



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Share the fun of fishing during free fishing weekend June 2-4

Iowa residents can try fishing without buying a license on June 2, 3 and 4, as part of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) free fishing weekend. All other regulations remain in place.

Free fishing weekend is a great time to share the fun of fishing with a kid, your family or a friend. Outdoor fun awaits at hundreds of Iowa lakes, thousands of miles of rivers or a neighborhood pond.

"A summer of family fun is just a short drive and a fishing pole away," said Joe Larscheid, chief of the Iowa DNR's Fisheries Bureau. "The water is waiting. Get your lines in the water and put your worries behind you."

Find a list of stocked lakes and ponds that are easily accessible in parks and along trails on the Iowa DNR's interactive Iowa Community Fisheries Atlas at www.iowadnr.gov/Fishing/Fish-Local.

Fun, hands-on fishing events will be offered across Iowa to help families new to fishing get started. Check the general fishing calendar on the DNR website at www.iowadnr.gov/fishing for a list of free fishing events.

Keep the fun going all summer long by buying a fishing license. It's easy to buy a fishing license with the DNR Go Outdoors Iowa online licensing system at <https://license.gooutdoorsiowa.com/Licensing/CustomLookUp.aspx>. You can

download the public Go Outdoors IA mobile app for iPhone and Android devices to buy and store your fishing license, so you will always have access to your license no matter where you are. Yearly, seven-day, or 24-hour fishing licenses are available.

Enticing a fish to bite your hook is fun for all ages. Get tips for taking kids fishing and catching crappie and bluegills on the DNR website at www.iowadnr.gov/Fishing/Ready-to-Fish.

Media Contact: Tyler Stubbs, Community Fishing Biologist, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 515-344-6960.

Fawning season is here, deer are on the move

The calls have been coming in to field offices and conservation officers for the past few weeks and will only increase as the first few weeks of June marks the peak of the deer fawning season.

Callers report finding an “abandoned” fawn in an unusual place, like a flowerbed or small patch of cover. Rest assured this is normal deer behavior.

“The doe searches out an isolated location where she feels safe and on occasion those places are not what we may think of as ideal. She chose that location because it made sense to her,” said Jim Coffey, forest wildlife research biologist with the Iowa DNR. “The worst thing someone can do is to ‘rescue’ the fawn. Mom is likely nearby and watching you. Leave it be or if you did handle the fawn, return it to where you found it and walk away.”

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) will not be rehabbing or co-mingling fawns with other deer to avoid the potential of spreading chronic wasting disease – or other disease - to new areas.

The spindly legged newborn fawn is designed with a few survival tools built in –its spots are cryptic camouflage that emulates the sunlight spots on the leaf litter on the forest floor and its lack of movement the first two weeks helps to reduce scent patterns. This combination is its best chance at survival until it is able to follow the doe.

After the fawns are born, the doe will return to fairly normal behavior – sleeping, feeding – but returning to nurse and care for the fawn.

The fawning season also coincides with an increase in deer vehicle collisions.

“There is a lot of movement this time of year that is part of the social structure of deer. The doe is on the move looking for the safe isolated place to have the fawns. In addition last year’s fawns – teenagers now – are starting to venture out to find

new space. These yearlings have to make their own decisions for the first time, encounter other adult deer and build new social structures,” Coffey said. “This movement behavior can occur during all times of the day. Once it settles out, the active time will return to dawn and dusk.”

Drivers are reminded to drive defensively, avoid distractions, and slow down and not to veer for deer. If they hit a deer, drivers can get a salvage tag by calling either the local conservation officer or local law enforcement. There is no fee for a salvage tag it does require that the entire deer is taken.

Media Contact: Jim Coffey, Forest Wildlife Research Biologist, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 641-774-2958 or Mick Klemesrud, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 515-490-5690.

21-year-old man drowned Saturday on West Okoboji Lake

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is investigating a drowning Saturday afternoon on West Okoboji Lake, after Alexander Glover, 21, of Cedar Rapids, jumped off a pontoon and into the water in Miller's Bay.

