

IOWA PARK LEADERSHIP PROGRAM  
1939

The Park Leadership Program in Iowa for the summer of 1939 has been a big success. This is evidenced by the fact that 580 nature tours in the nine state parks drew an attendance of 11,455; nature exhibits in seven parks attracted 18,316; special programs in the nine parks were attended by 5,256; and approximately 30,000 people made use of the self-guiding nature trails in five of the state parks; making a grand total of approximately 65,000 people benefiting from the Iowa State Park Naturalist Program. Naturalists did not wait for people to discover them in the parks. 519 contacts were made with individuals and organizations outside the park area. Among the contacts were 30 newspaper editors, nine colleges and universities, and organizations such as Scouts, Farm Bureaus, 4-H Clubs, city recreation departments, county conservation associations, Isaac Walton Leagues, Kiwanis, Rotary and Lions Clubs, Chambers of Commerce and Commercial Clubs, Church groups, Bird, Garden and Hiking Clubs, YMCA, CCC Camps, and women's organizations. The program received 327 reported news articles and a number of radio announcements. 11,830 Nature Notes Bulletins were distributed in the park area. Of this number, less than one per cent was discarded in the parks.

The following State Agencies assisted in the program: State Conservation Commission; Iowa State College Departments of Botany, Zoology, Geology, Landscape Architecture and Extension Service; the Iowa Geological Survey, the Recreation and Crafts Divisions of the Works Projects Administration; the State Department of Public Instruction and the Iowa State Teachers Association. The Division of Lands and Waters of the State Conservation Commission employed five naturalists and the Recreation Division of the Works Projects Administration employed four naturalists. The Extension Service of Iowa State College published approximately 12,000 Nature Notes Bulletins and the Public Recreation Department of Sioux City published approximately 1,000 Naturalist Bulletins. The Crafts Division of the Works Projects Administration prepared tree labels for self-guiding nature trails in all nine parks.

The season's program was planned by a committee composed of the State Conservation Director, Chief of the Division of Lands and Waters of the Conservation Commission, members of the State Advisory Committee under the direction of Paul C. Taff, Assistant Director of the Extension Service, Iowa State College, the State Recreation Director of the Works Projects Administration, and the Recreation Planner of the National Park Service. Naturalists for the State Parks were employed on a half-time basis, devoting a portion of their time to research work for which college or university credit was given. The assignment of personnel was as follows: Backbone - Emmet B. Polderboer; Dolliver Memorial - D. W. Augustine; Lacey-Keosauqua - Richard F. Trump; Lake Ahquabi - Guy West Wilson; Ledges - M. L. Jones; McGregor Areas (Pike's Peak) - H. Clark Brown; Maquoketa Caves - Lowell E. Swenson; Palisades-Kepler - Aureal T. Cross; Stone - Borden C. Buchanan.

Although there was no Chief Naturalist appointed to direct the program, assistance was given by a large number of individuals interested in its success. Among those listed as having assisted the naturalists in the field

were M. L. Hutton, State Conservation Director; Harold W. Groth, former Chief - Division of Lands and Waters; V. W. Flickinger, present Chief - Division of Lands and Waters; Elston Wagner, State WPA Recreation Director; Dr. A. C. Trowbridge, State Geologist and Head of the Geology Department of Iowa University; Dr. I. E. Melhus; Head of the Botany Department, Dr. George Goodman, member of the Botany Department, and Dr. George Hendrickson of the Zoology Department, all of Iowa State College; Dr. L. R. Wilson, Science Department, Coe College; F. A. Bahr and Nevin Nichols, Recreation Directors of Sioux City and Cedar Rapids, respectively; and Garrett G. Eppley, Recreational Planner of the National Park Service.

A training conference for the park naturalists was held on June 1, 2 and 3 at Iowa State College prior to their work in the field. The conference was planned and directed by a committee of which Dr. George Hendrickson was chairman. Valuable assistance was rendered, during the entire conference, by H. E. Rothrock, Assistant Chief Naturalist for the National Park Service. The conference did much to acquaint the personnel with the content of the program desirable. Twelve college professors assisted in the conference by presenting material in the various fields of interest or by leading the group in discussions.

Advisory committees organized by the Naturalists have assisted in the programs at Ledges, Pike's Peak, Backbone, Lake Ahquabi, Stone Park, and Palisades-Kepler State Parks.

