

THE CONSERVATOR

September, 2017

THE MONTHLY E-NEWSLETTER FROM POTTAWATTAMIE COUNTY CONSERVATION



Visit Our Website

Keith Summerville to Speak at Hitchcock Nature Center



Pottawattamie County Conservation is excited to host Keith Summerville, Levitt Distinguished Professor of Environmental Science and Deputy Provost at Drake University as our next guest for our 2017 Speaker Series. Join us for "Lessons Learned from Prairie Restoration" coming up September 9th at 4:00 p.m. This event is free with paid park admission & will be held at the Loess Hills Lodge. [Click here for more information.](#)

After the presentation attendees may enjoy conversation with the presenter, a book signing, and refreshments provided by local vendors. Space is limited at these events and refreshments are served so we ask that you pre-register and reserve your spot in advance. [Click here to register online in minutes](#) or give us a call at 712-328-5834.

In preparation for our September 9th event, Pottawattamie County Conservation's Kristen Bieret sat down with Keith to discuss his background, inspiration, and his upcoming talk at Hitchcock Nature Center.

Tell me a little about your background.

I am currently Levitt Distinguished Professor of Environmental Science and Deputy Provost at Drake University. I received my Ph.D in zoology from Miami (Ohio) in 2002. I teach classes ranging from conservation biology to field mammalogy to entomology, and I am most happy working outdoors, particularly in the forests and prairies of the Midwest.

What sparked your interest in the natural world?

I've always been eager to explore the outdoors, and I have fond memories of growing up surrounded by the forests and lakes of NE Ohio. A year-long research position with the Nature Conservancy in Michigan really solidified my commitment to conservation - I was essentially working to inventory all of the rare animals across both the Upper and Lower Peninsulas. I've been a committed ecologist ever since.

You are presenting at the speaker series coming up on September 9th. What are some highlights we can expect at your presentation?

I'll relate many stories of the animals and plants of Chichaqua Bottoms Greenbelt, and along the

way, I'll explain how animal ecology tells us a great deal about how to restore Iowa's native ecosystems. Expect stories about birds, ornate box turtles, and my favorite species - butterflies and moths.

[Click here to read the rest of the interview.](#)



Celebrate Loess Hills & Heritage Week, September 23rd - October 1st

Pottawattamie County Conservation is proud to be a part of the first ever Loess Hills & Heritage Week coming up September 23rd through October 1st, 2017.

Organized by a team of professionals from the Loess Hills region & designated by Iowa governor Kim Reynolds, this week long celebration will feature activities & events in all 7 Iowa counties within the Loess Hills. These public events will give residents and visitors alike the chance to experience, learn about, and appreciate Iowa's own natural wonder, the Loess Hills. Learn more about this exciting week and discover programming opportunities throughout the state at www.visitloesshills.org.

Pottawattamie County Conservation will be offering the following programs in partnership with this event. Please click the titles for more information on each program.

Introduction to Land Management: Seed Harvesting & Introduction to Prescribed Fire

September 23rd, 8:00 a.m. to Noon - Hitchcock Nature Center

\$15.00 per person, ages 14 & over please

Pre-registration required

This six-class series is designed to provide members of the public the basic knowledge and skills required to create and maintain a healthy environment in a Midwestern natural areas setting. The series will provide extensive hands-on experiences facilitated by natural resource professionals.

OWLS, Older Wiser Learning Seniors: Iowa's Loess Hills

September 26th, 11:00 a.m. to Noon - Hitchcock Nature Center

Free with park admission or annual permit, ages 50 & over please

No pre-registration required

Area seniors are invited to join us for a special presentation on Iowa's natural wonder, the Loess Hills. Bring your lunch and learn more about what makes this region so special.

Homeschool in the Hills

September 26th, 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. - Hitchcock Nature Center

Free with park admission or annual permit, ages 5 & over please

Pre-registration required

Homeschool students and parents are invited to join us for a fun filled field day in the Loess Hills. This event will feature a combination of self-guided activities such as scavenger hunts & nature challenges, along with activities guided by Pottawattamie County Conservation Naturalists.

