

MARSH UPDATES | NATURAL RESOURCE NEWS | NEW NATURE EXPLORER KITS | SPIDERWORT

NAHANT NEWS

SUMMER 2026

VOLUME 19, ISSUE 3



PHOTO BY C. SHIRK



NAHANT MARSH
EDUCATION CENTER



About Nahant Marsh

Nahant Marsh preserve is one of the largest urban wetlands on the Upper Mississippi River. It is comprised of marshy areas; mesic, wet, and sand prairie; and bottomland forest.

The 382-acre preserve is owned by the Nahant Marsh Board, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and the City of Davenport. Conservation and restoration efforts on the preserve are directed by the Nahant Board. The educational programming is in partnership with Eastern Iowa Community Colleges (EICC).



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Brian Ritter

Director of Education

Amy Loving

Director of Operations

Elizabeth Schramm

Director of Development

Victoria Edwards

Natural Resource Manager

Kinsey Nielsen

Marketing & Events

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Liv Humphrey

Naturalist and

Research Coordinator

Jimmy Wiebler

Naturalist

Allison Nodurft

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Natural Resource Crew

Madeline Kull

Zach Strong

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Chris Barnard

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Steve Gustafson

Tim Murphy

Tobey Pribyl

Good Things Shaking at the Marsh

By Brian Ritter, Executive Director

During the past several months, the Nahant team has been busy preparing for the future of the Marsh. Over the next months and years, we will be working to restore more habitat at Nahant while improving access and visitor experience.

First, I am happy to report that the dock boardwalk reconstruction project is nearly complete. This boardwalk, originally built in 2008, had endured more than 15 floods and was in desperate need of repair. With help from volunteers and staff, and funding from the Scott County Regional Authority and private donors, the new boardwalk will be more flood-resistant and will allow for better access to the marsh for years to come.

Second, we have been working with Ducks Unlimited to design a 60-acre wetland restoration at the upper end of the marsh. The US Army Corps of Engineers have approved our initial plans and we have begun work on our final plans for the site with hopes of breaking ground in 2027. The site will feature restored wetlands, trails, and access from Kimmel Drive.

Third, we were recently informed that the US Environmental Protection Agency will be awarding us a \$500,000 Assessment Grant to conduct brownfield inventories, planning, environmental assessments and community outreach. This funding will allow us to evaluate potential contaminants and create a comprehensive plan for Nahant's Carp Lake property and surrounding parcels. This will allow us to create a plan to restore the site and create public access in the future. Stay tuned for more updates!



Natural Resource Tech, Zach,
and Volunteer, Kent, working on
the board walk

That's a Wrap!

By Amy Loving, Director of Education

Since April, students from across our community have visited the Marsh for one of the most anticipated days of the school year; their outdoor field trip experience. Before many classes even stepped onto the preserve, our naturalists and Captain, our resident Blanding's turtle ambassador, visited schools to introduce students to the fascinating world of wetlands.



Once at the Marsh, students transformed classroom lessons into real-world discoveries. Teachers watched as their students caught and identified insects, explored habitats, discovered life cycles, and investigated how ecosystems function. For some students, it was their first time seeing a frog in real life, while others learned how to use binoculars to observe wildlife and connect with nature in a new way.



Field trip students exploring and participating in Marsh Programs

Spring's seasonal changes provided excellent opportunities for birdwatching. Students quickly learned to recognize some of our most common Marsh residents, including red-winged blackbirds, turkey vultures, and American white pelicans, among many others. The excitement of spotting wildlife around every bend in the trail helped bring science lessons to life.

One of the most memorable aspects of this field trip season was the number of turtles encountered along the trails. For weeks in early spring, we saw freshly emerged baby turtles making their way to the marsh. By late spring, On a single visit, a group of second graders from Moline spotted three gravid female turtles searching for places to lay their eggs—a rare and exciting wildlife observation that sparked plenty of curiosity and questions.

The turtles provided some of the most memorable wildlife encounters of the season. Early spring field trip groups were thrilled to spot tiny hatchling turtles making their way toward the water. Many people are surprised to learn that these young turtles likely emerged from their eggs late the previous summer but remained safely tucked inside their underground nests throughout the winter, waiting for warmer spring temperatures to crawl out of the nest. As the season progressed, the story came full circle. Later field trip groups encountered gravid female turtles searching for nesting sites and preparing to lay the next generation of eggs. Each day brought a new experience and reinforced why these outdoor field trips are so important for young minds.