Activities consisted of conducted nature tours, special nature tours sponsored by local organizations, lectures, camp fire sessions and pageants. A leadership course was given for CCC enrollees, boy scouts, and school teachers by the Naturalist at Backbone State Park. Indian Ceremonies and pageants attracted considerable attention at Pike's Peak. The McGregor community, adjacent to this park, has become so interested in the program initiated there that it has contributed to its continuation during the fall and winter months by providing library space, heat and light so that the naturalist assigned by the WPA could continue his program. Several of the naturalists have given special attention to nature exhibits and self-guiding nature trails. Exhibits and trail labels have been varied and changed at frequent intervals. Park guests were pleasantly surprised to find new, cleverly designed exhibits or trail labels on repeated visits to the State Parks. In one park, interest has been aroused to such an extent that several girls came to the trail one evening carrying flashlights to enjoy the new signs placed on the trail during the day. Several of the naturalists wrote weekly Nature Notes columns for the local newspapers. Contacts made outside the park areas did much to stimulate interest in the park program and to encourage various organizations in their individual nature programs.

Mr. G. W. Wilson, Park Naturalist assigned by the WPA to Lake Ahquabi State Park, is preparing a handbook to serve as a guide for the naturalists for the 1940 season. It is thought that this will be of considerable value, especially to the naturalists who might be serving their first year in the program.

Remarks of various individuals throughout the state and comments of newspapers indicate that the park naturalists program has met with whole-hearted approval. The program has developed from one park in 1937 to four parks in 1938 and nine parks during the past season. It has been made possible through the cooperative efforts of governmental agencies and the unselfish service of various individuals, committees and organizations who have been interested in the success of the movement.

Contact Data

IOWA STATE PARK NATURALIST PROGRAM

SPECIAL PROGRAMS  
 NATURE EXHIBITS  
 NATURE TOURS  
 NATURE TOUR ATTENDANCE  
 OUTSIDE CONTACTS  
 PUBLICITY ARTICLES  
 SELF-GUIDING NAT. TR. ATT.  
 NATURE BULLETINS

State Parks

Backbone	210	10,000	84	2,006	62	90	18,000	2,000
Ledges	995	3,616	60	1,028	58	33	6,000	4,000
Stone	140		106	1,272	115	45		900
Lake Ahquabi	341	1,100	43	711	47	25		180
Pike's Peak	1475	900	85	3,985	120	27	3,500	1,000
Lacey-Keosauqua	700	1,800	64	518	40	70	830	600
Dolliver Memorial	210	200	42	590	27	7	1,600	450
Palisades-Kepler	1100	700	26	292	30	6		1,200
Maquoketa Cave	80		70	1,053	20	24		1,500
Total	5251	18,316	580	11,455	519	327	29,930	11,830

SECOND IOWA STATE PARK NATURALISTS SCHOOL

June 1 - 3, 1939

George O. Hendrickson, Program Chairman

June 1, Thursday

Forenoon, Room 6, Science Hall

- 9:00 - 9:05 - OPENING REMARKS . . . . . Prof. P. C. Taff  
Assistant Director of Agricultural Extension
- 9:05 - 9:30 - PURPOSES OF THE SCHOOL . . . . . Mr. H. W. Groth  
Chief, Div. of Lands and Waters, Iowa State Conservation  
Commission
- 9:30 - 10:00 - THE WPA RECREATIONAL PROGRAM . . . . . Mr. E. R. Wagner  
Director, Div. of Recreation, State Unit WPA
- 10:00 - 10:45 - GEOLOGY OF STATE PARKS . . . . . Prof. Chas. S. Gwyne  
Dept. of Geology
- 10:45 - 11:30 - TREES OF STATE PARKS . . . . . Prof. Guy R. Ramsey  
Extension Forester
- 12:00 Noon - Lunch, Pine Room, Memorial Union Cafeteria and Grill Service  
Talk by H. E. Rothrock, National Park Service, Washington, D.C.

