

Ding Darling - Famous Iowa Conservationist

Dan Cohen, BCCB Director

Get to know "Ding!"

Enjoy getting to know Ding Darling during the 25th Anniversary Nature Center Banquet at Heartland Acres on Monday, April 22. Tom Milligan will be presenting in character as Darling (See page 6 for more information). A Darling Exhibit will open in the Nature Center February 28 (see page 6). Mark your calendars!

Jay Norwood Darling was born in 1876, and spent much of his youth living and sketching in the frontier town of Sioux City, Iowa, where he hunted, fished, and explored prairies, marshes. and rivers. He would forever attribute this experience as being formative in his views about wildlife and natural resources. Darling would become one of a handful of famous conservationists to emerge during the early and mid-1900s, and whose lasting impacts still are felt today.

Darling gained notoriety as a cartoonist with the Des Moines Register. His detailed artwork chronicled his thoughts on many topics, not least of which was conservation – especially the destruction of wildlife and habitat, soil loss, and lack of forethought about future generations. He would later famously sign his cartoons using a contraction of his last name D'ing, and would forever be known as Ding Darling.

Ding's journalistic work not only communicated ecological and conservation awareness to readers, but also gained attention from political leaders whom Darling would often critique. He was a conservative and a conservationist in the model of Teddy Roosevelt -Ding's favorite President.

First duck stamp by Ding Darling, 1934



Darling and Aldo Leopold (another famous conservationist with Iowa roots) led efforts to establish and conduct Iowa's first Biological Survey. They would later work together to establish federal Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Units at the nation's land grant universities (the first program would be housed

> at Iowa State University). These formal teaching and research programs trained the first generation of fisheries and wildlife biology professionals, and continue to do so today at some 40 universities.

Although initially not a fan of the more liberal Franklin D. Roosevelt Administration, Ding would eventually work closely with FDR. Frustrated by previous politicians' unwillingness to

address needs of wildlife and conservation, Ding pushed to have Roosevelt authorize the Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp (Duck Stamp) to raise funds for migratory birds, and was the artist for the first duck stamp. Ding helped form the federal Bureau of Biological Survey that would later become the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. He would go on to lead the agency and establish 28 national wildlife refuges. Sanibel Island in Florida, where Darling lived, was designated the Ding Darling National Wildlife Refuge in 1965 in his honor.

"As Land Goes, So Goes Man"

- caption from a "Ding" Darling editorial cartoon



Great Backyard Bird Count - February 15-18

The Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) is an annual four day event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of where birds are across the continent. Anyone can participate,

from beginning bird watchers to experts. It's as easy as 1-2-3!

 Plan to count birds for at least 15 minutes on one or more days of the count. Count birds in as many places and on as many days as you like—one day, two days, or all four days. Submit a separate checklist for each new day. You may submit more than one checklist per

- day if you count in more than one location.
- 2. Count the greatest number of individuals of each species you see together at any one time. You may find it helpful to print your regional bird checklist to get an idea of the birds you are likely to see in your area in February.
- 3. When finished, enter your results through the www.birdcount.org web page. You will see a button marked "Enter Your Checklists!" on the website home page beginning on the first day of the count. It will remain active until the deadline for data submission.

Each year, in addition to entering their tallies, participants submit thousands of digital images for the GBBC photo contest. Many are featured in the popular online gallery.

Winter Reflections from the Fontana Cabins-



Excerpts are from cabin journals, written by cabin renters during their stay this past winter. Cabins are open year-round. Reservations can be made online at www. buchanancountyparks.com (click on "facilities"). Snowshoes may be requested at no charge, based on availability.

