

# Cedar Valley Visions

## Conservation News

### Park Updates

Article by Chip Brown and Photos by Jacob Wilbourne

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The summer camping season is starting to wrap up. This season saw several large projects completed and a couple others started. We are always staying busy!

The first major project to be completed is the remodel of the Cedar Valley Little Campground. Back sites have been moved and spaced out a bit better to accommodate larger camper sizes. These sites also received a bit of a facelift with new electric pedestals, gravel pads, and an access road to accommodate campers. We were excited to have this remodel completed just in time for Labor Day campers!



At River Valley Wetland we completed tree and brush removal in order to move along with our habitat improvement project with the USFWS. Our next step for this project is to remove a layer of invasive reeds, canary grass, which is choking out more desirable wetland plants. This removal will help increase the amount of standing water in the wetland in order to benefit waterfowl and other wetland species. This joint project has come a long way and will greatly benefit the wetland and animals that call it home.



A remodel of the Rochester Shelter should soon be finished! We have poured a new concrete countertop, replaced the sidewalk, and added a wider entrance on the south side in order to improve access for park users. Additionally, the shelter is getting a facelift with an enclosed ceiling and an exterior remodel! We are very excited for this remodel, as it will be a great improvement to a shelter that gets a lot of use!

As the main camping season wraps up, please keep in mind that our campgrounds remain open year-round; however, water will be shut off in all parks on October 15th. We look forward to seeing you in our parks!

### Creature Feature~ Moose

Article Jacob Wilbourne and Photo by Chip Brown



While not typically found in Iowa, this critter is an occasional visitor to our state. It is the largest member of the deer family, the tallest North American land mammal, and the second heaviest! While other members of the deer family grow pointed antlers, male moose grow flatter palmate antlers. These are mostly solitary and browse and forage for food, both on land and in the water!

Adult moose can be nearly seven feet tall at the shoulder, with adult males being able to weigh upwards of 1500 lbs.! On males the antler spread can be between four feet and five feet across. A typical moose can eat up to 70 lbs. worth of food a day.

These animals are native to the colder parts of North America and Europe, though they have been spotted as far south as northern New Mexico!

## Fascinated by Fungi

Article and Photos by Jacob Wilbourne, Park Technician



This summer we had the privilege of hosting a Fungal Foray at Townsend Wildlife Area with the Prairie States Mushroom Club, whose mission is to promote scientific and educational activities for fungi and foster an appreciation for these wondrous organisms all around us. Prairie States Mushroom Club president Sarah-DeLong Duhon acted as our identification expert and documented our finds!

During the hike we found several species of fungi, which acted as decomposers, breaking down woody debris and returning nutrients to

the soil. We also found several species of symbiotic fungi, which work in conjunction with nearby plants to exchange water and nutrients for food. Participants had a wonderful time exploring the woods and learning about the wide variety of fungi all around us. The woods hold a magical medley of mushrooms that come in all shapes, sizes, and colors, which are a delight to behold! These fascinating fungi are an integral and interesting part of our ecosystem.



## Summer Camp Connections

Article by Jacob Wilbourne and Photos by Sarah Subbert and Jacob Wilbourne



With summer camp season coming to an end, I can't help but to think back on the time spent teaching and fostering a connection with the outdoors. The plan for these camps three years ago was to provide an avenue for kids to have a fun and fulfilling outdoor experience over an extended amount of time.

I could say that one of these three is more important than the others, but that's just not the case; it requires a balance in order to really build connection. Fun experiences create and promote enjoyment and build positive



interactions with outdoor spaces. A sense of fulfillment in the outdoors is vital; it's the foundation of a connection by creating comfort and confidence with oneself in their ability and skills outside. These two aspects of camp promote adaptability and problem-solving in an unstructured environment, which is reinforced during their time at camp. This all comes together by allowing for many opportunities for kids to explore and use knowledge and skills gained during camp to have fun!

See, camp isn't just about having fun, exploring, and learning new skills. It's about more than that. It's about creating a deep and growing connection to the outdoors. It's about helping kids understand that there is something for them outside, helping them find their niche, their place. It is my goal that every kid that comes to summer camp understands that nature is a marvelous place with a wondrous array of possibilities for them to explore. And at the end of every camp I can say for certain we are succeeding!



Campers always leave with a smile and new experiences. After camp is done, many campers have gone on to further develop those skills learned at camp and even gone on to learn new ones as they develop their own interests in the outdoors. These last three years have been a success for summer camp programs, but more importantly, they have been a success for the kids involved.



