

# THE CONSERVATOR

November, 2016



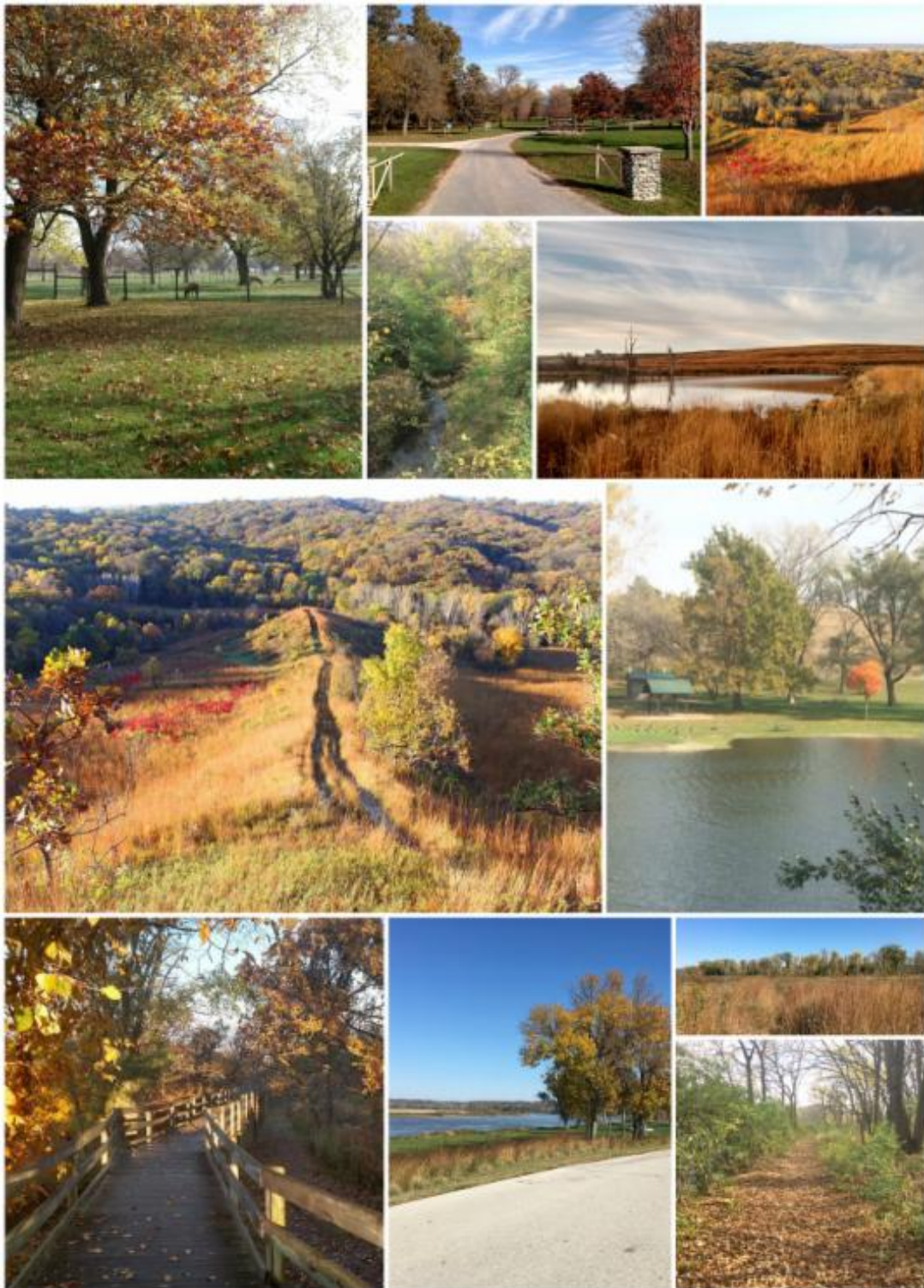
THE MONTHLY E-NEWSLETTER FROM POTTAWATTAMIE COUNTY CONSERVATION



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## Fall Fireworks in Pottawattamie County

October was stunning at all of our parks. Here are some photos of Arrowhead Park, Botna Bend Park, Farm Creek Public Wildlife Area & Hitchcock Nature Center so we can all enjoy the autumn colors a little longer.



**Off Season Camping at your County Parks!**



The end of fall doesn't have to signal the end of camping in Pottawattamie County! Three of our parks feature campgrounds that are open year round & ready for visitors!

**Arrowhead Park** - All campsites are open and electricity is still available throughout the park. Water access is restricted during the winter months with the modern shower house closed for the season and hydrants turned off to protect our plumbing from the winter cold so bring your own water or be prepared to purchase some in Avoca. Well maintained pit toilets are available for camper use all winter long. Don't forget our three camping cabins are also available year round. While they don't have running water they do have electricity & they are heated for a cozy winter getaway. Campsites are still first come, first served but you can make reservations for our cabins online at [www.mycountyparks.com](http://www.mycountyparks.com). Water will be available until mid-November barring any unforeseen weather changes. To confirm water availability please call the park office at 712-485-2295 or [follow Arrowhead Park on Facebook for updates](#).

**Botna Bend Park** - All campsites are open & electric sites are available throughout the winter! Water access is reduced during the winter months to protect our plumbing. The showerhouse, north campground restrooms, & dumpstation will closed for the season in mid-November but we do have pit toilets available year round and water hydrants remain on with the exception of those in the south campground. For additional information please call the park office at 712-741-5165 or follow [Botna Bend Park on Facebook](#).

