

Pathways to Nature

A Newsletter of the Webster County Conservation Board

April 2018



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What's New...

By Matt Cosgrove

If you have visited Kennedy Park in the last six months you've probably noticed a project or two under construction. With recent funding from the Webster County Board of Supervisors, the Conservation Staff has been busy working on park improvements.

The Kennedy Park Master Plan that was completed in 2011 provided a blueprint to update the fifty-three year old park. The plan identified ways to improve existing facilities and provide new opportunities.

The boat ramp area at Badger Lake was an area that was identified as a "high-priority" for updates. The aging infrastructure, gravel road, dated shelter and inaccessible restroom made the site uninviting to park visitors and unusable for people with disabilities. Recent additions to the site include a modern open shelter, fishing jetty, asphalt parking and an accessible restroom.

The \$80,000 project is scheduled to be completed this spring with an accessible path along the shore, a sandy launch area for the increased paddle-craft (canoes, kayaks, SUP's – stand-up paddleboards), new grill, and a paddling instruction area.

Plan a visit to Kennedy Park this summer for a paddling class, rent a canoe/kayak or just stop by the new playscape for a picnic!



Eastern Bluebirds (at left) were once common on Iowa's landscape before habitat loss which led to fewer nesting sites for these docile birds.

Photo below:

Eastern Bluebird Nest

Prepping For Bluebird Nesting

By Karen Hansen

The season for the return of the Eastern Bluebird is upon us. If you own a nest box but haven't cleaned it out yet, it's not too late. However, early spring prep ensures greater chance of them choosing your box. Once nesting starts, pay attention to other invaders, like house sparrows and wrens. A messy nest often with extras likely means a sparrow is trying to nest. A box filled with sticks means a wren wants to stake claim. Diligence in cleaning out intruders could mean the difference between successful bluebird nesting or not.

Chickadees, swallows and martins are not harmful. Tree swallows are even believed to protect the bluebirds from predators when they are nesting nearby. Bluebirds frequently fly to the ground for insects. Avoid spraying pesticides to protect this species from further declining numbers. Enjoy the splash of blue on the landscape and their interesting social behavior.

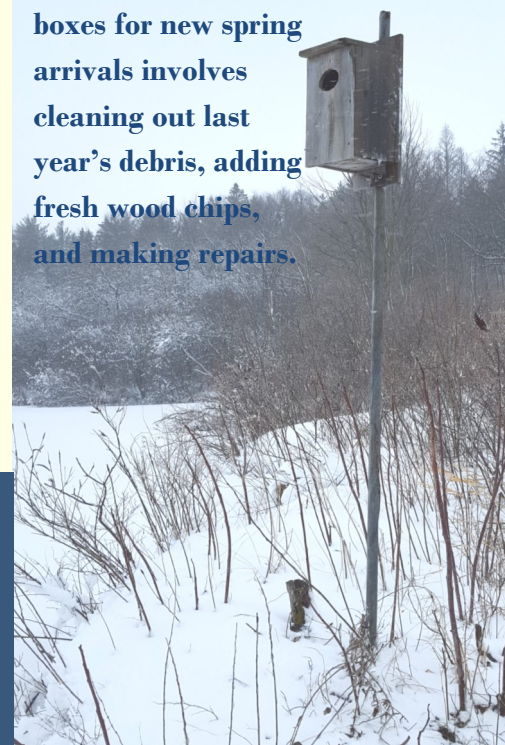


Prepping wood duck boxes for new spring arrivals involves cleaning out last year's debris, adding fresh wood chips, and making repairs.



Webster County Conservation areas are the home to 46 waterfowl nesting structures. The 2017 success rate was 46%

Did you know??