Afternoon, Room 6, Science Hall

- 1:15 - 2:00 - SHRUBS, GRASSES AND MOSSES OF STATE PARKS . . Prof. S. M. Dietz  
Dept. of Botany
- 2:00 - 2:45 - HERBACEOUS PLANTS AND FUNGI OF STATE PARKS . . Prof. Geo. J.  
Goodman, Dept. of Botany
- 2:45 - 3:30 - COLD-BLOODED ANIMALS OF STATE PARKS . . Prof. Reeve M. Bailey  
Dept. of Zoology and Entomology
- 3:30 - 4:15 - INSECTS OF STATE PARKS . . . . . Prof. H. H. Knight  
Dept. of Zoology and Entomology

Evening, Meet in Room 6, Science Hall

- 8:00 - STAR STUDY . . . . . Prof. R. W. Breckenridge  
Dept. of Mechanical Engineering

Friday, June 2, 1939

Forenoon, Room 6, Science Hall

- 6:00 - 8:00 - BIRD FIELD TRIP . . . . . Prof. G. O. Hendrickson  
Dept. of Zoology and Entomology
- 10:00 - 11:00 - EFFECTIVE PUBLICITY . . . . . Prof. Sam H. Reck  
Extension Technical Journalist
- 11:00 - 11:45 - FERNS AND NATURE TRAILS . . . . . Prof. I. E. Melhus  
Head, Department of Botany

Lunch, Pine Room, Memorial Union

- 2:00 - 4:00 P.M. - FIELD TRIP, LEDGES STATE PARK . . . Leader, M. L. Jones  
Assistants: Professors Bailey, Dietz, Goodman, Gwynne, Hicks,  
Knight, Ramsey, Wilson.

Saturday, June 3, 1939

- 9:00 - 9:20 - NATURE LEAFLETS . . . . . Prof. Ellis Hicks  
Extension Wildlife Manager
- 9:20 - 9:40 - POPULAR WRITING . . . . . Mr. Richard Trump  
Park Naturalist
- 9:40 - 10:10 - PARK PUBLICITY . . . . . Mr. M. L. Jones  
Park Naturalist
- 10:10 - 10:40 - PARK PUBLICITY . . . . . Mr. E. B. Polderboer  
Park Naturalist
- 10:40 - 11:10 - PARK PUBLICITY . . . . . Prof. Guy W. Wilson  
Recreational Leader WPA
- 11:10 - 11:40 - FINAL INSTRUCTIONS . . . . . Mr. Groth

Mr. H. E. Rothrock, Assistant Chief Naturalist,  
National Park Service, assisted in all sessions.

Mr. Garrett G. Eppley, Regional Recreational Planner,  
National Park Service, assisted in Saturday sessions.

TECHNIQUE IN THE PREPARATION OF A PARK BOOKLET

By - M. L. Jones, Iowa State College

Naturalist, Ledges State Park

Boone, Iowa

In the preparation of a park booklet, several fundamentals must be considered. The object of this paper will be to discuss briefly a few of the factors which the writer has endeavored to set up as criterions in the preparation of the "Ledges Nature Notes."

The guests of our state parks come primarily for relaxation. They certainly do not visit the park to be educated in the various phases of natural history. Only a small minority will actually be seeking information. If any appreciable number of our guests, then, are to receive any benefit from a park booklet, it must not be too apparent that its contents have any other function than that of entertainment.

In this decade of high-pressure advertising we are quite accustomed to discount any report or description which obviously over-rates the importance of the subject of discussion. Advertisers have attempted to startle us with the tremendous importance of their goods. Newspaper items frequently misconstrue the facts in order to make a story which is actually of little or no importance, appear to us as being quite significant. The radio listener, too, must tolerate advertising propoganda, which so often over-rates many commodities, that we might wonder how we have lived without them, were we to be gullible enough to place any confidence in their claims.

The writer of a park booklet cannot hope to compete with this type of overemphasis, even if it seemed desirable. He cannot expect that his readers will be as enthusiastic as was the writer over the finding of a moccasin flower, an edible mushroom which nearly everyone else considered poisonous, the nidification of some unusual song bird, or the interesting antics of the chipmunk. He must, of course, attempt to capture the interest of the readers and try to get them to share his enthusiasm; but he must not assume that they will share in his opinion if he says that the moccasin flower is the most wonderful and beautiful flower in existence, or that one has an oddly perverted mind if he cannot derive more pleasure from watching the lovable little chipmunk than from being a spectator at a local ball game.