According to reports, the pontoon began to drift away and while attempting to swim to the boat, Glover became fatigued and slipped under the surface. His fellow passengers tried to throw him a rope but he was unable to get to it.

Three of his fellow passengers jumped in but were unable to recover him. A kayaker paddling nearby entered the water and pulled him to the pontoon where they began CPR. The incident occurred around 1:30 p.m. He was not wearing a lifejacket.

Boats from the Dickinson County Fire and Rescue and the Iowa DNR responded to the scene. Glover was transported to Lakes Regional Healthcare, in Spirit Lake, where he was pronounced dead. Alcohol was not a factor in the drowning.

While the air temperature on Saturday was in the low 70s, the water temperature in West Okoboji Lake was 55 degrees.

“We’re awaiting the results from the autopsy, but cold water was like a primary factor,” said Greg Harson, northwest district supervisor for the Iowa DNR’s Law Enforcement Bureau. “This is a tragic reminder to always wear a lifejacket, regardless of swimming ability and time of year.”

The incident remains under investigation.

Help stop the spread of invasive species in your community

Governor Kim Reynolds recently proclaimed June as Invasive Species Awareness Month in Iowa.

Invasive species, like emerald ash borer, Asian longhorned beetle, spongy moth and oriental bittersweet threaten Iowa's ecosystem by competing with and destroying native trees and disrupting the natural complex habitat system.

Iowa woodlands, wildlands and waterways draw hundreds of thousands of tourists and recreational users each year. Much of the spread of Invasive species comes from people simply enjoying nature. Uninvited guests can hitch a ride on outdoor gear, shoes and clothes, traveling hundreds of miles in a single day.

Take these easy steps to stop the spread of invasive species in your community.

- Verify that the plants you buy for your yard or garden are not invasive. Many non-native plants can become invasive. Find quick ID photos and common management techniques to control 19 invasive trees, shrubs and plants on the DNR webpage at [iowadnr.gov/Conservation/Forestry/Forest-Health/Invasive-Plants](https://www.iowadnr.gov/Conservation/Forestry/Forest-Health/Invasive-Plants)
- Look for spongy moth egg masses on all outdoor equipment when traveling from a spongy moth quarantined area.
- Clean your boots before and after you hike in a new area to avoid spreading seeds. This is a common way garlic mustard and other plants are spread.
- Do not buy or sell firewood from outside your county. Firewood can contain emerald ash borer, Sirex woodwasp, Asian longhorned beetle, oak wilt and many more pests. Plenty of firewood is available locally near state and county parks. Make sure to burn all of the firewood at the campsite and not leave it or transport to a new area.
- Work with your private lands district forester for plans to make your forests more resilient to invasive species. Find contact information and forest landowner assistance resources online at [iowadnr.gov/Conservation/Forestry/Forestry-Landowner-Assistance](https://www.iowadnr.gov/Conservation/Forestry/Forestry-Landowner-Assistance).

Learn more about forest invasive species on the DNR website at www.iowadnr.gov/invasives.

Media Contact: Tivon Feeley, Forest Health Program Leader, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 515-669-1402 or tivon.feeley@dnr.iowa.gov.

Help protect Iowa's forests - leave firewood at home

Thousands of Iowans will be camping and building campfires this Memorial Day weekend and throughout the summer. The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) encourages campers to buy firewood from where they will burn it instead of bringing it from home.

"Moving unseasoned firewood around the state can threaten the health of our forests by spreading insects like emerald ash borer that live in firewood," explains Tivon Feeley, DNR forest health forester.

The emerald ash borer (EAB) is a small, metallic-green, invasive wood-boring beetle native to east Asia that attacks and kills ash trees. It attacks trees of any size, age, or stage of health.

