

Iowa Outdoors

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

www.iowadnr.gov

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GREAT DEALS FOR AUGUST AT HONEY CREEK RESORT

There's no question Honey Creek Resort State Park is busy this summer, as families and friends choose Iowa's close-to-home resort for their vacation destination. But according to Jeremie Slagle, the general manager for Honey Creek Resort, there's still plenty of opportunities to visit this summer and fall.

"Honey Creek Resort is offering some great August packages for both its guestrooms and cabins," said Slagle. "All packages include passes to the indoor water park and family bike rentals."

The best deals are available for Monday through Thursday stays, according to Slagle. "Families and couples who want to take a break on the lake before school starts should definitely give Honey Creek a try."

The resort is finishing up a major bike trail through the park, and is installing a natural playground area for kids in the next couple of weeks. Additionally, the resort's marina is now open, offering boat slips for guests and lake boaters, boat rentals, and fishing opportunities for the whole family.

To take advantage of the August Hot Specials, call the resort at 877-677-3344. Reservations can also be made on-line at www.honeycreekresort.com. If website visitors find that no rooms are available on the reservation site, they are encouraged to call the resort phone line to receive assistance looking for alternative dates or recent cancellations, said Slagle.

For more information, visit www.honeycreekresort.com/specials. Examples of August specials, valid for August 15-September 3, 2009 include:

- 2-Night Packages starting at \$199 in a traditional guestroom for entire stay. Includes 4-water park passes.
- 2-Night Packages starting at \$359 in a 1-bedroom cabin for entire stay. Includes 6 water park passes.

- 2-Night Packages starting at \$479 in a 2-bedroom cabin for entire stay. Includes 8 water park passes.
- 2-Night Packages starting at \$659 in a 4-bedroom cabin for entire stay. Includes 10 water park passes.

All packages include 4-bike rentals. Offer is available for Sunday through Thursday reservations. Bicycle rental is a two-hour limit and based on availability. Not valid with any other discounts or promotions. Some blackout dates may apply. Advanced reservations required. Room taxes and incidental charges not included in this offer. Offer does not apply to group events.

Honey Creek Resort is located on Rathbun Lake in southern Iowa, about 90 minutes south of Des Moines.

Contact: Libby Weimer, Honey Creek Resort/Central Group Companies Marketing Director: 320-654-6307.

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MINNESOTA AND WISCONSIN OSPREY RELOCATION UNDERWAY

Iowa will become home to nine ospreys from Minnesota and 10 from Wisconsin this week as volunteers place the young birds at select release sites.

On Monday, four Minnesota ospreys were placed at Dickinson County Conservation Board's Nature Center in Spirit Lake. Event coordinator Barbara Tagami reported the birds are doing well and will be finishing their flight feather growth in their release facility. All four will be released within two weeks. Tagami's number is 712-330-1080.

Other osprey releases include:

- Five Minnesota ospreys were placed at White Rock Conservancy by Kay Neumann of Saving Our Avian Resources on July 14. SOAR's contact number is 712-683-5555. A special osprey evening is planned for Sept. 5 at White Rock Conservancy.
- Five Wisconsin ospreys will be placed at Mudlake by Dubuque County Conservation Board staff at 9 a.m., July 16. Contact Brian Pearson at 563-556-6745.
- Five Wisconsin ospreys will be placed by Warren County Conservation Board Staff at Annett Nature Center at 9 a.m., July 16. Contact Missy Smith at 515-961-6169.

The young ospreys are developed enough to tear apart their favorite food, fish, by themselves. They will be attaining flight status about 53 days of age and allowed to fly freely from their "hack" or release site. Where the birds learn to fly and fish on their own becomes their "home" where survivors return to nest at four or five years of age. Volunteers and wildlife professionals at five sites have geared up to fill the niche the

Osprey adults were providing their young with fish and security. In conjunction with feeding the birds, the young ospreys are monitored daily to ensure they will be flight ready.

The ospreys are from Minnesota and Wisconsin nests in areas that are osprey rich with young birds can be relocated to Iowa. Volunteers are welcomed to contact coordinators at each “hack” or release site listed above to assist in these efforts to bring ospreys to Iowa. Financial support is especially appreciated at each site as no tax dollars or DNR Wildlife Diversity funds are budgeted for this project.

