

Cass Co. Cons. Bd  
57744 Lewis Rd  
Lewis, IA 51544

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## People Making a Difference...

Thank you to everyone that took part in our **Soiree with the Swans!**  
Thank you to the **ISU Extension Cass County and 4-H Leadership Council** for helping our winter camps be a success!

## Cass County Conservation on Facebook!

Search [Cass County Conservation](#) and "like" us on Facebook! Easy way to keep up on events and wildlife sightings around Cass County! Make sure you are getting this in your inbox! Email Lora at [lkanning@casscoia.us](mailto:lkanning@casscoia.us) and let her know to add your email to get the email/PDF version of the Conservation Quarterly!

## Cass County Conservation Board Members

Blaine Behnken- Massena                      Rich Govig- Lewis  
Judy Kennedy- Atlantic                      Sandy Sothman- Atlantic                      Mark Smith- Atlantic

## Staff

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# Conservation Quarterly Cass County Conservation Board Spring 2026

In this Issue:  
Park Highlights and Updates

Upcoming Events



## Results of 2026 Great Backyard Bird Count

Overall it was a great year for Iowa in the Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC). Iowa overall was higher in species and in checklists happening, but there was a lot of other counties struggling this year too. We were in the thirties over all, and Dallas county did not even make the top 10 either. We were 55th in the species count, we had many usual species missing this year. With the new eBird system the record keeping is by county so I cannot really tell you anymore the species reported for each town unless we record them, but Cass County as a whole. Iowa as a whole had 116 species reported and 1,902 checklists! United States reported higher all around too, 696 species and 253,053 checklists. The GBBC is a global bird count sponsored by the National Audubon Society and Cornell Lab of Ornithology, globally 8,257 species and 467,600 checklists. Since 2002 the Cass County Conservation Board has advertised this bird count throughout the county encouraging citizens to participate. Typically participants submit their checklists on the internet, however, for those that are not comfortable using computers, the Conservation Board collects the data and enters the checklists for them. You can explore the results at <https://www.birdcount.org/2026-final-results/>.

### Cass County Results

Town	# of Checklists Submitted	22 Species Reported total
Anita	7	
Atlantic	2	

More results: We had the most popular species of the count (Cardinal, House finch, Junco), and Trumpeter swans counted in Cass County!

# Park Highlights

As we move into the spring things are beginning to pick up in the outdoors. April 10th kicks off the Iowa youth turkey season, with the 4 other seasons following, with the end of 4th season May 17th. Fishing will be a bit different around here, this spring as we are in the growing phase of our new fish population here at Cold Springs, the lake is fully stocked but fish size will remain fairly small throughout this spring and summer as the newly stocked fish are continuing to grow. You'll notice we won't have our fishing derby in June, it will be back in 2027. The main pond at the Outdoor Classroom should be coming into its own this year with some decent-sized fish available after our recent renovation of the pond a couple of years ago. The pond at the Nodaway Wildlife area will offer decent fishing again this year as well. Also, with warmer temperatures and hopefully some more moisture, more mushrooms should be showing up again very soon, a word of caution if looking for mushrooms during the turkey season on land that may have turkey hunting going on, please wear blaze orange clothing so you stand out and help avoid any possible accidents. The campground at Cold Springs is currently open and ready for you to come stay with us and enjoy the beautiful oak and hickory trees as they start to leaf out for the year. A frequent camper card program is available, stay 6 nights get the 7th FREE- ask our staff! Camping coupon books are now available! \$150 for 11 nights of camping at Cold Springs Park good until Oct 31, 2027. Making Shelter Reservations- To reserve the shelter at Cold Springs Park, contact Ryan Lockwood at 769-2372. Don't forget we take reservations for our Outdoor Educational Classroom Lodge for meetings and events. Please contact the office if you are interested in making a reservation. Don't forget our Standup Paddleboards and Kayak checkout will be on last Saturday of every month, ending Labor Day Weekend with that Saturday September 5th. We only have 5 currently, so you must pre-register for your spot! Anyone under 16 must have a parent with them at all times. The Canada geese are beginning to nest on most of the bodies of water and I'm hearing wood ducks every day at Cold Springs. As of this writing, we are still waiting for the trumpeter swans that nest near the Outdoor Classroom to return but we are not too worried as they have nested there for many years now. So, enjoy the warming weather and beautiful sights and sounds of southwest Iowa this spring!

# Summer Camps

The Cass County Conservation Board has joined with the Cass County ISU Extension Office to sponsor summer camps for the youth of Cass County. These camps were developed to give children a chance to have fun exploring and learning about nature. Registration fee is \$10 (2nd gr and up) includes a cloth bag. If you have questions, please call Lora at 769-2372 or Katie at 243-1132. Registration Information: Online here: <https://go.iastate.edu/MJY8W9> ,Scan the QR code OR Forms can also be found here: <https://www.casscountya.gov/county-departments/conservation-office/>



**K-1st Grade\*: Creepy Crawlies in the Garden**~ FREE! Learn about bugs and creepy crawlies, make crafts and play games!

