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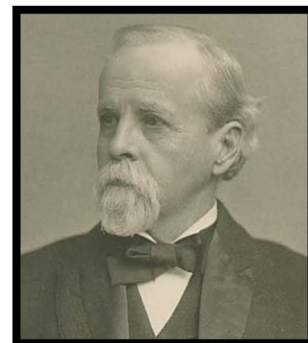
John F. Lacey The First Strong Congressional Voice for Conservation

By Laura DeCook
Naturalist

Lately, radios and televisions have been inundated with political commercials of people wanting us to elect them into a political office. At election time, our votes are important. Perhaps someone we elect will create legislation to help conservation in ways that no one has attempted before. A century ago, someone from Mahaska County did just that.

John F. Lacey served as a U.S. Representative for Iowa's Sixth District for 16 years (1889-1891, 1893-1907). He secured legislation to protect birds and other wildlife, national

forests and national parks and monuments. For this, Lacey was given the title "Father of Federal Conservation Legislation". When Lacey first became a congressman, he was ridiculed by other congressmen for his concerns about wildlife protection. Then later, Lacey proved himself to be one of the most competent legislators in Washington and silenced their ridicules. President Theodore Roosevelt also relied heavily upon Lacey while pursuing his policy on conservation. By this time in history, conservation issues had become an important national and legislative concern.



John F. Lacey

Here are examples of legislation that Lacey helped write and pass through the US Congress:

Forest Reserve Act of 1891- Permitted the President to set aside federal forest reserves (now called national forests) from the public domain (unsettled federal lands).

Yellowstone Protective Act of 1894 – Established Yellowstone as a wildlife refuge, the first refuge in the country. The act was the first legislation to establish national park management rules and it was also the first federal wildlife protection law. This is considered a piece of landmark legislation.

Lacey Bird Act of 1900 – Prohibits trade in wildlife, fish, and plants that have been illegally taken, possessed, transported or sold. It also protects both plants and wildlife by creating civil and criminal penalties for those who violate the rules and regulations.

Antiquities Act of 1906 – Allowed "the President to declare by public proclamation historic landmarks...and other objects of historic or scientific interest that are situated on (federal) land to be national monuments."

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Conservation Board!



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to make your reservations!

Welcome to the Mahaska County Conservation Board

Ross Nilson
Volunteer Board Member

Ross Nilson is the newly appointed board member for the Mahaska County Conservation Board as of August, 2014. We welcome Ross!

Ross grew up in Eddyville, Iowa and moved to Oskaloosa in 2008. As a child, he developed his passion for the outdoors and still today, one of his favorite places to spend time is somewhere deep in the woods. He enjoys the woods because it gives him time away from the sounds of modern day life. To him, spending time outdoors with family is better yet.

Besides spending time in the woods, Ross enjoys hunting, golfing and fishing. He owns a small acreage on which he enjoys spending time managing the land.

Who has been his greatest inspiration for nature and the environment? Ross stated, "My brother has always been my greatest supporter in the outdoors. We have always pushed each other to do more and better things every day. Nothing short of perfection!"

When asked why people should care about the environment, Ross replied, "The environment is something that we as mankind will never be able to reproduce. Once the land is gone, it's gone forever. Preserving public places for people to enjoy should be a priority for all of us". He believes that nothing else has had a profound impact on wildlife since the Lacey Act.



Nature Notes

Whitetail Deer Rubs

By Laura DeCook, Naturalist



The fall season is a great time of year to hike through the woods. Finding any sights, sounds and smells of the fall season can be refreshing to the senses. One of my favorite sights to see each fall are deer rubs, the shredded markings on trees made by the antlers of whitetail bucks.

Deer rubs are created when a male deer rubs his forehead and antlers against the base of a tree. In the early fall, rubs are usually made by bucks with the intentions of strengthening their neck muscles and rubbing the velvet off of their new antler growth. By performing mock battles with trees, bucks prepare for fights with real deer later on in the season.

However, deer rubs not only leave a visual clue to a buck's presence in an area, but an olfactory message as well. The rub contains a deer scent that tells other bucks to "back off, this is my territory". When rubbing tree trunks, deer rub scent from various scent glands on its head into the fresh sap of the scarred tree. The oily secretion from the forehead glands, or apocrine sweat glands, contain a genetic calling card that tell other deer about the social status and hierarchy a deer has with the local herd. Typically, a more dominant buck will make rubs with more frequency to announce his presence and stature. It has been said that the pheromones contained within the forehead glands are actually used to announce the coming of the next rutting phase.

Research indicates that the scent released from the preorbital glands in the corner of the eyes is also used for communicating social dominance when a deer rubs its face against brush or trees.

Deer rubs are fairly easy to spot in the woods. The fresh white and orange bark shining in the grey woods is a sign that we can't miss. Usually, these rubs are made along a network of trails used by bucks in their coming and going from bedding to feeding areas. Sometimes, along the edge of woods next to crops you'll find several dozen rubs all within a small area. These are known as staging areas, where several bucks will hang out, marking trees and sparring with each other while waiting for the cover of darkness to venture out into the open fields.