Upcoming Public Programs & Events

Date	Time	Event	Location
April 1st		Camp WaNoKi Reservations Open	Camp WaNoKi
April 2nd		Veteran's Memorial Park Opens	Kennedy Park
April 13th	12:00 pm	Campground Opens	Kennedy & OHV
April 21st	10 am	Wildflower Walk	Skillet Creek Indian Mds
April 24th	7 pm	Night Burn at Kennedy	North side (2nd entrance)
May 4th	5:00 pm	Fireside Friday	Camp WaNoKi
May 10th	4 - 5:30 pm	Plant Some Shade pick up	Kennedy Park
May 19th	8:00 am	SOAP Scramble Golf Tournament	Lakeside Golf Course
May 21st	6:00 pm	Friends Board Meeting	Camp WaNoKi
May 30th	See Below	Kayaking 101	Kennedy Park
May 31st	See Below	Kayaking 101	Kennedy Park

****Dog Training Closed March 15th - July 15th**

Kayaking 101 Classes

May 30th & 31st there will be two classes each, one from 5:30 - 6:30 pm and one from 6:30 - 7:30 pm. There is a 10 person max for each class. Cost is \$10/person. Registration required at: www.mycountyparks.com/county/webster.aspx.

This class or a specified online class must be taken to rent kayaks available at Kennedy Park.

2018 Spring Turkey Hunting

Youth Season (Residents Only)	April 7-15
Season 1	April 16-19
Season 2	April 20-24
Season 3	April 25-May 1
Season 4	May 2-20
Resident Archery Only-Licenses	April 16-May 20



**For the most up to date information,
LIKE us on Facebook:
Webster County Conservation**

For more information or a complete listing of all 2018 public programs and events, visit

www.mycountyparks.com/County/Webster.aspx



*Your Guide To
The Outside*

SOAP SCRAMBLE

"Support Our Area Parks"

GOLF FUNDRAISER

Sponsored By:



- Saturday, May 19th, 2018
- 4 person scramble (best ball)
- 8:00 AM shotgun start
- Grilled meal included
- \$120/team - cart not included

*Please call Lakeside directly to reserve a cart
by May 11 (515) 576-6741*

*All proceeds will
be used for rental yurts at
Kennedy Park!!*

- **Hole in One Challenge— Win
an EZGO Golf Cart!**

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*Return this form to Webster County Conservation, 1415 Nelson Avenue, Fort Dodge, IA 50501
or call Lakeside Golf Course to sign up at 576-6741*

4 Person Team \$120/team _____

Hole Sponsor \$50/hole _____ TOTAL \$ _____

Hole Sponsor (Friends Business Sponsor Discount) \$25/hole _____

Contact Name _____ Phone Number _____

Business Name _____

Address _____ City, State, Zip _____

Please make all checks payable to Friends of Webster County Conservation



Plant Some Shade®

Spring 2018 Residential Tree Program – Fort Dodge Region

To order, please complete the lower portion of this form and mail to:

Webster County Conservation Board

1415 Nelson Avenue
Fort Dodge, IA 50501
(515) 576-4258

MidAmerican Energy Company customers in Iowa are eligible to purchase trees for \$30 each, with the remaining cost funded through a grant from MidAmerican Energy. Advanced purchase is required and is limited to two trees per household to ensure that all customers have the opportunity to participate. In the event that additional trees are available on distribution day they will be released for purchase at 4 p.m. on a first-come, first-served basis until all are sold. **Trees must be picked up Thursday, May 10, 2018, from 4-5:30 p.m.** at John F. Kennedy Memorial Park, 1415 Nelson Avenue, Fort Dodge, IA. Any trees not picked up by 5:30 p.m. on distribution day will be considered donations to Webster County Conservation. **Trees are nonrefundable. Exchanges will not be accepted and plant material is under no warranty and/or guarantee.**

In exchange for participation in this program, the customer agrees that MidAmerican Energy, Iowa Department of Natural Resources or Webster County Conservation shall not be liable, in contract, tort and strict liability or otherwise, for any damages arising out of the administration of this program. MidAmerican Energy makes no warranties, expressed or implied, with respect to any material supplied under this program.



Please complete the order form below and return with a check for \$30 (one tree) or \$60 (two trees), payable to **Friends of Webster County Conservation**. No credit card or cash orders accepted.