"Lovely winter stay! Enjoyed watching the beautiful cardinals at the feeders against the new fallen snow" - 12/24-25/17

"We were very pleased with the coziness of the cabin. It's a wonderful place to come be in nature yet have the modern luxuries of home. Woke up Saturday morning to a lovely snowfall. Got a fire going to warm us [outside] through the day. Enjoyed the convenience of the outdoor grill to make lunch prior to heading out for our first snowshoeing experience. How amazing! Came back from our hike to relax by the fire and a great game of peek-a-boo with a woodpecker. After making foil packs over the open fire, enjoyed a nice evening playing games. We woke up Sunday morning to beautiful frost-covered prairie grass and trees." — 2/16-18/18

Chickadee Check-off

The Fish and Wildlife Tax Check-off, affectionately called the Chickadee Check-off, allows people to make charitable donations to wildlife conservation in Iowa. When filling out the state income tax forms, just look for the contribution line (usually somewhere between lines 55-60) and write in any dollar amount next to Fish/Wildlife. Money contributed through the check-off helps support the Wildlife Diversity Program at the Iowa DNR, which addresses management of wildlife that can't be hunted, fished or trapped. Learn more at: www.iowadnr.gov.



Congratulations Photo Contest Winners!

Winners in the 2018 Buchanan County Natural Areas Photo Contest were selected by those who voted on finalist photos posted on the Fontana Park Facebook page October 1-15. Thanks to everyone

who entered photos, and to those who voted on Facebook. Congratulations to all the winners.



Landscapes - Luke Stephens



Overall - Danyce Zegarac-Jasper



Plants and Wildflowers – Luke Stephens



Wildlife - David Beck



People Enjoying Nature – Rachel Walenceus

Get the e-Newsletter – Quick and in Color!

The Buchanan County Conservation Board encourages newsletter subscribers to change from paper mailings to an e-mailed newsletter. The e-mail version is in COLOR, has CLICK-ON LINKS, and arrives BEFORE the mail version. People also have the option to receive information shared



on an e-mail list serve, by requesting to sign up. Receiving the newsletter electronically saves energy, resources, and costs related to printing the paper version.

To make the switch to e-mail newsletter, send an e-mail to djohnson@co.buchanan.ia.us or call 319-636-2617. Be sure to provide the e-mail address you would like to add and the mailing address you would like to delete. Indicate if you wish to take advantage of the list serve option. If you remain a paper subscriber, please be sure to notify the Conservation Board office of any address change.

Nature Kids

Monday, December 10 - 10 a.m. Backyard Birds

Click here to register

Monday, January 14 - 10 a.m. Turkeys

Click here to register

Monday, February 11 – 10 a.m. Owls

Click here to register

Fontana Nature Center Classroom; Ages 3-5;

Bring a child to the park to learn about and experience different Iowa animals each month. Each program begins with a story, includes an upclose encounter with a



live animal, and ends with time spent exploring outdoors (dress for the weather). Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Unless otherwise indicated, programs are free, but preregistration is required. To preregister, go to www. buchanancountyparks.com and click on the "Public Events" tab.

OWLS - Birding 101 Older Wiser Livelier Souls

Monday, December 17, 10:00 a.m. Fontana Nature Center Adults only; Click here to register



Join a naturalist and experience bird life and



bird identification in Fontana Park during this featured program for "Older, Wiser, Livelier Souls" (OWLS).

OWLS is a program specifically designed for adults to learn and explore nature in and around Buchanan County. Several

programs are offered each quarter. Be sure to bring your binoculars because there will be plenty of time to watch the birds. There will be many great winter birds that will be viewable. Starting at the nature center then making our way over to the woodland trail we will encounter cardinals, blue jays, and downy woodpeckers.

New Year's Woodland Walks

Tuesday, Jan. 1, 10:30 a.m. (Grover); 1 p.m. (Cedar Rock) Guy Grover Timber: 2720 Nolen Ave., Rowley

Click here to register

Cedar Rock: 2611 Quasqueton Diagonal Blvd., Independence

Click here to register



Start off the first day of 2019 with a guided walk through Guy Grover Timber and Tree Plantings. The rolling landscape along the Wapsipinicon River Corridor

provides a great nature experience in this wonderful resource located near Quasqueton. Following the Grover walk, participants can grab a lunch in Quasqueton (or bring their own), and then head to nearby <u>Cedar Rock State Park</u> at 1 p.m. for another walk. Participants need to be sure to register for each walk online.

