

Iowa DNR News

CONSERVATION AND RECREATION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Hanlontown Slough's mix of prairie and wetlands attracts wildlife and hunters to Worth County



Totalling 950 acres, Hanlontown Slough, in Worth County, has 13 restored wetlands with 350 acres of wetland habitat bordered by prairie. Photo courtesy of the Iowa DNR.

A narrow strip of land, two plus miles long, with a history of being too wet to farm, has become an important waterfowl production area, home to other species in need of conservation and serving to improve water quality in the Cedar River watershed.

That piece of land, north of Hanlontown in Worth County, has been developed into a high-quality public area, supporting waterfowl, remnant and reconstructed prairie, while positioned as an important basin to improve water quality.

“You talk about a duck hunter and pheasant hunters’ dream, this is it,” said Rob Patterson, wildlife biologist with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR). “The diversity of hunting and recreation is here.”

The Natural Resources Conservation Service brokered the project involving 11 different landowners who sold areas of their farms that were more natural wetlands than natural farmland to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 1998.

Early habitat work focused on diversity and getting the prairie established. Totalling 950 acres, Hanlontown Slough has 13 restored wetlands with 350 acres of wetland habitat bordered by prairie. It’s a major stopover for trumpeter swans in the spring, and is a waterfowl production area, managed in partnership between the Fish and Wildlife Service and the Iowa DNR.

Hanlontown Slough stretches from northwest to southeast where visitors can walk more than two miles without stepping off public land. The larger, open water wetland offers paddling opportunities among the wetland plants, where visitors can see Blandings turtles, waterfowl and other wetland wildlife. A boat ramp is on the southwest corner.

Moving southwest along the main dike, a flock of blue wing teal nervously take flight, along with a pair of Canada geese. Two egrets and a raft of coots move to the other side of the wetland.

Habitat management includes targeted grazing, targeted haying and the use of prescribed fire to keep the prairie and wetlands open. The maintained firebreaks are good places to take a walk or to birdwatch. The willow bats and other tree encroachment into the wetlands and prairie will be removed mechanically by pulling or cutting, or by spraying.

Signs of remnant prairie are visible along the wetland outlet where the asters and sawtooth sunflowers were blooming. Pheasants can be heard crowing to the south. Two trumpeter swans are flying over a picked beanfield on this cloudless and calm fall morning.

“It takes a little more coordination between the agencies, but is a great opportunity for us and is a good partnership,” Patterson said.

Media Contact: Rob Patterson, Wildlife Biologist, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 641-425-2814.

Enjoy Iowa’s natural landscapes fishing rivers and streams this fall

Fall is a great time to catch fish in Iowa’s rivers. A unique angling challenge is hidden around every bend.

“You are never far from one of Iowa’s many rivers,” said Greg Gelwicks, Iowa DNR interior rivers research biologist. “Fall is a great time to give them a try.”

Fish become more active and hungry when the stream temperature drops. “Look for actively feeding fish where riffles enter pools or rocky areas,” Gelwicks said.

“They sit there out of the current and wait for food to come by.”

Many fish in Iowa’s rivers search out deep pools with very little current to spend the winter. Fish start to move to overwintering areas in October, and most fish will arrive by November.

Fish may move to deep water earlier than normal this fall with low water levels in many of Iowa rivers. “Anglers willing to brave chilly temperatures can be rewarded if they also seek out these areas,” Gelwicks said.

Channel catfish will move to the deepest holes they can find in larger streams, often with depths greater than 15 feet, if available. Walleyes can be found in these same pools, but will also use slightly shallower areas with little current. Look for smallmouth bass in deep holes with boulders or woody structure.

When fish first move to wintering holes, deep running crankbaits and jigs with plastics work well. As water temperatures drop, switch to a jig and minnow fished slowly for best results. Try the upper Wapsipinicon River (Buchanan and Linn counties) or upper Cedar River (Black Hawk and Bremer counties) for smallmouth bass. The Shell Rock River (Butler and Bremer counties) or upper Cedar Rivers (Black Hawk or Bremer Counties) are a great choice for walleye.

