



# The New Leaf

## Clarke County Conservation

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Conservation Director : Scott Kent

2024

## Greetings from the Director

After many years of dreaming, planning, fundraising, and constructing, the Conservation Education Building is now open! I am really excited that the Clarke County Conservation Board is now able to provide a place to hold public programming and be utilized by the public for private events. Reflecting back over the past 8 years since I became a Director, the Conservation Board has built a paved walking trail to connect East Lake Park to Osceola, modernized all the bathrooms, built a campground, improved the water quality of the lake, offered day camps and public programming, and now built the event center. None of this could have been done without the public's input, support, and contributions. Most of these projects were also able to be completed without tax payer's money! East Lake is a public park for the public. The other night while assisting with the free canoe night, I witnessed people canoeing on the lake, hikers on the trail, RV's pulling into the campground, kids playing on the playground, a soccer match on the soccer field, and people biking on the road, all from standing in one spot. I thought to myself, this is what East Lake is all about, people getting outside and enjoying the amenities that the park has to offer. One would be surprised of the traffic that comes through the park in one day. On weekends it is not hard to count over 100 people at a time in the park. I watch the news and see how parks in Des Moines are getting vandalized, graffitied, and destroyed. This seldom happens at East Lake mainly because it is used so much. And when something does happen, like a board falls off a shelter or a wasp nest by the playground, people are quick to tell us so we can fix the problem before the nest park user is affected. I take great pride in keeping East Lake a place for families to enjoy but could not do it with out the help of my staff and the community! With that I say **"THANK YOU!"**

Scott



### **Board Members:**

Sharon Dunfee

Larry Keller

Norm Lust

Marla Shifflet

Frank Riley

### **Friend's of CCC Board:**

President - Stephanie Snell

Vice President – Brian Stuva

Treasurer – Barry Mateer

Secretary – Judy Kjellsen

CCCB Rep Director – Frank Riley

CCCB Director – Scott Kent

Director – Marilyn Dorland

Director – Deb Talbot

Director – Spence Seeberger

Director – Bev Seeberger

# Calendar of Events

## Calendar of Events

### September

- 12<sup>th</sup> – Grand Opening for Education Building, 3:00 – 7:00 p.m.
- 13<sup>th</sup> – Nursing Home Residents Fishing, 9:00 a.m.
- 19<sup>th</sup> – I-35 Cross Country Meet 4:00
- 24<sup>th</sup> – Tree Walk/Ride at East Lake Park, 6:00 p.m. 'til dusk
- 26<sup>th</sup> – Friends Annual Membership Meeting, Education Building, 6:00 p.m.

### October

- 1<sup>st</sup> – Clarke Community Cross Country Meet, 4:00
- 16<sup>th</sup> – Trees Forever Workshop
- 19<sup>th</sup> – FFA Wild Walk
- 22<sup>nd</sup> – Owl Prowl, Education Building, 7:30 p.m.

### November

- 12<sup>th</sup> – Wildlife Photography by Tom Moss, 6:30 p.m.

## Canoe Night

Canoe Night was hosted by CCCB on Thursdays during the summer. Several individuals and families came out to take advantage of free canoe rental and to enjoy some time on the lake.



## Rose breasted Grosbeak - *Pheucticus ludovicianus*

One of our many neotropical migrants, the Rose breasted grosbeak spends its breeding season from Northeast British Columbia in Canada east to Southeast Newfoundland southward to the Midwest and east United States. They breed in Iowa. During the nonbreeding season they can be found in Mexico, south through Central America to Columbia, Ecuador, Peru, and in the West Indies.

They are around 18-20 cm long and males weigh 36-63 gm with females weighing in at 34-56gm. The males are striking in appearance with a black head, a black and white pattern on the back, a white belly and a bright rose red bib. Females have a heavily brown streaked breast and belly on a cream background with a brown and streaky black back. They also have a sharp, well defined white eyeline. Being a grosbeak both male and female possess a heavy cream color conical bill.