Natural Resources Updates

By Kinsey Nielsen, Natural Resource Manager



Sleep, creep, leap! Pollinator garden by Building B is taking off during year #3. 5-19-26.

The summer heat has arrived and that means everything is growing fast- both native and invasive species alike! The natural resources crew will be spending the summer removing herbaceous plants such as sweetclover, poison hemlock, musk/bull/Canada thistles, Queen Anne's Lace, and phragmites- just to name a few. Another large-scale project happening this summer is continuing to remove unwanted trees from our prairies, primarily cottonwoods and willows. This involves digging, pulling, or cutting the tree to remove it depending on the size and soil type.



Volunteers Al and Cindy removing invasive species. 5-7-26.

Spring projects that were accomplished included planting 109 trees/shrubs, planting several hundred prairie plants, weeding/mulching gardens, removing invasive species, and mowing/clearing debris from the hiking trails. Thank you to the many volunteers that helped us with these projects!



Volunteer Nathan using a tree puller to remove large trees from a prairie. 5-7-26.



Belize to Iowa: Tracking a Northern Waterthrush through Nahant Marsh

By Jimmy Wiebler, Naturalist

In my last newsletter, I introduced the installation of our relatively new Motus Wildlife Tracking Station, an antenna that sits atop Nahant Marsh and detects migrating birds, bats, and even insects that are tagged with radio transmitters.

This May, our station picked up the signal of a Northern Waterthrush, a sparrow-sized, long-legged warbler that migrates through Iowa to breed as far north as the Arctic Circle in Alaska. These birds have brown backs and creamy undersides covered with dark streaks. Compared to the similar Louisiana Waterthrush, the Northern Waterthrush often has a yellowish wash on its underside and eyebrow stripe. They are frequently found near slow-moving or standing water with brushy edges, such as wooded swamps. They forage for insects, spiders, and other invertebrates on the ground or in shallow water, where they can often be seen wading along the water's edge while bobbing their tails up and down.

Although Northern Waterthrushes breed in northern bogs and swamps, they spend the winter in Central America, inhabiting coastal mangrove forests. This individual was outfitted with a transmitter, or "tagged," on its wintering grounds in Belize. On March 31, it flew 1,675 miles as the crow flies before touching down at Nahant Marsh on May 15th. It spent three days at Nahant before heading north to Mines of Spain in Dubuque, Iowa, and then to Kellys Slough National Wildlife Refuge in North Dakota—a documented journey of at least 2,240 miles that took nearly two months.

These detections offer a stunning look into the movement patterns and migratory behavior of this species. They also highlight the importance of Nahant Marsh as a stopover site, providing migrating animals with the rest and fuel they need before continuing north to their breeding grounds.

As part of our efforts to document other migratory and nesting species at Nahant Marsh, student research interns have deployed acoustic monitors that record bird songs and calls at sites distributed throughout the preserve. Please join us on August 10th for an open house-style poster session, where the results of these and other projects will be presented by our outstanding student interns.

The data collected by our station and others throughout the Motus network are publicly available at motus.org. Follow along with us and explore our migratory detections by viewing the station labeled "Nahant Marsh Education Center" (Project 941).



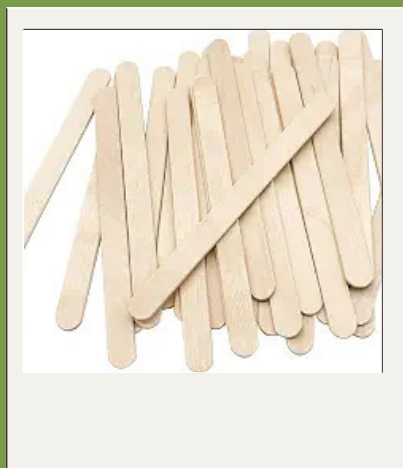
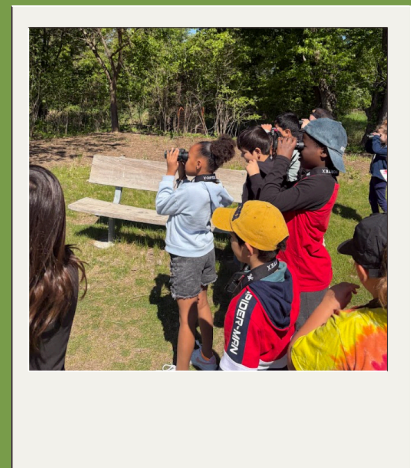
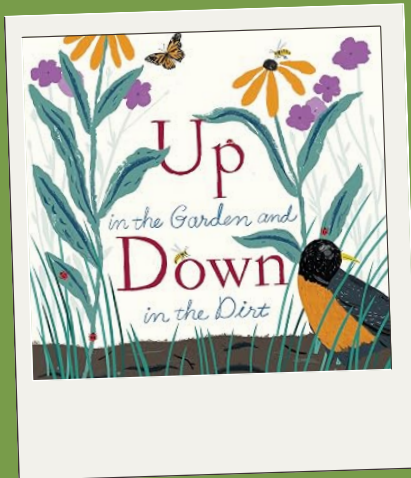
New Nature Explorer Kits at the Marsh!

