

The W.R.E.N.

Wapsi River Environmental News

WINTER 2020

Scott County Conservation Board's Environmental Education Newsletter

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The Wapsi River Center is owned, managed and operated by the Scott County Conservation Board

Wapsi Happenings

By: Director, Dave Murcia

Iowa 4H AmeriCorps Educator

The Wapsi River Center is grateful for being awarded a new full time 2019-2020 Iowa 4-H AmeriCorps Environmental Education Member to serve in our environmental education program. The partnership between AmeriCorps and Iowa State University Extension and Outreach 4-H focusses on preparing Iowa's youth to be knowledgeable, active, and contributing members of society.

Faith Henrichs has chosen to continue serving after her half-time term, and will improve and enhance youth-focused projects through education, related to the outdoors, and include our local partners. The program seeks to foster: the importance of Iowa's **native resources and conservation practices**, understanding the **science of the natural world**, experiencing the joy of **outdoor activities**, and developing appreciation and sense of **stewardship** for the environment.



Iowa Junior Duck Stamp Winners Here!

The Wapsi River Center is proud to be

hosting the **2019 Iowa Junior Duck Stamp Contest** winners! The winning artwork from K-12 grade students will be on display in the **Eagle View Eco Center** from **February 1 to February 29**. Please call (563)328-3286 for viewing hours. Olivia Payne, a 14-year-old from Knoxville, was the **2019 Iowa Best of Show** winner. Her original colored pencil artwork of a ruddy duck, was sent to Washington, D.C. to participate in the **Federal Junior Duck Stamp Program** national contest, and is now traveling the United States as part of the state best of show winners.

"The Federal Junior Duck Stamp Conservation and Design Program is a dynamic art- and science-based curriculum that teaches wetland and waterfowl conservation to [children of all ages]. The program encourages students to explore their natural world, invites them to investigate biology and wildlife management principles and challenges them to express and share what they have learned with others [partially in the form of artwork]"

The **Junior Duck Stamp** competition is held annually and all students in grades K-12 may participate in the contest. Entries for the 2020 contest must be postmarked by March 15, 2020. Information about this educational program can be found under the Education tab at this website: <https://www.fws.gov/birds/education/junior-duck-stamp-conservation-program.php> Contact Alyssa Lu at the DeSoto National Wildlife Refuge at (712)388-4820 for more info.



Center Updates

The old **Owl's Nest Dormitory** renovations are underway with the first phase entry addition taking shape. Inside, the building is being prepared for new education spaces.



Dormitory Renovation

New education specimens include juvenile soft shell and musk turtles donated by our IADNR biologist, along with a juvenile milk snake. Our



Tiger Salamander

new tiger salamander was rescued by our Scott County Park ranger, and new raptor perches were made by our West Lake maintenance Barry Alger, thank you.



New Bird Perches

Friends Group Awarded Grant

The *Friends of the Wapsi Center* have been awarded a **\$2000 corporate grant from LyondellBasell** in support of our education program. The funds are planned to support interpretive signage and exhibits at the Wapsi River Center and will play a role in planned renovations.

“LyondellBasell seeks to make a positive impact and advance the communities where we operate through charitable contributions and employee volunteerism.” On behalf of the *Friends* group, we thank **LyondellBasell** for recognizing our education program and the positive impacts we both bring to our community.



Fall Events 2019

Programming this fall is busy and has included both public (507 participants) and school visits (3464 participants). **Ecology Day** this year focused on “**Saving for Sustainability**” including rain barrels, composting, recycled t-shirts bags, and ended in a fall hike. The **Great Atlatl Pumpkin Hunt**, **Zombie Archery**, and **Halloween Hike** always draw a spooky crowd. **Paint by Nature** series had a “squirrely” time while **Wild Edibles** had a delicious time and **Cattail Dolls** and



Zombie Archery

Baskets “wrapped” up November. Our **Live Animal** programs continue to be very popular!

Field Experiences

An *emphasis on supporting the Iowa Core and Next Generation Science Standards* will enhance future programming for school programming. If you are an educator and would like to schedule a winter or spring field trip, we recommend that you call well in advance if possible and contact us at (563)328-3286.

Sponsor an Animal

If you are interested in sponsoring an animal, please contact us at (563)328-3286 for details.

