



Conservation News



A Quarterly Publication of the Muscatine County Conservation Board

Volume 35 No. 1 Spring 2022

Summer Fun For All Ages *by Michelle Berns*

Summer is shaping up to be pretty busy for the Muscatine County Conservation Board. We are going to be offering nature camps for all ages, starting with our youngest Polliwogs for ages 18 months to three years all the way up to a BRAND NEW ADULT series!

Polliwog Playtime: These classes are for the youngest naturalists and one of their adults. The topics that we will explore this summer include birds, frogs, insects and everyone's favorite creek stomping! We always like to start with a story and then dive into the topic. Be prepared to go outside and explore nature. We will hike, catch bugs and frogs, and listen for birds. There are four sessions available, sign up for one or all.

Knee-high Naturalists: Calling all four and five-year old's who LOVE nature! Bring your favorite adult and come hang out at the Environmental Learning Center with the naturalists. Our topics this summer include birds, frogs, insects and creek stomping. We will go outside and look for these creatures then end the summer with a hike in the creek at Discovery Park where we always find really cool rocks. There are four sessions available, sign up for one or all.

Chipmunk Camp: If you have just completed kindergarten or first grade, this is the camp for you! We can get more adventurous in these three-hour camps and explore to our hearts desire. We will spend time at Discovery Park finding out who lives here by the tracks they make. We will go on a hike and look for animal tracks, and make some art that

you can take home with animal tracks. The second camp will be stationed at Saulsbury Bridge Recreation Area, but we will all meet at Discovery Park and then go out to explore Saulsbury. We will try our hand at fishing, play some games, and take a hike. The third camp will be a morning at the arboretum. We will help with a service project, walk the labyrinth, and ID some fascinating trees. The final camp of the season will be our creek stomp. We will travel to Mad Creek off of Lake Park Blvd. and hike the stream with pond nets and buckets to see what kind of cool critters live in the creek.

Kestrel Camp: This camp is for the kiddo that has just completed second or third grade. This three-hour camp offers four different sessions this summer. The first session we will be at Discovery Park learning all about water. We'll scoop some pond water and find out who lives in it! The second session we will meet at Discovery Park and travel to Saulsbury Bridge Recreation Area. We will hike the trails and build shelters. During the third session we will again meet at Discovery Park and visit the arboretum for a scavenger hunt to find out which animals call the arboretum home. The fourth session we will creek stomp Mad Creek with nets and buckets to see what we can catch.

Otter Camp: Have you just completed fourth or fifth grade? Come join us for four different three-hour sessions of nature camp this summer. During the first session we will learn which teeny-tiny animals call the pond at Discovery Park home. We will get to use microscopes and even do some water testing. The second session will meet at Discovery

Park and then head over to Saulsbury Bridge Recreation Area for a morning of shelter and fire building. Can you get a fire started that will roast a marshmallow? The third session will be paddling the giant voyageur canoes at Deep Lakes Park. The fourth session of Otter Camp will focus on creeks. We will travel to a local creek and see what we can find swimming.

Outdoor Recreation Camp: Calling all sixth through eighth graders who want to learn more about the outdoors! We will offer three different sessions for the most adventurous. Our first session will travel to Wildcat Den State Park for hiking and creek stomping. The second session will be all about survival at the Saulsbury Bridge Recreation Area. We will build fires and shelters and make s'mores. The last session will be an awesome experience, paddling the 14-passenger voyageur canoes at Deep Lakes Park.

Nature for Adults: Channel your inner child and join the naturalists for nature camps for adults. For ages 18+ these camps will include many different activities. We will meet monthly from April through December. Fees will only be charged for the classes that require equipment or supplies. See page 7 for more information.



Deep Lakes Park Cabin Rentals

Visit www.muscatinecountyconservation.com to find out more about cabin rental at Deep Lakes Park as well as current specials.

Free Trees!

Yes, free trees courtesy of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. They are offering 400 seedling trees to residents in counties affected by derechos over the past few years, and that includes Muscatine County.



Trees will be given away to residents of Muscatine County on Saturday, April 23 from 8:00-10:00 a.m. at the large shelter in Discovery Park in Muscatine.

Tree species include: White Oak, Bur Oak, Red Oak, Hackberry, Black Cherry, and White Pine. Shrub species include: Redbud, and Serviceberry. All of these trees and shrubs are excellent sources of food and shelter for wildlife!

There is a limit of two trees or one tree and one shrub per family. No prior reservations for trees will be taken.

The tree roots will be wrapped in soaking wet newsprint in a plastic bag when you get them. They should be planted the same day you pick them up. Tree planting information will be available at the pickup location.

