

# THE CONSERVATOR

January, 2017

THE MONTHLY E-NEWSLETTER FROM POTTAWATTAMIE COUNTY CONSERVATION



Visit Our Website

## Two New Adult Learning Program Series Planned for 2017

Our Environmental Education department is kicking off 2017 with a bang by announcing the creation of two new programs geared towards adults, the 2017 Speaker Series & the OWLS Program. Both of these new programs are part of our newly redesigned programming for the season.

### 2017 Speaker Series

The 2017 Speaker Series will feature a new presenter with a new and unique topic each month, from April through October. These programs are designed for teens & adults to give them a chance to learn from and interact with various authorities in the fields of conservation & environmental science. Speakers, topics and details will be coming very soon. Watch our [website](#) for a full list of speakers coming soon!

Programs will begin at 4:00 p.m. & will last approximately an hour. Every program in this series will be free of charge with paid park admission or annual permit, free will donations are greatly appreciated. Our naturalist, Kristen Bieret is also on a mission to partner with local food producers to showcase their products following each program. If you are interested in being a local partner please contact Kristen for details, you can reach her at 712-328-5638 or via email at [kristen.bieret@pottcounty-ia.gov](mailto:kristen.bieret@pottcounty-ia.gov).



## **OWLS (Older, Wiser Learning Seniors)**

The OWLS (Older, Wiser Learning Seniors) is a brand new partnership effort with The Center in Council Bluffs designed for senior learners. Twice a month from January through March our Naturalists will be presenting two new programs to area seniors. Programs will be hosted at both The Center in Council Bluffs & at Hitchcock Nature Center in Honey Creek. Bring your lunch and join us for nature based learning.

### The Center, Council Bluffs, IA

12:30 to 1:30 p.m.

January 18th - "Badgers"

February 15th - "Owls"

March 22nd - "Birds & Butterflies"

### Hitchcock Nature Center, Honey Creek, IA

11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

January 25th - "Animal Homes"

February 22nd - "Astronomy"

March 29th - "Monarchs"

These programs are presented free of charge, free will donations are appreciated. Attendees to the monthly program at The Center do not need to be facility members. Attendees to the monthly program at Hitchcock Nature Center will need to purchase either a \$2.00 per vehicle daily entrance pass or have a valid Pottawattamie County Parks annual permit.

For additional information on these or other Pottawattamie County Conservation programs please visit our website, [www.pottcoconservation.com](http://www.pottcoconservation.com).

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## **Pothast to Manage Natural Areas For Harrison County Conservation**

*By Kody Wohlers, Conservation Technician*

The Pottawattamie County Conservation organization would like to extend a big thank you to Thad Pothast. Thad has worked as a shared Natural Resource Technician with the Pottawattamie County Conservation Natural Areas department and Harrison County Conservation over the past 4 years. Thad has moved into a full-time position with Harrison County Conservation to operate their natural areas program and be the weed commissioner for Harrison County.

Thad was a tremendous asset to the natural areas program over his tenure with PCCB. He was a big part of the prescribed fire operations, invasive weed control, timber thinning, infrastructure improvements, and various additional projects. He did a great job of developing over the years into a great land steward, fire practitioner, and invasive conservationist. We look forward to continuing to work with Thad and building the partnership with Harrison County for many years to come.

Thad lives with his wife, Johanna, and daughter, Sage, in Woodbine. We would like to thank Thad once again for his hard work and devotion to the PCCB natural areas, and wish him and his family the very best in their new endeavor!



## Backcountry Camping & Loess Hills Lodge Rentals Make the Move Online

To better serve our visitors Pottawattamie County Conservation has opened online reservations for both our backcountry camping sites & our Loess Hills Lodge rentals. Popularity & increased usage of these facilities made a change to a more streamlined rental process a necessity.

### Backcountry Camping

The 2016 camping season was incredibly busy for Hitchcock Nature Center's five backcountry sites. In addition to record usage we also added an additional two sites which both feature hammock camping facilities bringing our total available backcountry campsites to seven.

[Click here to view an updated trail map featuring our new campsites](#)

[Click here to view our 2017 backcountry camping brochure](#)

With the increased number of sites & climbing usage numbers we have increased the fee for all backcountry sites to \$7.50 per tent or hammock per night. Additionally, beginning January 1st all backcountry sites will require advanced online reservation. Backcountry campers will be required to visit [www.mycountyparks.com](http://www.mycountyparks.com) to reserve & pay for their campsite in advance of occupation. While this change will impact our walk-up campers it will allow our backcountry campers the opportunity to choose their site in advance of their arrival & guarantee their site will be available when they arrive. To read more about this change please [check out our latest BeWilder blog post here](#) or visit our website, [www.pottcoconservation.com](http://www.pottcoconservation.com).

