't happen by accident. They result from successful partnerships between private landowners and conservation agencies managing these natural resources.

Trout need very clean water to thrive. The water quality of any stream is a reflection of the water-

shed draining into it. The majority of Iowa's trout stream watersheds are in private ownership, and the dominant use of these private lands is agricultural.

The 1970s was a time of intense agricultural production in the Midwest. "We must feed the world," was the mantra of numerous farmers, and many parcels of highly erodible, marginal farm ground were converted to rowcrop production. It only takes one small crop field with too steep a slope to divert literally hundreds of tons of soil into a stream. This is true even if the field is several miles from the permanent flowing portion of the stream.

Soil erosion from a crop field into a trout stream can wipe out all natural spawning. Trout must have clean gravel to deposit their eggs. These eggs lie in the stream bottom for up to four months before hatching, the longest egg incubation period for any fish species in Iowa. Any silt deposit on the eggs during this time will kill the developing fish.

Today, we are a long way from the 1970s. Conservation practices



Trout need clean stream bed gravel for spawning areas and as an attachment point for insects, their primary food.

Bill Kalishek

have been implemented on many private lands and water quality is improving. Perhaps the biggest impact on water quality has been from the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) initiated in the mid-1980s. The program paid farmers to idle and plant marginal fields to permanent vegetative cover, hence reducing the amount of soil entering streams.

Nutrients, especially from animal waste, is the other major impact to trout streams. Because the dominant land use in trout stream watersheds is agriculture, the nutrients most commonly come in the form of livestock waste.

As with soil loss, great improve-

ments have been made in managing and handling livestock waste. Government cost-share dollars have helped construct manure storage facilities on many farms. Manure is now often viewed as a commodity that, if properly applied, can be a useful fertilizer that will stay in the soil and increase crop yields.

The stream riparian zone, or corridor, is the area immediately bordering a trout stream. Activities here can have some of the greatest impacts on the stream. As in

the watershed, soil and nutrients are the two biggest threats, and riparian areas did not escape the intense farming of the 1970s.

Federal farm subsidy programs, however, have greatly changed the land use in the riparian zone. The CRP program pays to plant vegeta-



Trout from South Pine Creek are the source of the brook trout fingerlings used to repopulate Iowa streams.



Lowell Washburn

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tive cover on strips of land adjacent to streams, creating a buffer from crop fields and livestock grazing.

Perhaps the biggest input of soil into a trout stream can be from eroding stream banks. Research in eastern Nebraska has shown up to 75 percent of total stream siltation can be from stream bank erosion. When a bank erodes, virtually all the soil enters directly into the stream. Accelerated stream bank erosion is an age-old problem that only in the last two decades has begun to be adequately addressed.

The first step in stopping stream bank erosion is to properly manage the area adjacent to the stream bank. When crops are planted right next to the stream, drift from herbicides can cause the soil-holding grasses to die. When pastures along trout streams are overgrazed, cattle can trample the stream banks and cause accelerated erosion. Using best management practices in the riparian zone will often alleviate bank erosion problems.

In cases of severe stream bank erosion, rock riprap is needed to stabilize the bank. Along with the rock, wooden bank hides can also be positioned under water to provide optimum cover habitat for trout. Projects of this type are being completed on private land with government cooperation and cost share. Public lands are also being improved using these same techniques.

The DNR land acquisition program also helps protect streams from soil and nutrient input from the watershed, riparian zone and stream



Bill Kalishek

In cases of severe erosion, stream banks must be stabilized with riprap. Wooden bank hides are also placed to provide optimum habitat for trout (left). The stream bank below was stabilized with riprap and had bank hides placed to improve trout cover. Once seeded the site has a very natural appearance.



Bill Kalishek

A Lund boat with a Yamaha outboard motor, featuring the Lund and Yamaha logos.

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bank. By purchasing land, the DNR ensures the best form of land use will occur in those watersheds and riparian zones, stream banks will be stabilized and trout habitat improved where needed.

Proper management of the watershed, riparian zone and stream bank results in cleaner streams with a higher amount of clean gravel and rock substrate for quality spawning. It also results in more diversity and higher numbers of aquatic insects, the primary food of trout. The stage is set for trout to respond.

Brown trout are not native to Iowa. They were originally brought from Europe and stocked in Iowa waters in the late 1800s. Brown trout stocking continues today. DNR trout hatcheries hold domesticated adult browns for up to five years for spawning. However, offspring from these captive brood stock have adapted to improved stream conditions and are now reproducing naturally.

Currently, brown trout from a naturally reproducing population in French Creek are collected annually and eggs from these fish are hatched and raised to 2-inch fingerlings. When stocked, these wild trout survive three to four times better than fingerlings raised from captive brood stock. The wild fingerlings are also beginning to spawn in the streams and develop naturally reproducing populations.

The increase in Iowa's naturally reproducing brook trout populations is also the direct result of egg collections from wild fish. In 1994, South Pine Creek was the only Iowa stream with a wild brook trout population. Eggs are collected yearly from adult fish in South Pine Creek, hatched and raised

to fingerling trout. Stocking wild fingerlings have resulted in three additional streams now having naturally reproducing brook trout.

Wild trout populations are now available to anglers throughout northeast Iowa. With the continued cooperation of landowners, availability

of government conservation programs and proper DNR management of trout populations, the future of quality trout angling in Iowa is going wild.

Bill Kalishek is a fisheries biologist at the Decorah Hatchery.

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2003 Stamp Designs



2003 Habitat Stamp

The 2003 Habitat Stamp was designed by returning artist Greg Bordinon. The stamp depicts quail in the snow on an Iowa farm. Bordinon has been commissioned to design the habitat stamp in 2000, 2001 and now 2003. He also was awarded the 2003 Waterfowl USA "Print of the Year." The image size is 22 x 13 inches. A limited number of prints are available from Bordinon Ink, 630 Grand Court, Robins, Iowa, 52328; 319-743-0874.

Neal R. Anderson is the artist for the 2003 Duck Stamp. A resident of Lincoln, Neb., Anderson's work has appeared in several publications such as *NEBRASKAland*, *Kansas Wildlife*, *Wyoming Wildlife* and on Cabela's catalog covers. Anderson has donated original and limited-edition work for fundraising efforts to improve wildlife habitat. A limited number of prints are available through the Neal Anderson Studio, 7607 Trendwood Drive, Lincoln, Neb. 68506.

2003 Duck Stamp



2003 Trout Stamp

"Brookie In The Brush" by Susan Winter is the design for the 2003 Trout Stamp. Winter, a Vermont native, has received the "highest bid" honors for this print at auction at Trout Unlimited's 2000 and 2002 national conventions. A limited number of artist editions are available. Winter is currently involved with a restoration project for the Smithsonian Institute. Call 802-878-4942 or for more information about her and her work or visit www.winteroriginals.com.

2002 Tree Farmers of the Year

Article and photos by
Bob Petrzelka



Ron and Carol Fullenkamp accept the 2002 Iowa Tree Farmer Award from Iowa Tree Farm chairman Rod Swinton.

If Ron and Carol Fullenkamp are your grandpa and grandma, you will grow up to love trees. If Ron and Carol are your neighbors or friends, you will be much more aware of trees than most people, and understand the benefits of tree planting and forest management. Even if you are a complete stranger, and on a lazy, summer afternoon find yourself at the end of a dead-end road leading to the "Fullenkamp Tree Farm," you will quickly learn these two people have a special relationship with their woods.