# Kids Corner

## Cedar Valley Visions

### Mason Jar Terrariums

Please have an adult help you with the following project

#### Materials

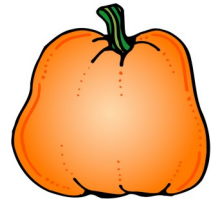
- Mason Jar with Lid
- Tweezers or forceps
- Small plants or moss
- Soil
- Gravel, pebbles, or sand



Photo Credit: Jacob Wilbourne

#### Instructions

1. Place your gravel, pebbles, or sand at the very bottom of your jar; this allows for drainage so plant roots aren't sitting in water.
2. Next, place your soil on top of your drainage material. If you are finding that your soil is falling through your drainage layer, you can add a section of clean screen between the layers to keep the soil in place.
3. Begin placing your plants! You can choose to make a single plant your focus and use others to enhance it or create a mini jungle; the choice is yours! Additionally, you can place small toys or decorations in your terrarium as well!
4. After adding your plants, water your terrarium lightly and seal. After watering, place in an area out of direct sunlight. Air it out every two weeks or so for about an hour and water lightly afterwards.
5. Enjoy!



### Fall Nature Scavenger Hunt

- A pumpkin
- A tree changing color
- A squirrel with an acorn
- Geese migrating
- Frost
- Birds at a birdfeeder



## Word Scramble

CKECTRI      \_ \_ \_ \_ \_  
 HIINGK      \_ \_ \_ \_ \_  
 LEESAV      \_ \_ \_ \_ \_  
 HTO OCOAC      \_ \_ \_ \_ \_  
 HIDEARY      \_ \_ \_ \_ \_  
 PMPUKIN      \_ \_ \_ \_ \_  
 DCARE      \_ \_ \_ \_ \_  
 ALFL      \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

## Nature Word Search

F	A	L	L	S	B	O	P	F	A
A	C	A	O	W	A	T	P	K	H
C	O	B	W	E	B	W	F	T	S
E	R	T	Q	B	C	R	I	S	P
S	N	O	W	L	A	B	S	X	I
P	R	T	W	O	M	T	H	S	D
E	G	H	O	R	P	A	N	S	E
G	O	L	D	E	N	R	O	D	R
I	A	L	L	P	A	R	K	Q	W
O	W	L	D	E	N	M	O	T	H

Fall, Acorn, Crisp, Camp, Bat, Owl, Spider, Goldenrod,  
Cobweb, Crow

**Sunday, September 28th, Hunter Safety Education**

Cedar County Conservation Office (713 E South Street, Tipton, Iowa) 8:00 am – 4:00 pm.

This is a classroom course; attendees must be present for the entire class. This is not a field day course. Lunch will be provided. However, if you have a special diet, please feel free to bring a sack lunch. Hunter education is a mandatory program that is designed to introduce students to several lifelong skills that are important to many different types of outdoor recreational opportunities. The course teaches students basic survival and first aid skills, water safety, wildlife identification, the basics of wildlife management, hunting laws, and firearm and archery safety. Hunter education also stresses the importance of individual responsibility and outdoor ethics. Iowa law requires that anyone born after January 1, 1972 must be certified in hunter education before they are eligible to purchase an Iowa hunting license. You MUST pre-register for this class. Register by going to <https://license.gooutdoorsiowa.com/Event/ViewEvent.aspx?id=3569>

**Tuesday, September 30th, Archery**

Bennett Park Shelter Two, 6:00 pm.

Bull's eye! Come shoot various targets in this relaxed atmosphere. This program is for kids in fourth grade through adults. If you have long hair, please bring something to tie your hair back.



**Wednesday, October 1st, Animals Preparing for Winter**

Durant Library, 5:30 pm.

It is time! Prepare for WINTER! Find out what some of Iowa's crazy critters do to get ready for the long cold snap.

**Thursday, October 2nd, Archery**

Cedar Valley Park Shelter One, 6:00 pm.

Shot through the heart, and you're to blame! Well, that is true, if you can hit our 3D deer and turkey target hearts! Give it a whirl with our Genesis bows. This program is for fourth grade through adults. If you have long hair, please bring something to tie your hair back.

**Friday, October 3rd, Story Time**

Mechanicsville Library, 11:00 – 11:30 am.

Come learn about spiders! We will be finding camouflage spiders in the library.

**Saturday, October 4th, Vampire Valley**

Cedar Valley Park Main Campground, 7:30 pm.

Enter if you dare! This is a free, family-friendly event. The non-scary hike will begin at 7:30 pm. Scary hikes to follow. We will have trail leaders leaving about every eight minutes for the scary hikes with groups of 10 people or less. BE PREPARED TO WAIT. We will provide headlamps for people to share during the hike. Feel free to bring your own flashlight/headlamp. Light refreshments will be provided.