### Loess Hills Lodge

Beginning January 1st guests interested in renting one of the two available classroom spaces at



the Loess Hills Lodge will be able to check availability & book their rental online using [www.mycountyparks.com](http://www.mycountyparks.com). This new option will give you the opportunity to plan your event with available dates, facility information, photos, rental policies, & the ability to book your rental all in one convenient location. For more information on rentals at the Loess Hills Lodge please visit our website, [www.pottcoconservation.com](http://www.pottcoconservation.com).

## Help PCCB Design our New T-Shirts!

Pottawattamie County Conservation is looking for your help! Have an idea for a t-shirt design for any of our parks? We want to see it. Details will be announced in February and our contest will begin in March so watch for updates coming soon!

## Two New Programs Announced for February at Hitchcock Nature Center

Join us for some February fun at Hitchcock Nature Center with two new programs & celebrate all there is to love in nature just in time for Valentines Day.

Saturday, February 11th will be a whole day of fun for guests of all ages with two unique programs. Families are invited to join us for Families Love Nature from 3:30 to 5:00 p.m. for a host of activities designed to inspire a love of nature for participants of all ages. Then, that evening, couples are invited for a special evening designed to celebrate love. Join us for a cozy fire & cocoa as you take in the beauty of the Loess Hills Lodge at night then head out on either a guided night hike or strike out on your own for a walk down a special lit trail.

Registration for both of these exciting new programs is currently open, visit our website, [www.pottcoconservation.com](http://www.pottcoconservation.com) for additional details and to register.



## Snowshoe Rentals Available at Hitchcock Nature Center

Snowshoe rentals are now available at the Loess Hills Lodge at Hitchcock Nature Center. Visit the Loess Hills Lodge during regular business hours to check out your own pair. Renters must be 18 & over or be accompanied by an adult, additionally, snowfall of 4" to 6" is required for snowshoe rental.

Snowshoes are available to rent during regular Loess Hills Lodge  
regular hours of operation:

Friday-Saturday 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Sunday 1:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.

\$6.00 per day per pair or \$10.00 per weekend per pair

Single day rentals must stay on park property and be returned before the close of business that day to avoid a late charge. Weekend rentals may be taken off park property and be returned before close of business on Sunday to avoid a late charge.

Please note - Daily & weekend snowshoe rentals will not be available on January 14th or February 18th due to the Guided Snowshoe Hikes

## Upcoming Programs

### January Guided Snowshoe Hike

1:00 to 2:00 p.m.

Saturday, January 14th, 2017

Hitchcock Nature Center, Honey Creek

Join Pottawattamie County Conservation staff on a snowshoeing adventure through the beautiful Loess Hills. This workshop is designed for participants 12 years of age and older & pre-registration is required. [Read More ...](#)

### KinderNature: Snow Science

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

Saturday, January 14th, 2017

Hitchcock Nature Center, Honey Creek

Did you know that there are many kinds of snow and that snowflakes come in all sorts of shapes & sizes? Become a snow scientist as we investigate this natural wonder. [Read More ...](#)

### OWLS Program - Badgers

12:30 to 1:30 p.m.

Wednesday, January 18th, 2017

The Center, Council Bluffs

Older learners are invited to bring their lunch as join us at The Center in Council Bluffs to learn more about an Iowa native, the badger, presented by one of our Naturalists. [Read More ...](#)

### OWLS Program - Animal Homes

11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Wednesday, January 25th, 2017

Hitchcock Nature Center, Honey Creek

Seniors are invited to join us at Hitchcock Nature Center as we discuss the different habitats of area native animals. Bring your lunch and visit with one of our park naturalists and learn. [Read More ...](#)

### Families Love Nature

3:30 to 5:00 p.m.

Saturday, February 11th, 2017

Hitchcock Nature Center, Honey Creek

Get in the Valentine's Day spirit as you enjoy crafts, activities, guided hikes and much more as you and your family discover all kinds of things to love about nature! Pre-registration required. [Read More ...](#)

### Sweethearts Love Nature

7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Saturday, February 11th, 2017

Hitchcock Nature Center, Honey Creek

Join us for a sweet time at Hitchcock Nature Center as we get ready for Valentine's Day and find romance in Iowa's Loess Hills. [Read More ...](#)

STAY CONNECTED:

 Hitchcock Nature Center  Arrowhead Park  Botna Bend Park  Narrows River Park

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