By Allison Nodurft, Naturalist

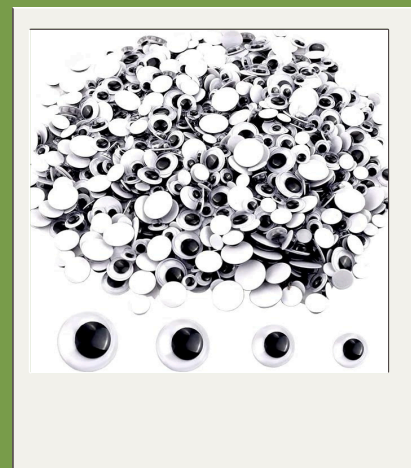
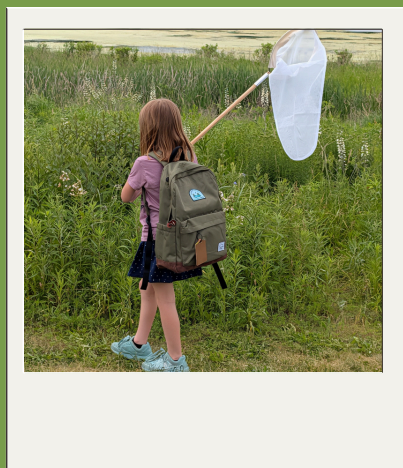
Curious about the tiny creatures buzzing around on the trails or swimming in the marsh? Ready to turn your walk in the woods into a hands-on nature adventure? Check out one of our new Nature Explorer Kits. Perfect for families, kids, and curious explorers of all ages! These kits include everything you need for a fun filled adventure at Nahant Marsh. We have themed kits for bird watching, nature hikes, catching insects, and investigating creatures in the marsh. Highlights include: scavenger hunts, guide books, bug nets, bug houses, binoculars and a story book.

Kits may be checked out Monday through Saturday between 9:00am - 2:00pm at the Education Center. Grab our Nature Explorer passport and receive an exclusive sticker when you check out all four kits.





Education Wish List



[CLICK HERE FOR WISH LIST LINK](#)

Did you know the Nahant Marsh Education Team has an Amazon wish list? Help us spark curiosity, imagination and enhance our youth programs by purchasing items from Amazon. Our list includes books and supplies to help with field trips, outreach programs, summer camps, and all other programming! Orders can be shipped directly to us or dropped off in person.



Spiderwort

By Bri Opyd, Naturalist



Striking purple flowers stand out among the prairie grasses at Nahant Marsh. Blooming from June through August, spiderwort is a natural food source for a wide variety of animals. In the spring, buzz pollinators rely on their pollen, and many reptiles and mammalian herbivores can be seen munching on the plant's edible flowers and leaves. As the plant reaches the end of its growth cycle, it will go to seed in mid-summer. At this time, many seed-foraging songbirds, like cardinals, finches, and sparrows may be seen throughout the prairie.

Historically, spiderwort has not only been important for local fauna but also for indigenous tribes such as the Meskwaki. The leaves and flowers of a young Spiderwort plant were often harvested and eaten in salads or boiled until tender. They also discovered that the sap inside the leaves of the plant had a soothing, cooling effect, similar to that of an aloe plant. Consequently, the leaves were often mashed into a paste that could be used topically as a medicinal treatment for insect bites. Depending on symptoms, different parts of the spiderwort plant were also often brewed into teas. The young leaves would be brewed to minimize stomach aches, as the gel-like substance inside the leaves would coat and sooth an irritated digestive tract. Alternatively, if a small chunk of spiderwort root was brewed, it would act as a laxative and treat constipation.