Fall Public Programs



Looking for a healthy outdoor activity?
Look for this symbol throughout the
list of upcoming public programs.

I-Spy Trail Hike



Friday, October 10
Noon – 1:30 pm
Russell Wildlife Area



I-spy books are a lot of fun for all ages...how about taking it outdoors? Come out to the Russell Wildlife Area any time between noon and 1:30 pm and take a hike down a trail to find hidden objects. Some won't be easy to find! While on the trail, take a "selfie" of you and the most challenging object. It will be posted on MCCB's Facebook page. Participants that find *every hidden object* on the trail will receive a prize! **Please pre-register by calling MCCB at (641)673-9327.**

Kidtoberfest

Saturday, October 11
2:00 – 3:00 pm stage presentation
Penn Central Mall, Oskaloosa



Bring your family to see live snakes at a stage show at this year's Kidtoberfest! Naturalist Laura DeCook will talk about reptiles that live in Iowa and give you a close-up look at live snakes and turtles. Kidtoberfest is a free, one-day event sponsored by the Mahaska County ISU Extension Office. The event provides families the opportunity to learn about youth development resources available in Mahaska County. There will be a lot of things for kids to do at this event – check it out!

Hunter Education Class

Thursday, October 16 (5:30 - 9:30 pm)
& Saturday, October 18 (9:00 am – 3:00 pm)
Russell Wildlife Area



This course is free of charge, but space is limited and **pre-registration is required at www.iowadnr.gov**. Anyone born after January 1st, 1972 must attend a Hunter Education course before they are allowed to purchase an Iowa hunting license. Any person who is 11 years old or older is eligible to attend the class. **Participants must attend both days.** This class is co-sponsored by the Skunk River Retriever Club.



Halloween Bash at Eveland Access



Saturday, October 25
5:00 – 10:00 p.m.
Eveland Access Campgrounds

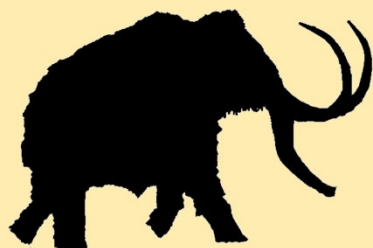
Calling all ghouls and goblins! This event will be fun for the whole family, whether you are camping or not. There is no cost for the contests, games and other fun events. Camping at Eveland Access is \$10.00 per night on a first-come, first-served basis. Campers are asked to decorate their campsite with a Halloween theme and provide treats to hand out to Trick or Treaters. The campsite with the best decorations will be awarded a free weekend of camping! The event activities will be held in the shelter house next to the playground and the schedule will be as follows:

- 5:00 pm **Snakes Alive!**
- 5:30 pm **Creative Contests & Games** (for children & adults)
 - Coloring Contest (materials provided)
 - Pumpkin Contest (bring a decorated pumpkin)
 - Hedge Ball Bowling
- 6:00 pm **Creepy Contests** (for children & adults)
 - Best Scream Contest
 - Best Owl Call Contest
 - Best Coyote Call Contest
- 6:30 pm **Storytelling by Mrs. Fox**
- 7:00 pm **Costume Parade & Night Hike** (through the campgrounds)
- 7:30 pm **Camp Site Decoration Judging & Trick or Treating** (from campsite to campsite)
- 8:30 pm **Campground Movie** featuring Disney's "Hocus Pocus" (bring your own lawn chair/blanket)



Eveland Access is located 4 miles south of Beacon on T39 adjacent to the Des Moines River. For more information, call the Mahaska Count Conservation Board at (641)673-9327.

Fall Public Programs



DIGGIN' UP BONES

Wednesday, October 29 - 3:30 p.m.

Oskaloosa Public Library
Meeting Room A, Third Floor



Laura DeCook
Mahaska County
Conservation Board
www.mahaskaconservation.com

MCCB Naturalist Laura DeCook will offer a presentation on the mammoth dig site located in Mahaska County.

Woolly mammoths roamed Mahaska County nearly 13,000 years ago. Laura will explain the fascinating story of what has been discovered at the dig site and show some of the bones that have been found there.

The story is not just about mammoths, but of what Mahaska County's landscape would have looked like long ago.

Oskaloosa Public Library 301 S. Market St. (641) 673 - 0441 www.oskaloosalibrary.org

Our website has a new look!



Expedition Mahaska County



Friday, November 14
9:00 am - Noon
Russell Wildlife Area



This will be the first in a series of expeditions in Mahaska County for the older kids (grades 6-12). This expedition will send you to the **Russell Wildlife Area**. Find the "wild" in you by hiking outdoors, going geocaching around the park and cooking lunch over the campfire. Some kids in the county do not have school on this day, so bring a friend! *Dress for the weather. This event is for kids in grades 6-12. We are asking each participant to bring an item to share for the lunch – inquire when you sign up. Please pre-register by calling (641)673-9327.*

Online Hunter Education Field Day

Wednesday, December 3
6:00 – 9:30 p.m.
North Mahaska High School,
New Sharon



Participants must pre-register and complete the online course prior to the start of the field day class. The field day is free of charge, but space is limited. Anyone born after January 1st, 1972 must attend a Hunter Education course before they are allowed to purchase an Iowa hunting license. Any person who is 11 years old or older is eligible to attend the class. *To pre-register and take the course, go online to www.iowadnr.gov.*