Digging and shipping of trees can be weather dependent. If a delay is necessary we will post information with a new distribution date on our website www.MuscatineCountyConservation.com, and on Facebook at Muscatine County Conservation.



Holiday Closings

The Conservation Board offices and Environmental Learning Center will be closed on Sunday, April 17 Monday, May 30, and Monday July 4.



Memorials

A monetary donation was made
In Memory of Wannabelle Mosier.

A monetary donation was made
In Memory of Therese Beckey.

A Sugar Maple tree was adopted in Discovery Park
In Memory of Cameron Summitt.



Thank you to all those who generously gave time, talent, funding and/or materials to help make our programs, projects, and areas better than ever.

Muscatine Veterinary Hospital - medicine for Chula our fox snake.

All Seasons Glass - monetary donation for the raptor programs at Bald Eagle Day as well as other programs and projects.

Quad-Cities Women's Outdoor Club - monetary donation.

Honorariums



An Ivory Silk Tree Lilac was adopted in Discovery Park
In Honor of NALC Branch 644.

Become a Friend

Thank you to all our "Friends" whose donations to the Muscatine County Conservation Foundation support the development and enhancement of environmental education and conservation projects in Muscatine County.

The names of all donors go into our donor book and those who donate \$250 or more receive a plaque on our donor wall located in the Environmental Learning Center. Please include the form at the right with your donation and become a "Friend" today.

Robert Grunder Memorial

Mike & Phyllis Avesing

Cindy & Randy Howell

Diane Bunker

Dave & Alice Jones

Joyce Mather

Nancy Pagel

Jim Scott

Mark & Julie Frye

A Gift For the Conservation Foundation

I would like to become a Friend,
please accept my donation.

<input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor	\$10—\$49
<input type="checkbox"/> Partner	\$50—\$99
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<input type="checkbox"/> Guardian	\$250—\$499
<input type="checkbox"/> Steward	\$500—\$999
<input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor	\$1000 +
<input type="checkbox"/> I would like to donate my time.	

Name _____

Address _____

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Thank you for your support!

Please make checks payable to:
Muscatine County Conservation Foundation
PO Box 109, Muscatine, IA 52761

Programs and Special Events

Kids Fishing Seminar & Derby

Come to the seminar and learn the basics of fishing. This event is geared toward elementary-aged kids, but all ages are welcome. All participants receive a tackle packet and are eligible for door prizes!

After the seminar stay and put your new found fishing knowledge to use and participate in the fishing derby. Prizes awarded in several fish categories and age groups.



Saturday, June 4 **Fishing Seminar 9:00-10:45 a.m.** **Fishing Derby 11:00 a.m.-12:00 noon**
Discovery Pond in Discovery Park
Free, children must be accompanied by an adult
Registration forms are available at the Environmental Learning Center or at
www.muscatinecountyconservation.com

Voyageur Canoes

Come paddle these 29-foot canoes just like the one Marquette & Joliet used to explore in the 1600's. It takes teamwork and 12-14 people to paddle these canoes, so bring the family or a group. If you have a large group that would like to paddle together sometime between July 7 and July 13 call us and we'll try to schedule it.



Wednesday & Thursday, July 6 & 7 **6:00-8:00 p.m.**

Saturday & Sunday, July 9-10 **3:00-5:00 p.m.**

Lake Chester at Deep Lakes Park

Free, children must be accompanied by an adult

Preregistration requested at (563) 264-5922 or conservation@muscatainecountyiowa.gov



Hunter Education

Anyone born after January 1, 1972 who wants to purchase a hunting license in Iowa must have successfully completed a Hunter Education course. The minimum age for certification is twelve. Each class is limited to 30 students.

Classes are free but, you must register on-line at www.gooutdoorsiowa.com. After registering you must pick up a workbook at the Environmental Learning Center. The chapter review questions at the end of the workbook should be completed prior to coming to class. Students will need to bring their completed workbook and a sack lunch.

Saturday, August 27 **9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.** **Environmental Learning Center**

Summer Camps for Kids

General Summer Camp Info

- * The registration form is available at the Environmental Learning Center or on our website www.MuscatineCountyConservation.com
- * We must have the signed registration form and payment to be registered for the camp. No reserving spots allowed.
- * All camps meet at the Environmental Learning Center. We will provide transportation to and from any other areas we visit.
- * All campers should bring a water bottle.
- * Snacks are provided for any camps over one hour in length.
- * Campers should wear clothes that can get wet and dirty. No flip-flops.

