

RACCOON RIVER Watershed Association
December 2, 2020
NEWS & VIEWS



Photo by Ray Harden—Middle Raccoon River, Coon Rapids

Raccoon River Watershed Facebook Group: We have over 900 members of our Facebook group. Check it out for ongoing discussion about “Life in the Raccoon Watershed”, beautiful photos from the watershed shared by members, events, ideas and more Join us in celebrating our shared resources in the entire 4000 acre watershed. Post your favorite pictures, share your stories, and your projects.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/107052089361843>

Our monthly board meetings are currently being held via Zoom on the second Saturday of the month. Meetings are open to the public - and after a short business meeting that starts at 9:30, a discussion or speaker is scheduled for 10:30. Email INFO@RaccoonRiver.org to register and to receive the Zoom link by return email.

2020 Memberships

The RRWA is an all-volunteer non-profit with almost no overhead. While other organizations struggle to pay staff, office space, printing etc. the RRWA puts most of its resources into networking, education and research. The board has decided to eliminate new Lifetime memberships. However, our 75 lifetime memberships will continue to be honored. (Many of them still pay annual dues.) We would like to thank our Lifetime members for being wonderful supporters for many years and helping us to get where we.

Consider the Research and Education fund. Contributions are tax deductible through our partnership with Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation. Charitable deduction rules have changed for the better for 2020. You may want to give before the year is out. According to Mike Murphy: "We have given out almost \$30,000 in grants since 2010, for research conducted in the watershed by students and staff at Drake University, ISU, Buena Vista University, and others. Subjects included chemical, bacterial, and biological (BMIs) water quality; insects, including bees, Monarchs, Dragonfly/Damselfly, etc.; prairie surveys and the effects of land use and agricultural best practices on lifeforms. The RRWA has also invested in water monitoring equipment.

We provide a newsletter, special updates and our Annual LIFE IN THE RACCOON event. More information is available at our newly updated website: www.RaccoonRiver.org or Contact us at INFO@RaccoonRiver.org.

Choose the Membership that best fits for you, and/or make a special tax deductible donation to our Research and Education Fund.

- ____ Basic--\$10
- ____ Family--\$20
- ____ Organization--\$50
- ____ Business--\$50 (free ads in the newsletter included)
- ____ Supporting--\$100
- ____ Patron--\$500
- ____ RRWA Research and Education Fund (Any amount or bequest welcomed)

Please provide your name, address, email and cell phone contact.

Send your check to: Michael Murphy, 6507 Del Matro, Windsor Heights, IA 50324

SHOPPING

Beautiful Handmade Pottery: Mike Delaney has had mugs and tumblers made by Russ Leckband. You can pick one up for \$10 (below cost I might add.) Contact Delaney mikedelaney1@mac.com

Aldo Leopold Foundation Store https://www.aldoleopold.org/shop/?mc_cid=0139c336ba&mc_eid=ff6468c303

Iowa Environmental Council Store
<https://iaenvironment.salsalabs.org/GivingTuesdayFundraisingFormTemplate2/index.html?eType=EmailBlastContent&eld=10d844af-c2c8-44ab-ad80-e7ff3e140ee6>

Dr. Lee Searles' Phenology Calendar

It's been another busy year, with calendar photography fitted in the cracks of everything else. I've been able to travel east and west across the state, taking pictures of new places and living things for your viewing pleasure.

NEW IN 2021

- All-new photos (of course!) and New information and photos on the back page.
- The addition of destinations for migratory birds, to give a bigger picture of how Iowa is connected to other places. Updates to the arrival and departure dates for birds.
- A new center essay, with photos, on rewilding: what it is, how it could happen in Iowa, and what the benefits would be.

EXPECTED DATE TO BEGIN DELIVERY: November 1st. PRICING is the same as the last edition, \$25.00 each plus sales taxes, with volume discounts unchanged. Consider using the calendars as gifts, as many already do. Calendars would be a great way to say "Thanks" to employees, volunteers, and others whom you wish to recognize. More info at my website.

Thank you for your continued or new support of this ongoing project. You'll get a lot out of the calendar's information and Iowa's beauty, and that will likely prompt you to get outside more to observe what's going on.

Thank you!

Leland M. Searles, PhD, Consulting Ecologist

Leeward Solutions, LLC

Prairies, Savannahs, Streams, Wetlands, Woodlands

515-979-6457

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EVENTS - PARTNERS - RESOURCES

Webinar for farmers—Tuesday, December 8, 2pm — Lessons learned from Indiana conservation cropping systems on farm soil health — From National Izaak Walton League's Dean Farr

[Lessons learned from Indiana Conservation Cropping Systems on-farm soil health research/demonstration sites](#)

Groundwater Conference — Thursday, December 10, 2020, 9am until 12pm
[IGWA Virtual Fall 2020 Conference - Events](#)

Friends: I was in a legislative committee at the capitol a few years ago. I was shocked to know that our legislators had done away with ground water supply research and allowed the sale of unlimited amounts of water for \$25. No wonder that the Chinese are importing our water by way of hogs and grain, the southwest wants to buy our water, CAFOS locate here, data hubs, and dry country farmers are moving to Iowa for our river and ground water.

Like so much in Iowa “We take our Natural Capital—air, soil, woods, water and wildlife-- for granted.” (And our farmers vote for even more exploitation of everything!) Where is the “land ethic?” Saint Pope John Paul II said to us, “Be good stewards of the land.” Right on Saint John Paul.

Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation - Work Days on the Prairies at Perkins Prairie (south west of Jefferson) Saturday December 12, 10am until 12pm

[Winter Workday at Perkins Prairie \(Jefferson\) \(complete description\)](#)

Curb your cabin fever with a morning outdoors! Volunteers will remove brush and non-native plants from the prairie at Perkins Prairie. People are welcome to stay and hike the prairie after the event.

Invasive brush removal involves using various hand tools (handsaws or loppers) to manually cut invasive brush. Participants may work alongside or with an experienced chain sawyer. No experience necessary. Instruction and tools will be provided. New and seasoned volunteers welcome. Space is limited (this event will be capped at 20 attendees). Please arrive early to park and check-in. An RSVP is required and Covid mitigations will be in effect. RSVP link: <https://www.inhf.org/register/winter-work-day-at-perkins-prairie-2020>

Edited & produced by Mike Delaney, RRWA Founding Board Member