Winter Tales

Saturday, December 6
9:00 – 10:30 a.m.
Russell Wildlife Area



Bring your family out to the conservation center on this winter morning to listen to tales about wildlife in the winter. Afterwards, we will decorate cookies and meet a jolly visitor from the North Pole—Santa Claus! *This event is for all ages.*

Winter Day Camp



Tuesday, December 30
1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
Russell Wildlife Area



Kids, get out of the house during your winter break and come out to the conservation center to have fun and learn about nature on a winter day! Dress for the weather because having fun in winter is spending some time outdoors. Indoor activities (including a movie and popcorn) will also be held so we can warm up our fingers and toes. *This event is for all ages. Please pre-register by calling (641)673-9327 because we have limited space.*



Friends of Mahaska County Conservation

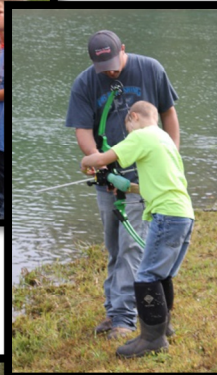
FMCC is a non-profit organization created in 2011 with the purpose of raising money for a new Environmental Learning Center and other environmental education projects in Mahaska County. The Friends board consists of 10 board members who are committed to the betterment of outdoor education in our community. The Environmental Learning Center will be located at Caldwell Park, just East of Oskaloosa, on Highway 92.



Look for more information about the Friends of Mahaska County Conservation on their Facebook page and at their website www.friendsofmccb.weebly.com!

Photo courtesy of Cole Nilson

2014 Youth Outdoor Field Day Snapshots



Statement

The primary mission of this organization shall be to create an awareness of our natural environment, encourage a state of harmony between people and their natural communities, develop and implement public conservation policy, maintain the public's investment in our natural resources, and strive diligently within the budget restraints to provide adequate services for the environmental education and enjoyment of the citizens of Mahaska County.

The Prairie Star

The Prairie Star is the quarterly newsletter of the Mahaska County Conservation Board and is mailed to those persons on our mailing list. There is no charge for the newsletter, although contributions to help defray printing and mailing costs are greatly appreciated. Please help us keep our costs down by keeping us informed of any change of address or if you wish to receive the newsletter by email.

"A tree tries to argue, bare limbs waving, but there is no detaining the wind."

~ Aldo Leopold



A Big Thank You!

The Mahaska County Conservation Board wishes to extend our deepest thanks to the following people and businesses for their donations and volunteer time.

Youth Outdoor Field Day Sponsors:

Mahaska County Pheasants Forever
Mahaska County Fan Club NWTF
Mahaska County Izaak Walton League
Mahaska County Ducks Unlimited
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Clow Valve Company
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Oskaloosa Hy-Vee
VanderBeek Truck Accessories
Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Striegel Communications
Swim's Sports & Awards
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Glenn & Susan Knox

Youth Outdoor Field Day Volunteers:

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Peggy Wright
Grace Vavra
Claire Carmichael
Ethan Rice
Leah Rice
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Larry Anderson
Russ Sytsma
Steve Heaton
John Steinbach
Amanda Dunlay
Levi Taylor
Jessica Taylor
Lexi, the retriever
Sarah Hodges
Splash, the retriever

MCCB CALENDAR NOTES:

- October 2 **Mahaska County Conservation Board Meeting**
7:30 p.m. @ Conservation Center, Russell Wildlife Area
- October 20 **Youth Outdoor Field Day Wrap-Up Meeting**
6:00 p.m. @ Conservation Center, Russell Wildlife Area
Friends of Mahaska County Conservation
6:30 p.m. @ Conservation Center, Russell Wildlife Area
- November 6 **Mahaska County Conservation Board Meeting**
7:30 p.m. @ Conservation Center, Russell Wildlife Area
- November 17 **Friends of Mahaska County Conservation**
6:30 p.m. @ Conservation Center, Russell Wildlife Area
- December 6 **Mahaska County Conservation Board Meeting**
7:30 p.m. @ Conservation Center, Russell Wildlife Area
- December 17 **Friends of Mahaska County Conservation**
6:30 p.m. @ Conservation Center, Russell Wildlife Area

Dates and times are subject to change. Call MCCB at (641)673-9327 for more information.





COUNTY CONSERVATION CENTER HOURS

12:30 to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday
or by appointment.

The Mahaska County Conservation Board meetings are open to the public. Visitors are always welcome and encouraged to attend. The board meets the first Thursday of every month at 7:30 p.m. at the Conservation Center. Please note: these dates are subject to change.

A large-type version of this newsletter is available on request.

Mahaska County's programs and facilities are consistent with pertinent federal and state laws and regulations on non-discrimination regarding race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, and handicap. If anyone believes he or she has been subjected to discrimination, he or she may file a complaint alleging discrimination with either the Mahaska County Conservation Board or the office for Equal Opportunity, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington D.C. 29240.

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Mahaska County Conservation Board



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