An extensive list of Iowa’s rivers, with information on access points and native species, is available on the DNR website at www.iowadnr.gov/Fishing/Where-to-Fish/Interior-Rivers.

Media Contact: Greg Gelwicks, Interior Rivers Research Biologist, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 563-927-3276.

Collegiate trap, skeet, sporting clays, and super sporting clays state championship results

Athletes from nine Iowa colleges competed in the 2024 Iowa Scholastic Clay Target Program (SCTP) Collegiate Championships in Trap, Skeet, Sporting Clays, and Super Sporting Clays, Oct. 19-20, at the New Pioneer Gun Club, in Waukee.

Iowa Western Shotgun Sports and Hawkeye Redtails each won Team State Collegiate Championships over the weekend. Iowa Western took home first place team in Sporting Clays, Super Sporting, and Trap, while the Hawkeye Redtails Sports Shooting Team won the Skeet Championship. Iowa Western Shotgun Sports also won the Team High Over All Championship, which combines team scores from all four events.

Chase Bindl, Hawkeye Redtails, took the top men’s spot in Sporting Clays and Super Sporting, while Elliot Brincks, Hawkeye Redtails, won the men’s American Trap event and Colton Crooks, Hawkeye Redtails, won the Skeet event.

For the collegiate women, Abby Johnson, Iowa Western Shotgun Sports, won the American Trap and Super Sporting events, Payton Kruse, Iowa Western Shotgun Sports, won the Sporting Clay event, and Janice Tejada, Iowa Western Shotgun Sports, won the Skeet event.

A total of 141 athletes participated in the state championship. Results can be found online at <https://app.sssfonline.com/nationals/4514>.

American Singles Trap

Men's Individual Singles Trap

1. Elliot Brincks; Hawkeye Redtails Sports Shooting, 100 points
2. Mason Pillard; Iowa Western Shotgun Sports, 99 points
3. Karson Lea; Iowa Western Shotgun Sports, 99 points
4. Karter Kopecky; Iowa Western Shotgun Sports, 99 points
5. Lucas Kentopp; Hawkeye Redtails Sports Shooting, 99 points

Women's Individual Singles Trap

1. Abby Johnson; Iowa Western Shotgun Sports, 97 points
2. Dakota Lacina; Northeast Iowa Community College, 97 points
3. Ella Audorff; Hawkeye Redtails Sports Shooting, 97 points
4. Payton Kruse; Iowa Western Shotgun Sports, 96 points
5. Lydia Covert; Hawkeye Redtails Sports Shooting, 96 points

Singles Trap Teams

1. Iowa Western Shotgun Sports, 494 points
2. Hawkeye Redtails Sports Shooting, 494 points
3. Indian Hills Community College Sports Shooting, 484 points

Skeet Championship

Men's Individual Skeet

1. Colton Crooks; Hawkeye RedTails Sports Shooting, 100 points
2. Chase Bindl; Hawkeye RedTail Sports Shooting, 99 points
3. Karson Lea; Iowa Western Shotgun Sports, 98 points
4. Carson Abrams; Indian Hills Community College Sports Shooting Team, 98 points
5. Elliot Brinks; Hawkeye RedTail Sports Shooting, 97 points

Women's Individual Skeet

1. Janice Tejada; Iowa Western Shotgun Sports, 97 points
2. Abbie Hill; Hawkeye RedTail Sports Shooting, 95 points
3. Payton Kruse; Iowa Western Shotgun Sports, 92 points
4. Brenna Leitner; Hawkeye RedTail Sports Shooting, 91 points
5. Emma Adams; Indian Hills Community College Sports Shooting Team, 91 points

Skeet Teams

1. Hawkeye RedTail Sports Shooting, 486 points
2. Iowa Western Shotgun Sports, 481 points
3. Iowa Central Community College, 479 points

