

“Looking OUT THE BACK DOOR...”

The Sac County Conservation Board’s Quarterly Newsletter

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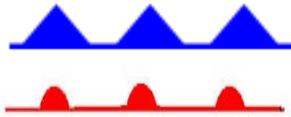


Our Mission: “To initiate an awareness and foster stewardship of nature’s rewards.”

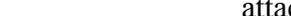
Weather or not to Migrate

Weather plays a huge factor in the timing of migration. If you enjoy seeing birds thought the spring learning how to read a weather map can help you predict when migrants will be arriving, leaving or when a fallout may occur. Lets quickly review weather terminology and symbols. Fronts are masses of air pushed by the wind a cold front is represented by a blue line often with teeth like triangles attached to it. This means cold air is

Cold Front

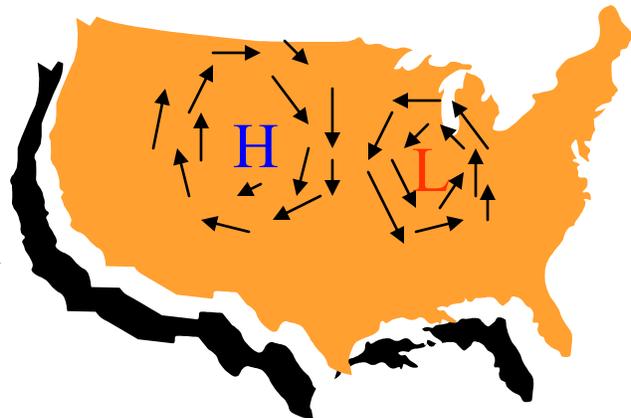


Warm Front



moving in, pushing warm air out of the way towards the east. While a warm front is a red line with half circles attached to it. This indicates that warm air from the west is moving in to replace the cold air it is pushing away. If you see a line with both symbols it means that there is a stalemate between these fronts and they often last for a while. Unless the line with both symbols is purple. This is an occluded front and often means storms. Fronts are often associated with a pressure system. Either a blue H or a red L. Pressure systems are large circulating air masses. The H or L is always placed in the center of the rotating mass of air. The H represents a high pressure system. This means that the air is pushing down towards the ground as it rotates in a clockwise. Due to the fact that clouds and storms form when air is quickly rising a high pressure system means good clear weather as the air is pressing down

towards the ground. While an L means Low pressure so air is rising as it rotates counter clockwise. Low pressure systems are often found near fronts are bumping into each other.



Below is a high and a low front on a map of the US. Now lets start to think like a bird. If you had to fly northward it will be easiest to do when there is a tail wind, meaning the wind is pushing on your tail scooting you along. It would be taxing to try to fly against a headwind, or winds pushing southward against where you want to head. Strong headwinds cause birds to land. The winds push northward in front of a low and after a high. However the L indicates air rising which often brings fowl weather.

Storms and precipitation force a bird to land so Cont pg..5

Fact Files.....	Page 2
Upcoming Programs.....	Page 3
Kid’s Korner.....	Page 4
Eyes to the Skies.....	Page 5
Winter Fun.....	Page 6



THANK YOU BARB!!

The Sac County Conservation Board would like to thank Barbra Bloom for her commitment and outstanding volunteer service. She



Barb presenting at 4th grade Field Days



has been on the Conservation Board for 16 years. She has also been a member of the Sac County Conservation Foundation for 10 years as well. During this time she served as a liaison between the foundation and the board. She has also been a huge supporter of

our environmental education department. She has volunteered her time and talents to assist so many programs. As a teacher for the Odebolt Elementary School she



Barb helping with summer camps

ran the annual trip for 4th grade to Springbrook State Park. She assisted with this trip even after retirement. During the trips the Sac County Naturalist attended and ran programs. Now Odebolt comes to Hagge Park and we could not do it without Barb's help. She runs many of the programs during this huge day. She has given us outstanding volunteer service time and again. Other than the Odebolt Outdoors day she has helped run summer camps, field days, special programs like the holiday open house and every year she is the greeter for our annual Halloween Night Hike! She is always the first to volunteer time, talent, and items where and when she can. The depth of her love of children and nature is so apparent in everything she does. Her passion is infectious and I feel lucky to have had her as a board member and a mentor. THANK YOU BARB!!!

