

Johnson County Conservation VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER

January 2025

We need your help for the following volunteer positions and events!

Clothing Swap Helpers

JCC is hosting our first community clothing swap and we need your help! Clothing swaps are a way to build community, divert clothing from the landfill, and provide an economical option for participants to update their wardrobe. Clothes that are donated ahead of the swap will then be available for participants to choose from at no cost during the event. There is no cost to participate. We will be weighing clothes that are swapped on site to understand just how much we have diverted from the landfill through this effort.

We need volunteers to assist with event set up, sorting clothing, and with event facilitation.

Volunteer shifts include:

- Sorting donations & event set-up
Friday, January 24 from 1-4 pm
- Event Volunteers (greeters, weighers, floaters)
Saturday, January 25 from 12:30-3 pm
- Event Cleanup—Saturday, January 25 from 3-4 pm

Contact Michelle Wiegand
MWiegand@JohnsonCountyIowa.gov

Or visit the [SignUpGenius Link](#) for direct sign up by clicking above or scanning the QR code.



Willow Basket Prep

We would love your help cutting willow for our upcoming basketry classes. We host basket weaving classes every winter/spring, and the most time consuming part? Harvesting the willow! Ideally, freshly cut "green" willow should sit for a few weeks to dry out before being soaked and re-hydrated for weaving. Willow will be cut from William's Prairie Preserve with hand pruners, provided by us, then bundled for transport and storage. We will set a date dependent on volunteer availability, but cutting will likely occur sometime mid-February.

Contact: Frances Owen
fowen@johnsoncountyiowa.gov

Luminary Night Hike Clean-up

Hike under the stars on February 14, and help us clean up from the Luminary Night Hike. Volunteers will help retrieve 100+ LED candles spread along the 1-1.5 mile hiking path. If the weather is not cold enough for ice luminaries, clean up will also involve retrieving mason jars. Clean-up starts at 9:00 p.m. and will likely be completed by 10:00 p.m.

Contact: Kristen Morrow
kmorrow@johnsoncountyiowa.gov

Flip for more volunteer needs on the backside.

<https://www.johnsoncountyiowa.gov/conservation>





Field Trip Substitute

Help JCC Naturalists facilitate hands-on environmental learning this spring as a substitute naturalist. Volunteers will be trained to lead two lessons: Wetland Ecology and Discovery Hikes. A sub would be called on in cases of naturalist/family illness, or to help with large capacity field trips. Volunteer should be comfortable in a teaching role, comfortable with kids and public speaking, comfortable getting dirty, and able to hike 2 to 3 miles in warm weather and over uneven terrain. A background check is required for this role.

Contact: Kristen Morrow
kmorrow@johnsoncountyiowa.gov

Conservation Education Center Host

Though we're in the thick of winter, we're looking ahead to the warm summer months. Volunteer CEC Hosts are vital in keeping the CEC in Kent Park open to visitors on summer weekends. Hosts serve as friendly ambassadors greeting visitors, answering nature- and JCC-related questions when able. We are seeking volunteers for Saturdays from June 1 to August 10. Hosts unlock the CEC at 10:00 a.m. and lock up at 2:00 p.m. Hosts can serve one day or many, every bit helps! A background check is required for this role.

Contact: Kristen Morrow
kmorrow@johnsoncountyiowa.gov

Citizen Science: Integrated Monarch Monitoring Program (IMMP)

With the future of the monarch uncertain, research into their habitat and abundance becomes even more important. During this effort, volunteers will visit the study site (located at Cedar River Crossing) throughout the summer to complete various activities required by this program to monitor monarch butterflies. Activities include identifying blooming plants and milkweed, searching for monarch eggs and caterpillars, looking for adult butterflies, and/or possibly raising one or two caterpillars at home. We go to the site on Wednesday mornings for 2-4 hours, but volunteers do not need to come every time, or participate in every activity. No prior experience is required – we can teach you everything you need to know! This work requires walking off trail through tall vegetation and often muddy conditions. This will be the fifth year JCC has been involved with this national citizen science program.

Contact: Frances Owen
fowen@johnsoncountyiowa.gov



This newsletter will come out on an as-needed basis. To subscribe to the email-list for this newsletter, [click here](#) or scan the QR code to the right.

Banner photo: Two Horse Farm, credit: Erin Melloy

<https://www.johnsoncountyiowa.gov/conservation>