OWLS - Botanical Center Older Wiser Livelier Souls

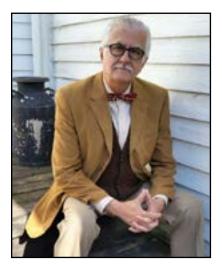
Monday, January 7, 10:00 a.m. UNI Botanical Center (1227 W 27th St, Cedar Falls, IA 50614) Adults only; Click here to register

Join a naturalist and enjoy the beauty of the UNI Botanical Center. Billie Hemmer, Preserves Manager, will provide a group tour of the center. This is a great opportunity to get into a nice tropical environment without having to leave Iowa. Those interested in carpooling will meet at Fontana at 9 a.m. There will be limited seating in the county van, for those who register quickly. Please note if you would like to ride in the van while registering online.



Fontana Interpretive Nature Center Anniversary Banquet

Monday, April 22 - Heartland Acres, Independence, Iowa



Tom Milligan as Jay N. "Ding" Darling visits with the audience, as an old friend, in his office at The Des Moines Register. Considered one of the most *important members of the* conservation movement in the first half of the 20th century, his impact is still felt today.



- Featured Speaker "Ding" Darling
- Doors Open at 5 p.m. for Social
- Enjoy a Great Meal
- Raffle and Silent Auction

Celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the opening of the Fontana Interpretive Nature Center. Enjoy a fantastic meal, followed by a keynote presentation by Historical Re-enactor Tom Milligan as the famous conservationist Ding Darling (see cover article). The presentation is provided through a grant from Humanities Iowa. a private, nonprofit state affiliate

of the National Endowment for the Humanities. A cultural resource for Iowans since 1971, Humanities Iowa brings humanities programs into the heart of Iowa communities.

The banquet is for anyone wishing to show support for the nature center, education programs, school field trips, live animal displays, and other programs and projects associated with Fontana Park. All proceeds help fund these efforts through the nonprofit Friends of Fontana Park.



To reserve banquet tickets and raffle packages, visit www.buchanancountyparks.com and click on events. Raffle packages include 50 raffle tickets and a 6" x 9" bamboo cutting board for \$25. Order as many raffle packages as you like (must be present to win). Individual raffle tickets during the Banquet will cost \$1 each. On the website you will be able to choose from four event options (there is no extra charge for the Ding Darling program):

Option 1: \$75 Couples Package (includes two meals and one raffle package) Option 2: \$50 Single Package (includes one meal and one raffle package) Option 3: \$30 Single Banquet ticket (includes one meal - no raffle package)

\$25 Extra raffle packages (order as many as you like - can be ordered with any of the Option 4:

three other options)

If you are a person with a disability who requires special assistance, if you have special dietary needs, or for answers to questions, please call 319-636-2617 in advance.

Darling: One Man, Many Visions Grand opening celebration Thursday, Feb. 28 at 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, Feb. 28- Friday, May 31, 2019 Fontana Interpretive Nature Center

"This exhibit includes some of my favorite personal artifacts and rarely seen artwork celebrating 'the man who never forgot that he once was a boy' and illuminates the visionary who clearly demonstrated that we are at our best when we work together," says Curator Sam Koltinski, director and curator on the Jay N. Darling Center in Des Moines. The Exhibit is dedicated to Darling's grandson "Kip" Koss and his wife Andrea and to the fine folks in Buchanan County.



Darling at his desk

The grand opening celebration will start at 6:30 p.m. on February 28. Hear Koltinski's story behind, the extraordinary collection of personal memorabilia at the Center, and his unique involvement with Darling's family. As a special part of the evening, he will be bringing treasures seldom seen by the public that will inspire generations to come.



Darling in Sioux City



Darling at his press



Darling meeting the president



Whimsical Darling

Sandhill Crane and Prairie Chicken Motor Coach Trip

Sunday, March 24 to Tuesday, March 26; Registration deadline February 22 Please call 319-892-6485 to request a trip brochure Registration information is in the trip brochure

This year's trip begins by visiting Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo and the first phase of its new Asian Highlands exhibits. On Monday, participants will observe the remarkable sandhill crane migration from within the Grand Island's Crane Trust Nature Center blinds along the Platte River, home to the largest crane roost in the world. The cranes stage at this area to refuel on their northward trip to

their breeding grounds. Seeing this large group of cranes. and hearing their rattling calls is truly a spectacular experience of a lifetime. The trip will continue to Burwell, NE and the Switzer Ranch, home of Calamus Outfitters, to view prairie chicken booming during the courting season. This trip is interspersed with stops at points of interest along the route.

