



# OUTDOOR CONNECTION

STORIES, ADVICE, AND INFORMATION FOR OUTDOOR LOVERS



## FISHING FUN

Kids have great day on the ice

By STEVE WEISMAN  
OUTDOOR EDITOR

The Youth Ice Fishing at Lost Island Lake on Saturday, Jan. 11 can definitely be considered a huge success. A total of 72 youngsters from around the area, age 15 and under, spent the morning on the ice learning about ice fishing technology from adult mentors, catching a variety of fish and just plain having fun on the ice!

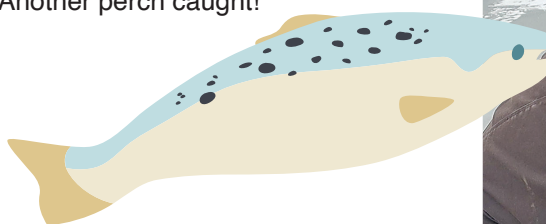
According to Kaitlin Steinle, Palo County naturalist, "We had an incredible day. The weather was good, and the fish were biting with the kids catching both perch and yellow bass. Thanks to the Iowa Great Lakes Fishing Club for providing ice fishing rod and reel combos for all 72 youngsters. They all put them to good use."

Steinle expressed her thanks to all involved. "The partnership with Palo Alto Conservation, Emmet County Conservation and the Iowa Great Lakes Fishing Club (IGLFC) and its volunteers, along with Bobber Down bait shop providing the bait helped make this a great day for everyone involved."

Meanwhile, Sidney Krueger, Emmet County naturalist, echoed those sentiments. "What a great day we had on the ice. Thank you to everyone who participated and made this amazing day happen. It was an awesome event, and I think the kids learned a lot. I know that I did."



**Top:** A total of 72 youngsters took part in the Youth Ice Fishing outing on Lost Island Lake on Saturday, January 11.  
**Above:** Another perch caught!



**At right:** Adult mentors from the Iowa Great Lakes Fishing Club helped youngsters learn about using electronics to mark fish.

**At left:** Teaming up for a nice perch.



## Thoughts on keeping ice fishing clean

By STEVE WEISMAN  
OUTDOOR EDITOR

As we move through the ice fishing season, we need to remember the importance of taking care of our surroundings. So many people are so good at this, but this message is for those who are inconsiderate and uncaring, oblivious of their surroundings. Because of them, every winter things get really bad with lots of garbage left on the ice: everything from cigarette butts, to pop bottles, plastic bags, disposable propane tanks, fishing line, human waste...you name it, and it's probably somewhere on the ice.

We talk about the lack of courtesy and the lack of care for the lake that litterers show with their mess of garbage. Really, it's so easy. It takes only bringing a plastic garbage bag along to handle the littering issue.

So, here we are another winter asking folks to clean up after themselves. Most likely, we will get the same results as we have for years and years. However, our neighbors to the north have taken on the challenge of stopping littering on the ice and made it a law.



A trailer load of garbage collected along Zippel Bay State Park Beach after a winter of ice fishing back in 2010. It is what helped kick off the Keep It Clean initiative.

Photo courtesy Keep It Clean MN

Turn to **CLEAN**, Page 3C

## Mitchell headlines the Iowa Great Lakes Fishing Club's Spring Fishing Seminar

By STEVE WEISMAN

It's hard to believe that we're less than a month from the annual Iowa Great Lakes Fishing Club's (IGLFC) annual Spring Fishing Seminar Night. Scheduled for Thursday, February 6, the evening will be held at Oak Hill Outdoor on the north end of Milford. Doors will open around 5 p.m. with a free meal for all members and their family followed by the fishing seminar. Non-members are also welcome but with a meal charge of \$10. Memberships will be available for \$25 (same cost for individuals and families).

Fishing clinician for the evening will be the widely renowned outdoorsman, Jason Mitchell, who hosts the highly popular Jason Mitchell Outdoors Television, regionally broadcast television show available throughout the Midwest on Bally Sports North and Midwest, and MIDCO Sports Net covering North and South Dakota, Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska, Wisconsin, Indiana, Illinois, Kansas, and Missouri. In addition, all episodes can also be found on YouTube.

Jason Mitchell Outdoors is an industry leader in detailed ice fishing and multi-spe-



Jason Mitchell

cies fishing intel. Information packed episodes highlighting open water and ice fishing tactics from across the Midwest.

