



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Iowa DNR News

Conservation and Recreation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Aug. 23, 2022

- [Chain O Lakes Wildlife Area recovering two years after derecho](#)
- [DNR State Forest Nursery seedling orders start Sept. 1](#)
- [Charges filed in May 29 Missouri River boating fatality](#)
- [Learn to Hunt program opens registration for beginner furharvesting workshops](#)
- [Banner and Olofson Shooting Ranges offer programs this fall](#)

Chain O Lakes Wildlife Area recovering two years after derecho



Sitting adjacent to Palo and a few minutes from Cedar Rapids, Chain O Lakes is popular with local residents. Photo courtesy of the Iowa DNR.

The lingering effects of the historic 2020 derecho that cut a destructive path through Iowa can be seen at the Chain O Lakes Wildlife Area in northern Linn County.

The 1,150-acre wildlife area received significant wind damage, stripping sections of the canopy and knocking down trees, creating a limb, branch and trunk mangled and tangled mess difficult for wildlife and people to navigate.

“It created nearly impassible conditions, but we’re doing our best to get it back where it’s a usable area again,” said Steve Woodruff, wildlife biologist with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources Iowa River Unit.

Iowa DNR district forester Mark Vitosh scouted the area and determined there would be a salvage timber harvest covering around 300 acres divided over three sections. The salvage harvest designation allows for damaged trees to be used. In this case, most of the damage occurred to cottonwood, silver maple and ash trees. The logs will be used for pallets and some turned in to furniture.

The work began late last fall on the first segment. The contractor may only remove trees that have 25 percent or less canopy or are leaning or are downed, and trees may be dropped only between Oct. 1 and March 31 to avoid impacting the endangered Indiana bat and the threatened northern long-eared bat during their active time. Bats will migrate south to hibernate.

Woodruff said the salvage harvest is reopening access to the damaged areas and is expected to be done by the end of March. While not all of the damaged or downed trees will be removed, the remaining damaged trees will offer a secondary habitat preferred by cavity nesters, like raccoons and pileated woodpeckers, and the remaining root balls will support turtles and grubs and more.

He said individuals can also salvage wood for their own use for free by contacting him for a wood cutting permit. The permit identifies when they can access the area and only allows them to cut trees that are already downed.

Woodruff said initially, they are not planning to replant trees, but will wait to see if the trees will naturally fill in the openings.

Sitting adjacent to Palo and a few minutes from Cedar Rapids, Chain O Lakes is popular with local residents, but is often overlooked by those out of the area.

The public area has forest, prairies, wetlands and oxbow backwaters of the Cedar River. It’s home to diverse wildlife including osprey, bald eagles, turtles, frogs and is occasionally visited by sandhill cranes.

A portion of Chain O Lake is north of a county road and consists of additional timber and wetlands.

“There’s hiking and bird watching, lots of deer hunting here, we always see turkeys, pheasant hunting is good, waterfowl too,” he said.

Media Contact: Steve Woodruff, Wildlife Biologist, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 319-330-7013.

DNR State Forest Nursery seedling orders start Sept. 1

AMES - The DNR State Forest Nursery is gearing up for fall 2022 and spring 2023 seedling orders.

Seedlings can be ordered Sept. 1 - May 30. The bare-root (no container, soil root ball or moss include) seedlings are packaged in bundles of 25 inside sealed and labeled plastic bags.

Tree varieties include 23 species of native hardwoods, eight evergreen species and 15 smaller trees and shrubs. Prices range from \$.70 to \$1.20 per seedling. Seedlings are sold in three age classifications, and range in size from 10-30 inches depending on the species.

Evergreens and a few other species are only available for spring delivery; all other species are available both spring and fall. Fall delivery is in November and spring delivery is in April and May. Customers can choose to have their order shipped or they can pick it up at the State Forest Nursery in Ames.

“Planting trees and shrubs can help landowners reach a variety of goals,” said Pat Griffin, DNR State Forest Nursery manager. “Native, affordable seedlings are available to help you make your planting successful.”