The Linn and Buchanan County Conservation Departments cosponsor motor coach trips to spectacular wildlife viewing opportunities in the Midwest. Please request a trip brochure by calling 319-892-6485. The registration deadline for the trip will likely be February 22.



Winter Open House Saturday, Jan. 12, 1 - 3 p.m.

Cost: \$5 per person or \$15 per family Fontana Nature Center All ages are welcome; Click here to register



Tired of being stuck inside the house? Come out to Fontana and enjoy an afternoon exploring. building a fire, and cooking. There will be a snowshoe hike through the Fontana Woodland trails.



followed by a fire building activity and delicious desserts. No prior snowshoeing experience is necessary. Be sure to preregister because there are a limited number of snowshoes available.

Attention Civic Groups

Conservation Board staff are prepared to present to civic groups about county parks, wildlife, and many other topics. To schedule a presentation, call 319-636-2617.

Moonlit Snowshoe Saturday, Jan. 19, 5:30 p.m.

Cost: \$5 per person or \$15 per family; Click here to register Cortright Wildlife Area: 1380 River Road Blvd., Independence

Strap on a pair of snowshoes and explore the beauty of a winter evening at Cortright Wildlife Area northwest of Independence. Participants will meet in the middle parking lot on River Road Blvd. If the sky is clear, the moon

will light our way. No prior snowshoeing experience is necessary. All ages are welcome.



Covote Club - Ice Fishing

Saturday, Feb. 16, 9 a.m. Cost: \$5 per child; Click here to register Fontana Nature Center

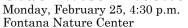
Covote Club is for kids age 6-10 who are interested in nature, animals. and outdoor fun! Participants engage with the Naturalist at Fontana Park, with programs scattered throughout the year.

Fontana Lake is a great spot to fish, even in

winter. The February Coyote Club program is a great time for young people to get out on the lake and try their luck at ice fishing. All supplies will be provided, including bait, snacks, and drinks. Adults are encouraged to learn and participate with their kids.



OWLS - Owl Chat Older Wiser Livelier Souls



Fontana Nature Center Adults only; Click here to register

There are many different owls that call Iowa home, so come out and explore the different species. The group will discover the amazing owl adaptations as creatures of the night, and even get a close encounter with one! There will be

a short hike to call for owls (and perhaps hear owls calling back!). Be sure to give a hoot for this fun program. OWLS is a program specifically designed for adults to learn and explore nature in and around Buchanan County.





Volunteer Workshop

Saturday, March 9, 9 a.m. Preregistration required

This workshop is for everyone, from seasoned volunteers who would like a refresher. to newcomers who need an orientation to do volunteer work. All are welcome! Conservation Volunteers are involved in a wide variety of activities, including serving as nature center receptionists and campground hosts, monitoring nest boxes, helping with park maintenance, pulling invasive plants, working on special projects, and more!

The Volunteer Workshop will provide an opportunity to meet other volunteers, learn about opportunities, and begin to receive volunteer training. The workshop will begin with drinks and donuts in the Nature Center. If you have questions, call Diane at 319-636-2617. Preregister at www.

buchanancountyparks.com (click on "public events").



Volunteer Edith Biddinger

assists a park user.

Volunteer Recognition

(as of 11/20/10)	
Edith Biddinger	217
RubyBodeker	161
JamesBond	23
Sally Bond	19
Joye Bowers	165
Margaret Damge	59
Breanna Ellis	9
Jan Franks	21
Ellen Gaffney	247
Helen Hoefer	864
Elaine Hughes	406
Marybeth Jaggard	923
Rita Knutson	10
Frankie King	256
Bob Miehe	
Duane Olsen	
Patti Olmsteadt	300
Judy Porter	426
Shirley Rozendaal	339
Faith Rulapaugh	
Lorene Shonka	222
David Voigts	534
Jane Watson	
Clark Willoughby	
.	



