



QUARTERLY
WINTER • 1984
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Julia Mink
83



ACRES '84 WINTER

- Sunday
Jan. 8 -- Join with Stockbridge Audubon for the film by British ornithologist Mark Catsby: "The Colonial Naturalist"
2:00 p.m. 1st floor Auditorium Public Library in Fort Wayne
- Sunday
Jan. 29 -- Winter Hike at the Walter Woods in Allen County
Meet: at Mengerson Reserve Parking Lot, Stelhorn Rd. at 1:00 p.m.
Naturalist: Robert Weber
This is a winter hike; dress warm, wear boots
- Thursday
Feb. 16 -- Enjoy a program by Mark de Brock on "Natural Resources in Thailand"
Mark is a Noble County SCS employee; he spent 2½ years with the Peace Corps in Thailand documenting those fisheries for food for the people. Mark also did a documentation of our Ropchan Wildlife Refuge.
Meet: 7:30 p.m. at Kendallville Public Library on 126 W. Rush Street
- Wednesday
Feb. 29 -- Join Fox Island folks to view the multi-projector slide show on "Environmental Education at Southwest Allen Schools"
Meet: 7:30 p.m., Public Library Auditorium, Ft. Wayne
Fee: Fox Island membership card or \$1.00
- Saturday
March 17 -- WORK DAY at Lonidaw
Meet: 9:30 a.m. at Golden Dome Bank, Coliseum Blvd. or at Lonidaw
Ted Heemstra in charge
Wear green workclothes - bring: lunch, gloves, rakes loppers

Rain, shine or snow -- We go!

NOTE: Keep April 14 on your calendar. There will be another Natural Area Conference sponsored by Nature Preserves of IDNR in Indianapolis. Details later.

QUARTERLY COVER ARTIST is Julia Meek, Fort Wayne silk screen artist.

REMEMBER THE
NONGAME WILDLIFE
FUND ON THE
INDIANA INCOME
TAX FORM.

DO SOMETHING
WILD!

New
from Merry Lea

NATURALIST ON WATCH



Alton A. Lindsey

WANTED

Information leading to
location of
BARN OWLS



THESE BENEFICIAL BIRDS
ARE BECOMING RARE!

LOOK FOR:

- An owl, 14 inches tall, with a white, heart-shaped face, brown eyes, no ear tufts and a wingspan of 3½ feet
- White, with specks when seen from below; golden brown from above

LOOK IN:

- Abandoned barns or houses
- Hollow trees, silos, steeples or grain bins

REPORT:

Any barn owls or nests seen in the last five years to:

Chris Iverson, Nongame Biologist
Div. of Fish & Wildlife
RR#2 Box 477
Mitchell, Indiana 47446
(812)849-4586

This program is funded by public contributions on the Indiana Income Tax Form to the Nongame Wildlife Fund.



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With an eye toward Spring, those of us who like fossil searching, will be planning the exploration of stream beds, quarries and moraines of northeastern Indiana for brachiopods. Long extinct from our area, this ancient sealife still thrives, alive and well and living in the Pacific



Oldtimer lives by hanging in there

A SECRET to survival for the world's champion survivor, the brachiopod, has been a stalk which anchors the creature to almost any underwater surface. It can adapt to a hostile habitat.

Thought near extinction, brachiopods, one of the most ancient forms of sealife, have been found in abundance in waters off New Zealand and Australia by Dr. Joyce R. Richardson, a marine biologist associated with the New Zealand Oceanographic Institute.

Peterson Inlet, an inlet of Stewart Island at the tip of New Zealand's South Island, is especially rich in brachiopods. There, the hard-shelled bivalves litter the floor of the inlet and its rocky underwater outcrops.

Unlike clams, which they vaguely resemble, brachiopods have two shells of uneven size. Colors range from pink and white to dark brown and black. They also have few internal organs, enabling them to exist with a minimum of effort.

The feature that sets the 300 or so remaining species of brachiopods apart from other bivalves, however, is a

stalk or pedicle that can be moved in and out of a protrusion called a beak at the tapering end of the creature.

Their shape reminded the ancients of the small Roman lamps that once illuminated much of the world, and the bivalves became known as lamp shells, a name still commonly used.

Despite their heritage, living brachiopods haven't been widely studied, although their fossils have received a lot of attention.

Supported by the National Geographic Society, the study of the living creatures has enabled Dr. Richardson to construct several theories on how they managed to survive and flourish into modern times.

"We found highly distinctive patterns of behavior, and these would have been as difficult to reconstruct from their deposits as it would have been to visualize flight and feathers from only the bones of fossil birds," she observed.

From birth many brachiopods cling fiercely to the world around them, using their stalks to anchor themselves.

The stalk gives them great flexibility. Brachiopods have been found in the frigid waters of Antarctica and near warm water vents along rifts under the Pacific Ocean. Divers working with Dr. Richardson have found them attached to such diverse items as beer cans and bottles in shallow waters and manganese and phosphorite nodules on the floor of the Pacific.

What gets a brachiopod moving is a serious danger to its feeding opening, which must stay clear of mud, silt, and bottom sediments to feed on the tiny microorganisms in the water currents.

Threatened with burial, the brachiopod uses its stalk--controlled by powerful muscles--to push clear. If necessary, the creature can completely detach itself and become a free spirit. Some of the animals have been observed on the ocean floor making crablike motions, others moving in constricted circles.

"This streak of individuality in a creature so humble never ceases to amaze me," says Dr.

