

2/24/2014

Projects Grant Report Criteria

Projects Committee, Iowa Ornithologists' Union 2014

IOU News

PROJECT TITLE: Pammel Park Bird Blind Project

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

General Site Description

The bird blind is located at Pammel Park, located four miles southwest of Winterset. The blind is positioned near the present Nature Center providing easy access from trails as well as the nearby campgrounds.

Existing Habitat Description

The bird blind location is primarily influenced by upland hardwood timber with an adjacent grassland habitat of approximately 15 acres containing both cool and warm season grasses. The bird blind is located in the transition zone of grasslands and upland timber. These zones provide habitat for a diversity of bird species, and provide an excellent spot for bird viewing. A wider zone of habitat influence includes the riparian ecosystem associated with Middle River which is located within ¼ mile of the blind location.

Construction of the blind began in August of 2013 and was completed on September 5, 2013. Building materials were purchased locally and the labor was conducted by employees of the Madison County Conservation Board. The blind was officially opened on September 21, 2013.

PROJECT GOALS:

- Attract more people into the park where community members and bird enthusiasts can get outdoors and foster lifelong hobbies.
 - School groups
 - Scouts
 - Seniors
 - General park users
 - Educational camps
- Provide bird watching experiences where students can practice observation, inquiry-based investigations and data collection in concealment.
- Benefiting Iowa birds through more awareness of human observers.
- Attracting birders to the area and perhaps allow us to sponsor birding events such as annual bird counts, scavenger hunts, or a featured bird of the month in the local newspaper.

Our goals are being addressed as we are observing;

- Individual using the blind for amateur birding
- Being used by school field trips
- Being used by clubs and organizations
- Was a host site for the Great Backyard Bird Count

The grant money received from IOU allowed us to reach our fundraising goal and purchase discounted building materials through a local provider.

PROJECT IMPACT:

The structure is the first of its kind in our area and is being used regularly. The feeding stations have attracted large numbers and varieties of bird species.

As a conservation board, we are increasing our own awareness about the unique bird species residing in and migrating through this area and are continue to look for ways to reach out to birders. Our Director participated in an adjacent Christmas Bird Count this past December in order to learn more about that program and is in the process of applying for a birding circle in our area for future Christmas Bird Counts. We plan to participate in other organized counts on an annual basis including the Great Backyard Bird Count.

The blind has helped establish contact and networking opportunities such as;

- Program by Doug Harr with the Iowa Audubon Society
- Makoke Trail users
- Invitation to participate in Urban Bald Eagle Days in Des Moines on February 22nd