Mourning the loss of Judy Porter

Conservation Board and Staff recently suffered the loss of a great all-around Conservation Volunteer. Judy Porter served as a campground host and nature center receptionist, and helped with the newsletter and other projects. Many visitors to the park will miss Judy - a person they learned to know as part of their park experience. Condolences to Judy's many friends and family.

	ant to donate to t n. I am glad to be d		Fontana Park! te at the level shown below.
☐ Donor (\$1-99) ☐ Contributor (\$100-249)	Supporter Patron (\$5	(\$250-499) 500-999)	Sponsor (\$1,000-4,999) Founder (\$5,000 or more)
Amou	nt Enclosed: \$		
Please contact me regarding making a donation as a memorial to a friend or relative. Please contact me regarding making a donation a gift in the name of a friend or relative.		ntact me regarding making a donation as he name of a friend or relative.	
Names as you wish them to read on recognition:			
Address:			
City:	<i>State</i> :	Zip:	
Phone:_()		E- $mail$:	

Make checks payable to:

Shopping at the Nature Center



This year, consider making your holiday gifts reflect one of the main wishes we all have - spending quality time with family and friends. Purchase campground and/or cabin gift certificates. Perhaps your gift could be a sponsorship of an animal in the wildlife

display. For a donation ranging from \$50-\$175 you can place the name(s) of your kids, family, or friends on a plaque affixed to an animal enclosure for the 2019 calendar year. Certificates, sponsorships and program registrations can be purchased at the Nature Center, or ordered by phone (319-636-2617).

Stop in the Nature Center and look at our selection of nature books, field guides, T-shirts, sweatshirts, environmentally-produced coffee, and miscellaneous nature toys, mugs, puzzles, and more. Cash and personal checks are accepted.



The Buchanan County Conservation Board and Staff thanks all volunteers that help put together this newsletter. Special thanks to those people at the Independence Senior Center who help fold and tape the newsletter on a regular basis. Thanks also to those volunteers who come when needed to help place labels on more than 2,000 newsletters sent out each quarter. Thanks to those who receive the newsletter via e-mail—less to fold and staple.

Winter Weather Closings

During winter months, driving conditions may be dangerous for weekend volunteers and staff to open the nature center. Please call ahead when weather may be considered hazardous for driving. The Nature Center may be closed.

Conservation Calendar!

Dec. 10	Nature Kids - Backyard Birds Fontana Nature Center 10 a.m. (P. 4).
Dec. 17	OWLS - Birding 101 Location and time tbd (P. 4).
Dec. 20	Conservation Board Meeting Bill's Restaurant in Independence, 5 p.m. (subject to change).
Dec. 24-25	Merry Christmas! (Nature Center closed).
Jan. 1	Happy New Year! (Nature Center closed).
Jan. 1	New Year's Woodland Walks Guy Grover Timber, 10:30 a.m. Cedar Rock, 1 p.m. (P. 4).
Jan. 7	OWLS - UNI Botanical Center University of Northern Iowa 10 a.m. (P. 4).
Jan. 12	Winter Open House Fontana Nature Center, 1 p.m. (P. 7).
Jan. 14	Nature Kids - Turkeys Fontana Nature Center, 10 a.m. (P. 4).
Jan. 15	Conservation Board Meeting Fontana Park, 6 p.m. (subject to change).
Jan. 19	Moonlit Snowshoe Cortright Wildlife Area 5:30 p.m. (P. 7).
Jan. 21	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.
Feb. 11	Nature Kids - Owls Fontana Nature Center, 10 a.m. (P. 4).
Feb. 16	Coyote Club - Ice Fishing Fontana Nature Center, 9 a.m. (P. 7).
Feb. 15-18	Great Backyard Bird Count (P. 2).
Feb. 19	Conservation Board Meeting Fontana Park, 6 p.m. (subject to change).
Feb. 25	OWLS - Owl Chat Fontana Nature Center, 4:30 p.m. (P. 7).
Feb. 28	Ding Darling Nature Center Display Grand Opening Celebration, 6:30 p.m. Remains on display thru May 31 (P. 6).
Mar. 9	Volunteer Workshop Fontana Nature Center, 9 a.m. (P. 8).
Mar. 19	Conservation Board Meeting Fontana Park, 6 p.m. (subject to change).
Mar 24-26	Sandhill Crane and Prairie Chicken Trip Nebraska (P. 6).
April 22	25th Anniversary Banquet Heartland Acres, 5 p.m. Reserve tickets now (P. 5).