Special Speaker Event: An Evening with John Liu

September 29th, 7:00 p.m. - Hitchcock Nature Center

Free with park admission or annual permit, ages 14 & over please

Pre-registration required

Join us for a special evening with world renowned filmmaker & Loess Hills expert John Liu. John D. Liu has documented the rehabilitation of China's Loess Plateau since 1995. He will be joining us in Iowa's own Loess Hills to share his findings & experience in this informative presentation. Following the presentation attendees may enjoy conversation with the presenter at a reception.

Birding 101 with Nik Salick

September 30th, 7:30 to 11:30 a.m. - Hitchcock Nature Center

\$20.00 per person, ages 14 & over please

Pre-registration required

Join Pheasants Forever biologist and experienced birder Nic Salick for a beginning birding class that will provide the knowledge and skills for amateur and beginning birders to accurately identify common and notable species found throughout the Midwest.

For more information on the Loess Hills & Heritage Week including upcoming programs in all participating counties please visit www.visitloesshills.org.

Backpacking 101: 4 - Season Edition to Be Presented at Hitchcock Nature Center



Pottawattamie County Conservation and the backpacking experts at Canfield's Sporting Goods have once again teamed up to present a 4-part series of classes designed for hikers and outdoor enthusiasts with limited backpacking experience.

By the end of the series, students will have acquired the knowledge, skills, and hands-on experience to plan and execute memorable backcountry trips. This series will provide a foundation upon which more advanced backpacking skills can be built and will culminate in a guided overnight backpacking trip at Hitchcock Nature Center's backcountry campsites.

The cost for the entire 4-part series is \$50.00 per student and includes a Pottawattamie County Parks annual park permit. This annual permit will provide access to all Pottawattamie County Parks for 12-months from the start of the series. [Click here to register online in minutes](#) or call 712-545-3283 for more information. Space is limited and early registration is recommended.

This series of classes is intended for adults & teens; students are encouraged to leave smaller children and pets at home. The series will be held from 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on the dates and at the locations below:

October 5th - Hitchcock Nature Center
October 19th - Canfield's Sporting Goods
November 2nd - Hitchcock Nature Center

The final session, the guided overnight, will be held on November 4th at Hitchcock Nature Center. Tentative start time is noon on the 4th & it will end the morning of Sunday, November 5th. Students are encouraged to bring their own gear for the guided overnight stay.

[Click here for more information & to register online today.](#)

HawkWatch 5K Trail Run & Walk Registration Now Open

Register today for the 13th Annual HawkWatch 5K, coming up on October 14th. This all ages event is a family favorite and a perfect way to celebrate fall in the Loess Hills.

Register before September 30th & receive a commemorative shirt!
Online registration is open or you can stop by the Loess Hills Lodge to register in person.

[Click here for more information and online registration.](#)



13TH ANNUAL
HAWKWATCH 5K
OCTOBER 14TH
\$28 BEFORE SEPT 30 **9AM** \$33 DAY OF EVENT
Hitchcock Nature Center

Questions and More Information
Call us at 712-328-5855
Email us at ched.kunze@pottcounty-ia.gov
Register at www.pottcoconservation.com



Annual Beer Tasting & Auction Coming up in October

It's time to "Go Wild for Conservation" and support the Pottawattamie Conservation Foundation! Support land stewardship, environmental education & low impact recreation in Pottawattamie County at the Pottawattamie Conservation Foundation's annual Go Wild for Conservation beer tasting & auction fundraiser.

Join us October 19th at the Mid-America Center & enjoy a number of specialty brews with custom food pairings as you view dozens of silent auction items. Then, settle in for the main event ... the Live Auction!

Tickets are on sale now! Single seats are \$50.00 each or purchase a table of 10 for \$450.00. Each ticket includes our signature beer tasting with a souvenir mug, non-alcoholic beverages, food, and a bidder number for the live and silent auctions. For additional information please call 712-328-5638.