According to IGLFC board member, Russell Sweet, "It's really kind of cool that Jason is

willing to come down for the seminar, because over 11 years ago, he was actually the first fishing clinician outside of the club who accepted an invitation to talk to the club."

Turn to **MITCHELL**, Page 2C

**PDU Cables**  
connect with us

IF YOU USE THE INTERNET, YOU USE PDU CABLES.

**PDU CABLES.COM** 108 S 16TH ST, ESTHERVILLE, IA

It's **ICE** FISHING SEASON

We carry a large selection of ice fishing equipment and supplies. Rods, reels, lures and more. Live bait available!

**ACE Hardware**

409 Central Ave, Estherville, IA • 712-362-3745

BRING YOUR CAR TO US TO KEEP YOUR CAR LOOKING ITS BEST!

**M.E.'S BODY SHOP**

2209 Murray Road, Estherville, IA  
712-362-3950


**Doug Wagner**  
Financial Advisor  
712-362-7744

**Kristia F Pollock**  
Financial Advisor  
712-362-7744

**Edward Jones**  
MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

120 N 7TH ST | ESTHERVILLE, IA 51334 | **EDWARDJONES.COM**





THE EMMET COUNTY NATURE CENTER FOUNDATION PRESENTS

# 18th Annual Nature Center Banquet

A fundraising dinner and auction

**MARCH 15, 2025**  
**ELKS LODGE ESTHERVILLE**

**SOCIAL HOUR - 5:30 PM**  
**DINNER - 6:00 PM**  
**PROGRAM & AUCTION - 7:00 PM**

All proceeds will be donated to the ECNCF

Contact us at (712) 867-4422 or  
emmetccb@yourstarnet.net for more information

THE EMMET COUNTY NATURE CENTER FOUNDATION'S

# 18th Annual Nature Center Banquet

A \$200+ SPONSORSHIP WILL GET YOU:  
2 2025 BANQUET TICKETS  
32 GENERAL RAFFLE TICKETS  
12 BONUS RAFFLE TICKETS

DONATIONS LESS THAN \$200 WILL BE  
RECOGNIZED AT THE BANQUET

BANQUET TICKETS CAN BE PURCHASED  
SEPARATELY FOR \$25

TO BECOME A SPONSOR OR DONOR,  
PLEASE CONTACT US AT (712) 867-4422  
OR EMMETCCB@YOURSTARNET.NET

## Center Lake Yellow Bass Beatdown set for Saturday

By STEVE WEISMAN  
OUTDOOR EDITOR

Here's a fun ice fishing tournament coming up! It's the second annual Center Lake Yellow Bass Beatdown scheduled for Center Lake on Saturday, February 8.

Presented by Delta Waterfowl Prairie Lakes Chapter and Oak Hill Outdoor, it's a great way to enjoy a little friendly competition, to help with the population of yellow bass in Center Lake and also as a fundraiser for the Delta Waterfowl Prairie Lakes Chapter.

The tournament will feature 2-person teams with an entry fee per team of \$100. There is also an optional Big Fish pot with the cost of \$10.

A mandatory rules meeting will be held on Friday, February 7 at 6:30 p.m., at Oak Hill Outdoor. At least one team member is required to be at the meeting. According to Anthony Smith, one of the organizers, Friday night will also feature multiple door prizes of quality fishing equipment to be given away.

Take off location will be the Center Lake Boat Ramp with the tournament running from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. According to Smith, "Each team can weigh up to 30 yellow bass. When the tournament is over, tournament officials will tag each of the buckets with each team's number, and the officials will transport the buckets of fish to Oak Hill Outdoor for the weigh-in."

Interested teams can go to the Oak Hill Outdoor Facebook page (January 18 post) to find the registration form and also on the Delta Waterfowl Prairie Lakes Chapter Facebook page. Filled out registrations can be mailed to Oak Hill Outdoor, 2188 Hwy 86, Milford, IA. 51351. You can also fill out and bring the entry to Oak Hill Outdoor.

## Missouri and Big Sioux rivers paddlefish fishing season open

DES MOINES — The paddlefish snagging season on the Missouri and Big Sioux rivers opened Feb. 1 and goes through April 30, from sunrise to sunset each day.