Both the male and female sing a beautiful lilting up and downs singsong, punctuated by the classic "chink" chip note of the grosbeaks.

The breeding habitat consists of a variety of woodlands, including stands of maple, cherry, and the like, mixed deciduous/coniferous woods, second growth woodland, stream edges, and well wooded suburban areas and usually partially open rather than full closed woodland, pasture with scattered trees, and urban parks.

The diet of the rose breasted grosbeak is mixed and varies during the year. On breeding grounds, the diet is equally divided between animal and vegetable material. During the nesting period. The amount of animal material increases. This can include beetles, bugs, caterpillars, bees, and ants. Vegetable matter includes elderberries, mulberries, pigweed and milkweed seeds. On migration the diet is almost entirely frugivorous.

The breeding season is April to August/September and a single brood is raised. Occasionally 2 broods can be raised. The nest is built mostly by the female and is a loose, flimsy open cup made from small twigs, weed stems, bark strips, and straw, placed up to 17M above the ground in a sapling or small tree. A clutch of 3 to 5 pale blue eggs with reddish brown splotches is laid. Both male and female incubate for 12-13 days. the chicks are brooded and fed by both parents and fledge at around 10 days and attended to for an additional 3 weeks. Nest parasitization by the brown headed cowbird is around 10%.

The Rose breasted grosbeak is not a threatened species and is common in much of its range.

I had up to 6 males at my feeders this spring at one time and I must say they are a beautiful sight.

Happy Birding,

Debi





# SUMMER DAY CAMPS

By Judy Kjellsen

We have had a busy summer of hosting summer day camps for kids entering 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> grades, and 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grades. There were six half-day camps that we offered to learn more about conservation, make new friends and have fun! The camps were planned by myself, Debi Talbot and Scott Kent.

Our first camp was “Pollinator Power.” We taught the kids what pollination is, who the pollinators are and focused on the honeybee. The kids learned the roles of the bees within the hive and each got to play the part of a honeybee. In addition to the “queen” who lays the eggs, we had the “construction workers” who built the hive, “janitors” who cleaned the hive, “medics” who helped the injured bees, “security workers” who guarded the hive, “foragers” who collected pollen, and the “cool drones” who more or less just hang out in the hive. The kids also learned how a beekeeper tends to his hive.



“Wings & Things” was our second camp where the kids learned all about feathers, flight, nest building, and eggs. They got to see the baby barred owl we had in our flight rehab cage. Dissecting owl pellets was a fun activity as the kids got to identify the different bones they found. Each one of the kids also got to build and decorate a bird house.

Our third camp was “Monarch Mania & Wildflowers.” The kids learned about the metamorphosis of the monarch caterpillar as it turns into a butterfly. They took a “Migration Journey” from Mexico to Canada, and discovered the roadblocks the monarchs have along the way. The kids had fun making seed bombs, did flower pounding, and painted their hands to put their handprints on our monarch board that is displayed in the park.





The next camp was “Nature Rocks!” The kids learned about sedimentary, igneous and metamorphic rocks and identified different specimens. They learned about molds and casts and how fossils are formed. They each got to excavate their own “fossils,” examined arrowheads, and learned about Iowa’s state rock, the Geode. Each one of the kids picked out a geode and we cut them open to take home. They also each painted a rock that we put together to make a snake so others in the community could add rocks to it.

“Pond Life” included a walk down to our sediment pond to collect water samples and learn how lake levels are controlled. They looked at their water samples under the microscope. We identified fish by their fins, coloring, and shape. Debi shared her pet tortoise with the kids and Judy shared her painted turtle. The kids also learned how to cast a fishing line, and bait a hook.



Our last camp of the summer was “Hoof & Horns.” The kids learned the difference between antlers and horns, identified elk, moose, whitetail and mule deer antlers, wild sheep, pronghorn and bison horns, learned how much a deer will eat in a day and how far they can leap and jump, and also went on a shed hunt. We learned about a Japanese form of art (“Gyotaku”) for keeping record of the fish they caught by painting one side of the fish and making an imprint on paper. Then we finished the

morning by going fishing.

