



# IOWA OUTDOORS

## IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

CONSERVATION AND RECREATION DIVISION | [WWW.IOWADNR.GOV/NEWS/](http://WWW.IOWADNR.GOV/NEWS/)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: AUGUST 11, 2009

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### **LOTS TO DO AND SEE AT THE DNR BUILDING DURING STATE FAIR**

DES MOINES – Preparation for the Iowa State Fair is well underway at the DNR building.

“We always look forward to the State Fair and the opportunity it brings to visit with people,” says DNR Director Richard Leopold. “Our building showcases the natural resource of Iowa, what they have to offer and the responsibilities we have as citizens to be good stewards of them.”

Inside the building visitors will find a lot of the old favorites that are a draw every year as well as a few new features.

The historic aquarium, a focal point of the building, will again have 21 tanks filled with fish of various sizes and species, all found in Iowa.

The watershed display on the east side has been downsized and the area will now include a number of free-standing displays demonstrating how people can do their part to protect and improve our environment.

In the northeast corner, visitors will find the Nature Store and can purchase hunting and fishing licenses, a subscription to *Iowa Outdoors* magazine and a variety of outdoor-themed t-shirts and other apparel.

A stroll around the rest of the building will help visitors learn more about reptiles and amphibians, river trails, state park cabins and the new Honey Creek Resort State Park. And throughout the building, conservation officers, foresters, fish and wild biologist, park rangers and environmental specialists will be available to answer questions.

On the west side, along the wall opening to the courtyard, visitors may notice a structural change that is an aesthetic one as well. This year, artist David Williamson will be replacing one of the five iron gates with one sculpted from trash collected by 2008 project AWARE, Iowa's annual river clean up. The gate was started at the 2008 State Fair during Williamson's "trash into treasure" demonstrations. This year, in the "orange cone area" of the courtyard, Williamson will again involve fair-goers in sculpting a second gate from trash collected this year.

A new courtyard activity, sure to draw a crowd this year, will be birdhouse building. On Aug. 23, the last day of the fair, visitors can make and take birdhouses while supplies last. The DNR's courtyard, with its duck pond, sandbox, drinking fountain and plenty of shade offer State Fair goers a place to relax, cool off and enjoy a park-like setting, maybe even take in a stage presentation. Courtyard stage presentations will take place each day and feature tree treks around the fairgrounds, wild game and Dutch oven cooking, energy saving tips and games, fly fishing demonstrations and plenty of live animals. For list of courtyard presentations with dates and times, visit the DNR web site at [www.iowadnr.gov](http://www.iowadnr.gov)

The DNR building is a large, brick, open-air pavilion located just inside the east or main entrance to the fair on the north side of the Grand Concourse.

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## DEER TAG SCRAMBLE

By Joe Wilkinson

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

It may not feel like fall. However, step one of Iowa's deer tag scramble opens August 15. That's the first day on which hunters can select a tag and which season to hunt. Those options have been widely expanded in the last decade or so; with county specific antlerless tags and increased seasons, urban zones and more landowner tags.

The early scramble comes as early season muzzleloader hunters vie for 7,500 statewide tags available. "That quota keeps it an uncrowded hunt. People can get out in less crowded conditions; maybe kill a nice buck before the peak of the rut," notes Tom Litchfield, Department of Natural Resources deer biologist

September 15 is the next date on the calendar for deer hunters. They can pick up a variety of antlerless tags for the seasons and zones they prefer. A couple of the *later* antlerless seasons have tags come available closer to their dates.

Those antlerless tags, of course, are designed to increase the harvest of does, to steady or steer deer populations downward. That grab bag of whitetail hunting opportunities, though, is not an endless prospect. By 2012, wildlife officials want to see deer populations at mid to late 1990s levels. Their data indicates it is there in northwest, north central and much of east central Iowa. It's getting closer elsewhere.

It is already reflected in tag offerings this year. "We removed 17 counties (in east central and into northeast Iowa) from the November and late January antlerless seasons. Our data show if we discontinue the *seasons*, the tags would still be sold." Litchfield reminds hunters their in nearly every county, the overall tag quota remains intact, for use in the 'regular' seasons. Statewide, the number of antlerless tags has increased; with 131,600 available across 77 counties. There are more available in central and southern Iowa, where extra pressure is needed. "What drives everything is the harvest and the makeup of that harvest," stresses Litchfield, noting that of the 142,000 reported deer killed last season, more than half were does.