Spiderwort is a beautiful plant with many uses, however, each blossom only lasts a day. Each individual flower will open early in the morning and begin to close by noon. The next time you set out on a morning hike, keep a look out for Spiderwort. Feel free to harvest its flowers, leaves, or roots and take advantage of its many properties.



Troop 24 for the Win!

By Victoria Edwards, Director of Development

The staff at Nahant Marsh are extremely grateful for the hard work of the Waters Family and Troop 24 for completing an incredible service project at Nahant Marsh Education Center!

Thanks to their hard work and dedication, we now have three new Bark Ranger Stations at the marsh, potentially earning Graylon the rank of Eagle Scout.



Scout Leader and scout digging post holes

These stations help pet owners keep our trails clean and enjoyable for everyone while protecting the wildlife and habitats that make Nahant Marsh such a special place.

Projects like this make a lasting impact on our community and our natural areas. We are grateful for the time, effort, and leadership that went into making this project a reality.

Thank you Graylon, Zach, Gretchen, and Troop 24 for helping make Nahant Marsh a better place for people, pets, and wildlife!

Scout leader and scout hoisting their project up



Proud scouts next to their completed project

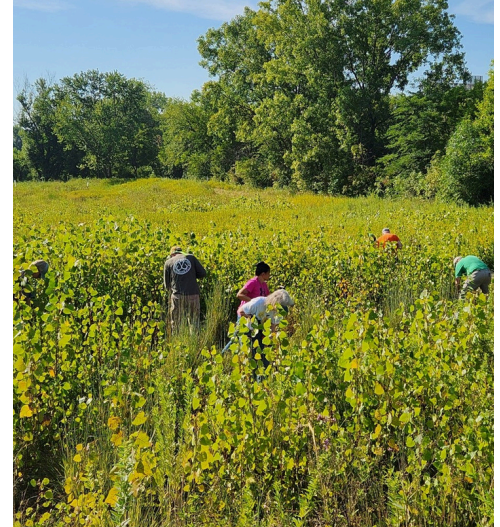
Volunteering at the Marsh!

By Liv Humphrey, Volunteer Coordinator

Upcoming Volunteer Fun!

August will be a busy month for the Volunteers here at the Marsh. We are planning our Volunteer Appreciation Dinner and Open House & Training during that month.

Dates are coming soon, please watch out for them!

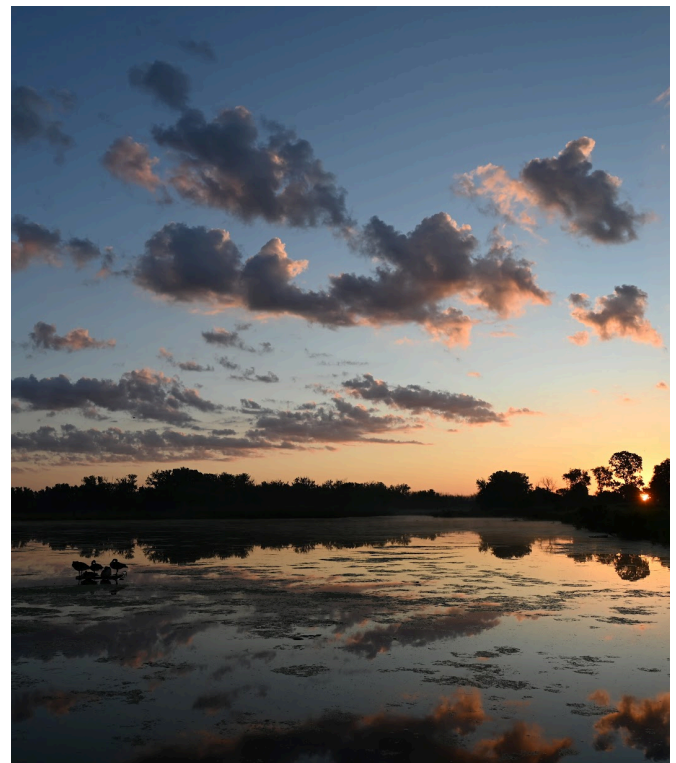


Nahant's Summer Volunteer of the Quarter

This Summer, we would like to highlight Denise Bulat! Denise is part of the Nahant Marsh Board, holding the Vice Chair role! Not only does she serve our Board, she sits on event committees and is a volunteer! She really enjoys the Fall Festival and tours of the Marsh to learn more about all the fauna and flora living at Nahant.