Conservation has enjoyed a period of popularity which can be utilized to advantage. Many people realize the practical value, and actual necessity, of a wise use of our natural resources. Some will tolerate, or even thrive upon, the sentimental aspects of conservation, but the vast majority are primarily interested in a sane, practical application and look upon the sentimentalist as undeserving of any consideration. If this practical type of person is to be reached, it will be necessary for us to keep our feet on the ground and not write in an affected style as one in a dream.

It would, therefore, seem desirable to write in a conversational manner, religiously avoiding the use of words and phrases not readily grasped by the average twelve year old, for we all speak along a level no higher than that

attained by an average twelve year old child in those vocations or avocations in which we have had no special training. On the other hand such publications will be subjected to the critical and trained eyes of educators who may rightfully expect a product of some scientific value, and certainly not one in which the scientific data has been carelessly misconstrued.

If considerable information is to be contained in such a booklet, it would seem necessary to supply that information in brief notes. The booklet will, in many instances, contain no more than six pages of written material (each page being five by seven inches). With such limited space available it would hardly seem justifiable to have many full page articles. If it is necessary to deal with the subject at greater length, a sub-title should be introduced, or one or more illustrative sketches employed.

The state parks contain such an abundance of interesting things that it seems unpardonable to fill any single issue with heavy reading material, or to limit the contents to any one branch of natural history. It seems advisable to enumerate the resources available and refer to them frequently when preparing such a booklet. Such a list would include animals, birds, insects, lichens, mosses, ferns, herbaceous plants, shrubs, trees, geology, park history, Indian mounds, Indian lore, and various other things of interest.

The likes and dislikes of the people differ so greatly that it might be well to include a generous assortment of notes and articles in each issue in an attempt to contact everyone at some point of common interest.

The general public of today is so well supplied with reading material that it would seem highly desirable to strive for a booklet which would be read in its entirety by the park guest before leaving the park. If one or more pages give the appearance of being heavy reading, the tendency will be to pass over it at the time with the idea in mind of reading it later. Should the booklet be of sufficient interest to be re-read at home and filed away among reference notes, a double purpose shall have been accomplished. The writer has felt somewhat complimented by the fact that very few copies of the Ledges Nature Notes have been carelessly thrown aside in the park, and by the many requests for complete sets of the booklet.

Everyone likes to look at pictures. Our newspapers, magazines and books are freely embellished with sketches, cartoons and pictures. Not only do they break the monotony of the printed page, but they may serve to tell a story or capture the interest, or both. An old Chinese proverb states "One picture speaks louder than ten thousand words." Ordinarily it will not be practicable for us to use pictures which will compare favorably with those found in books, newspapers, or magazines, but it is possible to obtain quite creditable sketches and cartoons with our modern duplicators. It is the conviction of the writer that these should be used freely in the preparation of our park booklets.

Scientific and technical terminology, while indispensable in certain lines of work, has little or no place in a park booklet. If the reader is

an advanced amateur or an expert, he will be capable of finding the scientific name if he desires it. If he is not especially interested, he will react very unfavorably to scientific names. He may feel that if he must learn such difficult names, the matter is not worth the effort. Perhaps he is already confused in the popular names of trees and other common plants. Our task, then, is to make the burden as light for him as possible and unless some very interesting memory aid can be developed from the scientific name, we would do well to omit it entirely.

To summarize the factors to be considered in the preparation of a park booklet, let us then: avoid the school-room method of presenting uninteresting facts; assist in making the park a recreational center for the mind as well as the body; show enthusiasm in writing about the park lore but avoid a poetic or affected style; write so that the layman can understand what is intended; keep all articles based on facts taken from careful observation, or other reliable sources; draw freely from the expert, but word the information in terms familiar to the amateur; use brief, concise articles and keep the booklet small and readable; lighten heavier articles with drawings which will in themselves tell a story or convey a bit of humor; scientific names and technical terminology should be used only when one is unable properly to convey the idea in the vernacular of the people, as it may will often be interpreted as "showing off" on the part of the author; deal with a balanced variety of subject matter--nearly everyone will be interested in some phase of natural history, but comparatively few will appreciate a booklet dealing exclusively with trees, birds, fish or any other single aspect; strive to include some information in each issue which some will wish to keep for future reference.

The general idea of the booklet is to provide a source of information for the park visitor. It should be written in a simple, direct, and interesting manner. The booklet should be of a size and weight that it can be carried in a pocket or purse. It should be printed on good quality paper and be well bound. The booklet should be available to all visitors to the park.

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