A big thank you to all of you who supported our day camps this summer. We enjoyed teaching the kids and hope they learned a thing or two, and created some fun memories along the way.

FFA Alumni show at the  
Clarke County Fair. Scott got  
1st Place!



## What is AmeriCorps?

by Judy Kjellsen

This summer I decided to try something different from my usual routine and was given the opportunity to work with the Clarke County Conservation Board through an organization called AmeriCorps. There was an AmeriCorps internship position available at the park, teaching kids about conservation through summer day camps. My kids and son-in-law had served in the same capacity through extension and conservation, but I never realized all the experience I would gain. Some of you have asked, “What is AmeriCorps?”

*“AmeriCorps is a network of local, state, and national service programs that connects over 70,000 Americans each year in intensive service to meet community needs in education, the environment, public safety, health, and homeland security. It is an opportunity for individuals to gain career skills and experience while giving their time and talent to strengthen communities.”*

I have to admit that my initial thought was more self-serving. I was looking for an opportunity where I could be outside and enjoy nature, and teaching day camps was one way I could make that happen. Little did I know the total effort that was needed to plan each camp for the kids but it was a great opportunity to gain some experience and knowledge about conservation. For each camp I needed to do some research about the topic so I could pass on what I learned to the kids through the day camps, but the kids also taught me a lot and gave me some wonderful ideas for future camps. The greatest rewards I received by serving through AmeriCorps was hearing the kids talk about what they learned, what they enjoyed, and the memories they made at some of the camps.

My term of service is May 15 – September 15 where I need to serve a total of 450 hours. AmeriCorps pays me a living allowance as well as an education award that I can use toward continuing ed classes, workshops and other expenses relating to education, which I plan to do as I begin to serve another year with Clarke County Conservation once the summer term is complete.

If you are interested in joining or learning more about AmeriCorps programs in Iowa, please contact them by email: [americorps@volunteerioda.org](mailto:americorps@volunteerioda.org) or call 1-800-308-5987.



# Wildflower Walks

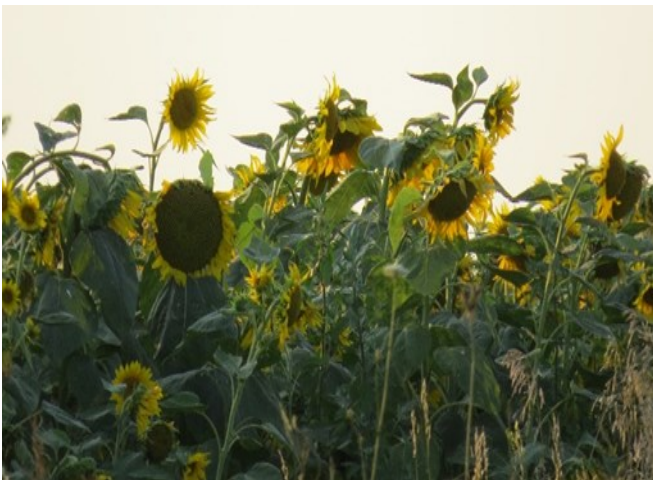
By Judy Kjellsen

This year the Clarke County Conservation Board hosted three wildflower walks at three different areas to show the uniqueness of each.



The first wildflower walk of season was the end of June at the Barry Mateer residence. Barry has wide variety of native wildflowers right in his backyard and helps protect and restore habitat for monarch butterflies. He lives on the family farm and is a wealth of knowledge when it comes to Clarke County history and wildflower identification.

The second walk was at East Lake Park in Osceola early July. Spring burnings and timely mowing has benefited the pollinator plots within the park and along the trails. The grey headed cone flowers, black eyed susans and bee balm were in abundance at the time. It will be interesting to see the different grasses and flowers that pop up from year to year.