The spread of EAB into uninfected areas has been primarily through people moving firewood from county to county or state to state. "These pests don't move far on their own, but they can travel hundreds of miles in a single day in contaminated firewood," said Feeley.

Plenty of firewood is available locally to your favorite state or county park. Ask a park ranger or campground host where to get firewood locally. Make sure to burn all firewood at the campsite and not leave it or transport to a new area.

The Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship requires all firewood sold or acquired in Iowa to have the county and state of harvest location on the label of packages and the delivery ticket for bulk firewood.

Learn more about emerald ash borer and why not to move firewood on the DNR website at www.iowadnr.gov/eab.

Media Contact: Tivon Feeley, Forest Health Forester, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 515-669-1402.

Bat survey looking for volunteers

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources and Iowa State University are looking for volunteers interested in performing night time surveys for bats in Dubuque, Pocahontas, Marshall, Franklin and Butler counties.

The survey monitors bat occurrence in key areas of the state. It began in response to declining bat population from White Nose Syndrome, among other challenges.

This survey uses acoustic recording equipment mounted on top of a car to detect bats along specific routes. Data has been collected on these standardized survey

routes for the last 10 years.

Volunteers will need a vehicle and a partner to run the survey and to be available for at least two nights; one during a two-week period in July. The survey begins 30 minutes after sunset and takes roughly 2.5 hours. Volunteers may also be asked to set up, leave for a period of days and then retrieve equipment at 1-2 locations near the driving route.

The total time commitment, including training, the two surveys and picking up and dropping off equipment, is roughly 10-12 hours between June and July. More details can be found at www.iowadnr.gov/vwmp/ as well as an electronic volunteer interest form that can be filled out if you are willing to help with the survey.

Media Contact: Stephanie Shepherd, Wildlife Diversity Biologist, Iowa Department of Natural Resource, 515-230-6599.

Iowa's Scholastic Clay Target Program crowns international skeet and international bunker trap champions

The Scholastic Clay Target Program (SCTP) held championship events for International Skeet and International Bunker Trap on May 20-21. These events are the same as what are competed in at the Olympics. International Skeet was held at the New Pioneer Gun Club, in Waukee, while the International Bunker Trap Championship was held at the AVAD Hunt Club, near Coon Rapids.

In the International Skeet competition, Carson Simon, from the Oskaloosa Shooting Team, won the men's non-collegiate division, while Matthew Brindley, from William Penn, won the men's collegiate division. Madelynn Schroeder, from the Pella Shooters Club, won the women's non-collegiate division. Final results are below.

At the International Bunker Trap Championship, it was a repeat performance for brother and sister Cole and Lexi Henning, from Wilton, who won the men's non-collegiate and ladies non-collegiate respectively. Athletes from both events were invited to the National Junior Olympic Match in Hillsdale, Mich., in July. The final results are below.

International Skeet Championship

Men's Individual

1. Carson Simon, Oskaloosa Shooting Team: 84
2. Dawson Wiemann, Des Moines Clay Crushers: 82
3. Kamden Thomas, Oskaloosa Shooting Team: 61

Women's Individual

1. Madalynn Schroeder, Pella Shooters Club: 93
2. Megan Vos, Oskaloosa Shooting Team: 82

Men's Collegiate Individual

1. Mathew Brindley, William Penn Shotgun Sports: 110

International Skeet Team Standings

1. Oskaloosa Shooting Team: 227

International Bunker Trap Championship

Men's Individual

1. Cole Henning, Wilton Trap Team: 114
2. Gavin Wulf, Wilton Trap Team: 102
3. Hunter Beason, Wilton Trap Team: 96

Women's Individual

1. Lexi Henning, Wilton Trap Team: 88
2. Hollie Larson, Underwood Youth Trap Club: 47

International Bunker Trap Team Standings

1. Wilton Trap Team: 312
2. Carroll County Shooting Sports: 233
3. Williamsburg Shooting Sports: 164

The Scholastic Clay Target Program allows student athletes from elementary through high school and college the opportunity to compete in trap, skeet, and sporting clays, as well as Olympic disciplines like bunker trap and international skeet. The next competition is the American Trap Championships, June 6-11, at the Iowa State Trapshooting Association Homegrounds, near Cedar Falls.