The Fullenkamps, from West Point, are Iowa's 2002 Tree Farmers of the Year. They were presented with the award by the Iowa Tree Farm Committee when they hosted more than 200 forest landowners at their tree farm field day last October.

The 140-acre Fullenkamp tree farm is nestled among the rolling hills of Lee County in southeast Iowa. It is a classic oak-hickory timber,

although the Fullenkamps have found more than 50 tree and shrub species on the property, including chinquapin oak, blackjack oak, persimmon and American hornbeam.

The Fullenkamps purchased the first 85 acres in 1988, but it wasn't the first time Ron had set foot on the property. When he was around 9 years old, he delivered a two-row cultivator with a Ferguson 30 tractor his dad had sold to the property owner at the time. In the years to



come, Ron returned to the property to hunt squirrels and rabbits. He saw his first wild turkey there. "I was hunting squirrels at the time, and it scared the heck out of me," Ron recalls.

Since the original purchase 14 years ago, the Fullenkamps have brought all of their forest under active management. Working with a private consulting forester and their DNR district forester, a written management plan was developed to combine the Fullenkamps' objectives and interests with sound forest management. The Fullenkamps have followed the plan over the years, thinning out trees that were too crowded, killing vines on desirable trees and eliminating undesirable trees.

In 2001, the Fullenkamps graduated from ISU Forestry Extension's

Master Woodland Manager program, and hosted the program at their tree farm this past fall.

In addition to managing their existing forest, the couple has taken advantage of the Conservation Reserve Program and planted trees on three crop fields. The first plantings were done with tree seedlings, but later plantings were done with seeds, such as acorns and walnuts, planted directly into the ground.

As attached to the timber as they are, the Fullenkamps realize there comes a time when certain trees need to be harvested. In 1991, 128 trees were selectively harvested. Working with their forestry consultant and Langenbach Wood Products from Ft. Madison, they selected trees that were mature or over-mature, an

undesirable species or lower quality, or in an area that needed to be thinned. That created more growing room for the better-quality trees.

"Trees are just like a field of corn," says Ron. "When it is ready to harvest, that's what you do instead of letting it stand and rot, and then you get ready for the next generation of trees." Carol agrees, but also stresses the need to leave enough for regeneration. Ron's advice when conducting a timber harvest? "Work with a forester to mark it properly, listen to their suggestions and let them help you sell it."

While trees are the obvious component of an active tree farm, there are other elements as well. Like the large, green and white tree farm sign displayed prominently on their property says, a tree farm

Tomorrow's success

depends on today's decisions.

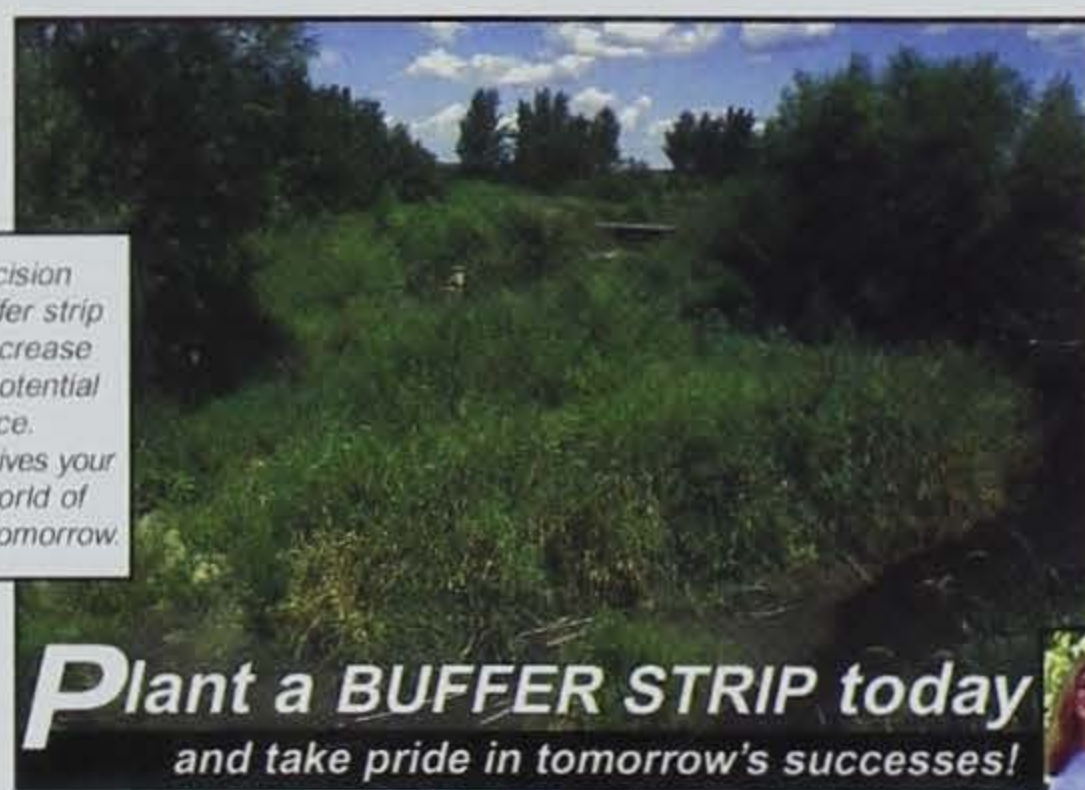


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For Ron, wildlife plays an important role. That first encounter with the wild turkey didn't scare him for long. Today, he enjoys deer and turkey hunting and loves to rekindle fond memories of squirrel hunts with his grandchildren. In fact, Ron helps the DNR survey wild turkey populations in the summer, and he and his son, Chris, were instrumental in starting a chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation in southeast Iowa.

This year, there were at least a dozen deer taken off the tree farm, "that we know of, anyway," says Ron with a smile. And in a typical year, six to eight wild turkeys are harvested from his land.

Carol's interests lean more toward birdwatching, wildflowers and mushrooms. She rarely travels without her binoculars, or bird and mushroom guides. She has seen rufous-sided towhees, scarlet tanagers, green herons, kingfishers, ospreys, cedar waxwings and even a pileated woodpecker on the property.

Her interest in mushrooms was piqued when a grandchild asked what the brilliant red-cupped mushrooms were that were even present in winter. She learned they were scarlet cups, and has been interested in fungi ever since. The family eats morels and puffballs, and Carol is interested in sampling other varieties she has identified as edible, including chicken-of-the-woods. Ron on the other hand, isn't so willing to experi-

ment. Instead, Carol regularly photographs mushrooms, even more so than birds, because, as she admits, "I'm just not patient enough to wait around for a good bird shot."

In the spring, it's the wildflowers that command Carol's attention. "That's why I go turkey hunting, to look at the wildflowers," she confesses. Dutchman's breeches, hepatica, trillium, maidenhair fern, jack-in-the-pulpit, blue-eyed grass, bloodroot and spiderwort are all present on the tree farm.

Not wanting to be outdone by Ron and his turkey count, Carol participates in the DNR's annual toad and frog survey. At dusk, at five locations and on three specific dates from April through July, Carol can be found listening for the calls and croaks of these amphibians. She has identified calls from green, leopard, cricket, chorus and bull frogs, as well as tree and American toads.

As grandparents, the Fullenkamps make sure future generations will enjoy the tree farm by planting a tree for each grandchild. Every year, an album is put together with each child standing next to their special tree.