The DNR State Forest Nursery sells approximately 1 million seedlings per year, and 3-5 million seedlings are grown on-site at any given time. Located on 98 acres just south of Highway 30 in Ames, the nursery was established by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s, and has operated continuously ever since.

For more information visit the online sales site at <http://nursery.iowadnr.gov/> or call 1-800-865-2477 during regular business hours, Monday – Friday. DNR’s expert nursery staff can assist with species selection and answer questions about your tree needs and nursery offerings.

Charges filed in May 29 Missouri River boating fatality

LOGAN - The Harrison County Attorney’s Office has charged Garret Vanderheiden, 22, of Fremont, Neb., on Aug. 22, with involuntary manslaughter, a class D felony, and boating while intoxicated – first offense, a serious misdemeanor, for the boating incident on May 29, that resulted in the death of Emma Olsen, 20, of Omaha.

Vanderheiden is accused of being the operator of a 30-foot red and white Scarab that sank in the Missouri River, near Mondamin, Iowa. The charges are the result of an extensive investigation by Iowa conservation officers.

Note: A criminal charge is merely an accusation. The defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

Media Note: The Iowa DNR will not be commenting on this case until the trial has been completed and verdict issued.

Learn to Hunt program opens registration for beginner furharvesting workshops

DES MOINES - The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is offering a program to teach skills needed to trap furbearers to anyone who has little to no trapping experience.

The five workshops will feature several knowledge and skill building sessions with instructors that will teach the basics of trapping in Iowa.

“For those interested in the tradition of trapping as a means of sourcing fur, this program provides the opportunity to learn the skills and the knowledge it takes to do it all yourself,” said Jamie Cook, program coordinator with the Iowa DNR.

Participants will learn basic strategies for trapping, such as proper equipment, trap placement, trapping regulations and steps for preparing hides for trade.

The courses take place in various locations statewide with times and details varying for each event. Each course is designed for participants of all ages. Space is limited, so be sure to register right away.

For more information and to register, visit the links below.

August 27th - Knoxville, IA

<https://tinyurl.com/2fx3t2xz>

August 27th – Ruthven, IA

<https://tinyurl.com/mr24d5zf>

September 18th - Clear Lake, IA

<https://tinyurl.com/3vdv5u8f>

October 22nd - Hazelton, IA

<https://tinyurl.com/2hdwtcyd>

November 19th - St. Charles IA

<https://tinyurl.com/48zs5k jy>

The program is provided through a partnership with the Iowa DNR and Iowa Trapper Association. It is part of a national effort to recruit, retain and reactivate hunters, anglers and trappers due to the overall decline in hunting and outdoor recreation.

Media Contact: Jamie Cook, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 515-350-8091.

Banner and Olofson Shooting Ranges offer programs this fall

The Banner and Olofson Shooting Ranges have classes, leagues and events scheduled this fall for shooters of all skill levels.

Hunter Education Classes

Hunter Education classes and field days are in full swing across the state. Iowa law requires that anyone born after January 1, 1972 must be certified in hunter education before they are eligible to purchase an Iowa hunting license.

Olofson Shooting Range, located at 11652 NW Nissen Drive in Polk City, will offer four field days this fall. Students are required to successfully complete the online course work at <https://www.hunter-ed.com/iowa/> prior to attending. All field days are from 5:30- 8:30 p.m.

September 8 - <https://bit.ly/3ceLXG1>

September 22 - <https://bit.ly/3dP7BRM>

October 6 - <https://bit.ly/3dRXb3O>

October 13 - <https://bit.ly/3AEGLV9>

Learn more about ways to complete hunter education in Iowa or find a hunter education class or field day near you at www.iowadnr.gov/huntered.

Bowling Pin Leagues

Banner Shooting Range in Indianola and Olofson Shooting Range in Polk City are offering bowling pin leagues this fall. Banner's league will meet on Thursday nights from September 8 - October 6. Olofson's league will meet on Tuesday nights from September 13 - October 11.