From the Nahant Marsh Team,

Thank you, Denise!



UPCOMING EVENTS

BREAKFAST NATURE CLUB

BNC meets year round on the first Friday of the month.

Enjoy a continental breakfast while listening to nature-themed presentations from 8:00-9:00 am.

**Breakfast Nature Club is proudly sponsored by the Quad-City Plus 60 Club for 2026. Their generous support makes this program free for participants.*

Upcoming: August 7, September 4, October 2

NATURE HIKE

Hikes are offered year round on the first Saturday of the month and give visitors an opportunity to learn more about the diverse flora and fauna of this unique natural area.

Upcoming: August 1, October 3

BIRD HIKE

Join us for a naturalist-led bird hike through Nahant Marsh! Over 200 species of birds are found at Nahant Marsh throughout the year, and participants can expect to see or hear a variety of them on these hikes, which are for everyone—from beginner to expert. Loaner binoculars are available for participants. Please reserve your spot online; \$5 Goodwill Donation is appreciated at checkout.

Upcoming: July 18, August 1, September 27

QIGONG & NATURE WALK

Join us for a trail walk and the ancient practice of qigong at Nahant Marsh. Take an hour to explore one of the QC's most diverse natural environments. Guided by Becky Nakashima Brooke. This will be a time to connect with nature, build strength and flexibility, and connect with your breath. Please dress comfortably.

Upcoming: July 18, August 15, September 19

HOMESCHOOL

A monthly series of natural science classes designed to supplement at-home learning.

The program activities are designed for grades K-8th. Classes meet once a month on Fridays from 2:30-4:00 pm.

Upcoming: TBD

TURKEY RUN ADVENTURE TRIP

Embark on a thrilling adventure to Turkey Run State Park in Indiana! This exciting two-day, one-night trip offers exciting hikes through the park's legendary trails.

A pre-trip meeting will be held on September 4th from 5:30-6:30pm to go over important information

September 18–19

11TH ANNUAL MONARCH PARTY

Help scientists track monarchs by tagging them as they migrate to Mexico! We will also place focus on other important pollinators.

This is an open house event and monarch tagging will take place on a first come, first served basis. Monarch numbers are LOW this year, so catching monarchs in the prairie for tagging is encouraged.

Families will enjoy educational activities, crafts, milkweed giveaways, and more. Participants can also search for and catch migrating monarchs along the trails.

September 12

4TH ANNUAL FALL FESTIVAL

Help raise funds for one of the largest urban wetlands on the upper Mississippi River!

Look forward to inflatable obstacle courses, a petting zoo, live animal encounters, food trucks, a beer tent, nature-based crafts & activities, contests, exclusive merch, and MORE!

Save the date! More details to come!