Winter Equipment Loan Program

The Wapsi River Center invites you to get outdoors this winter and get active by snowshoe or ski. Our cross-country ski and snowshoe loan program requires just a few steps to enjoy these healthy, low-impact, outdoor recreational opportunities.



Adventurers **must call the office ahead of time** to plan an outing at (563)328-3286.

We require a **minimum of 4” of base** and reserve the right to any loan, depending on conditions.

You will be required to render your license to hold any equipment while on loan.

You must remain on Wapsi River Center property.

Equipment is available during business hours M-Sat 9-4 pm- dependent on program needs and site conditions.

Cross-country skis and boots fit a variety of families, while snowshoes are weight rated for both adult and children. Waterproof boots are suggested for snowshoes.



WINTER EVENTS

JANUARY

1st ~ Holiday ~ County offices will be closed in observance of the Holiday.

3rd ~ Winter Break at the Wapsi ~ 1:30 to 3:30 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Get the family outside this winter break! We will talk about how animals survive the cold winter months and learn about tracks and animal signs. Then take to the trails to go discover what animals live in the Wapsi woods! This event is family friendly and is most suitable for children 8 and up. And it is FREE! Must call to register (563)328-3286.



4th ~ Crafting for Conservation-Recycled Wrapping Paper ~10:00 to 11:30 A.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Find creative ways to upcycle your wrapping paper! Come join Wapsi River Center staff and an Iowa 4-H AmeriCorps Environmental Educator, and learn to become more sustainable by reusing leftover wrappings from the Holidays. Please bring your own leftover wrapping paper and holiday cards and be prepared to share. We will provide ideas and patterns for what to do with it to give it a new purpose! Ideas include book covers, napkin rings, gift tags, and more! This program is FREE! Please call to register (563)328-3286.



6th ~ Feeding Backyard Wildlife ~ 2:00 P.M. ~ Eastern Avenue Library, Davenport, IA ~ Join Naturalist, Becky Baugh, from the Wapsi River Center to learn about feeding backyard wildlife with an emphasis on backyard birds. Contact the library for more details (563)326-7832.

8th ~ Scott County Conservation Board Meeting ~ 3:00 P.M. ~ The Scott County Conservation Board meets monthly at the West Lake Park Headquarters office (Gate 3) 14910 110th Ave, Davenport, Iowa 52804. Please call if interested in attending (563)328-3280.

9th ~ Get Out and About in Scott County ~ 6:00 P.M. ~ Walcott Library ~ Join Wapsi River Center Director Dave Murcia to learn about exploring our local waterways by kayak and canoe to enjoy the innate beauty found within them.

10th, 11th, 12th, ~ Annual Bald Eagle Days ~ (see times for each day below) ~ Quad Cities Expo Center ~ The Quad Cities Conservation Alliance, Illinois Department of Natural Resources and Army Corps of Engineers are sponsoring this annual event. This event features live birds of prey, a 20 foot climbing tower over 100 display booths, and of course, viewing of our national bird, the American bald eagle. The event is held at the QCCA Expo Center at 2621 4th Avenue, Rock Island, from 4:00 to 8:00 P.M. on Friday, 10:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M. on Saturday, and 10:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. on Sunday. Come see us at the Wapsi River Center display. Please call (309)788-5912 for more details.



16th ~ Friends of the Wapsi Center Meeting ~ 6:30 P.M. ~ Scott County Library (Eldridge Branch) ~ Come learn about the current happenings at the Wapsi River Center. Please call if you are interested in attending (563)328-3286.

17th ~ Crafting for Conservation ~ 1:00 to 2:30 P.M. ~ River Valley District Library (214 S. Main St. Port Byron, IL) ~ Join a Wapsi River Center Naturalist for an adult program on creating crafts using old magazines. Please bring your own magazines for this program. You will learn how to make trivets/coaster and bookmarks out of the magazines. For more questions, please call the library at (309)523-3440.

18th ~ Cocoa Picasso, OWLS ~ 2:00 to 3:30 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Join one of our Naturalists to learn about our Great Horned owl and then create an owl-themed painting with guided step-by-step instructions. This program costs \$5/canvas. Canvases will be provided along with delicious hot chocolate. This program is family friendly! Space is limited, so please call to register (563)328-3286.

20th ~ Holiday ~ County offices will be closed in observance of the Holiday.