We already have some great items that will be up for grabs in our Live Auction including:

- A one week stay in Captiva Island, FL
- An interactive cooking class
- One day use of Porsche 911 with driving instruction and unlimited driving time laps at Raceway Park
- A lake house get-away at beautiful Lake Panorama
- A licensed basketball autographed by the ISU coach & two tickets to an October football game
- A weekend of camping at a Pottawattamie County park with 30' & food provided
- A new fishing kayak with 1 hour paddling lesson
- And much more!

Auction items are arriving daily so look for this list to grow. If you would like to donate an item or a service in support of our auction please contact Sam Stivers at 712-328-5638.

[Click here for more information and to purchase your tickets online.](#)

Upcoming Programs

Hunter Education Field Day

9:00 a.m.

Saturday, September 9th

Hitchcock Nature Center, Honey Creek

Offered by Pottawattamie County Pheasants Forever, this is a mandatory program for all Iowa hunters that is designed to introduce students to several life-long skills that are important to many different types of outdoor recreational opportunities. [Read More ...](#)

2017 Speaker Series: Lessons Learned From Prairie Restoration" With Keith Summerville

4:00 p.m.

Saturday, September 9th

Hitchcock Nature Center, Honey Creek

Join us to welcome Keith Summerville, professor of Environmental Science at Drake University as he shares his 15 years of experience in prairie restoration and research. [Read More ...](#)

The Naturalist School: Late Summer Field Season Session

Session #5 - Sunday, September 10th

Session #6 - Saturday, September 16th

Hitchcock Nature Center, Honey Creek

The Naturalist School at Hitchcock Nature Center field season are for those who seek to deepen awareness of, commitment to, & engagement in citizen science, nature education, & conservation in Iowa's Loess Hills & the surrounding ecosystems. [Read More ...](#)

September Living Loess Tour

10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Saturday, September 16th

Hitchcock Nature Center, Honey Creek

Connect with the culture of the Loess Hills. The featured stop for our September tour is Sawmill Hollow Aronia Berry Farm. [Read More ...](#)

September Hitch Hike

6:00 p.m.

Tuesday, September 19th

Hitchcock Nature Center, Honey Creek

Join us at Hitchcock Nature Center on Tuesday, September 19th for the final Hitch Hike of the 2017 season. [Read More ...](#)

Introduction to Land Management: September Session

8:00 a.m. to Noon

Saturday, September 23rd

Hitchcock Nature Center, Honey Creek

All members of the public including students, land owners, and anyone interested in learning responsible land management practices are invited to join us for our new Introduction to Land Management program. [Read More ...](#)

OWLS Program: Iowa's Loess Hills

11:00 a.m. to Noon

Tuesday, September 26th

Hitchcock Nature Center, Honey Creek

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[Read More ...](#)

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6:30 to 9:00 p.m.

Thursday, October 5th

Hitchcock Nature Center, Honey Creek

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Bird Banding Demonstration

9:00 to 11:00 a.m.

Saturday, October 7th

Hitchcock Nature Center, Honey Creek

Come get a "bird's eye" view of our fine-feathered friends as you join volunteers for a live songbird banding at Hitchcock Nature Center. [Read More ...](#)

October Harvest Spoon Tour

10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Saturday, October 7th

Hitchcock Nature Center, Honey Creek

Join us for the second Harvest Spoon Saturday of 2017 & travel through Iowa's picture perfect Loess Hills and celebrate the food and culture of western Iowa. [Read More ...](#)

Arrowhead Park Annual Chili Fest

4:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Saturday, October 7th

Arrowhead Park, Neola

Bring the whole family out and enjoy a warm bowl of chili in the crisp fall air at the Arrowhead Park Chili Fest.. [Read More ...](#)

Kate Simmons, Community Relations Coordinator
Pottawattamie County Conservation
katherine.simmons@pottcounty-ia.gov

STAY CONNECTED:

 Hitchcock Nature Center  Arrowhead Park  Botna Bend Park  Narrows River Park

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