Oakwood Grassland Wildlife Refuge was the site for our third walk the end of July. We got to tour another area of the property that has been cleared of several cedar and hedge trees., and there was an abundance of tall green milkweed, orange butterfly milkweed, liatris and bee balm blooming. The 10-acre field of sunflowers was in full bloom and attracted a lot of birds. While driving along the mowed paths we also saw a family of quail cross in front of us. It's always fun to see the wildlife!

# Deer me. The Dearth of Deer

## By Barry Mateer

### **Taming the land; creating a need for Conservation.**

**The rest of the story ... is history ... waiting to be remembered.**

Barry Mateer

In **1833**, when the first settlers were officially allowed to enter and settle in eastern Iowa, white-tailed deer were reported to be abundant.

In **1846**, when Iowa became the 29th state, Clarke County was being surveyed. That original survey of Clarke County indicates the location of both the east-west Mormon Trail and the north-south Dragoon Trail from Fort Des Moines to the Missouri River.

[https://digital.lib.uiowa.edu/islandora/search?type=dismax&F%5B0%5D=mods\\_subject\\_hierarchicalGeographic\\_county\\_ms%3AClarke%5C%20County](https://digital.lib.uiowa.edu/islandora/search?type=dismax&F%5B0%5D=mods_subject_hierarchicalGeographic_county_ms%3AClarke%5C%20County)

<https://ouriowaheritage.com/our-iowa-heritage-iowa-field-of-dreams/>

### **Clarke County's first decade**

Not until **1851** did a commission of the state government decide upon the location of Clarke County's ... county seat of Justice. The first election was in August of 1851; with 35 votes. The sale of lots in Osceola was in October; each of the 85 lots was \$22. By that time, the Mormon Trace had become deeply rutted from the migration west ... through 20-some miles of Clarke County, including through Murray.

By **1850**, Clarke County's first permanent settlers had arrived, **Robert and Christena Kyte Jamison**.

[https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/95761628/robert\\_jamison](https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/95761628/robert_jamison)

Well before 1850, dozens of other pioneer families of Clarke County had already begun the westward migration that would take them across the Mississippi River.

### **The people**

**Simpson Lingle** (1842-1934) was born in Morgan county, Indiana. In **1853**, his parents and his uncle Jacob's family set out by ox teams for Iowa. Simpson, at age eleven, drove a one-horse buggy just behind the ox-drawn wagons; all 550 or so miles. The families located on wild prairie land a couple miles south of Osceola.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/14142119/simpson-h-lingle>

Simpson's family must have valued education as he attended the 'subscription' high school which was housed in the Methodist Church. There was not yet a tax-supported public high school. In **1863**, the head teacher temporarily closed down the school, due to his health and the demands of the Civil War. Of the thirty-two pupils in the high school in 1863, thirteen were boys and ten of them would enlist in the Union army. All thirteen of them were still living in 1894 when that original church building was being replaced.

**Abner Crew** (1819-1898) was born in North Carolina, and at age 22 he migrated with his parents to Belmont County, Ohio. There he married Elizabeth Smith (1823-1918). In **1854** with four young children in tow, they headed for Iowa; making the journey down the Ohio river by boat to St. Louis, then north, up the Mississippi River to Keokuk by boat. <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/22950894/abner-jordan-crew>

From Keokuk, they traveled by team to Clarke County. Though Abner's autobiography did not specify, most likely it was a team of oxen. The oxen would be better suited for breaking the 240 acres of government land they had bought in Knox Township for \$1.25 an acre. They first built a story-and-half log house, in which the family found a comfortable home until 1862, when during the Civil War, they extended the residence to accommodate the growing family. By 1886, the Abner and Elizabeth Crew family consisted of eleven living children.