Polliwog Playtime

ages 18 months through 3 years \$5.00/session maximum 10/session

Join us at the Environmental Learning Center and Discovery Park for activities designed to help toddlers explore nature. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Birds	June 13	9:30-10:30 a.m.
Frogs	June 27	9:30-10:30 a.m.
Insects	July 18	9:30-10:30 a.m.
Creek Stomp	August 1	9:30-10:30 a.m.



Knee-high Naturalists

4-5 year olds \$5.00/session maximum 12/session

Join us at the Environmental Learning Center and Discovery Park for nature activities such as games, crafts, stories, and outdoor exploration. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Birds	June 6	9:30-10:30 a.m.
Frogs	June 20	9:30-10:30 a.m.
Insects	July 11	9:30-10:30 a.m.
Creek Stomp	July 25	9:30-10:30 a.m.

Summer Camps for Kids

Chipmunk Camp

kids who just completed kindergarten or 1st grade

\$10.00/session maximum 16/session

Explore Discovery Park

June 7 9:00 a.m.-12:00 noon

Explore Saulsbury

June 21 9:00 a.m.-12:00 noon

Explore the Muscatine Arboretum

July 5 9:00 a.m.-12:00 noon

Creek Stomp Mad Creek

July 19 9:00 a.m.-12:00 noon



Kestrel Camp

kids who just completed 2nd or 3rd grade

\$10.00/session maximum 16/session



Explore Water

June 15 9:00 a.m.-12:00 noon

Explore Saulsbury

June 29 9:00 a.m.-12:00 noon

Explore the Muscatine Arboretum

July 13 9:00 a.m.-12:00 noon

Creek Stomp Mad Creek

July 27 9:00 a.m.-12:00 noon

Otter Camp

kids who just completed 4th or 5th grade

\$10.00/session maximum 16/session

Explore Water

June 9 9:00 a.m.-12:00 noon

Explore Saulsbury

June 23 9:00 a.m.-12:00 noon

Voyageur Canoe Paddling Deep Lakes Park

July 7 9:00 a.m.-12:00 noon

Creek Stomp

July 21 9:00 a.m.-12:00 noon



Outdoor Recreation Camp

kids who just completed 6th - 8th grade

\$10.00/session maximum 16/session

Explore Wildcat Den

June 17 9:00 a.m.-12:00 noon

Survival at Saulsbury

July 1 9:00 a.m.-12:00 noon

Voyageur Canoe Paddling Deep Lakes Park

July 8 9:00 a.m.-12:00 noon

Camps for Adults

Planting for Pollinators

Find out how to attract pollinators to your yard. We'll do some actual planting so bring your favorite pair of gardening gloves.



Saturday, April 9 10:00 a.m.-12:00 noon

Environmental Learning Center

\$5.00 per person

Be a Citizen Scientist-Frogs & Toads

We'll meet at Pike Run Wildlife Area and learn all about the Iowa Frog & Toad Survey. Be a Citizen Scientist by listening and learning frog and toad calls.

Saturday, May 21 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Pike Run Wildlife Area



Learn to Paddle

Learn how to paddle both canoes and kayaks. We'll use this time to prepare for our trip down the Cedar River in August.

Tuesday, June 14 6:30-8:00 p.m.

Deep Lakes Park



Clean the Creek

Meet us at Mad Creek off of Lake Park Blvd. and help clean up the creek.

Saturday, July 16 1:00-3:00 p.m.

Mad Creek off Lake Park Blvd.

Paddle the Cedar

We will paddle a 9-mile stretch of the Cedar River. We'll meet at Saulsbury, carpool to Jack Shuger Park in Moscow, unload the canoes and kayaks then head downriver to Saulsbury. Bring plenty of water, snacks and lunch.

Saturday, August 6 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Cedar River Boat Ramp at Saulsbury

\$10.00 per person



Adult camp registration form is available at the Environmental Learning Center or on our website
www.MuscatineCountyConservation.com

Shelter Rentals

The Conservation Board has picnic shelters at Discovery Park, Saulsbury Bridge Recreation Area, and Jack Shuger Memorial Park that may be reserved. Contact the Conservation Board office at conservation@muscatainecountyiowa.gov or (563) 264-5922 or for more information. Reservations may be made no earlier than one year in advance.

Discovery Park

Discovery Pond Shelter (#1) \$20 (no electricity)

Learning Center Shelter (#2) \$40

Saulsbury Bridge Recreation Area

Chicken Creek Shelter (#1) \$25

Boat Ramp Shelter (#2) \$25

Jack Shuger Memorial Park

Shelter \$25



Saulsbury Lodge Rental

The Saulsbury Lodge is available for rent. This enclosed building is air conditioned and has the capacity to seat around 75 people. It's a great setting for a family reunion, small wedding reception, graduation or birthday party. Prices vary depending on the day of the week and type of event. Contact the Conservation Board office at (563) 264-5922 or conservation@muscatainecountyiowa.gov for more information. Reservations may be made no earlier than one year in advance.