Anglers fishing for paddlefish must have a valid Iowa fishing license, along with a special paddlefish license and unused transportation tag(s).

Paddlefish anglers are asked to keep track of effort and catch throughout the paddlefish season. Complete the electronic survey when the season ends whether harvesting a fish or not. The information collected will help the Iowa DNR evaluate the success of the season and determine potential changes or modifications.

If an angler catches a jaw-tagged fish (numbered band in the lower jaw), call the phone number on the tag to report the tag number, date of capture, capture location and eye-to-fork length. The Iowa DNR and other state fisheries agencies tag paddlefish to better understand and manage populations. Tagging provides valuable information to estimate population size, fish movement and growth.

Low river levels might affect Missouri River boat ramp access.

For more information about Iowa's special paddlefish season regulations, visit the DNR website at [www.iowadnr.gov/paddlefish](http://www.iowadnr.gov/paddlefish).



A summer day's view from the shores of Camp Foster.

Photo submitted

# Camp Foster offers Veterans Fishing Camp

Event slated for May 13-16

By STEVE WEISMAN  
OUTDOOR EDITOR

Here is an exciting outdoor opportunity for area veterans. Camp Foster YMCA, located on the shores of East Lake Okoboji, will be hosting a Veterans Fishing Camp this spring, May 13-16 (Tuesday through Friday) for up to 20 veterans.

Mallory Wagner, Director of Overnight Camping at Camp Foster, shares her excitement about this opportunity. "At Camp Foster YMCA, we want to use this Veterans Fishing Camp as a way to thank our veterans for their

service and give them the opportunity to enjoy this time for fishing, food, fellowship and fun."

According to Wagner, "All veterans are eligible and if interested, we would like them to fill out an application on our Camp Foster website. If they have questions or need help accessing the application, they can call me at (712) 336-3272. Our deadline to apply is Friday, February 28."

### What to expect

Although the exact itinerary is not yet completed, the general framework has been established. The four-day opportunity gives participants the opportunity to stay at Camp Foster YMCA in

comfortable and modern cabins, with prepared meals and the chance to sit around the fire and share comradery and stories that so many times occur after a day of fishing!

Speaking of fishing, that's why everybody is here. It will be daily fishing with experienced guides, providing a great individual fishing opportunity with no more than two veterans per boat. Organized fishing will occur each morning, followed by a break and lunch and then back out fishing for the afternoon. Guides will be rotated so that participants get a variety of fishing experiences.

A major partner in this effort will be the Iowa

Great Lakes Fishing Club (IGLFC). The club will help with organizing of guides and offering their famous fish fry one of the evenings.

According to Terry Thomsen, president of the IGLFC, "The club is excited to be part of the Veterans Fishing Camp, and we look forward to working with the camp's organizers for this special opportunity. We look forward to being part of the Veterans Fishing Camp."

Wagner adds that there are sponsorship opportunities for groups, businesses and individuals, who want to help support this effort.

## Iowa DNR, Pheasants Forever: partners for decades to expand wildlife habitat

DES MOINES - The farm crisis of the 1980s fundamentally changed the Midwest in multiple ways, as did the large-scale loss of habitat on farm land leading up to it, which was the circumstance that ultimately created Pheasants Forever (PF) in St. Paul, Minn., in 1982.

Iowa is proud to be home to the first chapter outside of Minnesota, the Iowa Pioneer Chapter, and that excitement continues today as Iowa is home to the most chapters in the country with 94 active chapters across the state. Chapters and volunteers were motivated to create more habitat on private land, and in turn more pheasants for the hunters pursuing them.

Josh Divan, state coordinator for Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever in Iowa, has been part of the long-standing partnership for habitat development with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) since he was hired as a PF Farm Bill Biologist in 2009.

The Iowa DNR and Pheasants Forever have been partnering to improve public lands in Iowa for more than 40 years, through funding, and for the last 20 years, by the addition of wildlife specialists employed by Pheasants Forever under contract with the DNR. Today, there are 11 wildlife management specialists across the state who provide additional capacity for Iowa DNR wildlife units to conduct habitat management on public lands which benefit a wide array of wildlife species including pheasants and quail.

