



# Mississippi River Project



US Army Corps  
of Engineers®

## Welcome to the New Year

The year 2010 has past and the Mississippi River Project is now looking forward to the year ahead. This year we will see some new improvements at several of our parks and we can hope that the high water we saw last year will not repeat itself. While many of our recreation areas remain closed for the winter, there is still much to do and see within the Project. In this newsletter you will find information on all of our Bald Eagle watching events taking place along the Mississippi River.



## Dubuque Ranger Station News

### Dubuque Bald Eagle Watch

**Date:** Saturday, January 15, 2011

**Time:** 9:00 am – 4:30 pm

**Location:** Grand River Center

**Cost:** Free

**Information:** [www.audubondubuque.org/eagle](http://www.audubondubuque.org/eagle) or call the Welcome Center at 1-800-798-4748

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi River Project announces to come and watch our national symbol, the majestic Bald Eagle, soar around the Mississippi River at the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Dubuque Bald Eagle Watch on January 15, 2011 from 9:00 am – 4:30 pm. Indoor presentations and exhibits will be located at the Grand River Center in Dubuque, Iowa. Outdoor eagle watching will be available at Lock & Dam 11 where volunteers will have spotting scopes and binoculars for a close-up view.

### Indoor Presentations

- 9:30 am Raptors of the Midwest presented by the Minnesota Raptor Center of the University of Minnesota – Live birds of prey; including an eagle.
- 11:00 am Cougar, Iowa's Big Cat presented by Pella Wildlife Company, Pella, IA – Live Cougar!
- 12:15 pm Raptors of the Midwest presented by the Minnesota Raptor Center of the University of Minnesota – Live birds of prey; including an eagle.

- 1:45 pm      Cougar, Iowa's Big Cat presented by Pella Wildlife Company, Pella, IA – Live Cougar!
- 3:00 pm      Raptors of the Midwest presented by the Minnesota Raptor Center of the University of Minnesota – Live birds of prey; including an eagle.

Throughout the day nature related activities will be available for children including “build” an eagle’s nest! There will also be vendors selling nature related items and food.

### **Outdoor Viewing**

View eagles roosting, soaring, and feeding up close and in person along the open water of the Mississippi River near Lock and Dam 11. A trolley will circulate throughout the day from the Grand River Center to the National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium to Lock & Dam 11. The trolley will leave the Grand River Center at 9 am and continue every 30 minutes; the last trolley will depart the river center at 3:30 pm.

The Bald Eagle Watch is dedicated to the understanding, appreciation and protection of our national symbol. Mid-December through February is a great time of year to observe these magnificent raptors feeding and wintering along the Mississippi River. As many as 2,500 eagles winter between Minneapolis, Minnesota and St. Louis, Missouri.

The Grand River Center is located at the Port of Dubuque, 500 Bell Street, Dubuque, Iowa. For more information go to [www.audubondubuque.org/eagle](http://www.audubondubuque.org/eagle) or call the Dubuque Chamber of Commerce Welcome Center at 800-798-4748 or U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at 563-582-0881.

## **Thomson Ranger Station News**



### **Clinton Bald Eagle Watch**

**Date:** Saturday, January 8, 2011

**Time:** Outdoor Viewing 8:30 am – 3:30 pm  
Indoor Programs 9:30 am – 2:30 pm

**Location:** Clinton Community College

**Cost:** Free

**Information:** 815-259-3628

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi River Project announces the Annual Clinton Bald Eagle Watch on January 8, 2011. Indoor live bird presentations and exhibits will be located at the Clinton Community College in Clinton, Iowa from 9:30 am – 2:30 pm. Outdoor eagle watching will be available at Lock & Dam 13, located north of Fulton, IL where volunteers will have spotting scopes and binoculars for a close-up view. Free shuttle bus service will be running from the college to the outdoor viewing site throughout the day.

