



# Connections

Fossil & Prairie Conservation Foundation

Summer 2022



- Upcoming events
- Battery recycling



## *A view from the fence . . .*

*Heidi Reams, Floyd County Conservation Naturalist*



During the school year, one of my EE programs is on Seasons/Weather in many of the elementary schools. After we discuss the differences of the seasons, I have the students raise their hands on their favorite season. By all counts, the favorite is SUMMER! Now I can only assume that some of those hands are because they are out of school during that time. Other hands may be because they like to swim or play baseball. As an adult, my favorite thing about summer is being able to garden - vegetables and flowers. As a naturalist, my favorite thing about summer is taking groups kayaking, prairie flowers and the events that take place at various parks within the county.

The warm weather makes for a great time to learn and try things. One of my favorite things to assist with are Mussel Surveys. Mussels are a mollusk bivalve found in our rivers. They visually differ from clams in that their shells are oblong and irregularly round compared to the round equally sized halves of clams. Both can be found in freshwater and saltwater. Both are filter feeders.

At time of settlement, there were about 55 species of mussels found in Iowa. Today, there only about half of those species found: 9 species are endangered and 6 species are threatened.

Mussels are found along the river beds. Their shells blend in with the rocks. They move utilizing a muscular foot. Locating them during the survey is like pretending to be a raccoon. Other animals that eat mussels include otters, muskrats, & geese/ducks.



Some of the common mussels include: Plain Pocketbook (large round shell with rays that are yellow to tan), White Heelsplitter (brown/black shell with a sharp wing that could cut a heel if stepped on), Giant Floater (dark green to brown shell, elongate & inflated), and Mucket (oblong shell that is thick, heavy & compressed).

Having had the opportunity to be part of several river surveys, its interesting to see the backgrounds of the people that assist. Some are professionals, like myself, wanting to gather more information. Some are just individuals, from a variety of backgrounds, wanting to learn more about the river ecosystems. If you ever have an opportunity to join in a survey, do so! It is a fun way to learn!

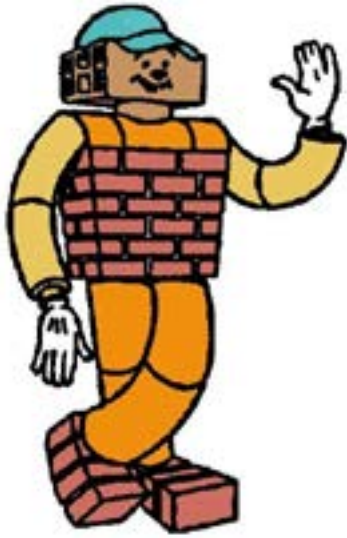
Another summer activity that I get to take part in, sometime, is taking individuals out on the river via kayaks & canoes. Being able to “go with the flow” in



a kayak, allows you to become more connected with the river. Watching fish swim beneath you while you paddle. Quietly passing below a Bald Eagle sitting in a tree along the shore. Picking up trash that has been left behind or moved due to a high water event (flood).

The view from a kayak along the Shell Rock River, varies from the cliff like limestone walls, muddy shores and sandy/rocky edges of the changing islands. It definitely gives an individual perspective on the wonders of nature.

Join me next time we host a river float or survey. Maybe I can share with you some of the things I've picked up along the way!



# Rocky Shirts available

\$15 per shirt

(picked up at the Fossil & Prairie Center)

\$20 per shirt (including postage)



Order yours today online at . . .



For more information contact  
Floyd Co. Conservation 641-756-3490



## Battery Recycling Available at the Fossil & Prairie Center

FMC Landfill has partnered with a recycling company Battery Solutions. Battery recycling containers were purchased by the FMC Landfill. The public will be able to fill these containers with their used batteries and when the container is full, FMC Landfill staff will come get them to be shipped back to the company and leave the empty recycling container to be reused. The battery recycling container is located inside the Fossil & Prairie Center, Rockford and is available during office hours.