Sporting Clays Championship

Men's Individual Sporting Clays

1. Chase Bindl; Hawkeye Redtails Sports Shooting, 94 points
2. Mason Gerdes; Iowa Western Shotgun Sports, 88 points
3. Zane Kirubakaran; Indian Hills Community College, 87 points

4. Mason Pillard; Iowa Western Shotgun Sports, 86 points
5. Benjamin Menking; Iowa Western Shotgun Sports, 86 points

Women's Individual Sporting Clays

1. Payton Kruse; Iowa Western Shotgun Sports, 90 points
2. Abby Johnson; Iowa Western Shotgun Sports, 84 points
3. Janice Tejada; Iowa Western Shotgun Sports, 78 points
4. Emma Adams; Indian Hills Community College, 76 points
5. Haley Byrge; Indian Hills Community College, 76 points

Sporting Clays Teams

1. Iowa Western Shotgun Sports, 264 points
2. Hawkeye Redtails Sports Shooting, 262 points
3. Indian Hills Community College, 252 points

Super Sporting Clays Championship

Men's Individual Super Sporting Clays

1. Chase Bindl; Hawkeye RedTail Sports Shooting, 47 points
2. Nathan Swanson; Iowa Central Community College, 45 points
3. Mason Pillard; Iowa Western Shotgun Sports, 45 points
4. Mason Gerdes; Iowa Western Shotgun Sports, 44 points
5. Braeden Cooper; Iowa Western Shotgun Sports, 44 points

Women's Individual Super Sporting Clays

1. Abby Johnson; Iowa Western Shotgun Sports, 41 points
2. Brenna Leitner; Hawkeye RedTails Sports Shooting, 38 points
3. Janice Tejada; Iowa Western Shotgun Sports, 37 points
4. Kelly Holt; Iowa Western Shotgun Sports, 36 points
5. Emma Adams; Indian Hills Community College, 36 points

Super Sporting Clays Teams

1. Iowa Western Shotgun Sports, 133 points
2. Iowa Central Community College, 129 points
3. Hawkeye RedTail Sports Shooting, 126 points

High Over All

High Over All Awards were given to teams and individuals who participated in all four disciplines; trap, skeet, sporting clays, and super sporting clays.

High Over All Men

1. Chase Bindl; Hawkeye RedTail Sports Shooting (Captain), 337 points
2. Mason Gerdes; Iowa Western Shotgun Sports, 325 points
3. Mason Pillard; Iowa Western Shotgun Sports, 324 points
4. Graham Jensen; Iowa Western Shotgun Sports, 320 points
5. Colton Crooks; Hawkeye RedTail Sports Shooting, 319 points

High Over All Women

1. Payton Kruse; Iowa Western Shotgun Sports (Captain), 311 points
2. Abby Johnson; Iowa Western Shotgun Sports, 309 points
3. Janice Tejada; Iowa Western Shotgun Sports, 307 points
4. Lydia Covert; Hawkeye RedTail Sports Shooting, 294 points

5. Emma Adams; Indian Hills Community College Sports Shooting Team, 293 points

High Over All Teams

1. Iowa Western Shotgun Sports, 1372 points
2. Hawkeye RedTails Sports Shooting, 1368 points
3. Iowa Central Community College, 1336 points

The Scholastic Clay Target Program (SCTP) and Scholastic Action Shooting Program (SASP) are youth development programs that promote shooting sports and competitive shooting as a means to help young individuals achieve their potential. Goals of the program is to instill personal values and character traits, such as fair play, compassionate understanding, individual responsibility, sportsmanship, self-discipline, and personal commitment in young people.

For more information on the Scholastic Clay Target or Scholastic Action Shooting Programs in Iowa, contact Jonathan Jones, DNR Shooting Sports Coordinator at 515-313-8048 or jonathan.jones1@dnr.iowa.gov.

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