Ron and Carol are as generous with their woods as they are with their welcoming

smiles. In the past they have hosted the Lee County Forestry Field Day, cooperated with the DNR in reintroducing ruffed grouse to the area, and regularly host school groups, community activities and other functions. On any given Sunday afternoon, when the weather is agreeable, you will find friends and relatives gathered at the shelter that serves as their headquarters. The first to arrive gets the grill going and the afternoon is spent hiking the many trails throughout the forest, seeing how hungry the fish are or just sitting soaking up the sun.

It would be hard to find stronger advocates for forestry and forest management. The Fullenkamps constantly talk tree planting, forest management, harvests and why you shouldn't graze your timber, to anyone that will listen. "You need



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to talk to Ronnie," is a frequent comment among people talking about planting trees or harvesting timber.

Thanks to the Fullenkamps, countless other landowners have been steered toward professional forestry assistance, forestry field days and Forestry Extension. Both husband and wife have a tremendous land ethic and are well-respected members of their community, which is a valuable combination when promoting forest management. It is safe to say no one squeezes more enjoyment and education for so many people out of their woods than Ron and Carol Fullenkamp.

Bob Petrzeka is a consulting forester for Geode Forestry in Burlington.

Grandson Eric Box gives his tree a hug.

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Meeting the Challenge

DNR pollution prevention
interns boost Iowa's economy
and benefit the environment

Article and photos
by Bob Casteline

*"The ultimate measure of a man is not where he
stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but
where he stands at times of challenge."*

— Martin Luther King

Jennifer Reutzel had a big challenge.

In May 2002, Reutzel was supposed to walk into Tone Brothers Inc. in Ankeny, the largest spice manufacturing plant in the world, and find a way to improve one of its processes. The company was sending waste spice that had fallen off the line during the manufacturing process to the landfill — to the tune of 130 tons per year. Reutzel's job was to find another use for this "spice dust."

Sounds like a job for a seasoned consultant, right? Guess again. Reutzel, all of 22 years old, was an intern. Oh yes — she had 12 weeks to complete the job.

"You think, 'I'm one intern, and I have a few weeks to solve problems for people who have done this their entire lives,'" Reutzel said. "It was definitely intimidating."

Such is the life of an intern, especially those in the DNR's Pollution Prevention (P2) Intern Program, a highly successful business/state partnership that has just entered its third year. P2 interns aren't sent to brew coffee or run the copy machine. They're sent to make a difference.

During the first two years, the program's 34 interns have helped their host companies divert 2,800 tons of solid waste from Iowa's landfills, conserve 213 million gallons of



Left: Jennifer Reutzel, Arindam Chowdhury and Jeff Kloster, three of 20 interns from the 2002 program.

water and 3.7 kilowatt-hours of energy, and eliminate the production of 11,000 gallons of hazardous waste. As a result, their host companies will save nearly \$3 million each year; if all intern solutions are implemented, that figure could jump to nearly \$10 million annually.

Students at Iowa colleges apply for the program through a competitive process. Iowa companies also compete for students, and each company must outline a specific pollution prevention project for a prospective intern.

A DNR selection committee then picks both industry and student candidates, matching interns and companies based on company needs and intern strengths. After a one-week training period, interns are sent to their host companies to work.

The program is living proof that pollution prevention, often thought to be an expensive burden, is simply too expensive NOT to implement.

"The intern program has demonstrated that pollution prevention is both good business and good for business," said Jan Loyson, the DNR's intern coordinator.

It certainly was good business for Tone Brothers. Reutzel discovered that spices, like many other food-based products, can be used to produce animal feed. She found a market for her company's spice dust, working a deal with a manufacturer of livestock feed. Thanks to Reutzel's solution, Tone's expense for this waste was eliminated.

"Feed manufacturers are trying to be cost competitive just like anybody else," said Reutzel, a Central College graduate who is studying for her master's degree in economics at Iowa State University. "If they can get materials at a low cost that aren't acceptable for human consumption, then it benefits them."

Reutzel said some manufacturers believe that "spiced-up" feed is more attractive to the livestock. Basically, it tastes better.

"It's funny, because I never thought of cattle as having a discriminating palate," she said.

Other interns across Iowa have had similar success, saving money



and reducing waste in a wide variety of industries, everything from feed producers to electronics manufacturers to makers of rubber hose. Even municipal and county governments have gotten into the act. All have benefited.

Winnebago Industries, one of the nation's leading manufacturers of recreational vehicles, knew that it created a lot of wood waste from the production of cabinets. The company had even documented an increase in its wood waste in recent months. But it didn't know exactly where the waste was coming from.

Enter Jeff Kloster, a 21-year-old junior at Iowa State. He had one primary goal for his internship: to complete an audit of Winnebago's

Jeff Kloster helped Winnebago reduce its wood waste.

wood waste so the company could identify alternatives and improve its process. "We had good numbers on the whole," said Kloster, a mechanical engineering major. "But the specifics weren't there."

Thanks to his waste audit, Kloster found several answers. Winnebago requires certain minimum specifications for the quality of its wood. Kloster said at least 25 percent of the pine Winnebago received "never touched a saw" because it didn't meet company specifications for quality. In other words, it came from the supplier warped or damaged in some other way; subsequently it was discarded.

"That's not a knock against the supplier," he said. "We're talking about pine, and you're going to have 25 to 30 percent defects with pine. The trick was to find a way to keep that wood out of the waste stream."

Kloster worked out a deal with the supplier that allowed Winnebago to re-bundle wood pieces that didn't meet company specifications and return it to the supplier, who could then re-sell the wood at a lower grade. The arrangement allowed Winnebago to eliminate its waste disposal cost for substandard wood.

The challenge was similar for Arindam Gan Chowdhury, another 2002 P2 intern. Originally from India, Chowdhury moved to the United States in 2000 to work on a Ph.D. in engineering mechanics, having already earned a master's degree in structural engineering from the Indian Institute of Technology in Bombay.

At 31 years old, Chowdhury wasn't your typical intern. And the results of his internship weren't typical, either.

Chowdhury served his internship with Lear Corporation in Iowa City, a Fortune 150 company that produces arm rests and other automotive interior components. His job was to reduce the amount of wastewater generated by paint guns that were used to spray the arm rests.

It took him less than two weeks to solve the problem. He employed a chemical process to treat the wastewater that returned clean water and precipitated a solid. The clean water was re-used, and the solid was marketed as fuel to a nearby incineration facility, eliminating the need to treat 35,000 gallons of wastewater annually at a cost of \$24,000.

Chowdhury was just getting warmed up. He found a way to increase the aerodynamic efficiency of the paint guns, which meant the guns' filters had to be changed every five hours, as opposed to every 20 minutes. The solution will save Lear about \$242,000 annually in filter costs. And since he was able to market the used filters as incineration fuel, the

solution eliminated \$9,800 per year in landfill costs.

It didn't end there. Chowdhury calculated the plant's paint transfer efficiency, or the amount of paint that actually ends up on the part compared to overspray. Based on those calculations, he discovered that his plant's efficiency could be improved and recommended the purchase of an electrostatic painting system that could save his company \$1.3 million per year in paint costs.

"I came up with a chart," Chowdhury said. "This showed them how much money could be saved for every 10 percent increase in efficiency. They didn't know their paint transfer efficiency. Now they have the numbers."

Chowdhury also demonstrated that seemingly minor problems can result in large expenses. He found that leaks in pipes and fittings for Lear's compressed air systems were causing compressors to run more than necessary, resulting in almost \$100,000 per year in extra energy costs. And leaking steam traps were costing \$38,000 per year in excess natural gas usage.

Finally, Chowdhury found energy

The "Class of 2002." Summer of 2002 interns met with Governor Tom Vilsack near the completion of their projects. Vilsack called the program an important tool for keeping qualified young professionals in Iowa.



Jennifer Reutzell found a home for one's spice manufacturer.

savings as you might in your home—from lights and equipment left on unnecessarily. He discovered that by simply turning off the lights and compressors on weekends and holidays, the company could save almost \$85,000 per year.

While it may seem incredible for college students to make such a difference at large companies, at least one manager isn't surprised by the results P2 interns have achieved. Dave Knight, a Six Sigma Black Belt engineer at Lear, said college students actually have advantages over more seasoned engineers.

"Students may not have a lot of field experience, but they have that unbridled enthusiasm," said Knight, who served as Chowdhury's supervisor during the internship. "That's a key characteristic in looking for new solutions. We need to have input from different vantage points and age groups. Plus, you're talking about



a home for 1's "spice dust" with a feed

industrial recycler to reduce waste all over the plant, recycling everything from packaging material to office paper. The project saved her company \$115,000 per year and diverted 800 tons from the landfill.

"For most of the waste that goes out, it's a matter of nobody having the time to evaluate how often loads are being taken to the landfill," Reutzel said. "You just don't know how much you're throwing away."

Of course, the internships weren't as easy as walking in and taking charge. Interns had to overcome the ever-present resistance to change.

"People who are working on a process don't want to change,"

being able to share their problems and offer their opinions."

Kloster said that most of the information he used to develop solutions came from workers on the floor. "They're the best source of information because they really know the details of their jobs," Kloster said. "They help you understand the process."

The program definitely has helped companies reduce pollution and save money, and students have gained hands-on experience, received a financial stipend and built on their résumés. But one of the program's chief benefits is that it encourages qualified college graduates to stay in Iowa. Of the 14 interns from the program's first year, 11 have remained in Iowa to pursue careers or continue their studies, while two others entered graduate programs in other states and could conceivably return to Iowa.

Interns also gained insight into the relationship between industry and government. And they learned that such a relationship can be strengthened by working together.

"The DNR has seen the advantages of working with industry," Kloster said. "This program epitomizes that idea. It combines good environmental policy with sound economics."

Bob Castelline is a waste management information specialist for the department in Des Moines.

Savings in 2001/2002

Actual pollution/waste reduction and cost savings from intern projects

Category	Reduction	Cost Savings
Water conservation	213 million gal.	\$722,000
Solid waste	2,800 tons	1,598,000
Hazardous waste	11,000 gallons	147,000
Energy	3.7 million KWh	183,000
Production costs		315,000
Total		\$2,965,000

some awfully bright young people."

Like Chowdhury, many of the other interns went above and beyond their company-prescribed projects. Kloster figured out ways to change the orientation of certain cuts, allowing the scrap to be used for a different piece. Since those cuts were made by a computer-driven automatic system, the solution required only a few changes to the computer's program. The solution saved 150 tons of wood waste.

Reutzel worked with a local

Chowdhury said. "I saw it in everyone's face whenever I suggested they do something new. You have to show the workers that it will ease their work, and you must show the managers that it will save money."

Reutzel said that employee input was key to overcoming that resistance because it gave them ownership in the solutions developed.

"If something isn't working right, they're the first ones to know it," Reutzel said. "And they really valued

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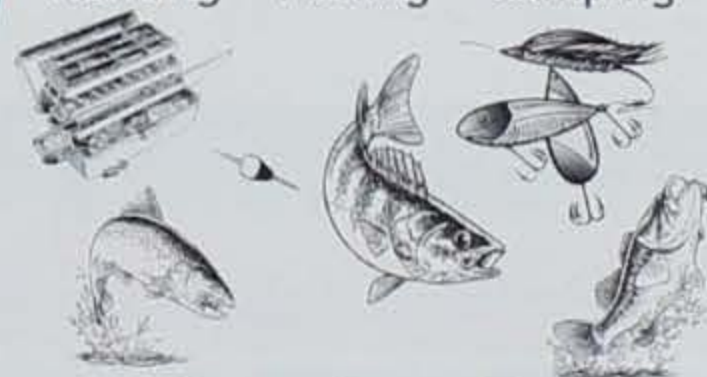
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2002 Explore Iowa Parks Winners

Three lucky campers were winners in the Iowa DNR's Explore Iowa Parks program in 2002. The program awarded prizes to campers who stayed in a number of the 18 participating state parks. Campers could earn prizes for camping in as few as four parks or they could try for one of three grand prizes by camping in 10 of the 18 parks. The 2003 Explore Iowa Parks program will kick off in May during Free Camping Weekend, May 2-4. The program will remain much the same, however this year 53 state parks will participate. For more information call 515-281-5918.



1st Emy and Larry Lavenz of Waterloo won first prize, a Palomino fold-down trailer donated by Herold Trailer Sales and MidAmerican Energy. Park district supervisor Jim Lawson, acting parks bureau chief Kevin Szcodronski and Herold owners Cindy Mathews, Bryan Herold and Morris Herold were present at the awarding.



3rd Jeff and Carmen Grooms from Ottumwa won a coupon book good for seven nights of camping in Iowa State Parks.

2nd Chuck and Pat Custer from Randalia won a two-person kayak from CanoeSport Outfitters in Indianola. Sherry Arntzen, event coordinator (left) and CanoeSport owner Jeff Holmes (far right) helped present the award.

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PARKS PROFILE



LAKE ANITA STATE PARK

WHERE PEACE AND TRANQUILITY MEET CONVENIENCE

Article by Joshua Peach
Photos by Clay Smith

Nestled in the rolling hills of southwest Iowa is a place where peace and tranquility meet modern-day convenience. Located about halfway between Des Moines and Council Bluffs, off Interstate 80, the beautiful scenery, relaxing atmosphere and easy access make Lake Anita State Park a perfect getaway for people of all ages.

Lake Anita was first proposed in 1950 when local residents approached the state with an idea to build a lake near the small town of Anita. Their effort was rewarded in 1962 when the park was established and construction began.

On May 30, 1969, the 1,062-acre state park was formally dedicated. Anita residents had their 175-acre lake, as well as a

120-acre public hunting area and a 942-acre wildlife preserve. Lake Anita was now set to provide many diverse opportunities for the outdoor recreationalist. And it has. Today, Lake Anita is one of the most popular outdoor recreation facilities in southwest Iowa.

Camping is one of the most popular activities at the park, with 145 sites in the modern campground. For those looking to rough

it, there are 69 sites with no electricity; and another 48 with electricity. A special feature are the 28 sites with full hookups, which include water and sewer as well as electricity. All campsites are within a short walk to the lake, providing easy access to fishing without having to pack all of the gear into the car. Along with modern rest room and shower facilities, there is a small playground in the campground with swings, a slide and climbing structure for the kids.

There are eight open-air picnic shelters around the lake that can be reserved through the park office or used on a first-come, first-served basis. Many offer views overlooking the lake. There are also numerous picnic areas around the lake, complete with tables and grills, that are very popular.

Fishing has always been popular at Lake Anita. With road access to all sides of the lake, along with nine fishing jetties dotted around the lake, you don't need a boat to enjoy fishing. Ample structure throughout the lake provides plenty of habitat for fish.

Since Lake Anita is an artificial lake, boats with any sized motors can be used, but they must be run at no wake speed. Boats can be easily put into the lake at one of the two paved boat ramps.

Fishing tournaments are a common site on Lake Anita.

Fishing clubs come from all over the state for a chance at catching a few of the lake's chunky largemouth bass. Almost every weekend you can see anglers competing in these tournaments.

The lake normally holds very good numbers of bass, bluegill, crappie and channel catfish. And extensive habitat work done in 1992 and 1993 greatly improved fish size and numbers.

However, around 1995 yellow



bass were found during sampling of the lake. In recent years, there have been some incredibly large spawns, and yellow bass are beginning to take over and out-compete other fish for food. Hence, Lake Anita will undergo restoration work this fall, which will add even more habitat and rid the lake of yellow bass, which will eventually improve the quality of fishing.

Wildlife watchers are greeted with a large variety of birds and

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animals throughout the various seasons. Lake Anita is a common stopover for bald eagles and migrating waterfowl in the spring and fall. There are plenty of deer, songbirds and small mammals that live in and around the lake.

An extensive bluebird box program, managed by a local volunteer, provides opportunities to observe and learn about this colorful bird. Each year hundreds of bluebirds are fledged in the boxes at Lake Anita. It is very easy to spot the blue wings and body as they fly around the park.

Water quality is great at Lake

PARKS PROFILE

Anita, mostly because a large portion of the lake's watershed is in approved agricultural practices. There are three large silt-retention ponds at various arms of the lake that keep sediment from entering the main body. These silt ponds are also excellent fisheries.

The great water quality makes Lake Anita a wonderful place for swimming. The beach,

located on the south side of the lake, is always popular on hot summer days.

For the more active adventurer, there is 4.25-mile hiking and biking trail following the lake shoreline. The trail is currently covered with gravel, but efforts are ongoing to pave it. The trail eventually hooks up with the Grass Roots Nature Trail running from the park into the town of



Fishing is popular at Lake Anita, and restoration work this fall should make it even better. (above). Shelters are available for picnicking (left). Camping is one of the park's most popular activities (right).

RENOVATION PLANNED FOR LAKE ANITA

- Having shown up in 1995, yellow bass have increased to the point where they have completely taken over the fish population at Lake Anita. This has contributed to the 85 percent drop in bluegill, 70 percent drop in the crappie population and 60 percent drop in largemouth bass.
- When the fishing is good, Lake Anita has an estimated \$750,000 annual economic impact to the area. From 1992 to 2002, fishing trips have decreased by 50 percent.

- The lake level will be lowered at the end of the summer and a chemical will be applied to the water to kill the fish. This will eliminate all the yellow bass so the problem does not occur again. Afterwards the lake will be stocked with bluegill, largemouth bass, redear sunfish and channel catfish. Work will also be done on the fish habitat and shoreline protection installed.

- After about two to three years the fish will be big enough to attract large numbers of anglers.

Anita, where visitors can get a taste of small-town Iowa and visit local shops and businesses.

Lake Anita also has a short interpretive trail, which is a great way to learn about the different tree species growing in Iowa. Informational pamphlets are available at the trailhead or the park office.

The Whaletown Triathlon, the second oldest triathlon in the state, is also held at Lake Anita each year. With more than 150 participants, the triathlon is fairly popular yet tough due to the rolling hills in and around the park. People come from all over to watch or participate in the event as runners wind around the park and through the campground.

In the near future, park visitors will get a chance to see what it was like in Iowa when settlers first arrived. Efforts are underway to restore large areas of the park to native prairie and savannah. A recent grant award will allow staff to buy the seeds needed to establish the prairie remnants.

Over the next several years there are plans to complete extensive invasive tree removal and seed planting to make the area look as it did hundreds of years ago. There are also several large areas of burr oak savannas

in the park, and once these areas are restored, they will provide a beautiful picture of historic Iowa.

Lake Anita State Park is a great place for a one-day outing or a longer vacation with the family. The many things to do and see at the park offer something for the whole family. With the rural setting and beautiful landscape, Lake Anita is truly one of Iowa's places of quiet beauty.



Joshua Peach is the Park Manager at Lake Anita State Park.

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CONSERVATION 101

Paddle Power: Propulsion is All Technique

by Brian Button

If the winter layoff has you feeling more like Wimpy than Popeye, here are some paddling tips to help you canoe farther, faster and more comfortably.

Good stroke technique benefits all paddlers by increasing efficiency and reducing sore muscles and strained joints. Seasoned paddlers constantly refine these strokes and beginners can benefit from learning them early. Here's the skinny on the power stroke and J-stroke so you can start making waves.

Power or Forward Stroke

Everyone *thinks* they know this stroke, until they get left in the wake of someone *really* in the know. When you need power, speed and the ability to cover distance and make knots, follow these tips. (Warning: Perfect this stroke and you'll start in Iowa and finish in St. Louis by dinner!)

A common error in the power stroke is relying on arm strength. Instead, use major muscle groups to avoid taxing fast-fatiguing smaller muscles. To do so, *push forward with the top hand, drawing strength from powerful shoulders, back and abdominal muscles of the torso.* Keep the lower arm straight, bending only near the end of the stroke to help

move the blade from the water.

Think of the torso pushing the shoulder forward, which pushes the upper arm and paddle, instead of pulling with the biceps of the shaft hand. To do so, you "wind up" or twist the torso and lean forward. During the stroke, the torso unwinds to deliver power moving between a 10 o'clock to 2 o'clock position.

Keep the paddle vertical, not across the body. Keep arms and hands no higher than your eyes. Any higher and you merely tire muscles for no gain. Cleanly pull the blade from the water near your hips, any farther aft and you simply lift water, creating drag and wasting energy. At stroke's end, the blade is still vertical.

J-Stroke

With practice you can track a canoe in a straight line without ruddering or switching sides to paddle, making it easier when your buddy in the bow is slacking or when you want to canoe solo.

Use this stroke only from the stern, or rear. Start the J-stroke like a typical forward stroke, finishing with a gentle pry away from the canoe (see illustration at right). Turn the thumb of the top hand down slowly during

the stroke to alter the paddle blade pitch (see photos below and right). Experiment turning the thumb down early or late in the stroke and combining it with the gentle pry, or J-shaped stroke, away from the canoe to provide additional course correction as needed.



Clay Smith



Illustration by Bob Casteline

Some Basic Mistakes

Splashing and Gurgling:

Splashing on paddle entry and exit should be avoided. Backsplashes indicate pulling before the paddle is fully inserted into the water, a wasteful motion that does nothing for forward propulsion.

Arms: Arms are a small muscle group compared to larger and more powerful abdominal,

shoulder and back muscles. Use these powerhouses for the majority of propulsion by twisting and rotating the torso. Reach forward, don't just sit bolt upright. Again, kayakers and canoeists should avoid keeping hands higher than the eye or chin, which fatigues the shoulders, neck and arms.

Tensing: Relax non-paddling muscles for comfort. A death-grip on the paddle or tense neck cause strain.

