



Upcoming Event Highlights

Connecting with Nature
December 19th



Wild Winter Day
January 16th



Bird Abode Building
February 27th



More program details and contact information located in newsletter.

Mills County Conservation Board

Many Moons

Full moons are one of the most impressive sights of nature, and can bring a welcome light during the cold winter. For centuries people have depended on the lunar cycle to keep track of calendars and seasons. The Native Americans named the full moon of every month. Listed below are the names, dates, and meaning for the full moons of 2016:

January 24th- *Wolf Moon* (During the cold and deep snow of winter Native Americans would hear wolf packs howling hungrily outside their villages)

February 22nd- *Snow Moon* (A time when the heaviest snow falls and piles upon the existing winter snow)

March 23rd- *Worm Moon* (Worm trails found on the thawing ground)

April 22nd- *Pink Moon* (Wild ground phlox begins blooming)

May 21st- *Flower Moon* (Abundant flowers blooming everywhere)

June 20th- *Strawberry Moon* (The peak harvesting season for strawberries)

July 19th- *Buck Moon* (Bucks begin to re-grow the antlers that they shed annually)

August 18th- *Sturgeon Moon* (Sturgeon were most abundant during this time)

September 16th- *Harvest Moon* (Time to gather crops after the autumn equinox)

October 16th- *Hunters Moon* (Best time to hunt summer fattened deer)

November 14th- *Beaver Moon* (Setting traps for beaver before the water froze was very important to ensure Native Americans had warm furs)

December 24th- *Cold Moon* (Winter has arrived and the cold fastens its grip on Nature)

Conservation Tip

Christmas is right around the corner and it is a busy time for everyone. There are several simple things you can incorporate into the holiday season that will help reduce waste and conserve energy. Reusing gift bags will save money and space in the local landfill. Putting your Christmas lights on a timer can help with electricity use. Even your "real" Christmas tree can be re-used for other things, instead of sending it to the landfill. Here at MCC we take old trees and sink them in local fishing areas to make fish habitat. If you are interested in donating your tree once you are finished with it, gives us a call at 712-527-9685 so we discuss the details.

Mills County Neighbor

Black-capped chickadees weigh in at a measly half ounce but they are some tough little birds. You will find them in Mills County year round. On the coldest days during the winter you will see busy little chickadees zipping around woodland areas or visiting a bird feeder. Chickadees hide seeds in hundreds of places around their territory and rely on these secret stashes to help them through some of the coldest parts of the winter. They can remember thousands of hiding spots.

Chickadees are very inquisitive and are typically the first bird to check out a new feeder, because of this behavior Chickadees are a popular guest at backyard bird feeders. If you are trying to attract chickadees to your feeder they like peanuts, sunflower seeds, and suet. Providing nesting boxes is another great way to entice them to your property. Put your box up well before the breeding season starts and atleast 60 feet into a wooded area. Birds are quite picky about the nest boxes they use. For a chickadee they prefer the hole to be 1 1/8" round. Chickadees use cavities year round, for raising young and for shelter. During the fridged winter days these amazing little creatures deploy a variety of ways to stay warm. Nocturnal hypothermia allows them to lower their body temperature and conserve energy throughout the lowest temperatures of the night. Combine, a good source of stored seeds, a nice cavity to stay out of the weather and a some intentional hypothermia and you end up with a warm little bird.

Chickadees can be a great companion for a birder. Small songbirds migrating through an area often associate with chickadee flocks. Keeping an eye out for chickadees during the spring and fall can help you discover some interesting migrants. Nuthatches, woodpeckers, kinglets, creepers, warblers, and vireos often congregate with chickadees and respond to their warning calls. If you don't live in a wooded area and would like to spot a Chickadee just visit one of Mills County Conservation parks and you will surely meet a new friend.



Chickadee Check-off

Since 1982, when the Iowa legislature created the Fish and Wildlife Fund Tax Check-off, Iowans have been able to bring a little wildness into the tax season. The Fish and Wildlife Tax Check-off, affectionately called the Chickadee Check-off was created to allow people to make a charitable donation to wildlife conservation in Iowa out of their tax refunds or by tacking a few dollars on to any taxes owed. When filling out the state income tax form, just look for the contribution line (usually somewhere between lines 55-60) and write in any dollar amount next to Fish/Wildlife.

All the money contributed through the chickadee check-off helps support the Wildlife Diversity Program at the Iowa DNR. This program has statewide responsibility for all the wildlife that can't be hunted, fished or trapped from Peregrine Falcons to Poweshiek Skipperling butterflies. You can learn more about the program on their website: www.iowadnr.gov/wildlifediversity.

Please consider donating to the Chickadee Check-off this tax season and supporting wildlife conservation in Iowa!

Classroom Connection

The Glenwood 5th grade science camp is an exciting experience that we help with every fall. Students are involved in numerous outdoor activities and a learn alot in two days. The MCCB provides fishing and canoeing opportunities for all the students, as well as pond study programs and night hikes. During this time Pony Creek Park is a valuable resource to get the kids outdoors and learning. Next year, with the completion of the Nature Center we hope the Science camp can be held solely at this great county park, so the students do not have to travel out of the county. Currently, they travel down to Waubonsie State Park for some of the camp activities.

The East Mills preschool raised a monarch caterpillar and the students got to watch it change into a beautiful butterfly. Once the butterfly was ready to fly we tagged it and wished it good luck on its way to Mexico. They were very excited to have a butterfly and named it Blanket. Let's keep our fingers crossed that the tag will be recovered and the circle of science will continue.

Nature Center Update

Construction is still in progress on the Nature Center at Pony Creek Park. Spring and summer rains delayed the crews and moved the completion date back. We are hopeful for the project to be done by March. The Mills County Community Foundation awarded the MCCB a generous grant of \$7,500 in support of the live animal display area that will be in the gallery area. This will be a wonderful addition to the building and allow easy viewing of the live, native animals that we keep. There are so many great things happening with this project for the citizens of Mills County.

Upcoming Public Programs

Connecting with Nature

December 19th @ 11:00 am

Nature journaling is a great way to connect with nature. It helps you look closely at things while you describe what you hear, see, smell and feel outdoors. This is a fun skill to learn for every age. We will meet at Pony Creek Park in the office building. If weather allows there will be a short hike after some journaling information and practice. We will have some supplies to make a small journal or you are welcome to bring your own. Space is limited, so please call 712-527-9685 or email us at millsccbia@hotmail.com if you plan to attend.



Wild Winter Day

January 16th @ 11:00 am

Although its cold outside its time to get outside! Meet us Foothills Park for some sledding and snowshoeing fun. Bring a sled if you have one, we will have some on hand for anyone that does not. If the weather does not provide us with snow, we will provide an alternate program of exploring the woodland and prairie. Pre-registration is appreciated.



Bird Abode Building

February 27th @ 11:00 am

Interested in blue birds? Come to Pony Creek Park and build your very own bluebird house to take home and put on your property. We will have all the supplies needed and will have a brief program about bluebirds. There is a fee of \$10 to cover the cost of materials for each house that you construct. Pre-registration is required to ensure materials will be available for everyone that plans to attend. Please call 712-527-9685 or send an email to millsccbia@hotmail.com by February 24th.

Check out our Facebook page for updates and changes to upcoming programs!

Mills County Conservation Board:

Contact information

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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
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