Looking into the fact files! *Northern Cardinal*



(*Cardinalis cardinalis*)

- This attractive bird is often the bird that attracts people into the world of birding.
- Unlike most female birds, the female cardinal sings. Often when she is on the nest. It may indicate to the male when to bring food.
- Although they will share song phrases the females song can be more complex and longer than the males.
- Cardinals are the state bird of seven states.
- In the spring when hormones are high males will aggressively defend their territory. They may spend hours attacking reflections of themselves in windows or mirrors.
- The oldest known cardinal lived to be 15 years and 9 months
- Look for nests in dense brushy areas. Such as hedges, overgrown fence rows and forest edges.
- Cardinals eat a variety of foods from seeds and berries to insects like cicadas, moths, and beetles. Young are primarily feed insects.

Thank You

Sac County Extension, Lake View Library and Ben Wallace from the DNR for their work to make the Ice Fishing Clinic a Success.
A Big THANK YOU to all the volunteers who helped with the Christmas Bird Count!
Fallon Vauble for her excellent help.
Also a Big Thank You to those who helped with the holiday open house in December.
A special thank you to the wonderful volunteers who worked in the center on Saturdays.
Thank you to the parents that helped out during winter camp.



Upcoming Programs

March 8th Fishing Club—Meeting from 9-10:30. Call 662-4530 for location

March 11th-Breakfast with the Birds-Throughout the spring we will have a breakfast with the birds on the second Tuesday of the month. We will meet at the conservation center at 8 am for a light breakfast while we watch the feeders. Then a short program will highlight one local bird. Bring your binoculars if you wish! Please call 712-662-4530 to sign up.

March 14th- Sportsman’s Club Fish Fry- Doors open at 5pm and will serve dinner till 8pm. During this fish fry there will be door prizes and raffles. The event is held at the 4-H building at the Fair grounds. Ticket prices are \$7 in advance and \$8 at the door for adults, Kids are \$4 in advance and \$5 at the door. Tickets are available at the Sac County Conservation Board, MGM Plumbing and Heating, and at Shamrock.



March 19th- Knee High Naturalists– Signs of Spring -We will learn all about animal babies, eggs and much more during this program at Hagge Park from 4-4:45pm. Knee High Naturalist programs are for children ages 2-4 with an adult. Please sign up for a spot by calling 712-662-4530.



March 21st Pheasant's Forever Banquet-Doors at the Wall Lake Community Building will open at 5:30 with supper served from 6:00-7:00. Tickets are \$45 are available at the Sac County Conservation Board or by calling Rich Feilmeier at 273-5557 or at the Sac County Conservation Board office.



Natural Cleaners– If you are ready to do some spring cleaning, do it with natural cleaners. Making natural cleaners is easy, cheap and creates less toxic waste in your house and for the environment. You must bring your own containers. Call 712-662-4530 to sign up.



April 8th-Breakfast with the Birds-We will meet at the conservation center at 8 am for a light breakfast while we watch the feeders. Then a short program will highlight one local bird. Bring your binoculars if you wish! Please call 712-662-4530 to sign up

April 12th Fishing Club—Meeting from 9-10:30. Call 662-4530 for location

April 26th– Cashe in, Trash out

We will have a great time celebrating a belated Earth Day. This event will take place from 1-3 pm at Hagge Park. Learn how to use a GPS unit and help the Earth by picking up trash. We will send family groups with a unit with the coordinates to each hidden GeoCashe and a trash bag. The goal is to find the hidden treasures in the woods and to find the most garbage. Bags will be weighed at the end to see how we all did. Call 712-662-4530 to sign up.



May 13th-Breakfast with the Birds– Meet at the conservation center at 8 am for a light breakfast while we watch the feeders. Then a short program will highlight one local bird. Please call 712-662-4530 to sign up.

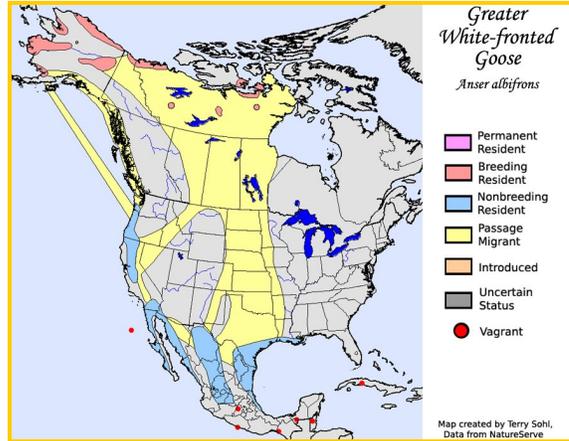
May 17th- Fishing Club—Meeting from 9-10:30. Call 662-4530 for location



Make Sure you have Summer Camp Forms in!