October 3

**TO LEARN MORE
ABOUT OUR
UPCOMING
PROGRAMMING
AND TO REGISTER
FOR UPCOMING
EVENTS, SCAN THIS
CODE:**



Current Members

Abel Family	Donald Palm	Kristin Sparbel	Ohnemus Family
Adam MacDonald	Doroba Family	Kroft Family	Patricia A. Halverson
Adamson Family	Dorothy Family	Kueter Family	Patricia Johnson
Angelica Jimenez	Druhl Family	Kyle August	Patricia Newswander
Bailey Family	DuPree Family	Lambert Family	Perez Family
Becky Buhman	Elizabeth Hodges	Lee Family	PJ Slobogan
Becky Dexter	Ferguson Family	Lenaghan Family	Quoc Chu
Bernadene Bowles	Fritz Family	Linda Clewell	Ralph Baechle
Betty Wood	Gail Rinkenberger	Logan Carney	Revell Family
Bohdan Dziadyk	Gary Ihlefeld	Lorraine Seibert	Rich Craddick
Broders Family	Gary Kerofsky	Lorrie Newman	Robbins Family
Brodie Houck	Gasiorowski Family	Lucas Faley	Robert Loch
Brown Family	Haas Family	Lynne Groskurth	Roberta Palm
Bushek Family	Hailey Eklund	MacDonald Family	Ron Lang
Carla Chapman	Haley Thess	Maggie Penry-Cole	Roorda Family
Carol Huggins	Hartman Family	Marcia Walsh	Rowland Family
Carolina Baptist-Bowers	Henry Family	Marilyn Andress	S.A. Fenwick
Cate Kratville-Wrinn	Hervey Family	Marilyn Davis	Sadd Family
Cathy White	Honts Family	Mark Fenner	Schiltz Family
Claire Dodson	Iglehart Family	Mark Marmorine	Schwartz Family
Clare Bechen	Jacob Shoppa	Matt Beeson	Shawn Kilty
Clark Family	Jean Semsch	Matulis Family	Slater Family
Claudia Scharf	Jenni Criswell	McAndrews Family	Smith Family
Cleve Family	Jo Ann Whitmore	Misley Family	Strunk Family
Connie King	Joanna Neumann	Moore Family	Sue Albrecht
Cook Family	Jodi Bristley	Moore-Matulis Family	Susan McPeters
Craig Family	John Walston	Mosley Family	Susan Moore
Croegaert Family	Johnson Family	Motto Family	Tamra McConoughey
Crosser Family	Jordon Jones	Nancy Coulter	Teri Stickler
Culver Family	Joseph Ambrose	Nancy Frascone	Thomas Wachtel
Cynthia Bottrell	Judy K. Hartley	Nathan Knowles	Thomas Woodburn
Danielle Farr	Karen Weinstein	Nic Smith & Angelica Jimenez	Thompson Family
Danielle Kegler	Kathryn Krings	Niebuhr Family	Wille Family
David Schramm	Kempker Family	Noah King	Winter Family
Dennis Kemper	Kinser Family	North Family	Zinger Family
Diane Kinser	Klag Family		
Dick Potter	Kristen Bergren		

Lifetime Members

Amy Groskopf &
Kent Turner
Amy & Kevin Kay
Ann Werner
Anne Colville
Bob Bryant
Bob Thoresen
Brian Ritter
Brian Tugana
Britt Vickstrom
Brock & Carol
Earnhardt
Cal & Jill Werner
Chris & Mary
Rayburn
Curtis Lundy
Darrell & Anne Thode

Dave Linde
Denise Bulat
Dick Ryan
Ellen Bluth
Frank & Ann McCarthy
Fred & Martha Burnham
James & Cathy Van Fossen
Jane & Les Cox
Janelle Swanberg & Don Fish
John & Amy Telleen
John & Joan Maxwell
John & Liz Arter
Jonathan & Sarah Wilmshurst
Josh & Kate Hoffman
Kathleen Logan
Kathy & Gary Morris
Kathy Wine

Marion Lardner
Mary & Greg Schermer
Michael & Hedy Hustedde
Nancy & John Danico
Nathan & Elizabeth Schramm
Randy & Carol Pribyl
Richard & Judy Kreiter
Rita Rawson
Robert Walsh
Shirley Johnson
Stan Reeg
Thomas Thompson
Thomas Thoms
Tim Murphy
Todd & Amy Kersten
Tony & Joyce Singh

Corporate Supporters



Recent Tributes

Eileen Smith in Honor of Elysa & Caden
Huynh-Smith
Fred & Martha Burnham in Memory of Mike
Stopulos

Greg Schermer in Honor of Mary Schermer
Ryan Christensen in Memory of Mary
LaDean Christensen

A Thank You to Our Donors!

For this summer’s Donor Highlights, we celebrate the group of incredible donors who generously supported Nahant Marsh in a sudden time of need.

Last May, AmeriCorps funding was suddenly cut, instantly leaving Nahant’s educational programming without two full-time naturalists in the middle of spring field trip season.

The Nahant Fundraising Committee was jumpstarted into action by a large matching grant sent forward by a committed, generous anonymous donor. During that time, a member of the Nahant Marsh Board influenced emergency funds from Quad Cities Community Foundation, Regional Development Authority, and IH Mississippi Valley Credit Union to keep the two former AmeriCorps Naturalists on temporarily.