Free Fishing Days

The Iowa DNR's free fishing days this year are June 3, 4, 5. Iowa residents may fish on these days without a fishing license. All other fishing regulations must be obeyed.



Camping at Saulsbury

The Saulsbury Bridge Recreation Area campgrounds will open in mid April (weather permitting). Camping fees will be as follows.

Main Campground	\$20/night
River Campground	\$17/night
Primitive Campground	\$10/night
Permanently Handicapped	\$15/night

You can save on camping in the main campground with a coupon book for \$100 - that's six nights for the price of five. Available at the Environmental Learning Center or from the park officer or campground host.

We will also continue with the "Free Wednesdays" and the "Two-for-One" camping specials.

TWO-FOR-ONE Camping Weekends

Camp the first night (Friday) in any of the campgrounds at Saulsbury and stay for the next night (Saturday) FREE on the weekends listed below.

May 6-7 & May 20-21

June 3-4 & June 17-18

July 1-2 & July 15-16

August 5-6 & August 19-20

September 2-3 & September 16-17

October 7-8 & October 21-22



FREE Wednesdays

Camp in any of the campgrounds at Saulsbury on any Wednesday in April-October for free.

Creature Feature

American Woodcock

The American Woodcock is found in the eastern U.S., including Iowa, and southeastern Canada. Most migrate to the southeastern U.S. in the winter. Their habitat is on the ground in moist young forests and shrubby or overgrown fields.

They are rotund, robin-sized birds with short legs, short necks, and long straight bills. Their large eyes set high and toward the back of the head allowing them to see above while they forage on the ground. They are well camouflaged in leaf litter with their mottled brown, tan, black, and gray feathers. The underside is a rusty color.

American Woodcocks feed in the early evening and just before dawn mostly on earthworms using their long bills to probe the ground. Their bodies bob as they are foraging causing vibrations in the ground that are thought to make the earthworms wriggle around and easier to find. They also eat insects, spiders, larvae, small crustaceans, and some plant material.

The courtship ritual (see photo to the right), that takes place at night in spring, is a “sky dance” the male does to attract a mate. He makes nasally “peent” sounds on the ground then flies high into the air twisting and chirping before flying spirally downward until he attracts a female and mates with her. He may even mate with multiple females on any given evening. The male takes no part in building the nest or taking care of the eggs or young.

The female makes the nest on the ground by scraping out an indentation and lining it with dead leaves. The nest is made in open woods or overgrown fields. Four eggs are usually laid and are incubated for 20-22 days. The young hatch covered in down and leave the nest a few hours later. Mom continues to feed and care for the young, but at a few days old the young start trying to probe for their own food. They can fly in about three weeks and are independent at five weeks.

Woodcock are preyed on by owls, hawks, foxes, coyotes, mink, bobcats and domestic cats. The lifespan of the American Woodcock is around two

years. Woodcock are also a gamebird that can be hunted in many parts of the U.S. including Iowa.



Fun Facts

- Even though they are mostly solitary birds except during mating season, a group of woodcocks is called a fall.
- Although most woodcocks have never seen a beach, they are considered shorebirds and are related to sandpipers.
- A woodcock can eat its weight in worms everyday.
- Compared to other birds, woodcocks have an upside down brain. The cerebellum is below the rest of the brain right above the spinal column. This is attributed to the evolution of the long beak and set back eyes.
- Also called timberdoodles, mud snipes, and bog suckers.

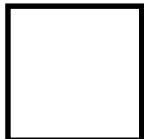
SPRING

Scavenger Hunt

Get outdoors and use your eyes, ears and nose to find all these signs of spring.



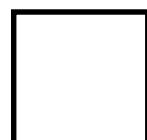
Tree Buds



Earthworm



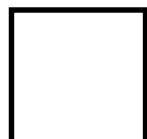
Turtle



Drumming
Woodpecker



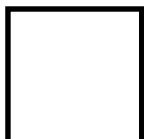
Bird Nest



Flowering
Tree or shrub



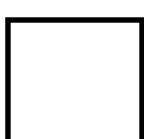
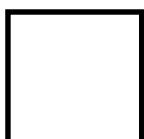
Insects