The Iowa DNR began a private lands program to help landowners enroll in the Conservation Reserve Program and other federal programs in 2000. In 2009, an opportunity came to expand Iowa's existing private lands team with additional PF staff to help the USDA provide wildlife technical assistance to even more landowners



across the state. The common goal of more habitat on private lands made it a natural outcome for the state agency and conservation organization to expand their partnership.

"Without habitat on private land, we wouldn't have the wildlife resources that we have in the state," Divan said. "The more staff we have in the field, the better we can serve the landowners looking for wildlife habitat assistance. It's important that people have a good experience with their habitat projects because we want them to be repeat customers."

This DNR-Pheasants Forever partnership, along with other partners, including the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, Farm Services Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service and Soil and Water Conservation Districts, has allowed for more contacts with

landowners and subsequently more acres enrolled in the federal farm programs.

In addition to the wildlife specialists, Pheasants Forever will soon employ 16 farm bill biologists (currently six) and two precision ag & conservation specialists (currently one) across the state for habitat development. Contacts are available on the Pheasants Forever website at <https://www.iowapf.net/staff/>.

Last year, PF field staff made 3,000 landowner contacts, wrote more than 550 plans and proposals, conducted 2,000 site visits and held 64 field days. In total, they provided technical assistance on 47,000 acres across the state. With the recent increase in staff, Divan expects to see the team connect with even more landowners and write more habitat plans in the coming years.

One potential habitat opportuni-

ty that Divan is particularly excited about is Iowa farmers' interest in understanding the variability in crop performance within their fields. Divan said the use of precision conservation is a newer practice which utilizes agronomic data, such as yield data, to demonstrate how targeted habitat on specific areas can provide an increased benefit to the landowner by only enrolling the most problematic cropland acres.

"A little bit of habitat on the right locations can benefit the farm and wildlife, improve the farmability and profitability of a working farm," he said. "Marginal cropland makes great wildlife habitat. Our precision ag and conservation specialists work with farmers to improve the acres in production and improve their bottom line."

The Iowa DNR-Pheasants Forever partnership goes beyond habitat.

Pheasants Forever chapters play an important role in the state's outreach effort to recruit, retain and reactive hunters, support learn to hunt events for youth and increasing more often, adults, and partner with the Becoming an Outdoors Woman workshops. Iowa PF also just gained its first Women on the Wing chapter.

"We certainly want to increase the number of people who are passionate about continuing in the tradition of hunting wild birds across Iowa," Divan said. "But we also know that when we create a bird hunter, we've also created an advocate for habitat, an advocate for wild places, and an advocate for sound policies that support those things."

The Iowa DNR and Pheasants Forever are celebrating 100 years of pheasant hunting in the Hawkeye State. The first season was held Oct. 20-22, 1925, when 13 counties in north central Iowa were opened to pheasant hunting. Hunters were allowed a three-rooster limit, for a half-day of hunting. An estimated 75,000 hunters participated.

Hunters can commemorate the 100th anniversary by purchasing a hard card featuring Iowa Pheasants Forever Print of the Year. Information on places to hunt, the August roadside survey results and more is available online by clicking the 100 Years of Pheasant Hunting graphic at [www.iowadnr.gov/pheasantsurvey](http://www.iowadnr.gov/pheasantsurvey).

Pheasants Forever is offering commemorative apparel featuring both the 100 Years of Pheasant Hunting graphic and PF logo through an online, pop-up store at the following link <https://iowahunting100.itemorder.com/shop/home/>. According to PF staff, the store will be available intermittently throughout the year, with its initial opening running from Feb. 5-23, so mark that date on your calendar to visit the store.

### MITCHELL, Continued from Page 1C

Every year since that time, regional fishing guides/experts have responded to the IGLFC requests to present an evening clinic.

According to Mitchell, "It is great to be coming back to the Iowa Great Lakes area. There are certainly excellent fisheries." The main focus of

the seminar will be looking at open water, targeting walleyes in the weeds.

**About Jason Mitchell**

Jason Mitchell has hosted and produced Jason Mitchell Outdoors Television for nearly 20 years. During that time, JMO has had some of

the highest raw Nielsen ratings for outdoor television and airs every Sunday on FanDuel Sports North. Before a career in TV, Mitchell was a renowned guide on North Dakota's Devils Lake and operated one of the largest guide services in the Midwest. Mitchell has developed and pi-

oneered many products in the fishing industry and was inducted into the ND Fishing Hall of Fame in 2016. Mitchell has also won and had top ten finishes in several fishing tournaments over his career.