**Jacob Proudfoot** (1822-1899) was born in what is now Barbour Co., Virginia. In 1826, his wife, Cyrene Vanscoy was born in Randolph County, Virginia which is now in West Virginia. Married in 1843, by the fall of **1855** with five children, they emigrated from Virginia to Iowa undertaking the journey over wagon road and trails, lasting forty-four days. On their 50th wedding anniversary in Liberty Township, all seven of their children were living ... and all but one was at the celebration.

[https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/14957064/jacob\\_proudfoot](https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/14957064/jacob_proudfoot)

In **1856**, when the village of Osceola was but five years old, the first Iowa law was passed to provide a **closed season for deer hunting** from February through mid-July.



There were only **679 dwellings** in the whole of Clarke County with a population of 3,978.

There were: 21 houses - Troy Township; 34 in Madison; 42 in Jackson; 46 in Fremont;  
47 in Washington; 54 in Franklin; 57 in Green Bay; 66 in Liberty;  
69 in Knox; 91 in Doyle, and 152 dwellings in Osceola Township.

### Clarke County's second decade

In the **1862** census, twelve years after the arrival of the first permanent settlers, there were 990 dwellings in Clarke County, with a population of 5,687. The Civil War had been raging for a full year.

1,065 men were old enough and eligible to vote.

878 men were young enough (under 45) to be considered eligible for military service.

In the **1860** election 1,041 men in Clarke County voted; Abraham Lincoln carried Clarke Co. by 147 votes.

In the **1864** election, Lincoln carried Clarke County by 404 votes; though there were 223 fewer men voting in 1864 than in 1860.

Part of that drop in the number of votes cast in Clarke County was due to the fact that by 1865 and end of The War of the Rebellion (as it was called then), five hundred men had enlisted on the Union side in Clarke County. Nearly one-fifth of them had died in service.

**Clarke County, 1869** - one year after the railroad reached Woodburn, Osceola, Murray.

**8,037** was the population of Clarke County, in **1869** when the following **Game Law** was published in the Osceola Sentinel. The law stated: "It shall be unlawful for anyone **except on his own premises and for his own exclusive use**, to kill, ensnare or trap any wild **deer, elk or prairie chicken**, between the first day of January and the first day of August in each year. Other animals mentioned in the law with closed dates included: **woodcock, quail, ruffed grouse, pheasant and wild turkey**.

The law imposed a fine of fifteen dollars for each deer or elk, and three dollars for each bird of game.

### The statewide dearth of deer

In **1898**, less than 50 years after the arrival of the first permanent settlers in Clarke County, the season for **deer hunting** in Iowa was **closed year-round** ...

The year **1900** was the peak population of Clarke County at **12,440**.

In **2023**, the estimated population of Clarke County is **9,588**.

In **1935**, the **Iowa Conservation Commission** was founded.

**In 1936, five deer were released** across the county line in Decatur County. An article headline in the December 10 issue of the Osceola Sentinel was "**Have you seen any deer in Clarke County?**"

[http://osceola.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?i=f&d=01011862-12312023&e=seen%20any%20deer&m=between&ord=e1&fn=osceola\\_sentinel\\_usa\\_iowa\\_osceola\\_19361210\\_english\\_1&df=1&dt=1](http://osceola.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?i=f&d=01011862-12312023&e=seen%20any%20deer&m=between&ord=e1&fn=osceola_sentinel_usa_iowa_osceola_19361210_english_1&df=1&dt=1)

**1939** - Deer were reported as being seen in Clarke County

[http://osceola.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?i=f&by=1939&bdd=1930&d=01011930-12311939&e=deer&m=between&ord=e1&fn=the\\_osceola\\_tribune\\_usa\\_iowa\\_osceola\\_19391205\\_english\\_1&df=1&dt=10](http://osceola.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?i=f&by=1939&bdd=1930&d=01011930-12311939&e=deer&m=between&ord=e1&fn=the_osceola_tribune_usa_iowa_osceola_19391205_english_1&df=1&dt=10)

[http://osceola.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?i=f&by=1939&bdd=1930&d=01011930-12311939&e=deer&m=between&ord=e1&fn=the\\_murray\\_journal\\_usa\\_iowa\\_murray\\_19391207\\_english\\_1&df=1&dt=10](http://osceola.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?i=f&by=1939&bdd=1930&d=01011930-12311939&e=deer&m=between&ord=e1&fn=the_murray_journal_usa_iowa_murray_19391207_english_1&df=1&dt=10)

In **1940**, 40 years after the population peaks of most of Iowa's rural counties, it was estimated that **statewide deer population was 1,000 animals**.

