



Mississippi River Project

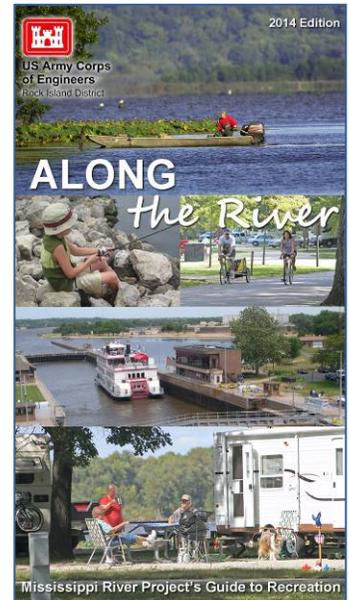


US Army Corps
of Engineers®

Happy New Year from the Mississippi River Project

NEW 2014 ALONG THE RIVER – GUIDE TO RECREATION

Each year the Mississippi River Project publishes a new updated guide to camping and recreation areas along the banks of the Mississippi River that are managed by the project. This year's 2014 edition will be available soon and offers information on reserving a campsite, buying a boat ramp pass, campground amenities, and has a list of many things to see and do from Potosi, Wisconsin all the way to Saverton, Missouri. If you would like to receive a free copy of this annual publication, please e-mail your name and address to mvrodmn15@usace.army.mil and we will mail it to you as soon as they become available.



OUTDOOR SHOW AND RV CAMPING SHOW

If you have a love for the outdoors and winter is keeping you from participating in your favorite recreational activities then come visit with our ranger staff at the QCCA Expo Center in Rock Island, IL and get geared up for summer while the cold air is still blowing outside. The Outdoor Show will be held February 13th through the 16th and our rangers will be on hand to provide information on all the recreational opportunities our project has to offer. We will even have annual day use passes available for sale so that boaters can get ready for the season by purchasing their boat ramp sticker early. The RV Camping Show will be the following weekend February 21st through the 23rd and rangers will be on site to answer questions and provide information on all our camping and recreational areas. For more information on these shows check out the website www.qccaexpoctr.com

NEW ONLINE RESERVATIONS FOR PICNIC SHELTERS

Many of the Corps of Engineers recreation areas along the Mississippi River have picnic shelters that can be reserved for use by visitors. They are perfect for birthday parties, family reunions, or other special occasions. Shelters located at Grant River, Blanding Landing, Thomson Causeway, Clark's Ferry, and Shady Creek can now be reserved up to one year in advance using the online reservation service at www.recreation.gov or calling 1-877-444-6777. The shelters located at Locks and Dam 14 (309-794-4301) and Andalusia Slough (563-263-7913) do not have online registration but may still be reserved by contacting the phone number listed. The cost to reserve these sites is only \$25.00.

SERVICE CONTRACTS FOR 2014 OPENING SOON

The Mississippi River Project will have several service contract opportunities available for bid in 2014. You can stay up to date on what is available by visiting our website at www.missriver.org and

click on the "Working for Us" link. If you would like to be put on a contact list for future consideration, or if you need more information on the service contract process on the Mississippi River, please contact Supervisory Natural Resource Specialist John Knoble at 309-794-4523 ([email](#)), or Administrative Officer Danet Dexter at 309-794-4524 ([email](#)).

<u>RECREATION AREA</u>	<u>CONTRACT TYPE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
Andalusia Slough	Mowing, trimming, refuse & custodial	Andalusia, IL
Big Slough	Mowing, trimming, refuse & custodial	Thomson, IL
Blanding Landing	Fee collection & custodial	Hanover, IL
Blanding Landing	Mowing & trimming	Hanover, IL
Bulger's Hollow	Mowing & trimming	Clinton, IA
Canton Chute	Mowing, trimming, refuse & custodial	Quincy, IL
Clark's Ferry	Custodial	Montpelier, IA
Fisherman's Corner	Fee collection	Hampton, IL
Grant River	Mowing & trimming	Potosi, WI
John Hay	Mowing, trimming, refuse & custodial	East Hannibal, IL
Kilpeck Landing	Mowing, trimming, refuse & custodial	Grandview, IA
Lock & Dam 11	Custodial	Dubuque, IA
Lock & Dam 13	Mowing, trimming & Custodial	Fulton, IL
Lock & Dam 14	Custodial	Pleasant Valley, IA
Lock & Dam 21	Custodial	Quincy, IL
Park-N-Fish	Mowing, trimming, refuse & custodial	Hull, IL
Pleasant Creek	Refuse & custodial	Bellevue, IA
Pleasant Creek	Mowing & trimming	Bellevue, IA
Thomson Causeway	Fee collection	Thomson, IL
Thomson Causeway	Mowing & trimming	Thomson, IL

Dubuque Ranger Station News

In 2013, the Dubuque field station dealt with flooding and a government shutdown, but regardless still provided excellent program events, and implemented park improvements for our customers. Although flooding was an issue this year in our area we were not as affected as others downriver. For part of the recreation season, Grant River & Blanding Landing Recreation Areas were some of the few parks along the Mississippi that were open and fully functional.

The Bald Eagle Watch even last January, at the Grand River Center, marked the event's 25th anniversary. Thanks to major sponsors like Eagle Windows & Doors, Alliant Energy, American Trust Bank, Wal-Mart Foundation, Holiday Inn Express, MainStay Suites, & the Dubuque Convention and Visitors Bureau, this annual family event continues to be free to the general public. In May, the ecology meet held at Eagle Point Park in Dubuque was another great success with St. Columbkille of Dubuque, IA, bringing home the first place trophy. Holy Ghost Immaculate Conception of Kieler, WI, participated and graduated from our Jr. Ranger program.

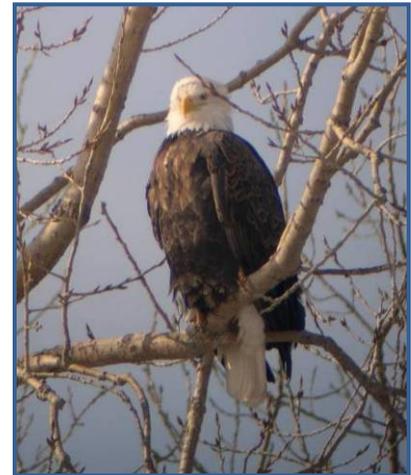
During the recreation season, all of our parks benefited from improvements because of our maintenance team as well as a volunteer AmeriCorps group. Some of the improvements included re-shingling the shower building roof at Grant River, replacing the old boat dock at Blanding Landing, and the install of new vault toilets on the island at Pleasant Creek.

Although flooding and the government shutdown shortened our recreation season, we still worked hard to make you, our customers, happy in 2013.

DUBUQUE BALD EAGLE WATCH

SATURDAY, JANUARY 18TH, 2014

- Outdoor viewing at Lock and Dam 11 from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM
- Live Eagle & Bird of Prey Programs by the University of Minnesota Raptor Center at 9:30 AM, 12:15 PM & 3:00 PM
- Pella Wildlife Co. will present on the difference between coyotes and wolves at 11:00 AM & 1:45 PM.
- Indoor Exhibits from 9:00 AM - 4:30 PM at the Grand River Center - Port of Dubuque
- Trolley rides from Grand River Center to the National Mississippi River Museum and the outdoor viewing area.
- For more information call: 563-582-0881



Thomson Ranger Station News

This year brought many challenges along the Mississippi River and the Thomson Ranger Office experienced its fair share. Early in the spring, it appeared the drought of 2012 had been washed away with spring rains and minor flooding in our recreation area. This past year we experienced three minor flood events that caused several closures. After July 4th weekend though, the high water concerns washed downstream and created another drought like later summer and early fall. The weather was ideal for campers to come out and enjoy the remainder of the camping season.

Volunteers were a vital part of our successful year. Each year we depend on an array of individuals and groups to help us keep the recreations areas looking their best, and this past year was no exception. We continued our partnerships with local Boy Scouts of America Troops to successfully complete interpretive events, wildlife habitat projects, and maintenance in the recreation areas. Campground hosts completed an array of tasks ranging from campground maintenance, to visitor assistance, and emergency cleanup efforts. This year, Thomson Causeway Hosts', Gene and Betty Boyer were honored for contributing over 3,200 hours over six seasons.

We continued to promote Water Safety at our recreation areas and while out on boat patrol. Rangers can be found providing water safety programs, Lock and Dam Tours, or performing courtesy boat inspections. Each weekend campground programs were held at Thomson Causeway and Fisherman's Corner. Every year



the Thomson Ranger Office organizes an array of special interpretive events: Eagle Watch, Wood Duck Nesting House Cleanouts, Earth Day, Photo Contest, Thomson Causeway Camper Craft Show and Trick or Treat in the Park. In 2013, Thomson Rangers prepared 74 programs for over 7,100 participants in events designed to encourage participants and visitors to get outdoors.

For the upcoming year we hope to build upon the success we achieved in 2013. With Mother Nature's cooperation we hope to pack the parks again this year with campers, boaters, fisherman, hunters and visitors of a likes while providing quality programs. If you have any questions regarding upcoming activities at the Thomson Ranger Office, please contact us.

30TH ANNUAL BALD EAGLE WATCH

SATURDAY JANUARY 4TH

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Mississippi River Project, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Clinton Community College, and the Stewards of the Upper Mississippi River Refuge will be hosting the 30th Annual Bald Eagle Watch on Saturday January 4, 2014. Educational programs and environmental exhibits will be held at the Clinton Community College. Clinton Community College is located at 1000 Lincoln Blvd, Clinton, Iowa. Eagle viewing will be held at Lock and Dam #13 in Fulton, Illinois off Highway 84.

The event will be open from 9:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. to view exhibits and education programs. This year's schedule is as follows:

9:45 a.m. – Welcome to Eagle watch.

10:00 a.m. – “The American Bald Eagle” – presented by the National Eagle Center, Wabasha, MN.

**The National Eagle Center will have a live eagle available for photos between 11:45 a.m. - 12:45 p.m. **

11:15 a.m. – “Native American Dance, in Honor of the Bald Eagle” – Rudy Vallejo, Member of the Kickapoo Tribe of Kansas presenting

12:30 p.m. – “Listen to the Eagles Message” – DVD produced by S.O.A.R.

1:00 p.m. – “The American Bald Eagle” – presented by the National Eagle Center, Wabasha, MN.

The programs and exhibits will feature a live bald eagle, conservations groups, artists, drawings for door prizes and refreshments. The National Eagle Center will have a live eagle available for photo opportunities between 11:45 a.m. - 12:45 p.m.

Mississippi River Visitor Center News

The year 2013 was a busy one at the Mississippi River Visitor Center with many changes taking place that have really improved the facility and the opportunities that visitors have when making a visit. During the past year the staff with the Mississippi River Project has worked hard to renovate nearly all the main exhibits on navigation, recreation, and natural resource management in the upper level of the building. This renovation was made possible via a partnership with the Quad City Convention and Visitor's Bureau which serves as a cooperating association for the Mississippi River Project and several other partners that provided donated materials and resources. On Jan. 24th, 2014 from 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM the Visitor Center will be hosting an open house event with additional staff on hand to discuss some of the new exhibits and how this project was made possible.



In addition to working on the new renovations over the past year, the staff at the Visitor Center was also involved in many special events and happenings. From water safety patrol on the river to educational programming at local schools a day in the life of a Visitor Center ranger is never the same. The rangers from the Visitor Center presented 300 educational programs this past year which reached a total of 17,032 participants. These programs are hosted both on and offsite with the rangers providing information on subjects ranging from local history to natural resource management. Water safety is a huge priority for the staff along the Mississippi therefore river patrol is a must. The staff also assists local boaters with getting educated about

the hazards on the river by conducting boating safety classes and helping our with large scale events like FLOATZILLA.

In 2014 the staff at the Visitor Center looks forward to the possibilities that a new year can bring. We thank you for your continued support and hope to see you soon at the Mississippi River Visitor Center.

QUAD CITY BALD EAGLE DAYS

DATE: FRIDAY JANUARY 10, 2014 – SUNDAY, JANUARY 12, 2014

**TIME: FRIDAY 4:00 – 8:00 PM, SATURDAY 10:00 AM – 8:00 PM,
SUNDAY 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM**

LOCATION: QCCA EXPO CENTER, 2621 4TH AVE. ROCK ISLAND, IL

**COST: ADULTS \$5.00, KIDS \$1.00, KIDS 5 AND UNDER FREE
(FRIDAY NIGHT 4:00 – 8:00 KIDS UNDER 18 FREE)**

INFORMATION: 309-788-2543

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi River Project would like to invite you to the Annual Quad City Bald Eagle Days January 10-12th, 2014. Come see a live eagle presentation given by the World Bird Sanctuary of St. Louis or check out one of the other live animal shows presented by the Pella Wildlife Company and Niabi Zoo. This is a family friendly event that can last all day with many booths to see and hands on activities for the kids. An of course don't miss out on your chance to view these beautiful birds in the wild on one of the guided bus tours along the Mississippi. These outdoor eagle viewing tours will take you on a trip around the Quad City area and show you the many places to see these majestic birds.



HISTORIC CLOCK TOWER AND EAGLE WATCH TOURS

DATE: JAN. 4TH, 5TH, 25TH, & 26TH, AND FEB. 1ST, 2ND, 8TH, & 9TH

TIME: 9:00 AM & 12:30 PM

LOCATION: MISSISSIPPI RIVER VISITOR CENTER – ARSENAL ISLAND

COST: FREE – RESERVATIONS RECOMMENDED

INFORMATION: 309-794-5338

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi River Project announces that the Visitor Center at Locks and Dam #15 is inviting guests to come participate in a Historic Clock Tower and Eagle Watch Tour. Relive the early days of the Rock Island Arsenal as you climb your way up the historic corridor of the Clock Tower Building which has been a Quad City landmark for over 100 years! Waiting at the top is a spectacular view of the Mississippi where you could have the opportunity to see Bald Eagles who visit our area during the cold winter months. There will be two tours offered each of the scheduled days listed that will begin at 9:00 am and 12:30 pm. The tour will be approximately 1½ hours long and be guided by a Visitor Center Park Ranger. The tour will begin at the Mississippi River Visitor Center, located on the west end of Arsenal Island at Locks and Dam #15.

This program is free of charge and everyone is invited to attend. **Advance registration is recommended.** An adult must accompany children under 12 years of age. **All persons over age 16 must carry a photo ID to enter the island. Vehicles are subject to search and participants should allow 15 minutes extra to ensure proper arrival time for the tour.** For more information or to sign up for the program, please contact the Visitor Center at (309) 794-5338.

Muscatine Ranger Station News

The Mississippi River Project had its fair share of struggles this year on the “recreation” front; and the Muscatine Ranger Station was no exception. However, we also had some new things happening that were quite good. Let’s start this review by working through our struggles, and ending with the highlights!

It took not one, not two, but three rounds of floods to go through before we could officially begin our prime recreation season! These flood events required us to close the parks for a combined total of 527 days! The breakdown was like this: Blanchard Island 108 days closed, Kilpeck Landing 101 days closed, Ferry Landing 116 days closed, Shady Creek 21 days closed and 69 days partially closed, Clark’s Ferry 18 days closed and 30 days partially closed, Andalusia Slough 13 days closed and 43 days partially closed, and finally Lock and Dam #16 was closed for 8 days.

Much coordination of volunteers, resources, and staff was required to safely and accurately employ our Flood Event Action Plan. I’m happy to say that no one involved in carrying out our plan had any safety mishaps! It’s always a good day, when a well thought out plan, is executed in the same manner, where no one gets hurt, including the public, the staff, and our facilities.

Another long struggle was the bad water situation at Clark’s Ferry Recreation Area. With the help of the IA Department of Natural Resources, an engineer, and contractors; we’re hopeful that the solution will be in place for next recreation season. The “root” of the problem (pun intended) appears to have been tree roots that infiltrated through cracks of the well casing causing the continuous return of bad water samples. We are in the process of getting the proper permits, specifications, and actual work completed to fix this problem once and for all.

Early this season, long time summer ranger Bill Yost decided to hang up his ranger hat for good. Bill was a ranger with the Muscatine Station for over 20 years. His knowledge, experience, and love for the job will be greatly missed!

Despite the three floods, the bad water situation at Clark’s Ferry, and being down a summer ranger and student aid; we did have many positive things happen this past year. I’ll highlight just a few for you here.



We had a young group of AmeriCorps volunteers, ages 18 to 28; accomplish many tasks for us in the parks. Now granted, they didn’t get as much done on the list as we had hoped, but that was only because yours and our priorities had changed, due to the flood events we had. We thought it was more important to get our campers back in the parks camping first, and then worry about the “list” later. This AmeriCorps group accomplished the following in the heat, mud, rain, and river: flood debris cleanup, weeding, boundary line cleanup, brush removal, painting and staining, and re-roofing the restrooms at Shady Creek. They did it all without a bed, a solid roof, and creature comforts. These young adults were good workers and didn’t complain once about their situation. Thanks AmeriCorps!

A new environmental education opportunity was implemented this past season as well. It was the Nature Backpack Program, where kids can check out a backpack for free from one of our fee booths and go explore the natural areas of the parks using the items inside. The backpack was checked out only a couple times this year. However, we hope that number increases by spreading the word to others. Can you help us with that?

The volunteers we had this year made a very positive impact on our recreation program. Thanks to the AmeriCorps, our long term volunteers Tom and Michelle, summer program presenters, craft show vendors, and eagle watch organizations to name a few; they logged a total of 57,604 hours of volunteer work!

We have some new news for the Muscatine Ranger Station and the Mississippi River Project as a whole to share with you as well. The old gravel boat ramp at Andalusia Slough Recreation Area along Hwy 92 in Illinois has been closed for good. The IL DOT has begun a road widening project there, which required the closure of this primitive boat ramp. Finally, most all of the Mississippi River Project's shelter's can now be reserved online at www.recreation.gov. The cost is still only \$25.00. All shelter reservations need to be made through this website or by calling 1-877-444-6777 or at their respective fee booth.

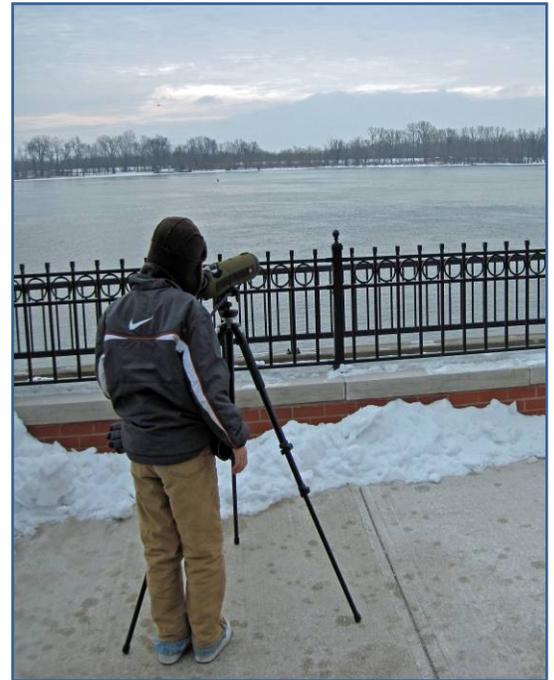
So thanks for hanging in there everyone during this past year's struggles. We look forward to the 2014 recreation season and hope its flood free! Let's not hold our breath though. See you this summer!