In addition, eligible landowners or tenants can qualify for no cost (other than \$2 in fees) or low cost tags. Though they account for about 25 percent of the tags issued in Iowa, their guidelines differ somewhat from paid hunters and fill an entire page in the hunting regulations booklet.

Details, including 65 urban, park and special zone hunts are available in Iowa's 2009-10 hunting regulations booklet, as well as online at [www.iowadnr.com](http://www.iowadnr.com) (click on Hunting & Wildlife, then on Regulations).

### **Deer tag sale dates, seasons:**

Each hunter may purchase first tags August 15. A second round of antlerless tag sales starts September 15. Seasons include:

Youth: Sept 19-Oct 4

Disabled Hunter: Sept 19-Oct 4

Bow: Oct 1-Dec 4, Dec 21-Jan 10

Early Muzzleloader: Oct 17-25

Late Muzzleloader: Dec 21-Jan 10

First Shotgun: Dec 5-9

Second Shotgun: Dec 12-20

November Antlerless: Nov 27-29 (available Nov 14, if any remain)

January Antlerless: Jan 11-31 (available Dec 15, if any remain)

Nonresident January Antlerless: (available Jan 11-31, if any remain)

Holiday (Nonresident): Dec 24-Jan 2 (available Dec 15-Jan 2)

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## **RESTORATION OF LIZARD LAKE TOPIC OF AUG. 25 MEETING**

POCAHONTAS - The Iowa Department of Natural Resources will host a public meeting to discuss the future of Lizard Lake at 7 p.m., Aug. 25, at the Expo Center, in Pocahontas. The DNR will present lake restoration and water quality improvement scenarios and will listen to public comments.

Richard Leopold, director of the DNR, will be on hand to highlight project benefits and to hear public feedback. The DNR will also have Lannie Miller, fisheries biologist for the area to discuss the future of the fishery, Mike McGhee, with the lakes restoration program to discuss lake restoration, and Mark Gulick, regional supervisor for wildlife, who will discuss shallow lakes management.

State officials received a petition showing there is a need for additional public comments to discuss restoration improvements at Lizard Lake. The DNR presented the findings of a diagnostic feasibility study at a public meeting in Gilmore City in March, that outlined historic lake and water quality conditions, described the current status of the watershed and lake, and outlined potential restoration options and associated costs.

The public is invited to the meeting and to offer their comments on the future of Lizard Lake.

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## **PUBLIC MEETING IN DES MOINES TO DISCUSS PROPOSED FISHING TOURNAMENT RULES**

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources is holding a public meeting to receive comments on a proposal to change the rules covering fishing tournaments.

The DNR proposal requires fishing tournament applications to be submitted on an electronic form as part of a new special events application system and changes the time period for application submission to no earlier than six months or later than 30 days prior to the requested tournament date.

The meeting is scheduled for 1 p.m., Aug. 20, in the fourth floor conference room, Wallace State Office Building, 502 E. 9<sup>th</sup> St., in Des Moines. Any persons who attend the public hearing and have special needs, such as hearing or mobility impairments should contact the Department of Natural Resources and advise of specific needs.

The DNR will be accepting written comments through Sept. 1. Send comments to Martin Konrad, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 502 E. 9<sup>th</sup> St., Des Moines, IA 50319-0034 or offer oral comments by calling 515-281-6976 or in person at the fisheries bureau office on the fourth floor of the Wallace Building.

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## **CLINTON MEETING SET FOR PROPOSED REGULATIONS ON PADDLEFISH**

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources will host a public meeting to receive comments on a proposal to change the fishing regulations covering paddlefish.

The proposed changes limit anglers to a maximum 5/0 treble hook size when snagging paddlefish, places a 33-inch maximum length on paddlefish as measured from the front of the eye to the fork of the tail, and reduces the length of the fishing season to March 1 through April 15.

The public meeting will begin at 7 p.m., Aug. 26, in the Clinton County Administration Building, Room D, 1900 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> St., in Clinton. Any persons who attend the public hearing and have special needs, such as hearing or mobility impairments should contact the Department of Natural Resources and advise of specific needs.

The DNR will be accepting written comments through Sept. 1. Send comments to Martin Konrad, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 502 E. 9<sup>th</sup> St., Des Moines, IA 50319-0034 or offer oral comments by calling 515-281-6976 or in person at the fisheries bureau office on the fourth floor of the Wallace Building.

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## **CORRECTION TO EARLY MUZZLELOADER DEER SEASON**

Des Moines – The early muzzleloader deer season in Iowa is Oct. 17 to 25. The season dates were listed incorrectly on the 2009 Iowa Outdoors calendar.

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