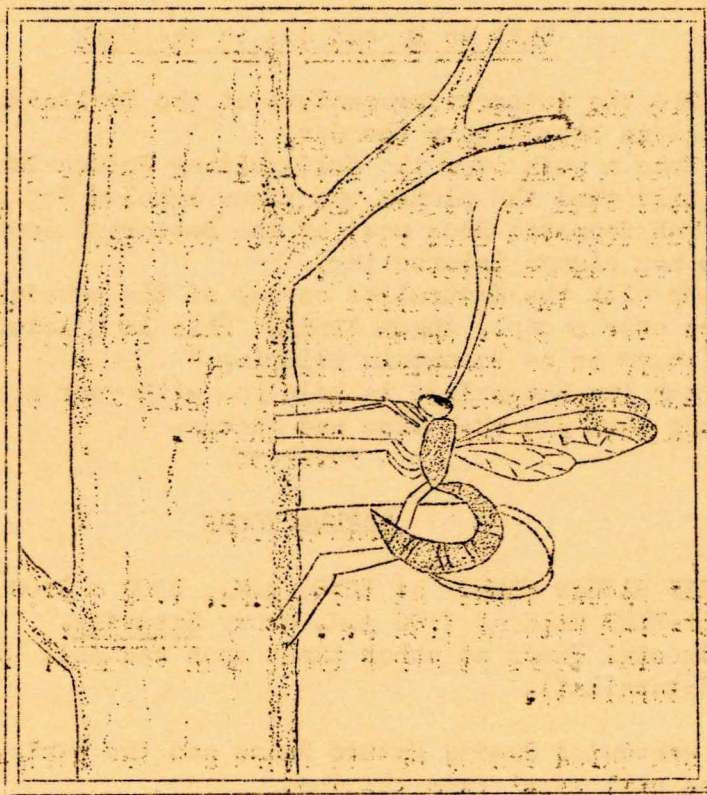


DOLLIVER MEMORIA

STATE PARK

NATURE NOTE



DOLLIVER MEMORIAL STATE PARK  
NATURE NOTES

Vol. III

July 14, 1940

No. 2

This bulletin is prepared by the Naturalist for the information of the guests of the Dolliver Memorial State Park in order that the recreational and educational opportunities of an unspoiled primitive area may be more fully appreciated, utilized and protected. It is issued by the State Conservation Commission with the cooperation of the Recreational Department of the Work Projects Administration and the Iowa State College Extension Service.

David Damon

State Park Naturalist

What to Do and See in the Park

See the interesting exhibit at the Trailside Museum (bulletin board) near the dam.

Take a walk over the Self-guiding Nature Trail. Here you will find the plants and trees labeled for you.

The Copperas Beds west of the Butternut Grove Picnic Area are always interesting.

Go with the Naturalist on one of the scheduled Nature Tours over a cool, shady trail. This is a leisurely tour and there is no "mountain climbing."

Ask the Naturalist to help you with your problems. He can save you much time and energy.

\*\*\*\*\*

NATURE TOURS

SUNDAY NATURE TOURS at 10:00 A.M., 1:00 & 3:00 P.M.

EARLY-BIRD WALK at 7:00 A.M. every Saturday.

(Special Tours at other times upon request. Ask the Naturalist).

The scheduled Sunday Nature Tours and the Early-Bird Walks will start from the dam.

W.L-137



## The Parasitic Wasps

Have you ever seen a long, slender-bodied insect flying through the woods with what appeared to be long strings attached to the end of the body? If you have had this experience you probably wondered what kind of an insect it was and whether the "strings" were part of the insect.

This insect is one of the larger members of a group of wasps frequently referred to as parasitic wasps and the "strings" are a part of the egg-laying apparatus of the female wasp. This "long-tailed" wasp is a valuable insect in our woods as will be seen from a brief description of its habits.

It is very interesting to observe the manner in which this wasp lays her eggs. As soon as she alights on a tree trunk her antennae or "feelers" begin to wave up and down as she walks over the bark as though looking for something. Finally she stops at a point which she judges to be over a burrow of a tree borer and elevating her long "tail" or ovipositor in a loop over her back with its tip on the bark of the tree she proceeds with great skill to drill a tiny hole into the tree as is illustrated on the cover of this booklet. When the borer's burrow is reached she deposits an egg in it. The tiny maggot which hatches from the egg creeps along the burrow until it reaches its victim and then fastens itself to the borer which it very slowly destroys by sucking its blood.

When the maggot is full-grown it changes to the pupa stage and later emerges as an adult wasp and is soon laying more eggs in the burrows of other destructive borers.

One insect destroys the eggs, larvae, pupa or adults of another and may in turn be destroyed by a third insect and so on. Thus continues the struggle for existence in the world of insects. But is this struggle for existence limited to insects?

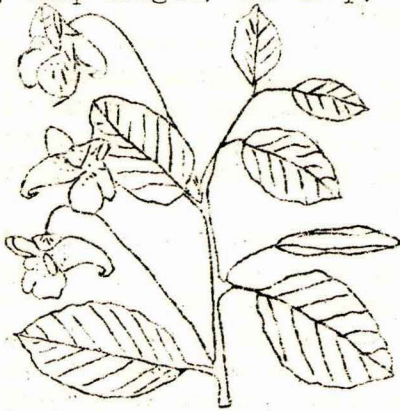
"Great fleas have little fleas on their backs to bite 'em,  
And little fleas have lesser fleas, and so ad infinitum."  
And the great fleas themselves in turn have greater fleas to go on,  
while these again have greater still, and greater still, and so on.

