

2018 Project Grant Report

With the help of the 2018 Iowa Ornithologists' Union Grant, the Langwood Education Center Bird Blind Feeders project was very successful. Louisa County Conservation's project consisted of purchasing new bird feeders and fixing up our existing bird blind area at one of our parks, Langwood Education Center.

Our main goal for this project was to repair and replace feeders in order to enhance our bird blind viewing area. Prior to the receiving this grant, most of our feeders were worn out or broken. This made keeping the feeders filled, attracting birds to this area, and teaching at the blind a challenge. Most of our teaching is done at Langwood Education Center throughout the year and we wanted the bird blind to remain an effective teaching tool. In addition to local students and individuals who attend our public programs, many weekend groups and boy scout troops use the bird blind year-round. Louisa County Conservation wanted to be able to continue to attract a wide variety of bird species to this area, so groups could learn about Iowa birds even if a naturalist isn't present.

With the grant money we received, we were able to purchase four new bird feeders from Wild Birds Unlimited in Davenport, IA. These feeders are made to withstand environmental conditions, so they will be a benefit to our organization for years to come. They hold a larger amount of seed than our old feeders, so it will be easier to keep our bird blind filled year-round for both Louisa County Conservation programs and weekend groups. In addition to feeders, we were able to buy suet to help feed and attract different bird species.

This project has already impacted our community and helped us teach about native birds. Since completing this project, we have had both adults and children from school field trips and public programs visit the improved bird blind area. Each time many different bird species have stopped by and have given the naturalists at Louisa County Conservation the opportunity to educate viewers about the importance of native birds. We have educated people ranging from 2 years old at our Nature Tots programs to adults at our public programs about bird conservation, adaptations, and identification. Visitors of all ages have been excited to see bird adaptations and behaviors up close. Watching the different bird species in their habitat has helped instill a greater appreciation for these animals.

Now that the area is improved, we are even more excited to use it for our upcoming school field trips, nature camps, and public programs. In February we are looking forward to utilizing the bird blind during our Great Backyard Bird Count program. Thanks to this generous grant, the bird blind area has become a better place for birds to visit. This has made it a better place for people to learn about the importance of protecting and valuing native Iowa birds.

Photos and Captions



Figure 1. Children at Winter Nature Camp helped fill the new feeders after viewing birds from inside the bird blind.



Figure 2. One of the feeders we were able to purchase with the grant money



Figure 3. It's never too early to learn about birds! Our Nature Tots (2-4-year-olds) spent time watching for birds inside the bird blind. Then they explored the area to figure out why the birds were stopping by and what they were eating.