

Earthtones

Winter 2020

Chronic Wasting Disease in Iowa

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is a neurological disease affecting primarily deer and elk. An abnormal protein, called a prion, attacks the brain of infected animals. The result is weight loss, abnormal behavior, and the loss of bodily functions.

Symptoms of CWD include excessive salivation, thirst and urination, loss of appetite, weight loss, lack of energy, and drooping ears and head. However, it is possible for infected deer to not display symptoms for years after becoming infected. It is important to note that the disease is **ALWAYS** fatal. Anyone who sees a deer exhibiting symptoms, should contact their local DNR officer or biologist.

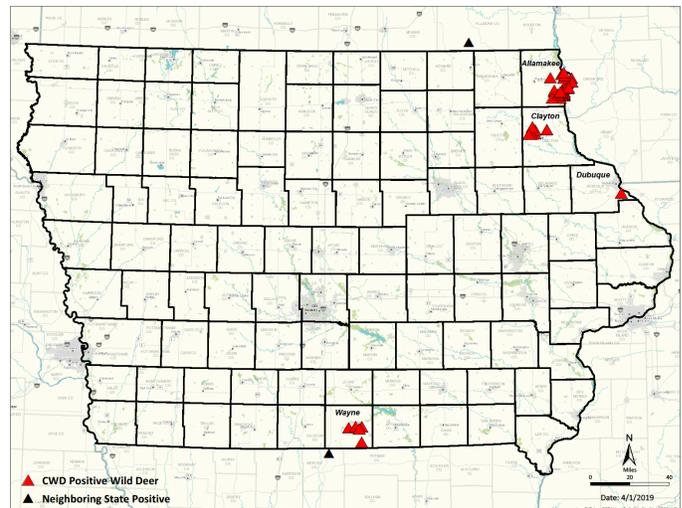
CWD can be passed on from deer to deer via direct contact and contact with bodily fluids, such as saliva, urine, feces, and blood. As a result, the risk of spread increases in areas that have larger and more dense populations of deer. However, prions from CWD positive deer can be shed and remain in the ground for many years, with the potential of infecting additional deer. Therefore, it is possible for the disease to spread in areas where the population density is lower.

Unfortunately, there is no vaccine for the disease. Once a wild deer herd has become infected, it is incredibly difficult to remove deer populations, thus spread of the disease is likely. In the state of Iowa, disease management strategies involve population reduction or a form of isolation and quarantining of infected areas. Other states have found that CWD has had strong population-level effects. Currently, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources takes tissue samples from deer in designated deer management zones, where deer have tested positive.

It is not believed that humans can contract CWD by eating infected venison. However, if harvesting deer in a designated deer management zone, it is highly recommended by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, to have the deer tested. If the deer does test positive for CWD, do not eat the meat. Contact the Iowa DNR for tissue sample collection.

Under Iowa law, hunters cannot transport into the state the whole carcass of any animal taken from a CWD-infected area. To legally transport an animal from a zone, the meat must be boned-out, with the cape and antlers, if a buck, attached to a clean skull plate. Please note, all brain tissue must be removed. In Iowa, CWD has been most prevalent in northeast and east central Iowa. However, there have been confirmed cases in Wayne County.

Megan Jorgensen, Naturalist



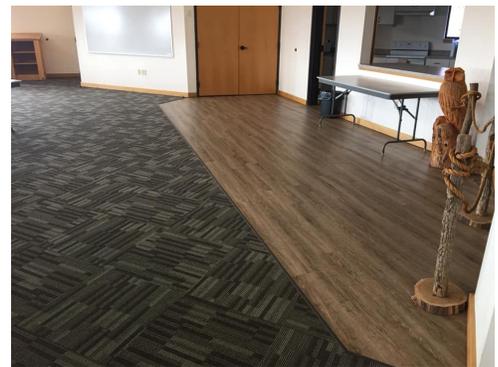
Conservation Center Upgrades

For those of you who have visited the Washington County Conservation Center in the past, you may not recognize the place on your next visit. As we hinted in our Autumn Earthtones, the Tinnes Exhibit Hall has received a complete overhaul of new education displays. The Washington County Conservation Board (WCCB) teamed up with McCullough Creative to design and create more than \$120,000 in new education display items that are great for all ages. A goal of the display upgrade was to pair education with interaction. Nearly every new display item will engage center visitors visually and physically, all while making the experience educational. These new displays would not be possible without the hard work contributed by current and past WCCB employees and the entire staff at McCullough Creative. Substantial funding for this project was provided by a Washington County Riverboat grant, in addition to funds drawn from the WCCB Resource Enhancement and Protection fund (REAP).

Not only are the displays new, the Steinbeck Conference Hall has received a facelift as well. The original conservation center carpeting was really showing its more than 16 years of wear and tear from countless graduation parties, weddings, trainings, and other events. Thus, Bruty's Carpet Corner in Washington was awarded the contract, to replace the flooring in Steinbeck Hall as well as the kitchen. After discussion with several contractors the WCCB elected to purchase commercial grade carpet squares instead of wall to wall rollout carpet. With this method of installation, individual carpet squares could be removed in the event of a spill, which is inevitable in the facility rental business. The carpet squares transition to a commercial grade glue down vinyl plank flooring in the catering/kitchen. The wood pattern of this flooring is beautiful but what we really like about it is the durability.