The Nahant Fundraising Committee used that matching grant to their full advantage, using its influence and power to match the grant not once but four times. The total amount raised reached \$126,802, securing the ability for Nahant to hire the two full-time Naturalists as our own until the end of 2025 and then hiring a permanent naturalist and two summer education interns at the beginning of 2026.

On May 21st, we celebrated these donors with a gathering at Nahant. Stories were shared, connections were made, and gratitude flowed throughout the room.

The list below highlights all of the selfless donors who started and contributed to the matching grant, laying the foundation for us to serve another 25,000 people in 2026.

Thank you to our generous donors for helping us exceed our goal!

Adler/Schermer Foundation
Werner/Ellithorp Advised Fund
Brian Ritter
Brock & Carol Earnhardt
Bryce & Tiffany Stalcup
Cal Werner
Curtis Lundy
C. Dana & Faye Waterman
Denise & Carl Bulat
Doug & Jean Vickstrom
Doug & Nancy Hultquist
Ellen Bluth
Green Fire Fund
IMEG Corp.
James von Maur

Janelle Swanberg & Don Fish
Josh Hoffman
Kathy & Gary Morris
Kathy Wine
Marie H. Bechtel Charitable Trust
Mark & Rita Bawden
Matt & Amanda Slavens
Nancy Chapman
Paustian Enterprises
Pete & Jackie Wessels
James and Michelle Russell Charitable Fund
Richard Ryan
Ted Priester
Tim Murphy
Will Moon

Granting Organizations

Change Happens Foundation
Clean River Advisory Council
Day Foundation
Mark W. Schwiebert Fund
Mary Iva Gittens Knouse
Moline Kiwanis Foundation
Moline Regional Community Foundation
Moline Rotary Foundation

Quad City Plus60 Club
QCCF Nonprofit Capacity Building
Rauch Family Foundation
RDA
Rock Island Community Foundation
Rotary Club of Rock Island
SCRA
The Bechtel Trusts

Animal Adoptions

Bob | Three-toed Box Turtle

Ambrose & Marlowe Kerr
Barbara Elmore
Robert Thompson & Judith Lee

Buddy | Painted Turtle

Cassie Druhl
Marlene Zarn
The Rakus & Wille Families

Captain | Blanding's Turtle

Cathy White
Mark & Lisa Cleve

Ecto |

Cathy White

Ethel | Red-eared Slider

Mark & Cindy Slater

Leopold | Northern Leopard Frog

Caroline Kimple

Micheline | Ornate Box Turtle

Schramm Family in Memory of
Shirley Horstmann

Oneida | Ornate Box Turtle

Caroline Kimple
Gregg Charvoz
Live Well Chiropractic & Wellness
Center
Tracey Kuehl & John Hintze

Pancake | Spiny Softshell Turtle

Jackie Jones
Kendall & Susan Schwartz Family
Patti Holmlund
Terry Collins
Tracey Kuehl & John Hintze

Pretzel | Corn Snake

Terry Collins
Thomas Thompson

Rizzo | Black Rat Snake

Cathy White

Rocky | Bullsna

Dave & Laura Schmidt

Squirtle | Ornate Box Turtle

Rescued

Sunny | Fox Snake

Aryanne (Cha Cha) Encarnacion-Cox
Elysa & Caden Huynh-Smith

*Want to adopt an animal
ambassador?*

Visit our website

<https://www.nahantmarsh.org/adopt-an-animal>
or contact Liz Schramm, Director of Operations at
elizabeth@nahantmarsh.org.

EDUCATION CENTER HOURS

Monday–Friday: 8:30 am to 4:30 pm

Saturday: 9:00 am to 3:00 pm (April - October)

There is no fee to visit the Education Center, but donations are always appreciated.

PRESERVE HOURS

Open daily from sunrise to sunset.

If the main gate is locked, trails are accessible from the front parking lot.

Look for the opening in the fence near the kiosk.



GETTING TO NAHANT MARSH

Nahant Marsh
4220 Wapello Avenue
Davenport, IA 52802

From Davenport, Iowa—Take Highway 22 south (Rockingham Road), turning left on Wapello Avenue (the last turn before the I-280 overpass).

From Rock Island, Illinois—Take I-280 into Iowa to the Highway 22/Rockingham Road exit. Turn right onto Highway 22, and then right onto Wapello Avenue. Follow Wapello Avenue toward the river. Nahant Marsh will be on the left just before the railroad crossing.