# OUTDOOR CONNECTION



## Then and Now

As the outdoor world changes, it appears that deer and turkeys are learning to read.

Photo by Bob Jensen

### Outdoor world is always changing

By Bob Jensen

I looked out my office window today and saw a flock of swans flying by. For me, that was a pretty big deal. I've seen more swans in my home area in recent years. Certainly more than we saw just a few years ago, but I still consider it a new experience.

Oddly, or maybe not so oddly, we're seeing more and more of some types of wildlife and fish life. And also not so oddly, we're seeing fewer and fewer of some types of wildlife and fish life. What we see and what we do in the outdoors has certainly changed from then to now.

Fishing has changed in a lot of ways. It used to be that keeping the larger fish was the way to go. On many bodies of water today, it's beneficial to the fishery to keep the smaller fish.

Northern pike are a good example of this.

On some lakes, keeping the smaller pike is encouraged. A body of water can support a certain amount of fish poundage per acre. For instance, if a particular lake can support a hundred pounds of fish per acre, there can be twenty, five pounders, or fifty, two pounders.

Take some of the smaller ones, the ones that we used to throw back, take 'em home and eventually we'll have bigger pike. That's an over-simplification, but it makes sense. And when prepared properly, those two and three pound pike are outstanding on the table.

The same concept holds true for panfish in many lakes. In some cases, we're doing the fishery a favor by keeping the smaller fish.

On some lakes, smallmouth bass have taken the place of walleyes. Largemouth bass have always been in these lakes, but they lived in

areas where the walleyes didn't. As smallmouth populations grew, they moved into the wall-eye's neighborhood. The smallmouth flourished. They were more aggressive than the walleyes and forced them out of the areas that were originally walleye territory.

On the land, there have also been changes. When I was younger, pheasants and jackrabbits were abundant near my boyhood home in Iowa. Now pheasant numbers fluctuate up and down, but there aren't as many as there used to be, and I haven't seen a jackrabbit in a very long time.

Weather plays a role in pheasant populations, but habitat, or habitat loss, is a very important factor. Since 1990, Iowa has lost 2,637 square miles of habitat. That's a strip of land nine miles wide that stretches from Davenport Iowa to Omaha Nebraska. That's a lot of habitat!

Likewise, in an earlier era, we never ever saw an eagle around home. When we went on our annual fishing trip to northern Minnesota, we would usually see an eagle or two, and it was always a thrill. Today, we see eagles in the back yard, and it's still a thrill. I'm hopeful and certain that it will always be a thrill.

We also see more deer, geese, and turkeys than we used to. Seeing deer, geese and turkeys aren't quite as thrilling to me as eagles, but I sure do like to see them, as long as they aren't on the road in front of my pickup.

Most people who spend time outdoors will agree that the outdoor world is changing. It's up to those of us who enjoy the outdoors to do what we can to make those changes, on land or water, changes for the better.

### Public meetings set to recap hunting, trapping seasons, discuss possible rule changes

DES MOINES — The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is hosting a series of town hall-style meetings where local staff will provide updates on recently completed hunting and trapping seasons, discuss possible changes to hunting and trapping rules and regulations, and address other topics as requested.

"We want people to come out to these meetings, listen to the seasons reviews, ask questions and hear directly from our staff," said Todd Bishop, chief of the Iowa DNR's Wildlife Bureau. "Part of the meeting will be devoted to discussing potential rule changes and collecting feedback as we work through the rules process."

The meetings are open to the public. Comments collected from these public meetings will be considered along with other related comments received by the Iowa DNR prior to proposing changes to hunting rules and regulations. Proposed rules will be presented to the Natural Resource Commission during a regular public meeting for consideration and additional public comment.

#### Meeting date, time and location

■ Spencer, Feb. 18, 6:30 p.m., Iowa Lakes Community College, 1900 Grand Ave. Suite B1, Entrance #1-West side of the North Mall.

■ Algona, Feb. 19, 7 p.m., Tietz Entrepreneurial Center, Algona campus of Iowa Lakes Community College, 2111 Hwy 169 North. Attendees should enter through the southwest door.

■ Okoboji, Feb. 20, 6 p.m., Maser Monarch Lodge, 22785 Nature Center Road.