**Hitchcock Nature Center** - All campsites, including the incredibly popular backcountry tent camp sites are open all year long! Our modern showerhouse & park hydrants will be turned off in mid-November in anticipation of the winter's cold but pit toilets are available year round and electricity is still on to all of our RV campsites. Our three camping cabins are also open year round and with heat & electricity making them the perfect spot for a winter adventure. Camping is first come first served but you can make cabin reservations online at [www.mycountyparks.com](http://www.mycountyparks.com). For more information give us a call at 712-545-3283 or [follow Hitchcock Nature Center on Facebook!](#)

**Narrows River Park** - This seasonal park will close for winter on November 1st. We can't wait to see you all again in April when the weather warms up!



## HawkWatch Season in Full Swing at Hitchcock Nature Center

HawkWatch efforts continue at Hitchcock Nature Center with our season counter, Bethany Thornton & her team of dedicated volunteer HawkWatchers staffing the tower seven days a week! Over 6,500 migrating raptors have been counted since they began their work in September.



[Weekly infographics with species and count information are available on our website](#), so find us online and keep up with our feathered friends as they migrate south for the season.



The Naturalist School collecting seed for restoration projects at Hitchcock Nature Center. Photo by Robert Smith.

## The Naturalist School at Hitchcock Nature Center

The November session of The Naturalist School begins November 5th, 2016.

For details, visit [www.thenaturalistschool.org](http://www.thenaturalistschool.org).

## Pre-register for our November Public Programs

Pre-registration is open for our November & December public programming. Advance registration helps us ensure that we have proper staffing levels and supplies to accommodate all of our program participants & it helps you secure your seat in advance. Online registration is available for all of our programs or you can always register by phone at 712-545-3283.

### Coming Up in November

Saturday, November 5th - 4:00 p.m.

Dan Kaercher presents "Exploring Iowa's Natural Heritage"

[Register Online Here](#)

Saturday, November 19th - 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

HawkWatch Eagle Migration

[Register Online Here](#)

### Coming Up in December

Saturday, December 17th - 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Nature On Tap (21 & Over Event)

[Register Online Here](#)

Sunday, December 18th - 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Winter Extravaganza

[Register Online Here](#)

## News from Natural Areas Management

**From Chad Graeve, Natural Resource Specialist & Kody Wohlers, Conservation Technician**

Natural Areas Staff have had a very busy fall season. Projects have included spraying Canada thistle at all of our areas, cutting brush, and finishing firebreak and burn plans for the upcoming burn season. In the last few weeks we have also assisted with construction of a lean-to shed and the mowing of honeysuckle re-sprouts at Arrowhead Park. We have completed our grazing project for the year and returned our team of goats to Honey Creek Creamery.

In the next couple weeks we will be busy burning if the weather remains cooperative. Most of the fall fire will occur at Hitchcock as has been the case since 2010. We are planning for over 1300 acres in various locations, and various fuel models (remnant prairie, reconstructed prairie, oak savanna, mesic woodland, and river riparian). Areas to note that will see fire this fall are Hitchcock Nature Center, Arrowhead Park, Old Town Park, Wheeler Grover Conservation Area, Fairmont Park, as well as some small private landowner areas. Please note that the trails at Hitchcock Nature Center remain open during burns. However, timing for some areas of the preserve do not allow for foot travel on some trails when we are burning that portion of the preserve. Please check our Facebook pages frequently for updates on burn plans throughout the month of November.



## Upcoming Programs

**Dan Kaercher Presents "Discovering Iowa's Natural Heritage**

**4:00 p.m.**

**Saturday, November 5th, 2016**

**Hitchcock Nature Center, Honey Creek**

There is a common misconception that Iowa is flat and full of cornfields ... Don't believe it! Discover the hidden gems throughout the great Hawkeye State with Dan Kaercher of *Midwest Living*. [Read More ...](#)

### **HawkWatch Eagle Migration**

**1:00 to 3:00 p.m.**

**Saturday, November 19th, 2016**

**Hitchcock Nature Center, Honey Creek**

Hitchcock has been recognized as one of the top 5 hawkwatches in the world for viewing migrating bald eagles and November is the ideal time to view these majestic animals on their journey south. The annual program will also include live raptor demonstrations by Raptor Recovery, & guided hike. [Read More ...](#)

### **KinderNature: Nocturnal Animals**

**1:30 to 2:30 p.m.**

**Sunday, November 20th, 2016**

**Hitchcock Nature Center, Honey Creek**

What goes bump in the night? Find out about nocturnal animals and the acute senses they use to move and find food. Journey on a nocturnal animal hike in search of clues they've left behind in the daytime. [Read More ...](#)

### **KinderNature: Tricky Tracks**

**10:00 to 11:00 a.m.**

**Saturday, December 17th, 2016**

**Hitchcock Nature Center**

Head out to discover the clues that animals leave behind as they travel the forest floor and try your hand at making your own tracks at this fun filled program. [Read More ...](#)

### **Nature on Tap**

**7:00 to 9:00 p.m.**

**Saturday, December 17th, 2016**

**Hitchcock Nature Center, Honey Creek**

Register your team of up to 5 participants to try your hand at nature trivia. Bring your thinking caps because there will be prizes from over 6 Iowa breweries up for grabs! This is a 21 & over only event. [Read More ...](#)

### **Winter Extravaganza**





**2:00 to 4:00 p.m.**

**Sunday, December 18th, 2016**

**Hitchcock Nature Center, Honey Creek**

Join us for some family fun in the great outdoors as we celebrate all things winter! Stop by the park from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 18th for winter crafts, activities & exploration in Iowa's winter wonderland. [Read More ...](#)

STAY CONNECTED:

 Hitchcock Nature Center  Arrowhead Park  Botna Bend Park  Narrows River Park

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Try it **FREE** today.

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