## Mississippi River Visitor Center News

### Quad City Bald Eagle Days

**Date:** Friday January 7, 2011 – Sunday, January 9, 2011

**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 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. Rock Island, IL

**Cost:** Adults \$5.00, Kids \$1.00, Kids 5 and under 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 7 – 9<sup>th</sup>, 2011. 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:** Saturday, January 15 through Sunday, February 13, 2011

**Time:** 9:30 am, 11:00 am, & 1:00 pm

**Location:** Mississippi River Visitor Center – Arsenal Island

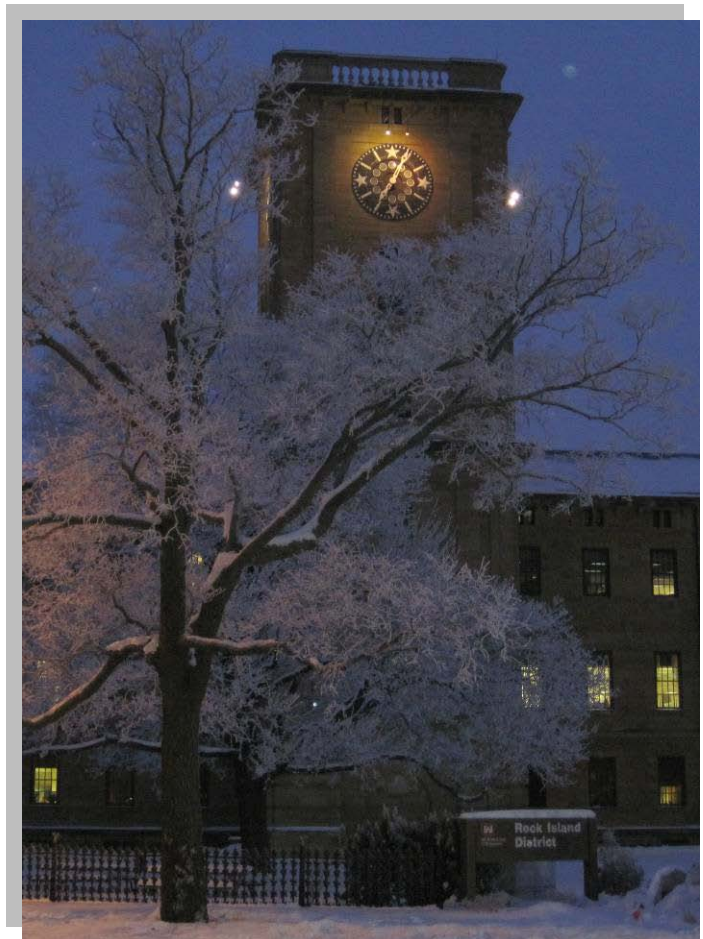
**Cost:** Free – Reservations required

**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 will have the opportunity to see Bald Eagles who visit our area during the cold winter months. Visitors are invited to join these tours every Saturday and Sunday beginning January 15 and running through February 13. There will be three tours on each of these days that will begin at 9:30am, 11:00am and 1:00pm. 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 western end of Arsenal Island at Locks and Dam #15. This program is free of charge and everyone is invited to attend. **Advance registration is required.** 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

### Mississippi River Project Employee Spotlight

#### Kevin Zidarich – Natural Resource Specialist

I started my career as a park ranger with the Corps while attending college at Minnesota State University in Mankato. For three summers I worked at parks in Minnesota and North Dakota in the St. Paul District through the co-op program. I graduated in 1999 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Recreation, Parks, and Leisure Services, with an emphasis in Resource Management. The summer after graduation, I worked in the Three Rivers Park District, formerly Hennepin Parks, in Minneapolis, Minnesota, as a park service officer. My first permanent position with the Corps took me to Mobile District's Allatoona Lake in northwest Georgia where I spent nine years. During my years at Allatoona Lake, I was fortunate enough to assist with the Emergency Response and Recovery efforts of Hurricane Frances and Jeanne in 2004 and Hurricane Katrina in 2005. My current position at the Muscatine Ranger Station began on November 9, 2008.



Over the past two years, my job duties have included interpretation programming, event planning, organizing volunteer opportunities, monitor park contracts, performing safety inspections, and flood preparation and clean up. I enjoy working with a great group of people, continuing to learn from them, and best of all, having a hand in providing recreational experiences for everyone to come and enjoy, both today and into the future. I wanted to find a job where I could help people and the outdoors. Being a park ranger gives me both of these opportunities. I was born and raised in northeastern Minnesota in Hibbing. In my spare time, I enjoy spending time with my wife, Kara, and our two sons, Matthew and Ryan, playing games, hiking, biking and camping. Other interests of mine are genealogy and model trains.

### Muscatine Bald Eagle Watch

**Date:** Saturday, January 29, 2011

**Time:** 9:00 am – 3:00 pm

**Location:** Pearl City Station in Riverside Park

**Cost:** Free

**Information:** 563-263-7913

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi River Project invite the public to enjoy a day of eagle viewing as a part of the Eagles and Ivories Ragtime Weekend Festival held in Muscatine, Iowa. The annual Bald Eagle Watch portion of the program will take place Saturday, January 29, 2011 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Pearl City Station in Riverside Park, 110 Harbor Drive, Muscatine, Iowa and nearby Lock and Dam 16 located 1.3 river miles upstream of the Muscatine Bridge off of 102nd Ave W, Illinois City, Illinois.

Spotting scopes will be available for viewing the eagles from Riverside Park and Lock and Dam 16. 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 the Pearl City Station. Bald eagle dance performances will take place at 1:00 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. inside the Pearl City Station. Rudy Vallejo, a member of the Kickapoo Tribe of Kansas, will demonstrate the significance of the bald eagle to Native American culture and perform a dance in honor of this majestic bird. Representatives from local organizations will be available to share information about conservation and the environment. All activities for this event are free. For more information, contact the Muscatine Park Rangers at (563) 263-7913.

## Quincy Ranger Station News

The heart of the hunting season is over which has left the Quincy parks fairly empty for the most part. Most of the visitors that are using the areas are sight seers trying to catch a glimpse of the majestic Bald Eagle. Because of this awesome bird, that many from all over the state come to see is part of what the Quincy Rangers will be tasked with, as they move into the month of January. Quincy Rangers assist with the Keokuk Bald Eagle watch, which is hosted by the Lee County Conservation. The dates for this eagle watch are 14-16 JAN. Groups and individuals that attend get to experience live outdoor viewing of eagles, a presentation with live raptors, and be able to stop by educational booths and arts and crafts booths. Quincy Rangers also host their own eagle watch which is going to be held on 29 JAN. This is simply an outdoor viewing of eagles just below lock and dam 21. Last year, the Quincy eagle watch was dampened with fog and conditions were not optimal. There have been plenty of eagles to be seen so far and if the conditions are right, it should be a good year for eagle viewing.

Jr. Ranger programs have also picked up as Brent continues to pick the brains of Adams Elementary 3<sup>rd</sup> graders, here in Quincy. Brent has so far covered what it means to be a park ranger for the Corps of Engineers and made bird feeders just before the winter break. He will continue to present programs throughout January and into February, talking about forestry, water safety, the web of life, water pollution, and possibly a camping special.

## Other News from Around the Project

### Mississippi River Project Employee Spotlight

#### Benjamin J. Vandermyde – Forester

During my college career at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, I had the privilege to work as a seasonal park ranger during the summers of 2004 to 2007 at the Thomson Causeway Ranger Station. Those four summers provided me with inspiration from other rangers and interactions with recreational users who motivated my aspirations of a career focus.

After completing my Forester Resource Management degree, I continued to work for the Corps of Engineers in Rock Island District as a Forester. Along with my other colleagues in the Natural Resource Management Section, I assist with timber management, timber inventory, wildlife monitoring, enforcement of illegal activity on COE project lands, and shoreline management. As a forester, I travel up and downstream of the Mississippi River Flood Plain covering 55,000 acres of forested wetlands in four different states; Wisconsin, Illinois, Iowa, and Missouri. The Natural Resource team and I work together with managing these public lands with the Fish and Wildlife service, WI DNR, IA DNR, IL DNR, and MO DOC. Together, we coordinate and collaborate on specific environmental projects to reach the best possible end result.

Some of the key tasks that I have worked on include: establishment of permanent timber inventory plots, tree plantings, avian surveys, timber thinning, aquatic vegetation sampling, and emerald ash borer surveys. Along with natural resource management activities, I also take part in assisting in interpretative programs including: Bald Eagle watches, eco-meets, lock and dam tours, the Quad City Flotizilla, and the 2010 National Boy Scout Jamboree. I can also be involved with operations needed in times of a national emergency. For example,



during the severe flooding of 2008, I was stationed in Quincy, IL and worked at distributing supplies needed to support the flood fight. As a forester on the Mississippi River, there is never a dull moment from day to day activities. On my days off, I can still be found on the river camping, fishing, and/or canoeing. I simply love to be out in the great outdoors. Stay safe and enjoy that big river.

## LeClaire Bald Eagle Watch

**Date: Saturday, January 29 – Sunday, January 30, 2011**

**Time: Saturday 10:00 am – 1:00 pm, Sunday 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm**

**Location: Mississippi Valley Welcome Center - LeClaire, IA**

**Cost: FREE**

**Information: 309-794-5338**

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi River Project invites you to join us at the Mississippi Valley Welcome Center for the LeClaire Bald Eagle Watch Saturday and Sunday, January 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>.

Indoor programs will be presented at the Mississippi Valley Welcome Center Saturday at 10:00, 11:00, and 12:00 and on Sunday at 1:00, 2:00, and 3:00. To make your adventure complete there will be spotting scopes set up for outdoor viewing of the eagles at Lock and Dam 14 on Saturday from 10:00 AM. - 1:00 PM and Sunday from 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM. There will be a Corps of Engineers ranger on hand to answer questions about the eagles and assist with viewing the birds. The Mississippi Valley Welcome Center is located along just off Interstate 80 and is accessible from Highway 67 west of LeClaire, IA. Lock and Dam 14 is located a short distance from the Welcome Center west of Interstate 80. For more information call 309-794-5338.

## Service Contracts for 2011

The Mississippi River Project will soon have service contract opportunities available for bid. You can stay up to date on what is available by visiting our website at [www.missriver.org](http://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](mailto:john.knoble@usace.army.mil)), or Administrative Officer Danet Dexter at 309-794-4524 ([email](mailto:danet.dexter@usace.army.mil)).

### RECREATION AREA

### LOCATION

### CONTRACT TYPES

Grant River	Potosi, WI	Mow and Trim
Lock and Dam #11	Dubuque, IA	Custodial
Blanding Landing	Hanover, IL	Mow and Trim, Fee Collection, Custodial
Pleasant Creek	Bellevue, IA	Mow and Trim, Custodial
Big Slough	Thomson, IL	Caretaker
Bulger's Hollow	Clinton, IA	Mow and Trim
Lock and Dam #13	Fulton, IL	Mow and Trim, Custodial
Thomson Causeway	Thomson, IL	Mow and Trim, Fee Collection
Visitor Center	Rock Island, IL	Custodial
Andalusia Slough	Andalusia, IL	Caretaker
Kilpeck Landing	Muscatine, IA	Caretaker
Clark's Ferry	Montpelier, IA	Fee Collection, Custodial
Shady Creek	Muscatine, IA	Fee Collection
Canton Chute	Quincy, IL	Caretaker
John Hay	Hull, IL	Caretaker
Lock and Dam #21	Quincy, IL	Custodial
Park-n-Fish	Hull, IL	Custodial

**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**

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