In 2009, there are 14 osprey nests in Iowa. Sites that were the first to release ospreys at Macbride Raptor Project in Johnson County and Hartman Reserve Nature Center in Black Hawk County each have four nesting pairs. Polk County Conservation Board reports two nests near their release site at Jester Park. One nest in Boone County at Don Williams Lake., Duane Arnold Power Plant in Linn County, Lake Rathbun in Appanoose County, and Missouri River in Woodbury County.

There have been 209 ospreys released at 10 sites since 1997. Ospreys have successfully nested in Iowa since 2003 with 33 young produced from 16 successful nestings. All Iowa ospreys have a purple band with number and letter on right leg and silver USFWS band on left leg. The wild-produced ospreys from Iowa have a green USFWS band.

For further information contact Schlarbaum at 515-432-2823 or 712-330-0526

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POPULAR CAMP TEACHES GIRLS OUTDOOR SKILLS

Iowa’s Outdoor Journey for Girls camp introduces outdoor skills to 12 to 15 year old girls of all backgrounds and knowledge levels where they have an opportunity to try things hands-on under the watchful eye of the instructors.

The three day, two night workshop teaches a variety of outdoor skills, including canoeing, orienteering, fishing, archery, shooting rifles/shotguns, conservation, water safety, camping, game care, trapping, fish identification and fish cleaning and cooking.

The second day is devoted to certifying the girls in Iowa’s hunter education program.

The final 2009 camp is scheduled for Aug. 5 to 7 at Springbrook Conservation Education Center, near Guthrie Center. The camp fills rather quickly so early registration is encouraged. More information is available on the Web at www.iowadnr.gov, then click on Camps and Workshops under Additional Information on navigation bar on the left side of the page. Then scroll down to OJ – Outdoor Journey for Girls.

Outdoor Journey for Girls began in 1993 with the purpose of offering girls a similar experience to outdoor camps already in place for boys, and so far, more than 2,000 girls have gone through the camp.

For information on Outdoor Journey, contact Donise Grygierczyk at 515-205-8709.

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RIVER CLEANUP VOLUNTEERS HONORED WITH NATIONAL AWARD

DES MOINES – Since its 2003 beginning, hundreds of Iowans have volunteered to exchange vacation days for an opportunity to help clean Iowa’s rivers as part of Project AWARE.

On July 17, their efforts will be recognized in Washington, D.C., when Project AWARE will be presented with a 2009 Take Pride in America National Award. The ceremony will take place at the U.S. Department of the Interior.

The DNR’s annual volunteer river cleanup event, Project AWARE stands for A Watershed Awareness River Expedition. Volunteers participate by paddling the river in a canoe or kayak and cleaning up river trash along the way.

Take Pride in America is a national partnership program authorized by Congress to promote the appreciation and stewardship of public lands, including parks, forests, historic sites and schools. Each year, a panel of judges selects award winners from hundreds of qualified nominations representing outstanding examples of stewardship across the country. This year, there are 15 national award winners, representing projects and events in 11 states and the District of Columbia.

“It is an incredible privilege to honor this outstanding group of award winners. They each embody the mission of the Take Pride in America program, and are examples to us all of what it means to be good stewards of our public lands,” said Lisa Young, acting executive director for Take Pride in America. “This is one way we can say ‘Thank you,’ for the work they have done.”

In the seven-year history of Project AWARE, the expedition has scored an impressive track record, enlisting 1,500 participants, cleaning up more than 513 river miles, and removing more than 1,800 cubic yards of trash and recycling 78 percent of it. Volunteers have also restored native prairie, renovated trails and enhanced recreational areas.

“Whether you clean up litter in a local park or help build a Continental Divide trail, you’re creating a legacy for our children and our grandchildren. Take it from me, you’ll feel better for it,” says Take Pride in America National Spokesman Clint Eastwood.

Six-year Project AWARE veteran John Pearson agrees, “Project AWARE is fun and educational in many ways. It is also gratifying to feel that the river is left a better place for your effort.”

For more information on Take Pride in America or Project AWARE, please visit www.takepride.gov or www.iowaprojectaware.com.

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