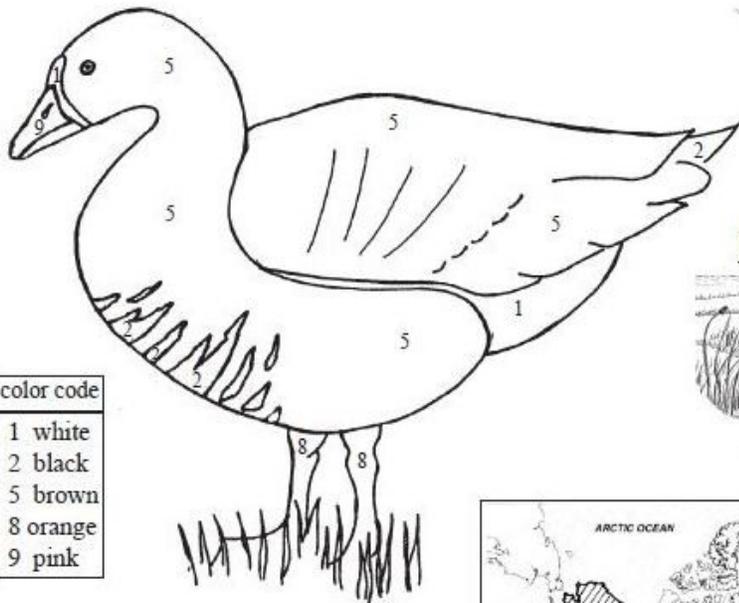
Kid's Korner

The Greater White-fronted Goose is one migrant that passes through Iowa. Usually these birds will rest in wetlands or open fields where they can feed on waste grain left in the field. You can tell when a flock or Greater White-fronted Geese fly overhead because their honk sounds more like a strange laughing sound. As you color this goose by numbers notices a few key identification markings like: The white ring around a pink bill. Dark



GWFG

Greater White-fronted Goose *(Anser albifrons)*



color code

- 1 white
- 2 black
- 5 brown
- 8 orange
- 9 pink

Food



Habitat



COOL FACT: Like many geese, Greater White-fronted Goose pairs stay together for years. Pairs migrate together, often with their young from previous years. Parents and siblings may continue to travel together throughout their lives.



bars across the front of the chest and bright orange legs. In the U.S. These geese are stay west of the Mississippi they can be found in from Greenland across Russia and into Siberia. Color the picture and look for these birds this spring!



Welcome Fallon!



The Sac County Conservation Board has a new friendly face. We asked Fallon to write a bit about herself. She wrote, “ I am Fallon Vauble and I am senior at East Sac County High School. I am planning to attend Western Iowa Tech in Sioux City Iowa to get my General Biology degree then transfer to a four year college to get a Major and minor in Wildlife and Fisheries Biology and Management. I chose the Sac Conservation office to get good hands on learning and experience in the different conservational careers. I enjoy the advantages in learning I get when coming and doing my school to careers project at the Sac Conservation Office.” We are very happy to have her helping us out. She will be with us for a little over an hour each day until the end of the school year.

Weather or not to Migrate? Cont from pg 1

they don't normally use these south winds. Instead birds will wait till a high pressure system is passing and migrate on those south winds. So when you see a weather map and see that a high pressure system is moving in, you just might find unique migrating birds that have been forced to land and when the system is passing then it is a good time for migration. The birds you saw just may take off and new birds from the south may be arriving. A high pressure system is a blue H because it follows a cold front. So when you hear a cold front is coming in and that temperatures will decrease then you know birds will be forced to land immediately following the cold front. Then in a day or two later once the high pressure system has passed they will be moving again. The weather can change very abruptly during migration. Changes in weather can force birds to land. This phenomenon is called a fallout. It is named so because the birds look like they are literally falling out of the sky.

They can be small a few hundred birds for a day or large, thousands of birds grounded for multiple days. Large Fallouts are rare but they do occur. Fallouts are good for birders who want to view migrating birds but not always for the birds. This is a good time to feed the birds as they are often tired and hungry.