**Wednesday, October 8th, Apple Tasting**

Mechanicsville Library, 3:30 pm.

Some like them sweet, some like them sour. Find out which kind of apple is your favorite! We will be using apple peelers for some added fun/mess!

**Tuesday, October 14th, Geocaching**

Stanwood Library, 2:30 pm.

We found it! We found the hidden treasure! Come learn what geocaching is and find some of them! There is a super cool one in Stanwood!

**Wednesday, October 15th, Spiders**

Bennett Library, 1:00 pm.

Learn what makes a spider different from an insect and play a fun camouflage game.

**Wednesday, October 15th, Animals That Nobody Loves**

Durant Library, 5:30 pm.

We'll be talking about several animals that call Iowa home that have a bad rap. Are they really that bad?

**Friday, October 17th, Story Time**

Mechanicsville Library 11:00 – 11:30 am.

Learn about foxes with Miss Sarah! We'll even dress up and play a fun fox game.

**Saturday, October 18th, Halloweekend**

Camp Liberty Lodge, 11:00 am – 4:00 pm.

Come see Miss Sarah at her booth and get to tour all the other booths and activities throughout camp!

Please call Camp Liberty for more information at (800) 798-0833.

**Wednesday, October 29th, Bones**

Durant Library, 3:30 pm.

What animal has a mohawk skull? What does a bear skull look like? Come touch and feel real bones.

**Thursday, October 30th, Pumpkin Archery**

Bennett Park Shelter Two, 6:00 pm.

Have you ever shot a tiny pumpkin with a bow and arrow? Well come, give it a try! This program is for kids in fourth grade and up and adults. If you have long hair, please bring something to tie your hair back.

**Friday, October 31st, Story Time**

Mechanicsville Library, 11:00 – 11:30

What do Iowa bats like to eat? Where do they go for the wintertime? Miss Sarah will be answering these questions and more as we have fun playing games and learning about our nocturnal friends.



**Tuesday, November 4th, Roving Retirees**

Stanwood Library, 2:30 pm.

Come to the library for a cooking surprise! These sessions are always full of laughter.

**Monday, November 10th, Turkeys**

Durant Library, 5:30 pm.

Let's talk turkey! Are there different kinds of turkeys? What is THAT!? Is that even part of a turkey?

Come find out during this program.

**Wednesday, November 12th, Turkeys**

Mechanicsville Library, 3:30 pm.

Touch and feel real turkey body parts! We will be working on using our turkey call too.

**Friday, November 14th, Story Time**

Mechanicsville Library, 11:00 – 11:30 am.

It's turkey time! We will be practicing strutting and gobbling during this program along with several other fun games. This program is designed for children under the age of five.

**Saturday, November 15th, Atlatl, Ax, and Sling Shot Day**

Cedar Valley Park Shelter Two, 11:00 am.

Have you ever wanted to learn how to throw an ax? What is an atlatl anyways? Shooting slingshots at pop cans is always great fun. This program is designed for kids that are in fourth grade and up and adults.

**Wednesday, November 19th, Mini Pumpkin Muffins**

Bennett Library, 1:00 pm.

Did you know you can eat your Halloween pumpkin? Yes, even those big, jack-o'-lantern pumpkins!

Find out ways to keep your pumpkin out of the landfill and enjoy a tasty treat!

**Monday, November 24th, Oatmeal, Cranberry, and Shagbark Hickory Energy Bites**

Durant Library, 3:30 pm.

Nuts are an easy and tasty thing to forage in the wild. We will be making and eating various combinations of these no-bake treats.



**Tuesday, December 2nd, Roving Retirees**

Stanwood Library, 2:30 pm.

Roving Retirees unite! Come for a surprise program. It is always a blast!

**Wednesday, December 3rd, Tundra Animals**

Bennett Library, 1:00 pm.

What is a tundra and where is it located? What animals live there? These are some of the questions that will be answered as we touch and feel various animal furs and antlers.

**Friday, December 5th, Story Time**

Mechanicsville Library, 11:00 – 11:30 am.

Have you ever touched a real moose antler? Well now is your chance! Come learn about moose with Miss Sarah. This program is designed for children under the age of five.

**Monday, December 8th, Recycled Paper**

Durant Library, 3:30 pm.

We will be turning recycled paper into masterpieces! With endless color combinations, add ins, shapes, and sizes. We will be using a blender with water to make our new creations.

**Friday, December 12th, Story Time**

Mechanicsville Library, 11:00 – 11:30 am.

Make a gift from the heart. We will be coloring ornaments from branches that have naturally fallen from trees in our county parks. This program is designed for children under the age of five.