25th ~ Winter Wild Edibles ~ 10:00 A.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Join Naturalist Becky Baugh to learn about the many wild edibles in your own neck of the woods. We will focus on identifying plants, foraging basics, and preparing wild edibles. We will take a hike outdoors to identify and harvest some of the winter wild edibles available during this time. At the end of the program, you will get to sample some wild flavors! Registration is required. Please call (563) 328-3286 to register for this workshop.



FEBRUARY

The Wapsi River Center is proud to be hosting the **2019 Iowa Junior Duck Stamp Contest winners from Iowa K-12 grade students in the Eagle View Eco Center, February 1 to February 29. Please call (563)328-3286 for viewing hours.**

1st ~ Winter Fun Day ~ 10:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Join us for a fun-filled day of winter activities. This is an event the whole family can enjoy, so plan to come out and discover winter at its best. Hot drinks will be provided so please see our special ad for more details.



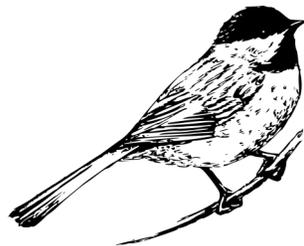
8th ~ Candle Making Workshop ~ 1:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Join *Friends of the Wapsi Center* member, Lucia Dryanski, and learn how to make candles out of recycled wax. You will learn about the history of candle making and make your own candle to take home. Participants must be a minimum of 10 years old. This class is limited to 10 candle kits. There is a suggested donation of \$3 per candle kit with proceeds going to the *Friends of the Wapsi Center*. Registration is REQUIRED. Please call (563)328-3286 to register for this program.



11th ~ Backyard Birds ~ 3:00 to 4:00 P.M. ~ Scott County Library (Walcott Branch) ~ Join Naturalist Becky Baugh for a lesson on attracting and identifying birds in your very own backyard. For more information please call the library at (563)285-4794 Ext. 5.

12th ~ Scott County Conservation Board Meeting ~ 3:00 P.M. ~ The Scott County Conservation Board meets monthly at the West Lake Park Headquarters office (Gate 3) 14910 110th Ave, Davenport, Iowa 52804. Please call if interested in attending (563)328-3280.

15th ~ Backyard Birds ~ 10:00 A.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Join Naturalist Becky Baugh and learn about the birds that can be found in your own backyard! You will also learn ways to attract birds to your backyard and will make take home pinecone bird feeders. During this program, you will also learn about the Great Backyard Bird Count. Bird watchers of all ages can participate in this free program. Registration is required. Please call in advance to register at (563)328-3286.



13th, 14th, 15th, 16th ~ Quad City Outdoor Show ~The event is held at the QCCA Expo Center at 2621 4th Avenue, Rock Island, from 4:00 to 8:00 P.M. on Thursday / Noon to 8:00 P.M. on Friday / 9:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M. on Saturday / and 10:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. on Sunday. Come visit the SCCB staff booth to pick up the latest info or visit with other vendors and get outdoors! Please call the Expo Center for admission prices and more information (309) 788-5912.



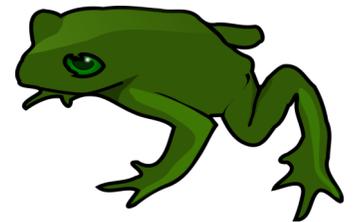
17th ~ The 360 Trail Project ~ 12:30 to 3:30 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Join our AmeriCorps Iowa 4-H member for a free day of orienteering, map making and snowshoeing! Learn how to read maps, read a compass and learn how to snowshoe (weather permitted). Participants will then take to the trails on snowshoes and take 360 degree photos to show what the Wapsi River Center trails have to offer in the winter! Participants should meet at Red Tail Lodge with water, boots and appropriate clothing – snowshoes will be provided. Space is limited so please call to register (563) 328-3286.



20th ~ Get Out and About in Scott County ~ 6:00 P.M. ~ Walcott Library ~ Join Wapsi River Center Director Dave Murcia to learn about exploring **local trails in our area**. Getting outside can be as simple as finding a city biking/walking trail, or exploring water trails, xc ski and horse trails.

20th ~ Friends of the Wapsi Center Meeting ~ 6:30 P.M. ~ Scott County Library (Eldridge branch) ~ Come learn about the current happenings at the Wapsi River Center. Please call if you are interested in attending (563)328-3286.

29th ~ Leap Day at the Family Museum! ~ 10:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. ~ Family Museum Bettendorf, Iowa ~ Get a little froggy on a day that only hops onto our calendar once every four years... Leap Day! Come learn about some awesome jumping amphibians—frogs and toads—with crafts, games, and programs from local leapin' experts. The event will include presentations by Wapsi Center's Assistant Naturalist, Paige. Please contact the museum for further information: (563)344-4155.



MARCH

7th ~ Awareness Workshop ~ 9:30 to 12:00 ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Do you enjoy camping, hiking and other fun outdoor recreation activities? Want to learn more on how you can help reduce your impact while enjoying the outdoors? Come join Iowa AmeriCorps 4-H Environmental Educator for a morning of learning about proper ethics for outdoor recreation and camping.

Participants will learn the 7 Principles of *Leave No Trace* set by the Center for Outdoor Ethics and will then take to the trails to practice and observe *Leave No Trace* ethics here at the Wapsi River Center. Participants are encouraged to bring a reusable water bottle and dress for the weather. This program is family friendly. Registration is required by calling (563)328-3286.



7th ~ Maple Syruping ~ 1:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Come join Naturalist, Michael Granger for a lesson on maple syruping. Learn the history of syruping, tree identification, and then sample maple candy! Fun for the whole family. Please call to pre-register (563)328-3286.



7th ~ Grounded in Nature (For Families) ~ 3:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Just in time for Spring Break! Help yourself or your family get ready to unwind during the **Grounded in Nature** programs. Connecting with nature and disconnecting with electronics can enhance your well-being and relax your mind and body. This program will focus on helping you connect with yourself and with nature through mindfulness, forest bathing/ hiking, and yoga. Please call to reserve a spot for you and your family (563)328-3286.



11th ~ Scott County Conservation Board Meeting ~ 3:00 P.M. ~ The Scott County Conservation Board meets monthly at the West Lake Park Headquarters office (Gate 3) 14910 110th Ave, Davenport, Iowa 52804. Please call if interested in attending (563)328-3280.

12th ~ Get Out and About in Scott County ~ 6:00 P.M. ~ Walcott Library ~ Join Wapsi River Center Director Dave Murcia to learn about exploring local natural areas and **foraging for wild edibles**. Depending on the season, there are many wild plants that can be identified, harvested, and prepared.

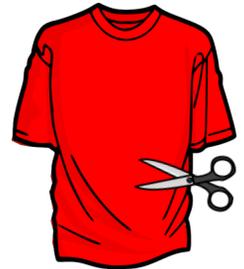
14th ~ Imagination station – Sixth Annual WQPT-PBS Imagination Station ~ 9:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. ~ Western Illinois University - Moline, IL Campus ~ Join Wapsi River staff for a “Wild Kratts” sessions on local, native animals including live educational animals. The talk will include habitats, needs, and how you may be able to support them where you live. This is a free family event and you may register at: <https://wqpt.org/imaginationstation/>.

14th ~ Maple Syruping ~ 1:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Come join Naturalist, Michael Granger for a lesson on maple syruping. Learn the history of syruping, tree identification, and then sample maple candy! Fun for the whole family. Please call to pre-register (563)328-3286.

14th ~ Grounded in Nature (Adults Only) ~ 3:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Just in time for Spring Break! Help yourself or your family get ready to unwind during the Grounded in Nature programs. Connecting with nature and disconnecting with electronics can enhance your well-being and relax your mind and body. This program will focus on helping you connect with yourself and with nature through mindfulness, forest bathing/ hiking, and yoga. Please call to reserve a spot for you and your friends (563)328-3286.

19th ~ Friends of the Wapsi Center Meeting ~ 6:30 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Come learn about the current happenings at the Wapsi River Center. Please call if you are interested in attending (563)328-3286.

28th ~ Crafting for Conservation “Upcycle It” ~ 1:00 to 4:00 P.M. ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Join us for the next installment of the Crafting for Conservation series! This program focuses on recycling and repurposing household items into something new. During this session we will focus on recycling T-shirts into dog and cat toys, magazines into bookmarks and more, and toilet paper tubes into artwork. Please bring your own t-shirt to reuse, we will provide the magazines and toilet paper tubes. This program is family-friendly. Registration is required. Please call (563)328-3286.



SAVE THE DATE: APRIL

18th ~ Earth Day Volunteer Workday ~ 9:00 – Noon ~ Wapsi River Center ~ Save the date and join us for a spring volunteer work day. Work projects will suit all ages and abilities. More details to come.



WINTER FUN DAY

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1ST, 2020 – 10:00 A.M. TO 3:00 P.M.

Join us for a fun-filled day of winter activities. This is an event the whole family can enjoy, so plan to come out and discover winter at its best. Please call to register your friends today!
(563)328-3286

OUTDOORS

INDOORS

SNOWSHOE HIKE:

Snow makes the perfect substance to record animals tracks. Join a naturalist for a wintery woodland trek in search of animals and wildlife.

10:00 A.M - NOON

WINTER BIRD FEEDING:

Make some natural “no waste” bird feeders to hang at home. Please bring a 12 to 20 ounce plastic bottle to create your feeder.

CHILI COOKOFF: Come sample chili at the chili cook-off, hosted by the *Friends of the Wapsi Center*. Please bring a crockpot with your favorite creation, or just be a judge. The winning entry will get to hold the coveted CHILI CUP!!!



12:00—1:00 P.M.

BIRD HIKE:

Enjoy a guided hike on the Wapsi Center’s trails to brush up on your bird identification. Bring your own binoculars, some will also be available.

1:00—3:00 P.M.

GRAPEVINE BASKETRY:

Create a natural grapevine basket with guided instructions from a naturalist. Please register, as supplies are limited.

“BECOME A WAPSI RIVER CENTER FRIENDS MEMBER TODAY!”

www.scottcountyiowa.com/conservation/Wapsi-friends

 www.facebook.com/FriendsOfTheWapsiCenter



The Friends of the Wapsi Center, Inc. organized in 1993, is a citizens’ support group dedicated to encouraging the public use and enjoyment of the Wapsi River Environmental Education Center and to the preservation of the Center’s natural resources for present and future generations. Please contact the Wapsi River Center for more information (563)328-3286.

YES I WOULD LIKE TO BE A FRIENDS MEMBER:

Enclosed is my contribution to the Friends of the Wapsi Center.

Name _____ \$10.00 newsletter
Address _____ \$20.00 contributing member
City _____ State _____ Zip _____ \$30.00 supporting member
Phone Number _____
Email Address _____

PLEASE SEND MEMBERSHIP FORM TO:

Friends of the Wapsi “Treasurer—31555 52nd AVENUE, DIXON, IOWA 52745

Contributions to the Friends are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

ANIMAL PROFILE: MILK SNAKE

By Naturalist Becky Baugh



Milk Snake, *Lampropeltis Triangulum*: Wapsi River Center

We have added a few new animal ambassadors to our collection at the Wapsi River Center. One of those animals is the milk snake, *Lampropeltis triangulum*. The milk snake's scientific name stands for radiant small shields. The Greek word *lampros* means "radiant" and *pelta* means "small shields". Milk snakes have a background color of tan, light gray, white, or yellow. The blotches are red to reddish-brown and all outlined by black. There is typically a gray or tan Y- or V-shaped mark at the base of the head and the snout is usually white. Adult milk snakes can be anywhere from 24-52 inches long.

In the southeastern part of the U.S., the non-venomous milk snake can be confused with the venomous coral snake due to its colors. Milk snakes use Batesian mimicry as a defense strategy. Batesian mimicry is a type of mimicry where a harmless species (the milk snake) mimics a harmful species (coral snakes). To tell these two snakes apart, just remember the saying "Red on yellow kills a Fellow. Red on black, friend of Jack".

The milk snake earned its name through folk legend. It was believed that the milk snake would drink the milk from nursing cows until the cow ran dry. This is a myth and scientifically impossible because snakes do not have lips to drink from a cow, and they have small stomachs and can't hold much liquid. They would enter the barns to capture the mice living in the barns, not drink milk.

The milk snake is protected in Iowa, but common throughout its range. They have the biggest range of any snake in North America and a wider geographic range than most snakes in the world. They can be found as far north as Ontario and Quebec, Canada and as far south as Venezuela, South America. In the U.S., they can be found almost

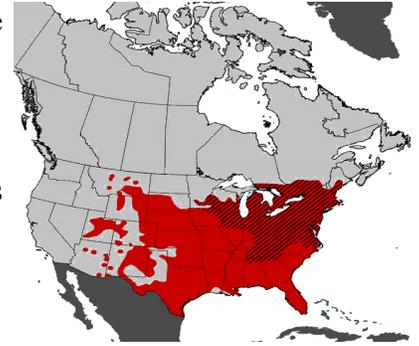


Coral Snake Coloration: Google Search

everywhere except the states on the West Coast. Milk snakes are able to thrive in a variety of habitats. They prefer deciduous or coniferous forest edges, but can also be found in open woodlands, tropical hardwood forests, rocky hillsides, small streams or marshes, dry or wet prairies, and suburban or agricultural areas. They can be found in altitudes ranging anywhere from sea level to 8000 feet. They typically spend much of the day hidden in dark places under rocks or boards of barns. They do not fear human proximity, but are secretive, solitary and primarily nocturnal. Therefore, they are rarely seen. The only time they are found in groups is right before, during, or right after brumation, the dormant period for reptiles. Brumation in cold-blooded animals is very similar to hibernation in warm-blooded animals.

Milk snakes are related to kingsnakes, which means they are carnivorous constrictors that will eat other snakes including venomous species like coral snakes and rattlesnakes. They will mainly eat rodents such as voles, mice, and rats, but will also eat bird eggs, birds, lizards, snake eggs, earthworms, and small frogs. Their predators include opossums, skunks, raccoons, foxes, and coyotes. When threatened, it will vibrate its tail to sound like a rattlesnake. Because of this, milk snakes are often killed by humans who mistake them for a venomous snake. Milk snakes are beneficial to humans as they feed on rodents that gather in barns or around trash cans.

Our milk snake came from an old farm house in Washington County, Iowa. It was found in a hibernaculum in the foundation of a house during renovations. (A hibernaculum is an important sheltering space for animals in winter, the Latin translation literally means a "tent for winter"). If you would like to meet this snake or any of our other snakes, come by the Eagle View Eco Center and check out our Live Animal Room.



Milk Snake and Subspecies Range Map: Google Search



PLANT PROFILE: EASTERN WHITE PINE

By Naturalist Michael J. Granger

Let me introduce you to one of my favorite pine trees, the eastern white pine, *Pinus strobus*, which is one of Iowa's native evergreen species, the other being eastern red cedar. The white pine had aesthetic appeal to contemporary naturalists such as Henry David Thoreau, who exclaimed "There is no finer tree!" There are many eastern white pine trees at the



White Pine Cone and Needles, Photo; Wapsi River Center

Wapsi River center. Many were planted including the ring of pines which is the hub of our programming when students arrive. The eastern white pine is one of the easier pines to remember how to identify. It has bundles of five, soft needles, measuring 2 to 5 inches long. The classic way to remember white pine is to grab a needle bundle and count out the needles while spelling W - H - I - T - E, (5 letters for 5 needles).

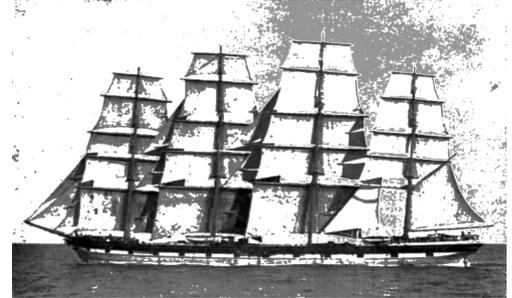
Since the eastern white pine is a conifer it has cones which are long and slender measuring 3 to 6 inches long. Young trees have branches spaced every 18 inches and will have 5-6 branches radiating out like the spokes of a wagon wheel. *Pinus strobus* grows approximately 3.3 feet annually between the ages of 15 and 45 years, with slower height increments before and after that age range. A mature tree can be 3 to 5 foot in diameter. While white pines grow 50 - 80 foot tall, they can grow over 100 feet with a potential of growing over 150 feet in height. The eastern white pine range includes eastern Iowa, around the great lakes region, a crossto the east coast and south, as far as Georgia.

The white pine has been used in traditional Chinese and Korean medicine for centuries to promote health and wellness. The amount of vitamin C found in white pine needles exceeds that of lemons and oranges. The needles can also be a replacement for lemons in certain recipes. Europeans drank pine



Eastern White Pine Range Map: Google

needle tea to prevent scurvy. We have tried the tea and it has a mild citrus or pine taste. An online reference pointed out the supposed health benefits of pine tea including: congestion and sore throat relief, increased mental clarity, combating depression, suppressing weight gain, lessening of allergy symptoms, and lowering blood pressure. It is important to note that the claims have not been adequately studied in humans.



Square Riggers

Historically the tallest white pine trees were highly prized for use in the original thirteen colonies. Tall white pines with high quality wood were known as "mast pines", and were marked for use by the British Royal Navy, who produced massive ships, with massive sails known as "square riggers". Pine wood is still commonly sold and used today.

White pine cones are suitable for making bird feeders which can be hung in your yard. Below is a simple recipe showing how to make suet that can be spread on pine cones for winter feeding.

**Ingredients: 2 Cups Crisco
1 Cup Peanut Butter
½ cup Cornmeal
Bird Seed Mix**



Peanut Butter Pinecone Feeder

To make the "suet" simply mix the peanut butter and Crisco in a bowl. This is a great activity for kids to get "hands on". Next add cornmeal to make the mixture into a dough.

Simply spread the peanut butter on the cone and then roll it in a mixed bird seed blend. A piece of yarn may be tied on for hanging. (Avoid using fishing string, or fine thread for pinecone feeders for they may harm your feathered friends).

Once again the eastern white pine is one of our native pine species which is found throughout the state. You can find it easily at the Wapsi Center, just remember W - H - I - T - E for the five needles in a bundle, and you won't be mistaken!!

FRIENDS PROFILE: NORM NICHOLS!

I grew up in Arispe, a tiny town no one has ever heard of in Southwest Iowa. My parents operated the grain elevator there. Being idealistic I wanted to save the world so I became a high school science teacher. It was a very small school so I was the entire science department. I taught everything from 7th grade Life Science up to senior level Physics and Physiology. I also taught an occasional summer and night class at the local community college. After twelve years of being shown time and time again that the world doesn't want to be saved, and has absolutely no sympathy for anybody dumb enough to try, I decided it was time to think about my family and myself. I went back to college and became a pharmacist. I was employed at Genesis Medical Center for 26 years. I retired for a few months, then went back to work as a part-time traveling pharmacist for Walmart for another 3 years. Walmart sent me all over eastern Iowa. I have been married to my wife, Cathie, for 47 years. We have two daughters, Barbara and Rhiannon, a granddaughter, Ambrosia Essex, and two great granddaughters, Leilani and Violet Essex. Leilani sponsors the great horned owl and Violet sponsors the American kestrel at the Wapsi Center.

Growing up in Southwest Iowa, interest in nature and conservation is pretty much required. My interest in environmental education led me to becoming a biology teacher. It goes back to wanting to save the world.

After I retired, Cathie told me I couldn't sit around home doing nothing. I had to find something to do to keep busy. Shortly before that there was an article in the Quad-City Times about Spring Cleanup Day at the Wapsi Center. That sounded interesting, so I signed up for it and then became a member. I have hosted the Eco Center on Saturdays numerous

times. I have helped at Bald Eagle Days twice. Both Cathie and I have assisted at the Halloween events. Cathie carved the pumpkins for the hike and I helped with archery 2 years and atlatl this year. I'm really good at carrying heavy objects and can do relatively complex math in my head, but I have absolutely no artistic talent whatsoever. Therefore, I can't help with the bow making or anything else that requires creativity.



Cathie and I like to walk on nature trails if we go anywhere that has one. We like to travel to exotic places and see everything there is to see there. Our best vacations involve getting up early, seeing and doing everything possible, and collapsing into bed exhausted late at night. When the vacation is over, we return home to rest.

VITAL STATISTICS

Friend since 2017, President since 2018, Volunteer of the Year both 2018 & 2019

Favorite Bird: Eastern Goldfinch

Favorite Animal: Tiger

Favorite Tree: Oak

Favorite Book: Any of the "Event Group" series, by David Golemon

Favorite Movie: "The Devil's Advocate" starring Al Pacino, Keanu Reeves, and Charlize Theron.

THANK YOU!

Friends of the Wapsi Center

Faith Henrichs, Iowa 4-H AmeriCorps EE Member

Norm Nichols (Friend President)

Ron Rickman (Friend)

Caroline Kimple (Friend)

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Dr. Mitchell, St.

Ambrose University

Quad City

Astronomical Society

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