These five week leagues offer participants the opportunity to shoot between two divisions - rifle and pistol. Scores will accumulate for four weeks and be used for a fifth week, bracket-style, double elimination tournament. Awards and prize packages will be given for each division's (rifle and pistol) top shooter for both the league and double elimination tournament at both ranges. Cost is \$50.00 to participate. There is a maximum of seven shooters per flight, for a total of 21 shooters in the league at each range.

For more information or to register visit the links below.

Banner Shooting Range - <https://conta.cc/3QMyPXk>

Olofson Shooting Range - <https://conta.cc/3SZJa42>

Skeet League

Looking to shoot skeet for fun or brush up on your skills prior to pheasant season? Join us for the 2022 Skeet League at Olofson Shooting Range. This seven week, 50 bird skeet league will meet on Monday nights from September 12 through October 24. Scores will accumulate for six weeks and be used for a seventh week, shoot-off tournament on Monday, October 24.

Make up rounds will be handled on a case by case basis. Targets are included in the \$100 league fee. There is a maximum of six shooters per flight, for a total of 30 shooters in the league.

Prizes will be given for the top league shooter and the tournament winner. For more information or to register, visit <https://conta.cc/3woZ2U6>.

Intro to Firearms Courses

Olofson Shooting Range is offering an introduction to firearms seminar on rifles on Wednesday September 14 from 6:30-8 p.m. This course is designed for people who know very little about firearms, who may be considering purchasing a gun, or just want to know more about them.

In an informal discussion setting, a shooting range instructor will teach the basic operation of different types of firearms, proper and safe handling, and safety devices. Learn about caliber, ammunition, actions, and storage, as well as guidelines for purchasing and the important role of training.

Participants will be provided with a hands-on shooting experience with a .22 LR rifle in a safe and controlled environment. We encourage questions and strive to provide answers that are personal and understandable. Class size is limited to 15 participants; register today to secure your spot. Cost is \$15.00 per person and includes use of firearms, range time and ammunition.

For more information or to register, visit <https://conta.cc/3Kdlm7w>.

Banner Shooting Range is offering an introduction to firearms seminar on pistols on September 21 from 6:30-8 p.m. This course is designed for people who know very little about firearms, who may be considering purchasing a gun, or just want to know more about them.

In an informal discussion setting, a shooting range instructor will teach the basic operation of different types of firearms, proper and safe handling, and safety devices. Learn about caliber, ammunition, actions, and storage, as well as guidelines for purchasing and the important role of training.

Participants will be provided with hands-on shooting experience with .22 LR semi-automatic pistol. Class size is limited to 15 participants; register today to secure your spot. Cost is \$15.00 per person and includes use of firearms, range time and ammunition.

For more information or to register, visit <https://conta.cc/3AGyJv1>.

Sight in Nights at the Range

Banner and Olofson Shooting Ranges are offering special opportunities this fall for hunters to sight in their firearms after hours at both ranges. Cost is \$5.00 per person and includes two paper targets along with the use of lead sleds and spotting scopes.

Sight in sessions are from 5-7 p.m. on the following dates and locations:

September 16 (Olofson Shooting Range)

September 28 (Olofson Shooting Range)

September 30 (Banner Shooting Range)

October 5 (Banner Shooting Range)

Hero's Day at the Range

The DNR celebrates Hero's Day at Olofson Shooting Range on Saturday, September 24th. Local Law Enforcement Officers and fire/rescue will be at the range for a meet and greet.

Gates open at 9 a.m. to the public and the event will conclude at 11 a.m. Free hands-on activities, doughnuts and juice for individuals in attendance. Come on out and show your support for these local heroes in the community.

Media Contact: Zach Bentline, Archery Education and Outreach Coordinator, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Zachary.Bentline@dnr.iowa.gov or 515-205-8709.