Pulling too Fast:

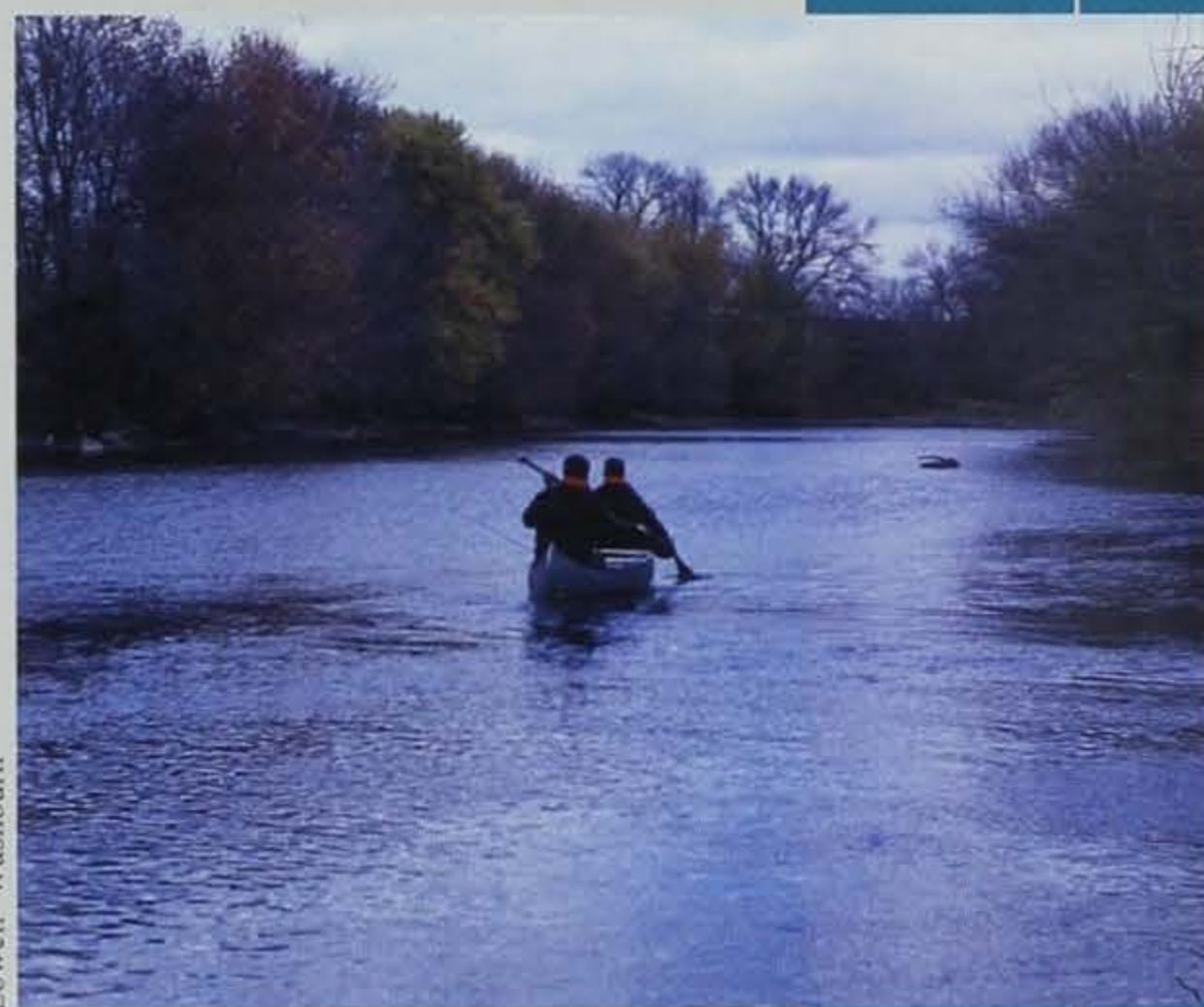
Don't pull the paddle too quickly and simply move water by you. Think of the paddle as an anchor to "grab" the water and pull yourself past that

spot, not just pulling water by you, or imagine sticks in the river that you must grab to pull yourself past.

Brian Button is an air quality information specialist and an avid canoeist.



Clay Smith



Lowell Washburn

Streamside Lessons

Canoeing on the aptly named Skunk River with a flotilla of six canoes, an owl lifts off like a lumbering cargo jet from a river bank tree. Losing altitude due to the extra weight — an adult skunk clutched in its talons — and spooked by the aluminum armada below, it drops the smelly payload like a B-52. As the skunk fell, adrenaline-stoked friends in the lead canoe put paddle to water, hurriedly pulling their paddles too fast, moving a lot of water past them but not moving the canoe forward. Fortunately, the raptor's bombardier skills were

lacking and the skunk bomb missed a direct hit, instead belly-flopping and splashing the screaming paddlers. **Lesson one:** Learn to pull the canoe *past the paddle*, don't simply pull the paddle *through the water*. **Lesson two:** Iowa's owls need more bombing run practice.

* * *

Two potential hazards quickly appear after a sharp bend in the swift spring flow of the Shell Rock River; a barbed wire fence strung across the rapids and a bovine naval blockade in the form of a massive, muscle-rippled brown bull standing in the channel just across the fence.

Using a strong reverse stroke, I keep from flowing through the barbed wire like soup stock through a strainer. With a leg in the water for stability and unaware you could electrify barbed fences, I grip the wire to keep from snagging while figuring out what to do about the bull. *Zap!* My high wattage yell sent the bull running, at least solving one of the problems.

Lesson one: Watch the river for hazards and be able to control your craft. **Lesson two:** It's no bull; water and electricity don't mix.

—BB

KIDS' CORNER

Prairie Power! by Meggan Daniels • photos by Roger A. Hill



Butterfly Milkweed

Take a look out your window. What do you see? Chances are you see buildings, roads, parking lots or a patchwork quilt of farm fields dotted with houses. About 150 years ago you would have seen an endless sea of rolling prairie grasses with splashes of orange, purple and yellow prairie flowers. The sounds of meadowlarks and bobolinks have been replaced with car horns and sirens. The prairie has nearly vanished from Iowa.



Big Bluestem

A prairie is land covered mostly with grasses and forbs (flowering plants). Prairie grasses, like big bluestem, can grow more than 8 feet tall and have roots spreading nearly 16 feet below ground.

Flowers such as pale purple cone-flower, compass plant and butterfly milkweed provide excellent food sources for birds, butterflies and other animals.

Animals such as bison and elk once roamed Iowa feeding on the delicious prairie plants, while wolves masterfully hunted these large herbivores (plant eaters). When the prairie disappeared, though, so did these animals.

When settlers first arrived, 30 million acres of Iowa were covered with tallgrass prairies. Settlers needed to grow food for survival and the rich prairie soil was perfect for raising corn, hay and other

vegetables. The prairie's many long roots were hard to break without strong equipment, but once the plow was improved, each year more and more prairie was turned into farmland.

Today, less than one-tenth of 1 percent of Iowa's tallgrass prairie remains. The little parcels left contain a very diverse group of



animals and plants that need our help for survival. Contact your local DNR office or county conservation board to find out what prairie areas are near you and take a field trip to discover what Iowa looked like more than 150 years ago.

Crack the Prairie Mystery

Use the key below to crack the secret code about Iowa's prairie history.