— De Morgan.

Do You Know the Touch-Me-Not?

You have seen this plant many times and perhaps referred to it as "just another weed" or you may know it by another one of its numerous names such as Jewel-weed, Snap-dragon, Ear-drop, Weather-cock, Snap-weed,

Kicking-colt, etc.



Let's spend a minute examining this plant which began to blossom about the first of July this summer. To find the Touch-me-not we must go to moist (not necessarily wet) locations. In the park we frequently find it along the road and trails, sometimes in fairly large patches.

You shouldn't have difficulty in recognizing it for it is that pale green juicy or watery-looking plant with a hollow stem. The leaves have long stems (petioles), some of which are red. The leaf margins are wavy and the veins are quite conspicuous.

The flowers are yellow with dark reddish spots. They are more or less bell-shaped with a hooked spur at the closed end, and suspended by a long, slender stem which is attached to the side of the bell.

The most curious part of the plant is the seed pod which explodes when ripe and scatters the seed. If you touch one of the pods you may be surprised to find it exploding in your fingers. The exploding of the pods when touched has given this plant some of the common names mentioned above.



### Are You A Bird-Lover?

Almost everyone is a bird-lover to some extent. Perhaps we don't realize how much we like birds, but did you ever stop to think what this old world would be like if we had no birds?

It is not difficult to picture a gloomy world which would result if we were suddenly deprived of the colors and songs of these feathered creatures. And from the economic standpoint we can only guess how difficult would be our life if it were not for the help of our birds.

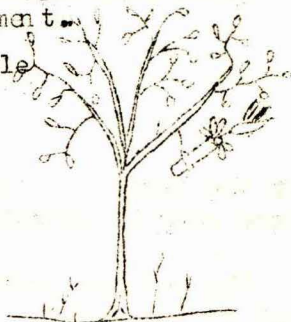
\*\*\*\*\*

Most of our birds seem to be very appreciative of any little help we can give them. One who has not fed birds in the winter, put up bird houses and set out a pan of water for a bird bath (especially in hot weather) may not believe this statement.

It is so easy and costs so little to prove it to yourself.



A simple bird bath.  
Pan of water on a  
stump.



Hummingbird feeding  
station.  
Glass tube wrapped with red  
paper, filled with sugar  
water and tied to shrub.

"A bird in the bush is worth two in the hand."



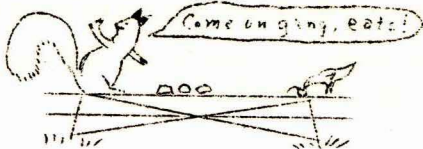
### Who Said "Blue Monday?"

Many of us are in the habit of thinking of Monday as a day of little joy -- everything goes wrong or we have to do that task we didn't do last Saturday. At best we do not consider Monday as a day of picnics.

Regardless of how we fare on Mondays it seems that our little wildlife friends in the park look forward to Monday as a day of picnics. One has but to visit the picnic areas on Monday morning to learn that the tables are still in use.

Squirrels, chipmunks, cowbirds, robins, catbirds, wrens, brown thrashers, sparrows and many others -- yes, even the crows and woodchucks are all busy picking up pieces of sandwiches and meat scraps. No "Blue Monday" here.

While many people purposely leave bits of bread



for the birds and squirrels, a few folks forget that these animals cannot eat paper and tin cans.

Why not get your club together for an Early-bird Walk in the park?

The time? Saturday at 7:00 A.M. or make a date with the Naturalist for any other morning.

The Service is Free.

\*\*\*\*\*

Five to ten sections of prairie land are necessary to hold the Prairie Chicken in any locality.

# THE LOG

- June 20. One of the Webster County 4-H Girls' Club visited the park today. Mr. Leaverton, Conservation Officer and Miss Esther Everett, Home Demonstration Agent, accompanied the girls. We had an enjoyable Nature Tour.
- June 24. Found an Indigo Bunting's nest in Boneyard Hollow. It was only 11 inches from the ground and contained 3 young.
- June 25. Discovered a Blue Jay with a broken right wing. After determining his ailment we released him. Old Dame Nature excels us humans in the care of wild creatures. This isn't surprising when we consider how much more practice she has had.
- June 27. The Ft. Dodge YMCA boys who have been occupying the camp went on four Nature Tours with the Naturalist this week. Mr. Seeley's boys showed great interest in the tours. It was a pleasure to work with them.
- June 29. Visited the Indigo Bunting's nest again, but it was empty. Judging from the actions of the parent birds their babies must have been nearby.

The Naturalist had the pleasure of taking Mr. and Mrs. Ted Fay of Iowa City on a Nature Tour this morning. The Fays have been our next-door-neighbors for the past few days and are real lovers of Nature and the out-of-doors.

- July 3. The Pocahontas County 4-H girls, under the direction of Miss Genevieve Colgan, Home Demonstration Agent, held a 3-day Conservation Camp at the park. Much interest in Conservation was shown on the Nature Tours and Early-bird Walk. Guy Ramsey, Extension Forester, conducted tree study hikes and showed some very interesting color photographs of Iowa wild flowers.





THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO