

Winter Nature Showcase

Quiet Walker Lodge

Volume 1 Issue 5



Nature abounds here at Quiet Walker Lodge Bed and Breakfast

Bald Eagles are the big attraction here in Dubuque during this time of year. The bald eagle lives only in North America and they live along coasts, rivers, lakes and wet prairies. It is easy to spot them. They have brown bodies and white heads and feathers. They are not bald. The word was derived from the old English word "balde" which means white. The bald eagle can live up to thirty years in the wild and here



Enjoying some seeds for breakfast

in Dubuque I see them along the little Maquoketa sitting majestically on the

branches of the old oak trees along the river. They love the rivers because they eat mostly fish and use their curved beaks to tear the food into small pieces. Their talons are able to catch the slippery fish so they can hold on to it.

Bald eagles fly 20 to 40 mph and can dive at speeds up to 100 mph. The bald eagle has exceptional eyesight which is 7 to 8 times more powerful than our eyesight.

During the winter there are large numbers of Bald eagles flying above the locks and dams on the Mississippi River. The Dubuque Lock and Dam #11 is a favor for many visitors to watch the bald eagles fish. Here at our log country lodge www.quietwalkerlodge.com we have seen several bald eagles flying over the valley below. It is a beautiful sight.

I have also seen one red shouldered hawks flying around the lodge. These

birds make their nests in the tall river bottom trees. These hawks are considered endangered here in Iowa because of habitat depletion.

We have many migratory birds like warblers that like to eat insects and buds from the tops of our maple trees. Some of our birds spend their winters in the warm south and then return to our area in the spring. Scarlet tanagers, ovenbirds, rose-breasted grosbeaks, ruby-throated hummingbirds, northern orioles, American redstarts and wood thrushes feast at our birdfeeders here at Quiet Walker Lodge.

White-tailed deer, raccoons, wild turkeys, fox and coyotes also make their homes on our forest reserve. Our beautiful wooded area provides an abundance of nature at your doorstep.

What is a Sun Dog?

Sun dogs are also called mock suns. This picture was taken in Dubuque County and shows two sun dogs. They are colored, luminous spots caused by the refraction of light by six sided ice crystals in the atmosphere. The bright spots form in the solar halo at points that are 22 degrees on either side of the sun and



Dubuque County, Iowa

at the same elevation as the sun. The nature-essayist Hal Borland wrote in his book Sundial of the Seasons that "Sun dogs and moon dogs are beautiful accents to a winter day or night as the rainbow is to a showery Summer day." Sun dogs usually appear in pairs. Until moving to Dubuque, I had never heard of a sun dog.

Special points of interest: Dubuque

- *Dubuque Fighting Saints Hockey Game : February 18 and 20th, 2011*
- *Park Farm Snowshoe Hike and wine tasting February 20, 2011*
- *Thunder Slam Monster Spectacular February 25-26, 2011*