16	18	1	9	18	9	5	19	15	14	3	5	3	15	22	5	18	5	4







1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 3
a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 %

Answer: Prairies once covered 85% of Iowa

President Theodore Roosevelt established the first national wildlife refuge on March 14, 1903 at Pelican Island, Florida. Celebrate 100 years of National Wildlife Refuges by visiting Iowa's Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge. The refuge offers five miles of walking trails where you're bound to see many of the native prairie animals, including bison and elk. This 5,000-acre area, located just east of Des Moines, is carrying out the daunting task of restoring a portion of Iowa's tallgrass prairie. The refuge is open from dawn until dusk seven days a week while the Prairie Learning Center is open year round to the public Monday through Saturday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is free.

Mix-n-Match

Can you match these Iowa prairie dwellers of yesterday and today with their pictures?

A.		White-tailed deer		D.
		Badger		
		Bison		
		Prairie chicken		E.
B.		Monarch butterfly		
		Bullsnake		F.
C.				

Answer: A. Badger B. White-tailed deer C. Prairie chicken D. Bison E. Monarch butterfly F. Bullsnake.

Fast Facts

- The pasque flower is the first prairie forb to bloom in Iowa each year.
- Prairie began to form about 8,000 years ago.
- Prairie once covered about 40 percent of the U.S.
- A bison can consume 30 to 50 pounds of food a day.
- Prairie dogs are not dogs at all — they're ground squirrels!
- Prairie fires can burn as hot as 700 degrees Fahrenheit (boiling is 212 degrees).
- Coyotes did not live in Iowa until wolves were forced out.



Clay Smith

Fire on the Prairie

Before the prairie was converted into farmland, great fires sparked by lightening or Native American hunting groups swept across Iowa leaving behind a blackened ground. The dark, exposed surface absorbed the sun's energy readily and stimulated the growth of plants. Fire also helped control the invasion of woody shrubs and trees. But for the frontier family living on the prairie, fire was a terrible thing that could destroy their home, farm and take their lives. Therefore, fires were put out. Today, controlled burns and prescribed fires are used to ensure the health of the prairie and protect its human neighbors.

CONSERVATION UPDATE

Storm Water Permits Now Required for One- Acre Land Clearing

Anyone who disturbs or clears one acre or more of land are now required to have a storm water permit from the DNR.

"This applies to anyone involved in construction activities, including municipalities, counties, individuals and farmers," said Joe Griffin, program coordinator with the DNR.

The permit is required when one acre or more is disturbed on any project that bares the ground by removing vegetation, concrete or other stabilizing materials. A bare surface includes soil stock-piles.

Griffin said that there is an agricultural exemption for activities that further cropping. That would include installing drainage tile or terraces in a crop field, or grubbing trees for a row crop.

Permits are relatively simple to obtain. First a pollution prevention plan must be written for the site that is being cleared. The plan should outline how erosion will be minimized during the construction project. Practices such as silt fences, retention basins, temporary seeding or mulch can be used.

"One of the most effective ways to prevent erosion is to disturb the minimum amount of surface area at any one time," said Griffin.

The pollution prevention plan must be followed, but it does not

need to be submitted to the DNR. After writing the plan, a two-page application form needs to be completed. Information on how to file a complete notice of intent and the general storm water permit No. 2 are available on the DNR's website at <http://www.state.ia.us/epd/wastewtr/wwapps/npdes.htm#storm>.

Permit applicants must provide proof of public notification and the one-year fee of \$150 with their application form.

Griffin said that anyone disturbing five acres or more has been required to have a storm water permit since 1992, but the one-acre requirement was required after the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency changed its rules in 1999.

For more information, contact Joe Griffin at 515-281-7017.

National Fishing Week Free Fishing Days June 6-8

In an effort to promote fishing, the Iowa DNR will be joining other agencies and organizations across the country in sponsoring National Fishing Week June 1-8.

As part of the celebration, the DNR has designated June 6-8 as Free Fishing Days in Iowa. During those days only, Iowa residents may fish and possess fish without purchasing a license or paying the new fish habitat fee. Payment of the trout fee, normally required when possessing trout, has also been waived. All other fishing regulations, including size and possession limits, apply.



Lowell Washburn

**Check out the DNR's website or watch your
local media for information on
Free Camping Weekend May 2-4!**



Plant Tree and Shrub Seedlings, Improve Bird Habitat

Birds need food, shelter and nesting sites. Iowa landowners can help promote bird habitat by planting native tree and shrub seedlings. The DNR State Forest Nursery has specialty packets of 20 to 200 seedlings that are designed to improve bird habitat. Available are Songbird, Pheasant/Quail and Turkey packets. For more information, call 800-865-2477 or see the web site www.iowadnr.com/forestry/

New State Land to Benefit Songbirds

The Iowa DNR has acquired an 80-acre tract of land that borders the west side of the Cedar Creek Unit of Stephens State Forest, near Williamson.

Nearly all of the land is in timber and has important benefits to nongame wildlife, said Doug Harr, with the DNR's wildlife diversity program. "We thought it was pretty important to migrating and nesting songbirds," he said. "And as the hickories age, it has the potential to have nursery colony habitat for the Indiana bat, which is listed as a federally endangered species, so that was attractive to us."

The new property is only accessible through the existing Cedar Creek Unit. No vehicles will be allowed on the property.

The land was purchased through a federally appropriated state wildlife grant and a matching donation from the National Wild Turkey Federation. It will be managed for the Kentucky

warbler, yellow-breasted chat, scarlet tanager, yellow-throated vireo and other warblers, vireos and flycatchers.

"This purchase couldn't have been possible without the generous donation from the National Wild Turkey Federation," Harr said.

"This should also provide an excellent opportunity to expand turkey and deer hunting in southeast Iowa."

The spring turkey hunting seasons, which runs from April 14 through May 18, will not conflict with the songbird

nesting season, Harr said. The new property will be managed jointly by the wildlife and forestry bureaus.

The DNR acquired the property on Dec. 20 for \$28,000.



1/92/11000

2003 Nongame Support Certificate
IOWA DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES

Bobcat
(Lynx rufus)
by Ty Smedes

This year's nongame support certificate is now available. The 2003 certificate features a photograph of a female bobcat with two kittens taken by Ty Smedes. Only 1,000 certificates were printed and are available for a limited time. The Nongame Support Certificate costs \$5 with benefits going to Iowa's Wildlife Diversity Program. The certificates have been produced annually since 1979.

CONSERVATION UPDATE

New Program Will Protect Valuable Habitat for Species in Peril

The Iowa DNR received a first-of-its-kind grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to further protect and enhance critical habitats to protect species listed as endangered, threatened or of special concern.

The Landowner Incentive Program is funded by a three-year grant that will provide \$300,000 each year in cost-share money to landowners that agree to protect and enhance habitats that harbor plants, birds, mammals, fish, butterflies or other species listed as threatened, endangered or of special concern. Highest priority will be given to federally listed species. The DNR wildlife bureau had to match 25 percent of the grant in order to receive the money.

"I think this is going to be a great opportunity," said Ken Herring, supervisor for the DNR's private lands program. "The timing is right for Iowa to be involved in a program like this. This program is not tied to any farming practices or crop base, it is for all landowners who are looking to protect and enhance critical natural resource areas."

Herring said the field staff will be working with landowners to try to identify where these species are found in Iowa and to then work with the landowner to

improve and protect the habitat. "We are going to work to preserve and restore the rare and endangered populations rather than the more common species," he said.

The program will provide 75 percent of the money to improve existing habitat on land hosting one or more of the listed species. Landowners will provide the remaining 25 percent, which, for example, could include the labor for restoration or by paying a contractor to do the improvements to the landscape.