NOTE: For alternate species, please only select trees you are willing to accept without being notified if your preferred species is not available. If both your preferred and alternate choices are sold out, your payment will be returned. If one of your choices is available, you will receive your order confirmation approximately one week prior to pickup.

TREES AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE – Deciduous and low-growing trees are 3-10 feet tall and conifers are a minimum of 2.5 feet tall. Please consider size at maturity when making your selection(s). For maximum energy efficiency, shade trees should be planted within 30 feet of the east and west sides and conifers should be planted as windbreaks along the north and west sides of your home. Before planting your tree(s), Iowa law requires you to call 811 at least two business days before digging to make certain there are no utility lines or other equipment buried underground. For more information, visit www.call811.com or call 800-292-8989. Dimensions below indicate size at maturity.

- [Chinkapin oak](#) (40-60' tall, 50-70' wide)
- [Bur oak](#) (60-80' tall/ wide)
- [Quaking aspen](#) (20-50' tall, 10-30' wide)
- [Norway spruce](#) (40-60' tall, 25-30' wide)
- [Ginkgo 'Presidential Gold'](#) *SEEDLESS* (40-50' tall, 25-30' wide)
- [Edible plum 'Superior'](#) (10-15' tall/wide)
- [Pagoda dogwood](#) (15-25' tall, 20-32' wide)

----- Clip and return to Webster County Conservation no later than May 6, 2018 (to place an order AFTER this date please call the phone number listed above) -----

CHOICE OF TREE SPECIES (may be two trees of the same species):

Please write your species preference(s) with alternate(s) in the table below. **Please indicate only those species you are willing to accept.**

	Preferred species	Alternate species
Tree #1		
Tree #2 (if applicable)		

Check here to sign up for a **BRIEF (10-15 min.) PLANTING DEMONSTRATION** to be held midway through the distribution at Kennedy Park. Specific time and location will be provided via email during the week prior to distribution.

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____
Daytime phone: _____ MidAmerican Energy account number: _____
Email: _____ Amount enclosed: _____

By signing and dating below, I certify that: a.) I am a MidAmerican Energy customer and live in Iowa; b.) I will pick up my tree(s) May 10, 2018, between 9 and 11 a.m. at John F. Kennedy Park, or else forfeit my purchase; c.) I will plant my tree(s) immediately, and ONLY at the residence associated with the account number above, and will give my tree(s) ongoing care; d.) I will not move any mulch provided at the event outside of the state, and; e.) if planting my tree(s) between the sidewalk and the curb, I will check with my local parks or public works department or city forester for applicable permission before doing so. I acknowledge that there is no warranty or guarantee for my tree purchase.

Signature _____

Date _____



1415 Nelson Ave
Fort Dodge, IA 50501
515-576-4258

conservation@webstercountya.org

www.mycountyparks.com/Webster.aspx



Webster County Conservation

STAFF

Matt Cosgrove	Director
Cody Peterson	Operations Supervisor
Darren Herzog	Park Ranger
Brad Janssen	Park Ranger
Karen Hansen	Naturalist
Erin Ford	Naturalist
Andy Stanberg	IRVM/Vegetation Specialist
Tasha Nielsen	Natural Res./Trail Tech
Adam Moeding	Natural Res./Trail Tech
Joni Hefley	Office Manager

BOARD MEMBERS

Nick Carlson	Fort Dodge
Geri Winge	Fort Dodge
Jerry Beck	Fort Dodge
Kirk Seltz	Badger
Beth Collins	Fort Dodge

The Webster County Conservation Board meets monthly on the second Tuesday of each month. The meetings are held at the Kennedy Park Office building at 5:30 p.m. All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcome.



The Webster County Conservation Board in the provision of services and facilities to the public does not discriminate against anyone on the basis of race, color, sex, creed, national origin, age, or disability. If anyone believes he/she has been subject to such discrimination, he/she may file a complaint alleging discrimination with either the Webster County Conservation Board or the Office of Equal Opportunity, U.S. Dept. of Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.