The Otter Creek Quarterly

Buchanan County Parks (acres)
Fontana Park and Jarrett Slater Addition (134) Hazleton
2. Jakway Forest (315) Aurora
3. Lime Creek Area (45) Brandon
4. Boies Bend Area (26)
5. Buffalo Creek Area (81.5)
6. Otter Creek Roadside Park (13) Hazleton
Buchanan County Natural Areas (acres)
7. Mickey Fox Area and Anderson Addition (118) Jesup
8. VanLaningham Area (3) Independence
9. Otter Creek Wildlife Area (100)
10. Hoover Area (20)Troy Mills
11. Sand Creek Area (80)Quasqueton
12. Niebeck Nature Preserve (40)
13. Pine Creek Area (40)Quasqueton
14. Buffalo Creek Wildlife Area (60)Winthrop
15. Rowley Fen (43)
16. Koutny Pond/Hoffman Woods (106) Brandon
17. Putty Root Preserve (17)Quasqueton
18. Blazing-Star Prairie (7.5) Rowley
19. Crumbacher Wildlife Area (368) Independence
20. Bearbower Sand Prairie (40)Brandon
21. Swartz Preserve (4)Aurora
22. Bryantsburg Prairie Preserve (1.5)Hazleton
23. Frogville Access (135)Troy Mills
24. Schneider-Heinick-Rowe Area (20)Troy Mills
25. Newton Township Natural Area (158)Quasqueton
26. Patton Prairie (45)Aurora
27. Hodges and North Wildlife Area (67)Jesup
28. Fairbank Fen (40)Fairbank
29. Anderson Addition to Cutshall (24)Jesup
30. Ham Marsh (54)Independence
31. Wehner Woods (30)Lamont
32. Guy Grover Timber and Tree Plantings (201)Quasqueton
33. Quigley-Slattery Heritage Prairie (33)Winthrop
34. Roberts Wildlife Area/Cutshall Addition (109)Fairbank
Buchanan County River Accesses (acres)
35. Iron Bridge Woodland (34)Quasqueton
36. Troy Mills Wapsi Access (63) Troy Mills
37. Wapsi River Access (51) Independence
38. Three Elms Area (75)Independence
39. Cutshall Area (72)
40. Cortright Wildlife Area (189)Littleton
41. Robert "Chic" McGlauighlin Access (6) Littleton

Board Members

Loren Hamilton	President
Ronnie Wolfe	Vice President
Karen Stephenson	Secretary
Andy Crump	
Anita Miller	Member

Conservation Staff

Dan Cohen	Executive Director
Sondra Cabell	Interpretive Naturalist
Michael Maas	Interpretive Naturalist
Mike Van Raden	Park Ranger
Jeremy Whittle	Park Ranger
	.Conservation Technician
Steve Sauer	.Conservation Technician
	Office Manager
Diane JohnsonSecreta	ry/Volunteer Coordinator

The Otter Creek Quarterly is printed on Exact Offset paper manufactured by Wausau. This is a Green Seal paper - a mark of environmental responsibility. For more information about Green Seal paper, go to www.greenseal.org. Contact the Conservation Department (319-636-2617/dcohen@co.buchanan.ia.us) for more information.

The Buchanan County Conservation Board does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, creed, national origin, age, or handicap. If anyone believes he or she has been subject to discrimination, he or she may file a complaint with the Buchanan County Conservation Board or the Office of Equal Opportunity, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.

For more information regarding Conservation Board activities, call 319-636-2617/dcohen@co.buchanan.ia.us



Students from East Buchanan Schools experience using snowshoes during a past field trip to Fontana Park. Several snowshoeing opportunities are offered to the public this winter (page 7), and snowshoes are made available at no charge to cabin renters upon request - subject to availability (page 2). One more way to enjoy the outdoors this winter!