**Friday December 12th, Cedar County Christmas Festival**

Cedar County Fair Grounds, time to be determined.

We will be doing a craft for this event.

**Saturday, December 13th, Cedar County Christmas Festival**

Cedar County Fair Grounds, time to be determined.

We will be doing a craft for this event.

**Sunday, December 14th, Cedar County Christmas Festival**

Cedar County Fair Grounds, time to be determined.

We will be doing a craft for this event.

**Wednesday, December 17th, Upcycled Craft**

Mechanicsville Library, 3:30 pm.

We have totes and totes of stuff that you can use to create your own masterpiece! Bring your imagination!

**Monday, December 22nd, Minute-To-Win-It Games**

Durant Library, 2:30 pm.

Come learn and play these silly and simple games. These are super easy to re-create and perfect to play with your family and friends during the holidays.

**Saturday, December 27th, Holiday Hike**

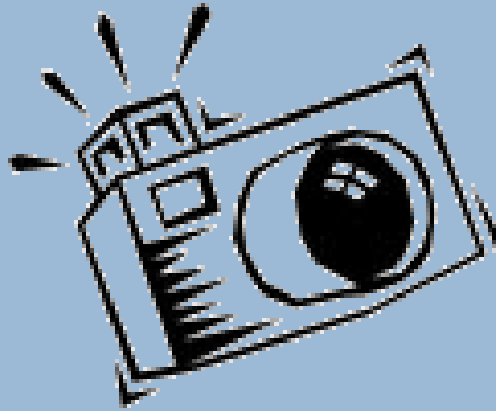
Bennett Park Shelter One, 4:00 pm.

Join us at Bennett Park for a fun holiday hike!

As this is weather dependent please keep an eye on our Facebook page for potential cancellations. Remember to dress appropriately for the weather.

## We Want to See Your Photos!

Have you taken photos out in our parks? Would you like to share them for everyone to see? If so we would love to feature them in our Newsletter! Please send photos to [Jwilbourne@cedarcounty.iowa.gov](mailto:Jwilbourne@cedarcounty.iowa.gov) with the subject "Newsletter Photo". Feel free to tell us a bit about your photo, be sure to include which park you're at, who the subjects and original photographer are and any other relevant details.



**Thank you park guest Heather for sending in this awesome photo collage!**





## Wild Recipe: Goldenrod Tea

### Equipment

- A pot or kettle to boil water
- Kitchen shears or a sharp knife and cutting board
- Tea ball (Optional)

### Ingredients

- 2-3 tablespoons chopped fresh goldenrod flowers and leaves (or 2-3 teaspoons dried goldenrod)
- 2 cups boiled filtered water

### Method

1. Collect goldenrod leaves & flowers from the top 6" to 12" of plants.
2. Rinse fresh leaves to remove dirt and bugs.
3. Chop or snip goldenrod into small pieces.
4. Place prepared goldenrod in a teapot or cup and cover with freshly boiled water.
5. Allow to steep 10-15 minutes.
6. Strain and enjoy!



Photo Credit: Jacob Wilbourne

## Cedar County Conservation Board Members

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Contact us by phone at: 563-886-6930

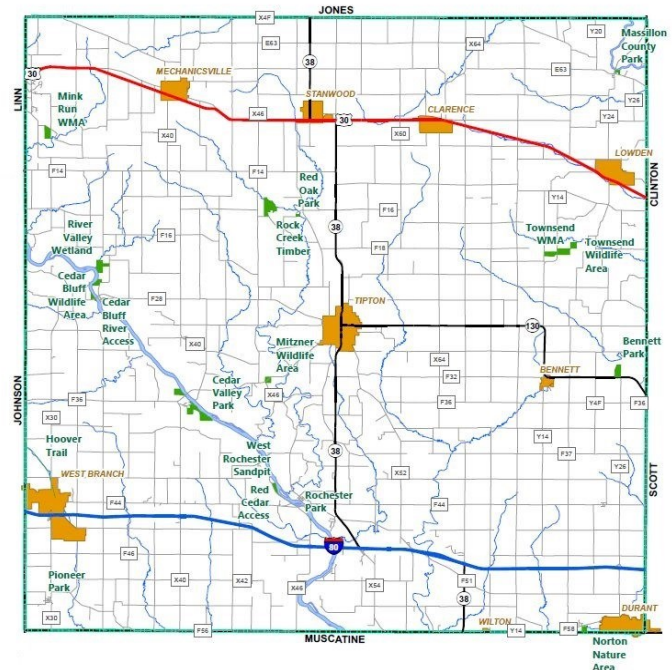
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## Cedar County Conservation Parks and Wildlife Areas



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