Richardson, "because once a brachiopod pulls up stakes it can never again use its stalk to bond itself to a surface."

But it's the brachiopod's unvarying reaction to danger--the response by the stalk--that has been essential to its survival. "This reaction by the stalk, and not change in the creature's basic form and structure, has been the secret to its continued existence," Dr. Richardson said.

The brachiopod fossil record shows the pitfalls of specialization. It is crammed with species that, after living in a habitat such as a reef for millions of years, gradually developed other characteristics, only to be wiped out.

The legion of the lost include some as tiny as a pin head, others measuring more than 15 inches long. The Smithsonian Institution's Museum of Natural History houses more than 3 million brachiopod fossils. Formed fossils of this type appeared fully developed about 600 million years ago, scientists estimate.



Barn owl and its prey: No contest

Owls and Their Seeing-Eye Ears

Owls don't see with their eyes when they're hunting at night--they "see" with their ears. Owls unerringly locate their prey in the dark by relying on their incredible sense of hearing. Although owls also have exceptional eyesight, it isn't of much use when they're searching for food on foggy, moonless nights.

An owl's eardrums are larger, and thus more sensitive, than those of other birds. This means it can hear faint noises others would miss--such as the sounds of rodents scurrying along on the forest floor below. Moreover, because of the great size of its head, an owl's ears are spaced unusually far

apart. As a result, the same sound strikes each eardrum at slightly different times, rather than simultaneously. An owl uses this feature to determine the precise direction the noise is coming from.

In an experiment reported in 1957, ornithologists Roger S. Payne and William H. Drury Jr. allowed a barn owl to fly free in a totally darkened room while a mouse scampered about on the leaf-strewn floor. Time and again, the owl honed in on the rodent with deadly accuracy. But the bird batted zero when its ears were plugged with cotton.

ELECTION - Larry Bieberich, Arthur Eberhardt, Edward E. Eberhardt, Thomas M. Kimbrough and Robert C. Weber were elected to serve three year terms on ACRES Board of Directors. Yet to be determined is the appointment of a Board member from the Indiana Park & Recreation Association for a three year term. Jay Hammel, Homestead High School, Fort Wayne represents the Indiana Department of Public Instruction and Sam Ropchan represents the Indiana Nature Conservancy on the ACRES' Board.

ANNA BRAND HAMMER WOODS

DEDICATED A STATE NATURE PRESERVE December, 1983 the ANNA BRAND HAMMER woods southwest of Ossian in Wells County became ACRES' eleventh dedicated area. Arthur Hammer, donor of the woods in memory of his mother writes, "Anna R. Brand Hammer was born Oct. 10, 1884 in Naumburg/Soale, Germany and left Germany in 1901 with her younger sister Elaise for Fort Wayne Indiana where they had an aunt and uncle.

"My mother was married in 1904 and was widowed in 1921 with three children to support. Her father, Wm. Brand, came over from Germany in 1920. She had to help support her father after 1928 when Hitler came into power and froze all of the assets leaving the country. Mother went to work as a domestic a week after my father's funeral and worked continuously until her late sixties. She taught herself to read English by reading the local papers. Anna Brand Hammer died Sept. 7, 1968."

MAUMEE RIVER SCENIC OVERLOOK

HEFTY WOODEN MARKER INSTALLED at Maumee River Overlook area. With the steam driven saw mill that once sat on the spot in mind, Dan McCain, donor of the area, designed a wooden marker set in stones. The rough oak planks remind of the saw mill and the sign reads:

MAUMEE RIVER SCENIC OVERLOOK

STEAM SAW MILL SITE Ca 1870

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A winter project at Division of Nature Preserves will be the making of a new Edna W. Spurgeon Woodland Reserve sign as well as Registry Boxes for the dedicated areas. Thank you!

New address for TNC

The Nature Conservancy, 4200 N. Michigan, Indianapolis, IN 46208
or Call (317) 923-7547

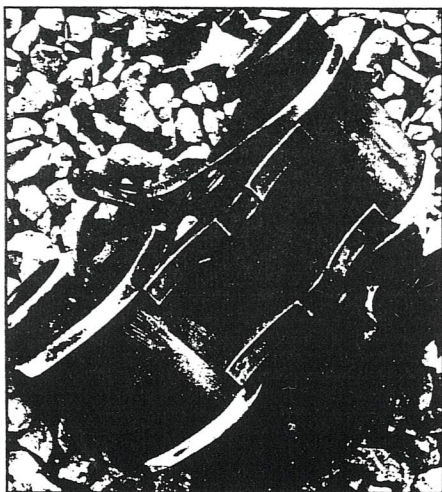
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ALLEN COUNTY ADDS FIFTH ACRES AREA

THE WALTER WOODS a gift of Alwilda and Martin Walter, is located in north-east Allen County close to the DeKalb line. A forest with a variety of towering old hardwood trees where no cutting has occurred for many, many years. Logs from the woods were used by Alwilda's father to build the house which later, seven years after they married, Alwilda and Martin bought and lived in. Sugar maple, tulip poplar, red and white oak, beech, ash and sycamore and at one time, and for many years, a sugar camp was operated in part of the woods. Martin was born and raised within 1 1/2 mile and added on to the lands for farming but kept the woods intact. Mrs. Walter remembers going with her father to the woods. A jog of land in the 30 acre parcel borders a small creek. Martin Walter died a year ago at age 83.

ACRES, Inc.

1802 Chapman Road
Huntertown, Indiana 46748

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