



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Iowa DNR News

Conservation and Recreation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Dec. 21, 2021

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The 2021-22 Christmas Bird Count is underway



The 122nd annual Christmas Bird Count, coordinated by the Audubon Society, is being held between Dec. 14 and Jan. 5. This year, an estimated 80,000 volunteers will participate across the United States and in up to 20 countries in the western hemisphere.

The counts are conducted in specific circles, 15 miles in radius, where volunteers count every bird sighted or heard within the circle during a 24-hour period. Iowa has 39 of these circles, primarily along the border rivers and in the larger cities, and each circle usually has a minimum of 10 volunteers and a count coordinator who helps to organize the volunteers, collects the data, tabulates the counts and submits it to the Audubon Society. Existing survey circles and contacts for volunteers, are available online at <https://audubon.maps.arcgis.com/apps/View/index.html?appid=ac275eeb01434cedb1c5dcd0fd3fc7b4>. Anyone can add a count circle to an area that doesn't have one as long as they meet the criteria and secure the volunteers.

Anna Buckardt Thomas, avian biologist with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, has volunteered for counts in Dallas County and in Ames. She said most circles are open to volunteer birders of all abilities, all they need is warm clothes and a spotting scope or pair of binoculars. Information on the Iowa counts is available online at <https://iowabirds.org/Connections/CBC.aspx>.

“Volunteers need to be prepared for the weather because if it’s raining on your count day, you still need to go out,” she said. “If someone is interested in volunteering but is a novice birder, they will be paired with more experienced birders as they learn. If they want to volunteer, live within a count circle and have birds or a bird feeder but can’t help for the entire time period, they can count the birds at the feeder and report the counts and time spent counting to the local count compiler.”

The data goes to a national database managed by the Audubon Society that provides a long-term view of the history and trends in bird populations and movements. It is used to periodically update population trends by area or subset and is made available to the public on Audubon’s website www.audubon.org. Count data is also used to produce long term trend reports like The State of the Birds 2019 at <https://www.stateofthebirds.org/2019/>

The Audubon Society also collects information on the number of hours spent and miles driven and walked to calculate the effort to collect the data.

Volunteers interested in contributing bird data but who can’t help with the Christmas counts have another opportunity in February as part of the Great Backyard Bird Count, an international effort to count birds that is focused on urban and suburban habitat. The Christmas bird count includes all habitat within the circles.

Media Contact: Anna Buckardt Thomas, Avian Biologist, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 515-823-3945.

Fish Iowa! and First Catch Center offer webinar on ice fishing basics

DES MOINES - The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is offering a free ice fishing basics webinar on Jan. 12, from 6 - 7 p.m., via Zoom, for those who have little to no ice fishing experience and would like to try it.

“If you have not tried ice fishing, or if you are just getting started, this webinar is for you,” said Barb Gigar, Fish Iowa! coordinator with the Iowa DNR.

Join the online event to learn about basic ice fishing equipment and tactics with Scott Grummer, fisheries biologist in north-central Iowa, and Tyler Stubbs, community fishing biologist. Participants will be introduced to basic ice safety, ice fishing gear and tactics, cold weather fish behavior and where to fish. The general presentation will be followed by a question and answer session.

The webinar is geared for participants ages 16 and older. Those under 16 may attend, but must have an adult register and participate as well. Space is limited, so register right

away to secure your spot. To register, go

to https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_QrVSeUV7Rzqv4fl0QrrJKQ

Media Contact: Barb Gigar, Fish Iowa! Coordinator, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 515-494-3891 or Barb.Gigar@dnr.iowa.gov.

Trout survey prize winners announced

BOONE - The recently completed 2021 Iowa Trout Angler Survey received more than 4,100 responses, from which 10 names were drawn for prizes.

Prizes were provided by JAX Outdoor Gear, of Ames and Scheels stores in West Des Moines and Cedar Falls.

The following individuals received prizes.

- Christopher Schulz, of Denison, fishing tackle package from JAX
- Stuart Ballinger, of Cedar Rapids, won a \$50 Scheels gift card
- Lindsey Tournier, of Adel, won a \$50 Scheels gift card
- Cody Freeman, of Fairfield, won a \$50 Scheels gift card
- Neal Hurlbutt, of Conrad, won a \$50 Scheels gift card
- Todd Mikkelsen, of Dike, won a \$50 Scheels gift card
- Zachary Barry, of North Liberty, won a \$50 Scheels gift card
- Timothy Luloff, of Winterset, won a \$50 Scheels gift card
- Frederick Burr, of Des Moines, won a \$50 Scheels gift card
- Bryon Tack, of Urbandale, won a \$50 Scheels gift card

MEDIA CONTACT: Jeff Kopaska, Fisheries Research Biometrician, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 515-204-8021.

Summer seasonal positions open in state parks, forests and preserves

The DNR Parks, Forests and Preserves Bureau has openings for recreational aides and seasonal patrol officers for the summer 2022 season across the state park system.

Jobs duties will include assisting park staff in patrolling the park, helping visitors, registering campers, and maintaining the park through duties such as mowing, trimming, cleaning, trail work and facility repairs. Interested applicants should have skills in general maintenance, ability to work on a team or with minimal supervision, and have strong customer relations skills.

For more details and how to apply, visit www.iowadnr.gov/Employment