Batteries that are accepted without any safety precautions are:

Alkaline, zinc, NiMH, NiCd, & electronics with embedded batteries,  
or batteries 9 volts & under.




Batteries that will need safety precautions are

Lithium primary, including button cell  
Lithium-ion  
Sealed lead-acid  
Battery greater than 9 volt

If you are unsure then always do the safety precautions, which are to tape the terminals with clear tape.



### Did you know. . .

- Memorial donations have helped to purchase 9 concrete benches located at various spots at the Fossil & Prairie Park.
- Volunteers of the Fossil & Prairie Center welcome visitors for over 90% of the hours that the Center is open. Would you like to be a Volunteer?? If so, contact Amy at 641-756-3490.
- Being outdoors can help improve your mood, reduce stress and connect you to your community! Floyd County Conservation has 33 areas around the county that can provide you with your connection to the outdoors!
- The Fossil & Prairie Center has [FaceBook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) pages    as well as the [fossilcenter.com](http://fossilcenter.com) website. Follow those to keep up on upcoming events and information.
- Since the opening of the Fossil & Prairie Center in 2001, we have had visitors from 48 states and 29 different countries. When will you visit this year? Will you bring a friend?? We are looking for residents of Maryland and Maine to complete our US map.



August 20<sup>th</sup>

7:30 p.m.

Fossil & Prairie Center, Rockford



*Bring lawn chairs/blankets  
for this FREE family event.*

*Free will donation for popcorn/snacks.*

## Upcoming Events

- July 21**      **Women in the Woods with Wine**<sup>o</sup>  
7-9 p.m at the Tosanak Recreation Area, Marble Rock.
- August 20**    **Hunters Education course**<sup>o</sup>  
8-4:30 p.m. at the Fossil & Prairie Center, Rockford  
Registration online at <https://license.gooutdoorsiowa.com/Event/EventsHome.aspx>
- Outdoor Movie Night**<sup>o</sup>  
7 p.m. Fossil & Prairie Center, Rockford.  
Bring a chair or blanket to view the movie. Snacks will be available, free will donation.
- August 25**    **Women in the Woods with Wine**<sup>o</sup>  
7-9 p.m at the Tosanak Recreation Area, Marble Rock.
- Sept. 10**      **Fossil & Prairie Center - Now OPEN weekends from 1-4 p.m.**
- Sept. 11**      **Monarch Tagging** •  
1 pm at the Fossil & Prairie Park, Rockford.  
Learn more about the migration of the Monarch Butterfly while assisting in the science of following them on their migration.
- Sept. 29**      **Women in the Woods with Wine**  
7-9 p.m. at the Tosanak Recreation Area, Marble Rock.
- Oct. 31**      **Fossil & Prairie Center closed for the 2022 season**

*Due to COVID-19, registration is required for all events in order to limit group sizes.*

*Register online at*

*<https://www.mycountyparks.com/County/Floyd/Events.aspx>*

Fossil & Prairie Center  
P.O. Box 495  
Rockford, Iowa 50468

Non-Profit Org.  
US Postage Paid  
Rockford, IA  
Permit No. 25

Address Service Requested

## Memorials

**Lawrence (Butch) Squier**  
Dennis & Rhonda Westergard

**Roberta Cooper**  
Sherrie Burt & Nancy Kies

**Dirk Uetz**  
Tom & Sherri Sisson

**Bob Dight**  
Roger & Susan Ramthun

**Linda "GL" Staudt**  
Jim & Sandra Lawrenz

**Leighton Demary**  
Jim & Sandra Lawrenz

**John Andersen**  
Resnicow & Associates

**Mel Chapman**  
Jim & Sandy Lawrenz

*Memorial Donation and Membership information  
can be found online at [fossilcenter.com/Foundation](http://fossilcenter.com/Foundation)  
or by contacting the Fossil & Prairie Center  
641-756-3490*



## Fossil & Prairie Conservation Foundation

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