The past year has been a new chapter in the storied history here at conservation. As we approach the end of the decade, I think these upgrades are the perfect cherry on top of what was another great year. I look forward to carrying our current momentum into the new decade. I can't wait to work with my staff and our amazing board members on writing our next chapter!

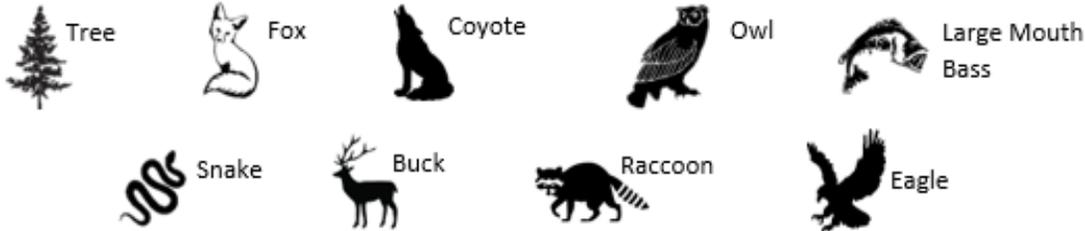
Executive Director,
Zach Rozmus



Nature Sudoku

Try your hand at this unique Sudoku puzzle. Make sure each object is in a box, row, and column only once. Feel free to cut out the objects on the side or enter the first letter of the objects into the boxes to keep track of your progress.

See page 5 for answers.





Winter Calendar

The Washington County Conservation Board meets the second Thursday of each month. Meetings are held at the Conservation Education Center in Marr Park at 4:30 p.m.

Sat., Jan. 18 1:00 p.m. CEC

Family Game Day

Join us at the Conservation Center for an afternoon of family-friendly games! We will be playing Family Feud, Bingo, Clue, and other fun board games. The event starts at 1:00 PM and goes until the fun is done. The event is free and open to the public.



Sat., Feb. 8 1:00 p.m. Marr Park

Snow Shoeing & Sledding

Join us at Marr Park for an afternoon of snow shoeing, sledding, and hiking! There will also be hot chocolate at the center, to help everyone escape the cold and warm up! The event starts at 1:00 PM and is free and open to the public. Should the weather not cooperate, we will move the event to February 22nd, at 1:00 PM.



Sat., March 21 & 22
a.m.-4:00 p.m. CEC

Hunter Education Classroom Course

Washington County Conservation will be sponsoring a FREE Hunter Education Classroom course on Saturday, March 21st, and Sunday, March 22nd. The first day will be spent in the classroom, while the second day will be a field day with live fire. Students must be 11 years old or older to attend. Please note, certificates do not become valid until their 12th birthday!



8:00

Washington County Conservation Board

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Members: Craig Capps
Bill Nickell
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Megan Jorgensen, Naturalist
Randi Brase, Center Coordinator
Fritz Engel, Maint. Technician
Cody Smith, Ranger/Technician
Brett Johnson, Ranger/Technician

Washington County Conservation Board meetings are held the second Thursday of each month at 4:30 p.m. at the Conservation Education Center. Visitors are welcome.

The WCCB is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

If you would like a copy of this newsletter in larger print, please contact our office.

This newsletter is printed on recycled paper.

Halloween Hike

Despite a bit of drizzly weather, we had a beautiful night (see picture) and a great turnout from the public to learn about the wildlife of Iowa. The Halloween Hike is our biggest event of the year and wouldn't be possible without the assistance of the following. We give all those listed below a huge round of applause.



Donations

- Fareway
- Hills Bank
- Noon Kiwanis
- SACHA
- Walmart
- Hy-Vee
- Pizza Ranch
- Sass Family Farms
- Washington Culligan

Volunteers

- Jim Blakeney
- Bob Donkersloot
- Austin Donkersloot
- Craig Capps
- Ila Capps
- Patti Britt

WASHINGTON COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD
2943 HIGHWAY 92
AINSWORTH, IA 52201

Electronic Service Requested

Winter Center Hours

Monday- Friday
8:00 a.m. — 4:30 p.m.

Closed
Saturday- Sunday

Hunter Education Classroom Course

Washington County Conservation is proud to be sponsoring a spring Hunter Education Classroom course on Saturday, March 21st, and Sunday, March 22nd, at the Conservation Education Center.

Are you a hunter? If not, have you ever thought about going hunting? Are you a youth or adult who has tagged along with family or friends and is ready to seek your first harvest? If so, Iowa law requires anyone born after January 1, 1972, to become hunter education certified, before they are eligible to purchase an Iowa hunting license.

Hunter education is a program designed to introduce students to life-long skills that are important to many different types of outdoor recreational opportunities. Students will learn basic survival and first aid skills, water safety, wildlife identification, and

the basics of wildlife management, hunting laws, and firearm/archery safety. Hunter education also stresses the importance of individual responsibility and outdoor ethics.

The first day will be spent in the classroom, following the curriculum. It will also include a laws talk presented by a local Conservation Officer. The second day will be a field day following a review and completion of the exam. The field day will involve live fire and a safety trail. Sign up at the Iowa DNR website under *Hunter Education*.

Students must be 11 years or older to attend unaccompanied by an adult. Please note, certificates do not become valid until their 12th birthday. For more information, please call 319-657-4200, or email wecbnaturalist2@gmail.com.