## Osceola's Centennial - 1951

In **1950**, estimates were of 10,000 deer in Iowa.

In **1953**, Iowa re-opened deer hunting season .... after 55 years.

[http://osceola.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?i=f&d=01011862-12312023&e=deer%20in%20clarke&m=between&ord=e1&fn=osceola sentinel usa iowa osceola 19530723 english 1&df=1&dt=8](http://osceola.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?i=f&d=01011862-12312023&e=deer%20in%20clarke&m=between&ord=e1&fn=osceola%20sentinel%20usa%20iowa%20osceola%2019530723%20english%201&df=1&dt=8)

***"First deer hunting season... almost in living memory."*** The Clarke-Decatur herd may number more than one hundred. The 1953 Osceola Tribune article went on to say: "Farmers, either owners or tenants, and their children, may hunt deer on their own land without a license. The farmer may have only one deer in his possession, but an attorney general's ruling has said that the farmer and each of his children may kill one deer. The ruling also said a hunter could shoot a deer each day of the season but would have to give them away in order to qualify for another kill. There will be no restriction on the age or sex of the deer killed, the commission said; buck, does or fawns may be shot."

In **1962** – 59 deer were killed in Clarke County during the hunting season.

Before the opening of the **1964** hunting season, it was estimated there were 519 deer in Clarke County. 109 deer were reported as having been shot in Clarke County, by the 204 licensed hunters; though only 99 of the licensed hunters reported. 79 deer were killed by hunters who had state permits and 30 were killed by farmers on their own premises.

Since 2006, Iowa DNR reports the annual 'reported' deer harvest in Clarke County ranging from a high of 1,966 (in 2018) and a low of 1,407 (in 2019).

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## Our amazing float for the 4th of July Parade won 2nd place!



## Friends Of Clarke County Conservation

The Friends of Clarke County Conservation Foundation, known as *Friends*, is a tax exempt corporation organized under the Iowa Nonprofit Corporation Act, Chapter 504A of the 1990 Code of Iowa, and the provisions of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The foundation was established in 1997 for the purpose of soliciting and accepting gifts and donations from persons and organizations for developing and enhancing environmental education and conservation projects within the scope of the jurisdiction of the Clarke County Conservation Board.

The goals of the organization are: (1) to support and further the functions of the Clarke County Conservation Board by serving as a vehicle for community involvement, (2) to advise CCCB of the needs of the community regarding facilities and programs, (3) to raise funds for designated projects, and (4) to serve as an organizational base for volunteers.

Categories of membership are determined by the annual dues, which range from Student at \$5.00 to Organizational at \$100, (see enclosed membership form). Membership dues and contributions are tax deductible. Membership in the "*Friends*" foundation is open to everyone regardless of race, religion, creed, national origin, age, gender, or handicap.

An annual general membership meeting is held to elect the "*Friends*" Board of Directors, a seven (7) member board that sets the policies and goals, and generally manages the affairs of the foundation.

### Friends of Clarke County Conservation

#### Membership Application

- ☐ Organization/Business (\$100)
- ☐ Family (\$20)
- ☐ Individual (\$10)
- ☐ Student (\$5)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Yes! I want to be a part of the "*Friends*" volunteer corps.

Make checks payable to:  
Friends of Clarke County Conservation,  
C/O Clarke Co. Conservation Board  
100 South Main, Osceola, IA 50213





Clarke County Conservation  
100 S. Main St.  
Osceola, IA 50218