"We have a lot of the technical assistance delivery in place with 25 private lands staff already in the field. We will be working with an additional 50 to 60 staff of fisheries, wildlife and forestry experts who will also be working with landowners on this project," Herring said. It is also expected that other conservation groups will be interested in providing technical assistance to landowners.

This is a program designed for all uncommon species — the rare and often unnoticed plants, insects, reptiles, as well as species like the bald eagle.

There have been other programs focusing on threatened and endangered species, but the focus of those programs was generally acquiring land. The Landowner Incentive Program's focus is working with landowners to improve the existing habitat

that hosts these species.

Herring is targeting this fall to begin meeting with landowners about the program.

For more information, contact Herring at 515-281-5529.



chapters are working with farmers and landowners to establish wildlife habitat. The mission of Pheasants Forever is to restore pheasants and other wildlife populations by providing quality habitat. PF provides assistance to landowners in planting food plots, nesting cover, shelterbelts and other habitat for game and nongame wildlife.

Pheasants Forever currently has 103 chapters throughout the state eager to work with local farmers and landowners for the benefit of all upland and wetland wildlife.

For help planting wildlife habitat or more information about Pheasants Forever, contact Jim Wooley (S. Iowa—641-774-2238), Matt O'Connor (E. Iowa—563-926-2357), Mark Heckenlaible (W. Iowa—402-687-2004) Dave VanWaus (Central Iowa—641-377-3480).

Volunteering Today For A Better Iowa Tomorrow

Eagle Scout Projects: WINDFALL FOR PARKS



Churches, schools and communities across the state reap the benefits of Eagle Scouts' projects. Iowa's state parks are no exception. Every year there are at least 25 Eagle Scout projects completed on state lands.

Wildcat Den State Park, located in southeastern Iowa, was the site of Blue Grass Eagle Scout Brett Hamilton's attention. A tree fell across a popular observation deck during a wind storm and damaged the railing beyond repair.

Hamilton and scouts in his troop removed the old railing. They then made a new railing at Hamilton's residence, and brought it back to the site to install.

In addition to replacing the railing, the scouts also used railroad ties to improve the approach to the overlook.

This is just one of the many projects completed with Eagle Scout labor and material donations. For more information about volunteering for state parks, contact call 800-367-1025, or contact volunteer@dnr.state.ia.us or go to www.keepersoftheland.org



Brett Hamilton (foreground) with scouts, DNR staff and parents who built and installed the new observation deck railing and fixed the approach to the deck.

Upcoming NRC and EPC Meetings

The dates and locations have been set for the following meetings of the Natural Resource Commission and Environmental Protection Commission of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

Agendas are set approximately 10 days prior to the scheduled meeting date. For additional information, contact the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Wallace State Office Building, 502 E. 9th St., Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0034.

Natural Resource Commission:

- April 10
Telephone Meeting
- May 8
Loess Hills
- June 12
Black Hawk County

Environmental Protection Commission:

- April 21
Des Moines
- May 19
Des Moines
- June 16
Des Moines

WARDEN'S DIARY



Carrying the Tradition

by Chuck Humeston

Do you ever notice how things can go from one extreme to another in a short period of time? That's how it was one day not too long ago when I received two telephone calls.

The first call came from a fellow officer who told me Tim Dorr had died. If you didn't know Tim, you should have. Those of us who knew and worked with him are better people for it. Tim was a conservation officer who, due to a battle with cancer, was forced to retire from the DNR. His courage was an inspiration to all of us. He was dedicated to his job and his family, and he was a man of integrity who proved cancer can never take one's spirit. I didn't work in the same district as Tim, so I saw him only on occasion. But, I remember he took an interest in the way things worked, and the way things were put together. If you ever asked him how something worked, you could bet he had the answer.

I was thinking about that a short time later when the second call came in. I immediately recognized the voice on the other

end. It was a young man who I had worked with from time to time as a summer Water Patrol Officer on one of the lakes. He was an energetic person pursuing with focus his goal of becoming a conservation officer. We were in the process of hiring new officers at the time. I knew he had applied, but when I read the list of applicants, strangely I noticed his name was missing.

"Hi Chuck," he said. "I just wanted to let you know I'll be wearing a gold badge in about a month." His excitement was evident to say the least. And rightfully so. We average around 260 applications for our positions, and he had survived the process and was realizing his life's dream.

"That's great," I answered. "Congratulations, I'm very happy for you. The department needs people like you."

I hung up the phone, and drove someplace where I could think for awhile. I thought how most things in life are based on a cycle. The cycle of the seasons. The cycle of the wildlife we see in the outdoors. And I guess it holds true for the cycle of the seasons of our lives.

It hits me again as I write this thinking about my close friend Arlen Throne. Arlen is a conservation officer in Mason City who suffered a heart attack in May.

Being the fighter he is, he worked hard to get back to the job, but the damage was too great. He retired at the end of January.

Arlen and I are the same age, although he takes great pleasure in reminding me I'm a few months "older." We shared many adventures together that I will never forget, and for me, the job will not be the same without him. But again, even as I received the news of his impending retirement, I was spending 10 days being a field training officer for one of our newly hired officers. The irony was not lost on me.

So it goes. I think back on the officers I knew who inspired me when I was hired: Wendell Simonson, Bob Moats, Jim Judas, Ed Lawrence and others who I looked at and thought, "No way will I ever know as much as these guys do!" I would say that is probably still true.

So, I thought about the cycle this is. The job of a conservation officer is more than just an occupation — much more. Fish and game law enforcement is a lifestyle we embrace. Fellow officer Steve Schutte and I were talking about that recently. We commented if we aren't doing the job, then we are usually doing something in the outdoors. It draws us. It calls us. It is where we feel the most alive. One of

my mentors always said, "If it doesn't have fur, fins or feathers, then I don't trust it." It is a lifestyle that sometimes carries personal cost. But, we have accepted that, and those of us who do it are very blessed to be, as Bob Moats always put it, "One of the select."

I will admit my youthful exuberance has been tempered somewhat. I have learned I can't single-handedly save the environment. Maybe that can be viewed as cynicism or some kind of, "burnout." If so, I would take issue with that. It wasn't long ago, while on duty, I stopped on top of a bluff overlooking the Iowa River to watch the colors change as the sun set. It was one of those times I shook my head, and thought, "They actually pay me to do this."

I would rather believe that

experience has taught me to choose my battles well, and I have learned what really is important are the men and women I work with. They do more than a job. They carry on a tradition that has been entrusted to us, and which we will some day entrust to others.

Somewhere right now the cycle continues. Somewhere there is a young person sitting at the edge of a pond slowly pulling a noisy popper across the water, or sighting in a BB gun on some imaginary target. They have tasted the outdoors, and they are filled with wonder as it calls them. They are dreaming. Dreaming maybe of one day wearing the gold badge we will hand down to them.

Help Preserve Iowa's Habitat Join PHEASANTS FOREVER

Why? Pheasants Forever is the only national conservation organization where 100 percent of net funds raised by our local chapters stay with chapters. This is why almost every Iowa county has a PF chapter. If you want to expand pheasant habitat and secure Iowa's great pheasant hunting tradition, join PF.

Join today and receive a year's subscription to the Pheasants Forever Journal, a window decal and sense of pride in knowing you're making a difference for our natural resources and hunting heritage for generations to come.

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