## By the numbers:

### 2024 hunting, fishing license sales

*Editor's Note: We all know how important our fishing and hunting license sales are for our public waters and public lands and research. As a matter of fact, 100% of all license fees go directly to the Fish and Wildlife Trust Fund, and the license dollars are directly reinvested to ensure Iowa maintain its strong outdoor traditions. A motto that the supports license sales is this: "License Dollars, Your Legacy!" Funds go to such general areas as fisheries management, wildlife management, public and private land access, wildlife habitat development and operations, boat ramp repairs and law enforcement.*

#### FROM THE IOWA DNR

DES MOINES — In 2024, Iowa residents purchased 32,021 fishing, hunting and habitat combination licenses. Here is a breakdown by the number.

#### Fishing

195,615 annual licenses  
8,741 lifetime fishing licenses  
16,110 three-year licenses  
1,086 seven-day licenses  
3,195 one-day licenses  
43,710 trout fees  
170 paddlefish licenses  
18,790 third-line licenses (resident and nonresident combined)

#### Hunting

40,439 annual licenses  
50,252 hunting and habitat annual combination licenses  
3,642 lifetime hunting licenses  
6,673 hunting and habitat three-year licenses  
905 apprentice (hunting and habitat) licenses  
25,177 migratory game bird licenses  
40,465 habitat fees  
13,605 furharvester annual licenses age 16 and older  
387 furharvester annual licenses age 15 and younger  
422 furharvester and habitat annual combination licenses  
398 lifetime furharvester licenses

#### Large Game

##### Deer

13,287 youth general deer, 1,309 antlerless deer licenses  
279 disabled hunter general deer, 49 antlerless deer licenses  
53,035 archery general deer, 20,591 antlerless deer licenses  
5,767 early muzzleloader general deer, 1,271 antlerless deer licenses  
41,704 first shotgun general deer, 16,358 antlerless deer licenses  
44,170 second shotgun general deer, 17,262 antlerless deer licenses  
17,306 late muzzleloader general deer, 8,467 antlerless deer licenses

##### Turkey

5,438 spring bow licenses  
18,798 spring gun/bow licenses seasons 1-3  
18,468 spring gun/bow licenses season 4  
6,456 spring youth gun/bow licenses  
2,268 fall gun/bow  
1,707 fall bow

##### Landowner-Tenant- Deer

48 youth general deer licenses, 48 antlerless deer licenses  
30,734 free general deer, 20,227 free antlerless  
1,887 archery general deer licenses, 1,895 antlerless deer licenses  
413 early muzzleloader general deer licenses, 415 antlerless deer licenses  
6,051 first- and second-gun seasons general deer licenses, 6,056 antlerless deer licenses  
1,362 late muzzleloader general deer licenses, 1,358 antlerless deer licenses

##### Landowner-Tenant-Turkey

2,243 spring gun/bow season 1-3  
2,386 spring gun/bow season 4  
885 bow licenses  
30 youth licenses  
2,705 fall gun/bow  
894 fall bow

##### In 2024, nonresidents purchased:

#### Fishing

27,154 annual licenses  
2,417 seven-day licenses  
11,761 three-day licenses  
16,724 one-day licenses  
7,730 trout fees  
31 paddlefish licenses

#### Hunting

6,045 annual licenses age 18 and older  
14,969 hunting and habitat annual combination licenses age 18 and older  
4,715 five-day licenses  
2,074 five-day hunting and habitat combination  
13,069 habitat fees  
3,726 migratory game bird fees  
367 apprentice (hunting and habitat) licenses  
129 furharvester annual licenses  
56 furharvester and habitat annual combination licenses

### CLEAN, Continued from Page 1C

#### From Minnesota...

A new law is now on the books in Minnesota: The Keep It Clean Law, which took effect in July of 2023. It began several years with a small group of concerned citizens from the lake of the Woods area worried about how the Lake of the Woods was being "attacked" by garbage during the winter months. It was obvious to them that just talking about littering wasn't enough. Instead, they took their concerns across the state and joined forces with others...today there are over 50 areas around the state representing over 1,200 lakes becoming a part of the Keep It Clean Coalition (<https://keepitcleanmn.org/>). The Keep It Clean Law is now on the books and gives conservation officers the power to enforce trash and waste issues on the ice. It also gives the conservation officers lots and lots of eyes to help make sure people follow the law. The law reads as follows: "It is illegal place garbage and human/other waste on or under the ice on Minnesota's lakes and rivers. Garbage, rubbish, cigarette filters, debris from fireworks, offal, the body of a dead animal, litter, sewage and any other waste needs to be stored inside your shelter, vehicle, or any other conveyance or inside a container that is secured to your shelter, motor vehicle or conveyance. The fine is \$100, plus administration and other fees."

definitely on a state level. After all, Iowa does have laws on the books that addresses littering.