**2nd -3rd Grade\*: Things that Fly** ~ Learn about how things fly from birds to planes, and rockets.

**4th - 5th Grade\*: Wondrous Water** ~ Youth will explore all things water!

**6th-8th Grade\*: Outdoor Adventure Camp** ~ For children that have completed 6th, 7th, or 8th grade. This camp highlights a Natural Resource job and an outdoor recreation activity. Activities this year include Forestry activities, Geocaching, and Dutch Oven Cooking.

Busing is available from Cass Co. Community center. To Register: On-line or Print the form, and return with \$10 per camp to the Cass County Extension Office by the deadline. Questions: Call 243-1132! \*Please Note— grade listed above refer to grade just completed.



# Upcoming Events



Denotes an Oak Stroller (family friendly) approved event! All Cass County Programs are FREE unless otherwise stated! Donations for programs are accepted.



**Camping 101**  
**Saturday April 18th, 6PM Cold Springs Park Campground Shelter**

This session will be all about supplies and gear! Bring your gear and stay with an optional camping night at Cold Springs park.



**Wildflower Walk**  
**Saturday, April 25th- 9AM**  
**Pellett Memorial Woods**

Join us for our annual Spring Wildflower Walk with our naturalist!



**Hitchcock Pioneer Skills Festival-** The annual Pioneer Skills Festival is scheduled for **Saturday, May 2nd**. Come visit the famous Hitchcock House (a National Landmark and former stop on the Underground Railroad) just west of Lewis and see tin punching, rope-making, butter making and many other skills that were vital to pioneer survival. This event will be open to the public from **1:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m.** There will be a \$5 fee for a tour of the Hitchcock House. B.Y.O.M. for some apple cider!

**Bike to School Day is May 6th**

**Bike to Work Day is May 15th**

Save some gas and bike around that day or all week!

**Native Landscaping**

**Anita Public Library**

**May 12th 5:30PM**

We will be discussing different Native plants and how to incorporate them into your yard. Discover how to use native plants in your yard!



**Movie in the Park**  
**May 22nd 9PM- Cold Springs Park Campground Shelter- TBA**

Come out for a movie under the stars! Bring a blanket or chair, Dress for the weather and if it RAINS it will be CANCELLED.



**Lake Anita Kids' Fishing Day**

Kids, come to Lake Anita on **Saturday, June 6th** for a fun morning of fishing (bring your poles) and information! Learn about the fish in Lake Anita, followed by hands on fishing! Prizes will be awarded to participants, no child will leave empty handed! Registration starts at 9:30 a.m. near at the beach parking lot, fishing starts at 10AM.

**Standup Paddleboard Demonstration- see information on page 2. Kayaks available for check out. Cold Springs Park- Beach 1pm- 4pm**

May 30th 1pm- 5 Spots available

2:30PM- 5 Spots available

June 27th 1pm- 5 Spots available

2:30pm- 5 Spots available

**Dutch Oven Cooking- Dinner**

**July 3rd 6PM- Cold Springs Park Campground Shelter**

Stay tuned for more on the July programs and more in the Summer Newsletter.



# 2026 Nature Tots Preschool Programs

**Reef Rovers Cold Springs Park Campground Shelter**  
Thursday June 11th 2-4pm Saturday June 13th  
2-4pm Dive into a reef with us and explore a marine  
ecosystem!

**Australian Adventurers Sunnyside Park, Camblin  
Shelter** Thursday July 9th 2-4pm Saturday July  
11th 10am-12pm Explore the Australian Outback  
and learn about the plants and animals that live  
there!

**Prairie Pioneers Outdoor Classroom, Massena**  
Thursday July 16th 2-4pm Saturday July 18th 10am-  
12pm Go on a safari through the prairie with us and  
learn all about the wildlife and plants in the prairie!

This is open to preschoolers only (3, 4, and 5 yr olds  
who have NOT attended Kdg. yet), and they must be  
accompanied by an adult or caregiver! Choose your  
date, it is the same program per week.

FREE, space is limited, must Pre-register by Filling  
out the form below. Or you may  
call Cass County Conservation at  
(712) 769-2372 or emailing Lora at  
[lkanning@casscoia.us](mailto:lkanning@casscoia.us) this form! Or  
scan the QR code to register on-line.  
We hope to see you there!



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## Nature Tots Preschool Programs

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Accompanying Adult or Caregiver (if different from above): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

### Nature Tot Program selection (circle one per week):

Reef Rovers @ Cold Springs Park Campground Shelter Thursday June 11th 2-4pm  
Saturday June 13th 2-4pm

Australian Adventurers @ Sunnyside Park, Camblin Shelter Thursday July 9th 2-4pm  
Saturday July 11th 10am-12pm

Prairie Pioneers @ Outdoor Classroom, Massena Thursday July 16th 2-4pm Saturday July  
18th 10am-12pm

Email form to [lkanning@casscoia.us](mailto:lkanning@casscoia.us) Deadline is the Monday before each program!!