The SCTP is a youth development program, with a mission to help kids reach their highest potential in becoming the best athletes and young adults they can be. For more information on the Scholastic Clay Target Program in Iowa, contact Chris Van Gorp, DNR shooting sports coordinator, at 515-313-8048 or chris.vangorp@dnr.iowa.gov.

Media Contact: Chris Van Gorp, DNR Shooting Sports Coordinator, (515) 313-8048 or Chris.Vangorp@dnr.iowa.gov.

Iowa DNR Fire Program gearing up for national wildfires

AMES – While wildland fire season hasn't been active yet, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Fire Program has been busy getting firefighters from Iowa ready to be dispatched to wildfires across the country.

The Iowa DNR Fire Program recently completed financial and qualification paperwork for 35 firefighters from Iowa for the U.S. Forest Service Administratively Determined Casual/Emergency Hire Firefighter program. These firefighters can be dispatched through the Missouri Iowa Coordination Center, out of Rolla, Mo., to wildfires and other national incidents like hurricanes, floods and tornadoes.

Some wildfires were occurring in Oklahoma and Florida, but the western wildfire season looks to be a late start.

"The 2023 national wildland fire season looks to be less active than in past years," explains Ryan Schlater, fire specialist, with the Iowa DNR's Fire Program. "With large amounts of snow and rain in western states, the fire season will likely be later in the year for the 2023 season."

Predictive services is forecasting a less active fire season for June and July. August and September look to be more active.

"If the 2023 fire season is wetter and less active, more growth of vegetation can dry out later for larger fire seasons in the future," Schlater said.

The Iowa DNR Fire Program sends out firefighters on 20 person hand crews, type 3 and 6 fire engines, and as single resource positions such as Emergency Medical Technicians. The program has been sending wildland firefighters to national incidents since 2006.

For more information, contact Ryan Schlater at 515-233-8067 or visit the Iowa DNR Fire Program webpage at www.iowadnr.gov/Conservation/Forestry/Fire-Management.

Scholastic Clay Target Program championship events

More than 3,300 Iowa shooting sports athletes will participate in the 2023 Iowa Scholastic Clay Target Program (SCTP) Championship Events held throughout June.

The first event will be held June 6-11, at the Iowa State Trapshooting Association Homegrounds, north of Cedar Falls. Athletes will compete in American singles,

doubles, and handicap trap. More than 820,000 targets will be shot by the athletes, ranging in age from grade school through high school.

- June 6-7: Elementary and Middle School Trap Singles
- June 8: Handicap and Doubles Trap Events, all ages
- June 9-11: High School Trap Singles

The sporting clays championship will be held June 15-17, at the Black Oak Clays shooting range, near Pella. The final competition will be American Skeet, at the New Pioneer Gun Club, in Waukee, June 22-25.

The Scholastic Clay Target Program has seen constant growth in Iowa and across the nation, with increases in participation seen in Iowa's middle school and high school teams, which have grown from 1,400 athletes in 2011 to more than 4,500 athletes today.

"The Scholastic Clay Target Program provides many opportunities to Iowa's shooting sports athletes," said Chris Van Gorp, shooting sports coordinator for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. "All athletes are welcome to attend and compete at the state championship events. You don't have to be the biggest, strongest or fastest. The shooting sports are as much a competition against yourself as it is with other competitors, and we have many athletes shoot their personal best at these events."

The SCTP is a youth development program, with a mission to help kids reach their highest potential in becoming the best athletes and young adults they can be. For more information on the Scholastic Clay Target Program in Iowa, contact Chris Van Gorp, DNR shooting sports coordinator, at 515-313-8048 or chris.vangorp@dnr.iowa.gov.

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