

# Muscatine County Conservation

## 2024 At a Glance

### Large projects completed

In 2023 a new shelter was installed by the playground at Discovery Park. In 24 electricity was installed at the shelter, and sidewalks were constructed helping people get from shelter to the parking lot and playground. A new sidewalk was also installed between the main park road, and the playground loop.



The Campground Project at Deep Lakes Park was a big topic of discussion. It will include 16 gravel surface, full hook-up sites, shower house, well, septic tank, and concrete roadway. The project went out to bid and Triple B Construction was awarded the contract at the end of 2024. Work will take place in 2025.



A Roy J. Carver Grant was received for new animal enclosures, enrichment materials, and updating the aquatic life support systems for the aquariums. The project will be completed in 2025.

The geothermal system in the Environmental Learning Center was restored, and updated to a web-based platform.

### Vehicles & Machinery

The only vehicles purchased were a Chevy Traverse for the Director, and a new John Deere Mower for Discovery Park.

### Deep Lakes Park - Additions

A .6-acre lot was purchased at the very end of 2023. It is adjacent to the DLP Main Access at 2554 Pettibone. Closed 12/29/23. The former house was demolished, well and septic removed in 2024. A two-car garage was saved for storage.



2570 Pettibone was purchased in 24, adding 5.01 acres to the park. This parcel has a large 50x200 red frame building, and a 60x80

building that we plan to turn into a maintenance shop in 2025.

### Staff Changes

There were no changes to the permanent, full time staff or Board Members in 2024.

Three seasonal maintenance staff helped to take care of parks: Trinidad Martinez at Discovery Park; Isabelle Hartman at Deep Lakes; and Kyle Bentley at Saulsbury.



Two summer externs helped with Environmental Education: Kathi Eichelberger & Laura McDonald.

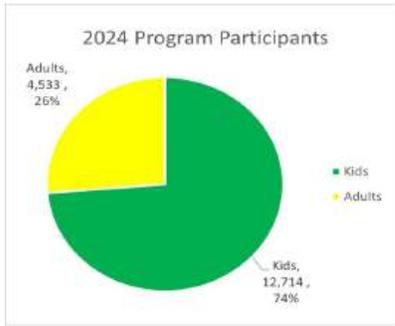
Two part-time cabin custodians, Beth Foor & Kristie Miller, were hired to help clean and flip cabins.

### Conservation Foundation

One of the goals for 2024 was to get the Muscatine County Conservation Foundation active. Quarterly meetings are being held and the group is helping to raise funds for the Campground Project at Deep Lakes Park.

## Environmental Education

In 2024, naturalists and staff presented 832 programs to 17,247 people. Participants ranged in age from toddlers through senior citizen.



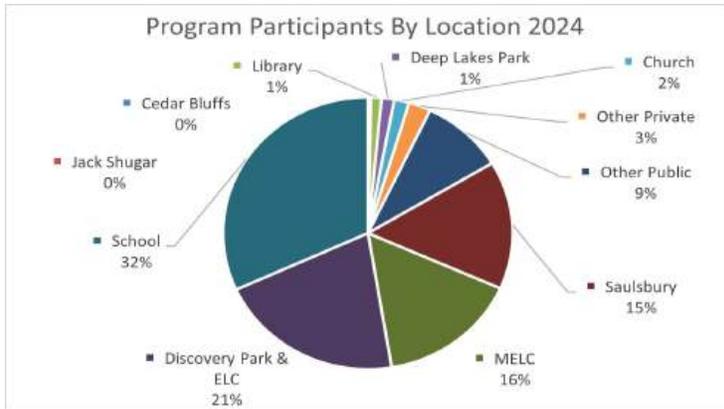
The majority of the programs (74%) were geared toward children with 12,714 youth participants.

Thirty-two percent (32%) of the

educational programs took place at local schools with 5,506 participants. About a quarter of the programs (21%) took place at the Environmental Learning Center/ Discovery Park with 3,602 participants, and Saulsbury was utilized for 15% of the programs with 2,642 people in attendance.

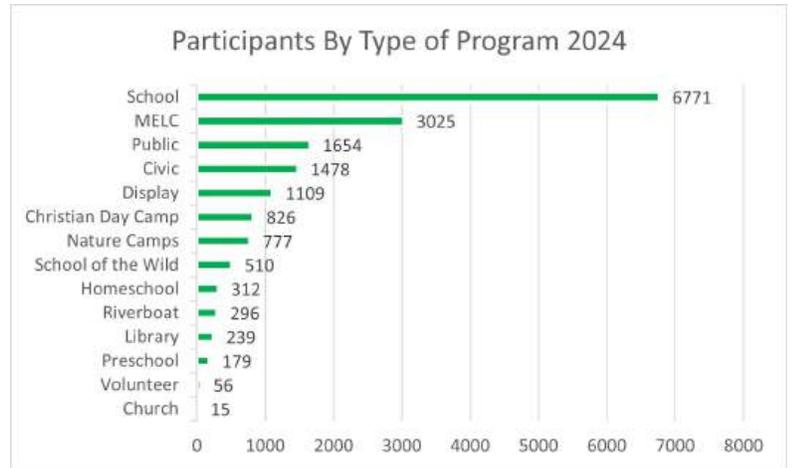
EE Programs were also held at Deep Lakes Park (245 people), Jack Shugar (56) and Cedar Bluffs (3).

A total of 10 riverboats docked in Muscatine



bringing 296 visitors to the Learning Center.

Live animal programs continue to be a huge draw and request. Our animal ambassadors (snakes, raptors, turtles, butterflies, and a frog, toad, and salamander) spend quite a bit of time helping with education programs.



Program topics included a mix of recreational activities (canoeing, kayaking, fishing, archery), animal groups (birds, mammals, insects, reptiles), habitats (prairie, woodland, wetland, river, pond), night sky, history, and more.

These are some of 2024's largest programs.

- Halloween Drive-Thru - 900
- Kiddie Barnyard - 404
- Hoover Fest - 375
- Night of the Young Child - 150

### 2024 CONSERVATION BOARD

|                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| Chairperson      | Sherry Seright |
| Vice-chairperson | Julie Jindrich |
| Member           | Karen Hartman  |
| Member           | Mike Schulte   |
| Member           | Mark Petersen  |



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**MISSION STATEMENT** — The mission of the Muscatine County Conservation Board is to preserve and enhance natural areas and resources in Muscatine County for the use and benefit of the community; to preserve sufficient natural habitats in Muscatine County; to ensure the survival of native plants and animals; to acquire, develop and manage land for public hunting, fishing, camping and recreation; and to promote public appreciation and responsibility for the environment through education.