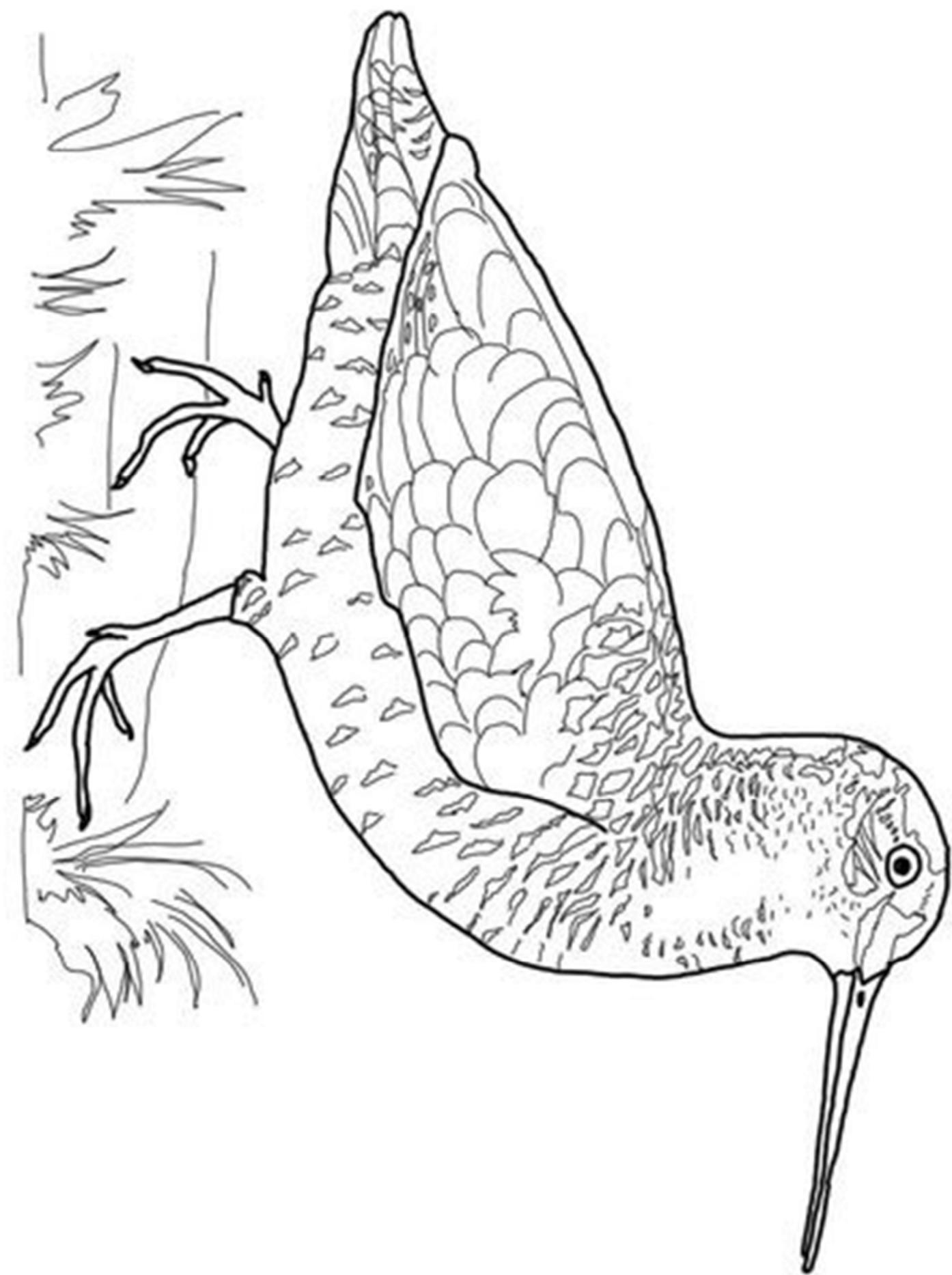
Frog Eggs



Mud Puddle



Singing
Bird



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Sue O'Donnell	Vice-chairperson
Mike Schulte	Member
Mark Petersen	Member
Karen Hartman	Member

The Muscatine County Conservation Board meets the third Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. Meetings are held at the Environmental Learning Center, 3300 Cedar Street in Muscatine. The public is welcome to attend.

If anyone believes he or she has been subjected to discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, gender, or handicap, he or she may file a complaint alleging discrimination with either the Muscatine County Conservation Board or the Office of Equal Opportunity, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240

STAFF

Curt Weiss	Director
Dave Bakke	Naturalist/Park Officer
Michelle Berns	Naturalist
Bob Kenyon	Operations Supervisor
Kent Kaufman	Park Attendant
Ryne Brimeyer	Park Officer
Jill Ziegenhorn	Office Manager
Dave Schuler	Learning Center Assistant

Contact us at:

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