2014 MUSCATINE BALD EAGLE WATCH

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi River Project invites the public to enjoy a day of eagle viewing. The annual Bald Eagle Watch, a part of the Eagles and Ivories Ragtime Weekend Festival held in Muscatine, Iowa, will take place Saturday, January 25, 2014 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Locations include Pearl City Station in Riverside Park, 100 Harbor Drive, Muscatine, Iowa 52761, nearby Lock and Dam #16 located 1.3 river miles upstream of the Muscatine Bridge, 33109 102nd Ave W, Illinois City, Illinois and the Muscatine Power Boat Club's clubhouse located at 35811 102nd Ave W, Illinois City, Illinois 61259.

The Muscatine Power Boat Club, a non-profit organization, will be sponsoring a breakfast the morning of the Bald Eagle Watch from 8:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. at their clubhouse. Donations collected from their breakfast will benefit the Boat Club. For more information about the breakfast, please contact Oly Anderson at (309) 738-7082.

Spotting scopes will be available for viewing eagles from Pearl City Station, Lock and Dam #16 and the Muscatine Power Boat Club. Park rangers from the Corps of Engineers, naturalists from the Muscatine County Conservation Board and volunteers will be available to assist with the scopes and answer questions. Learn more about birds of prey as naturalists from Wildlife Prairie State Park near Peoria, Illinois present live bird programs at 9:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. inside Pearl City Station. Representatives from local organizations will be available to share information about conservation and the environment. A craft area will be available for kids. The Pearl City Station and Muscatine Power Boat Club buildings will be open to warm up and enjoy some hot chocolate and coffee. All activities for this event are free. For more information, please contact the Muscatine Park Rangers at (563) 263-7913.



VOLUNTEER NEEDED AT CORPS OF ENGINEERS PARK



The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mississippi River Project is looking for a fulltime Volunteer Campground Host at Blanchard Island Recreation Area. The position will run through the summer and end on October 15, 2013. The campground host is responsible for the daily tasks of greeting park visitors, informing campers of self-registration procedures, cleaning the restrooms daily, cleaning out fire rings weekly, and informing the park rangers of maintenance needs. Volunteers will not collect nor handle money. Hosts will provide an average of 40 hours of volunteer service per week and may serve for the entire

recreation season. The volunteer selected for this position is provided a campsite with water and electric. A dump station is located in the park for use by the volunteer. Blanchard Island Recreation Area is located along the Illinois side of the Mississippi River just south of Muscatine, Iowa.

If you are interested in volunteering or have any questions, please contact the Mississippi River Project's Muscatine Park Rangers by calling (563) 263-7913 or by emailing Cynthia.R.Klebe@usace.army.mil or Kevin.J.Zidarich@usace.army.mil.

Quincy Ranger Station News

KEOKUK BALD EAGLE DAYS

SATURDAY AND SUNDAY

JANUARY 18TH -19TH, 2014

- Indoor programs and Environmental Fair at the River City Mall, Keokuk, Iowa
- Live Eagle Programs Saturday 10:00-3:00 and Sunday 11:00-3:00
- Outdoor viewing along the River Front 8:30 – 4:30
- For information call: 1-800-383-1219 or 217-228-0890

QUINCY GREAT RIVER EAGLE DAYS

SATURDAY AND SUNDAY

JANUARY 25TH - 26TH, 2014

- Indoor exhibits and events from 9:00 – 5:00 at the Oakley Lindsay Civic Center.
- Outdoor viewing at Lock and Dam 21 from 8:00 - 3:00 each day.
- For more information call 217-228-0890



If you would like to be removed from our e-mail list please print "unsubscribe" in the subject line in a reply to us.

**Thank you,
Park Ranger Staff**

P.O. Box 2004 Rock Island, Illinois 61204-2004

(309) 794-5338 E-mail - mvrodmn15@usace.army.mil Website - <http://www.missriver.org>