I know that Minnesota's Keep It Clean consortium is more than willing to help with this type of initiative. Joe Henry, a friend of mine and Executive Director of Lake of the Woods Tourism, has been one of the driving forces behind the Keep It Clean initiative. For Iowans wanting to learn more about the program, you can contact Joe at (320)260-7727 or <https://keepitcleanmn.org/>.

I think the public just needs to make it important and support the efforts of conservation officers. If you witness littering, contact your local conservation officer and give them information they can use like vehicle number, name on an ice shelter, so that they have something they can use when addressing the littering violation.

#### Iowa's misdemeanor law on littering

The law on the books is 462A.12(3) Littering public waters, ice or land. The scheduled fine is \$35 with a 15% surcharge of \$5.25 and court costs of \$55. This adds up to a cost of \$95.25.

In visiting with Captain Greg Harson, District Supervisor of DNR conservation officers in Iowa's northwest district, he said, "We take littering seriously, and if we see littering going on, we will address the situation and write citations. We also work with the county attorney on the violation. For instance, on West Okoboji, one of the times with huge crowds of people is during the Winter Games. A few years ago, several big items like couches and sofas were left on the ice after the games were over. Our officers followed up and traced every one back to the owner. Fines were issued and the guilty parties paid fines and had to come and remove the items."

One thing I have noticed



A trailer load of garbage collected along Zippel Bay State Park Beach after a winter of ice fishing back in 2010. It is what helped kick off the Keep It Clean initiative.

Photo courtesy Keep It Clean MN

about Iowans is that when we find something worthwhile to support, we go all in. I know that community groups will be part of cleanup projects along

highway ditches, public parks, along shorelines of public waters. Also, area schools do spend time at different levels engage students in working

in groups to pick up garbage/trash. I think it is a great way to make students aware and to give back, cleaning up trash that has been left.

The opportunity is there. Let's see if Iowa can become a Keep It Clean state!



# OUTDOOR CONNECTION



Who's Watching?

## A Rare Glimpse at the Northern Saw-whet Owl

Pictured are two different Northern Saw-whet Owls photographed by Mike Fredrickson at Moorehead Pioneer Park in Ida Grove. Don Poggensee, 81, has been showing park visitors (over 8,000) for 40 years including over 100 visitors this winter. Owls are in the park from November through March. They're the smallest owl in Iowa—7 inches tall and weighing 2-5 ounces. The owls are very timid. These photos were taken from 4 feet away.



Juvenile Cooper's hawk on my backyard feeding station

photos by

**MIKE FREDRICKSON**

Call or text Mike to purchase photos

**712. 209. 4907**



Trumpeter Swans south of Ingham Lake



Their name supposedly comes from one of their calls, which sounds like a saw being sharpened on a whetting stone—"saw-whet."



Eurasian collared-dove near Estherville Rock Garden

**Inspiration for Our Day-** "Then Jesus spoke to them again saying, 'I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in the darkness, but have the light of life.'" ~ John 8:12

# WINTER

The best time for tree pruning

A photograph of a row of trees covered in snow along a frozen lake. The trees are bare and their branches are heavily laden with white snow. The lake is frozen and reflects the sky.

- Winter Pruning Limits Exposure to Pests and Diseases
- Winter Pruning is Less Stressful for Your Trees.
- Winter Pruning Yields a Better Result

**We Specialize in Large & Difficult Tree Projects!**

**Have an "Impossible" Job? CALL US TODAY!**

Our ISA Certified Arborists and a complete line of equipment can service all your tree needs.

## THATE'S TREE SERVICE

John Thate - Owner

**800.225.8733**

www.thatetree.com • Fully Insured

**24 Hour Emergency Service!**

**FREE ESTIMATES!**