

Summer 2016



Conservation Matters

Upcoming Event Highlights

Canoes at Mile Hill Lake-
June 10th

Pony Creek Nature
Center Ribbon Cutting-
June 23rd

Summer Extravaganza
June 24th

Gone Fishing
June 29th

Canoe Float
July 1st

Nature Connect Series
July 7,14,21,28

Nature Detective Series
July 6, 13, 20, 27

Butterfly Bonaza
August 6th

*More program
details and contact
information located
in newsletter.*

Mills County Conservation Board

Pony Creek Nature Center

Pony Creek Nature Center is nearly complete and we are working to get moved in! The area surrounding the building is a bit of a mess but hopefully in the upcoming weeks that will be taken care of. Mills County and surrounding areas are lucky to have this great new resource for environmental education. Inside the building you will find a gallery with a neat live animal display, a seminar room and the conservation employees offices. The first scheduled event will be June 23rd at 9:00 am with a ribbon cutting and coffee hosted by the Glenwood Area Chamber of Commerce. Public programs will be held at the center throughout the year covering a range of environmental topics for people of all ages. For the time being, the building is open Monday thru Friday from 8:00am to 4:00pm. We invite everyone out for the Ribbon Cutting on June 23rd at 9:00 am! There will also be a fun opportunity for the public to come to Pony Creek Park and visit the Nature Center along with opportunities to canoe and roast hotdogs on June 24th in the evening. There are more details for these two events in the Upcoming Public Programs section of this newsletter.



Mills County Neighbor

Ruby-throated hummingbirds are the only species of hummingbird that breeds in the Eastern U.S. These tiny birds only weigh 0.1-0.2 oz and are acrobatic fliers. With wing beats up to 53 times a minute and the ability to fly backwards, up, down and sideways with extreme precision they put on an extraordinary show. Here in Mills County they arrive around the first week in May. Feeders and tube shaped flowers are a great way to attract them to your yard. An easy sugar mixture can be made using $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sugar mixed with 1 cup water. Bring the mixture to a boil and let cool completely. This mix can be increased to make any size batch and the leftovers can be stored in the refrigerator for up to a week. No need to add food color! Hummingbirds are attracted to red and orange so most feeders have color incorporated into them. These tiny birds also feed on mosquitoes and other small flying insects.

Hummingbirds build a nest about the size of a large thimble and place it directly on top of a branch. The nest is made of thistle or dandelion down and held together with spider silk and sometimes pine resin. We actually have a hummingbird nest on display at the Nature Center. One to three tiny white eggs are laid and 14 days later hatchling hummingbirds arrive. Male hummingbirds do not stick around to help raise the brood and some actually begin migration back south as early as August.

Classroom Connection

The school year is over and we went out with a bang. The East Mills 3rd graders spent an afternoon at Pony Creek Park participating in various nature activities and doing a pond study. Glenwood 1st and 2nd graders all had the opportunity to hold one of our snakes that is used for educational programs while learning about reptiles and creatures that live in forests. The last week of school the MCCB provided fishing poles and helped over 550 students fish at Glenwood Lake Park.

Art teachers from Glenwood and East Mills worked with students in Kindergarten thru 6th grade to complete an art project that will be displayed in the seminar room of the new nature center. The help of the teachers was greatly appreciated and we invite everyone out to see what the kids made.

Grants

The MCCB received a grant from the Mills County Community Foundation of \$15,000 to help with the expense of the education deck at the new Nature Center.

The Iowa Ornithologists Union awarded MCCB a grant in the amount of \$400 to purchase a spotting scope. The scope will be a great tool for bird watching programs that are provided through our environmental education programs.



Upcoming Public Programs

Canoes at Mile Hill Lake

June 10th @ 9:00am-11:00 am

Canoes will be available for use at Mile Hill Lake for anyone interested in getting out for a paddle around this beautiful lake. Life jackets will be provided. Please call 712-527-9685 for more information and to sign up for this.

Pony Creek Nature Center- Ribbon Cutting

June 23rd @ 9:00 am

The Glenwood Area Chamber of Commerce is hosting a coffee and ribbon cutting at the new Nature Center.

Summer Extravaganza

June 24th @ 6:00-8:00 pm

The new Nature Center will be open to browse around and there will be canoeing and hotdog roasting. Pre-registration is required to ensure enough food is provided.

Gone Fishing

June 29th @ 8:00 am

Join us at Pony Creek Access (one mile north of Pony Creek Park) for a fishing opportunity. Fishing poles and bait will be provided! The basics of fishing will be covered. Pre-registration is required.

Canoe float on the Nishnabotna River

July 1st @ 10:00 am

We will float from Washburn Landing on Hutchings Ave to Fisher Wildlife Management Area on Lambert Ave. The float will take approximately 4 hours with stops along the way. Canoes and life jackets are provided, you are responsible for bringing a lunch and drinks. Space is limited so please call 712-527-9685 and reserve your spot. More details will be provided as you get signed up.

Pre-registration contact information:

Phone: 712-527-9685

Email: millscbia@hotmail.com

Pre-registering helps us plan accordingly for programs.

Nature Connect Series

Every Thursday in July (7th, 14th, 21st, 28th)-
9:00 am -10:00 am

Geared for kids in 5th-8th grades! It's time to get outside and connect with nature. Each session will have a unique focus that builds upon the common goal of finding a connection with nature. Class size will be limited, so please call 712-527-9685 to pre-register. Kids should wear clothes and shoes that can get dirty and bring a water bottle.

Nature Detectives Series

Every Wednesday in July (6th, 13th, 20th, 27th)
9:00 am -10:00 am

Geared for kids in 1st-4th grades, we will be exploring Pony Creek Park. Each session will focus on something different and throughout the series we will learn about trees, insects, birds and ecosystems. Class size is limited so please pre-register by calling 712-527-9685. Kids should wear clothes and shoes that can get dirty and bring a water bottle.

Butterfly Bonanza

August 6th @ 9:00 am

Come learn about some of our local butterfly species, their life cycles and much more! This program will be held at Pony Creek Park and there will be a hike so dress accordingly. All ages welcome and pre-registration is required.

More programs may be added, please watch our Facebook page and the local newspapers!

Mills County Conservation Board:

Contact information

Mills County
Conservation
Pony Creek Park
56235 Deacon Rd
Pacific Junction, IA 51561

PHONE:
(712) 527-9685

E-MAIL:
millscbia@hotmail.com

Website:
mccb.millscoia.us



MCCB Staff:

Jerad Getter, Director
Dessa Montgomery, Naturalist
Zach Kohlhoff, Specialist
Jesse Ayers, Technician

MCCB Board Members:

Jan Faraci, Mineola
Brad Rasmussen, Glenwood
George Marshall, Malvern
Lana White, Hastings
Kreg Kinzle, Glenwood

The Mills County Conservation Board is committed to providing the citizens of Mills County with quality outdoor recreation areas and opportunities for environmental education experiences. Please take advantage of these services and visit the nearly 1,800 acres of public land available!

CONSERVATION MATTERS
MILLS COUNTY CONSERVATION
56235 DEACON RD
PACIFIC JUNCTION, IA 51561