Eyes To The Skies

March 1st– New Moon

March 16th– Full Moon– This moon has many names, one is the Full Sap Moon as the sap begins to flow with the cold nights and the warm days.

March 20th– Spring Equinox

March 30th–Black Moon– This will be the second new moon during the month of March. This is just as rare as having two full moons in a month. It was thought that magic is most powerful at this time.

April 8th– Mars in Opposition– This means that the planet Mars will be on its closest approach to Earth. This is the best time to photograph Mars as it's face will be illuminated by the sun. The best way of viewing will be though a medium power telescope as you may be able to make out the ice caps and dark spots. Even if you don't have a telescope it is still a good time to use a pair of binoculars and take a look at our neighboring planet.

April 15th– Full Moon– This moon was known as the growing moon as it is the time when the first spring wildflowers start to appear.

April 15th– Total Lunar Eclipse– During this eclipse the moon will pass into the Earth's shadow. It will begin to darken then it will take on a red color. This should be visible throughout most the U.S.A.

April 22-23rd– Lyrid Meteor Shower– This is an average shower. It should peak at about 20 meteors per hour. Although it is possible to see meteors from the 16th–25th. Due to the moon only the brighter meteors can be seen. When they are, they often will leave bright tails that will last a few seconds.

April 29th– New Moon

May 5-6– Eta Aquarid Meteor Shower– This shower is better in the southern hemisphere but we can see up to 30 meteors per hour with the shower.

May 12th– Saturn in Opposition– A medium powered telescope will allow you to see the ring and some moons.

May 14th– Full Moon– Known as the corn planting moon.

May 24th-Possible meteor shower??- Early Saturday morning the Earth will travel though debris from comet P209/LINER but it is unknown if it will produce anything.





Winter Fun

This winter we had many fun events at the Sac County Conservation Center. In December we had special Saturday hours leading up to the new year. We hosted our holiday open house where we made a variety of crafts and activities. Some shown below were center piece and ornament making. We had a wonderful time and participants made beautiful works of



art to take home. Another December program was winter camp! We had a blast. We went hiking and looked for animal tracks. Camps were well attended this year. I was so busy that I forgot to get pictures. The next images come from our Knee High Naturalists programming. This winter and into early spring we had one every month. These programs are for kids



aged 2-4 with an adult. We had a great time with these wee ones and plan on starting up the monthly

series again in the fall. During the month of February we stayed very busy with public programming on top or normal school programming. We had two large public programs. The first was the Moonlight, Candle Light Hike/Snowshoe. We had the snowshoes but we just didn't have the snow for them. But the 32 participants that came had a great time walking

though the candle lit woods under a full moon. I served refreshments and warm cocoa to the red nosed hikers. Even with the cold temperatures many people exclaimed that it was "so cool." Below are images I took that night.



The very next day we had the Ice Fishing Clinic. We had 23 kids plus their parents attend this program. Ben Wallace from the DNR did a great job explaining what we would be looking for and some fishing tips. This year we changed things up and fished on Blackhawk Lake. The DNR helped us out and we had a successful fishing clinic. Below are images from our time spent fishing. We set up the view finder in the icehouse as a warm up spot. The kids stuck out the cold weather and look at all those FISH!!



Traveling Snake Exhibit Coming Soon!

Starting in April we will be hosting a traveling snake exhibit. This exhibit includes a huge walk through snake skeleton! There will be informational panels about snakes, their biology and adaptations. An interactive area will allow you to feel like a snake, design your own snake camouflage and much more!

March is your last chance to come out and see our exhibit on tracks and the art of tracking. Please make sure you find time to see it before it is gone. This exhibit will be at the center until July. Please find time this spring and summer to come out and visit us.

Hours of operation are 8-4:30 now and 7-3:30 starting after memorial day.



Sac County Conservation Board

Board Members

Andy Meredith-Lake View-Chairperson
Kenny Bentsen-Sac City-Vice Chairperson
Dean Stock---Lake View---Member
Rich Feilmeier---Early---Member

Staff

Chris Bass---Executive Director
Sandi Huster---Secretary
Rene Stroud---Naturalist

Meetings

Regular board meetings are held the second Thursday of each month at 7:30 PM at the Hage Park office. These meetings are open to the public.

Hage Park Office Phone: (712) 662-4530
Email: saccocon@frontiernet.net

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