



QUARTERLY

SPRING . 1987

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Do not stand by my grave and weep
 I am not there, I do not sleep
 I am a thousand winds that blow
 I am a diamond glint on snow
 I am the sunlight on ripened grain
 I am the gentle autumn rain

This dedicatory rock marks the site where native Americans lived and met with European settlers for treaty talks along the banks of the Wabash River. It is given to commemorate the presence of these significant people and to express a devotion to the search for peace, justice, and freedom among all Americans.

- Donated by Sam and Marla Ropchan
 1987

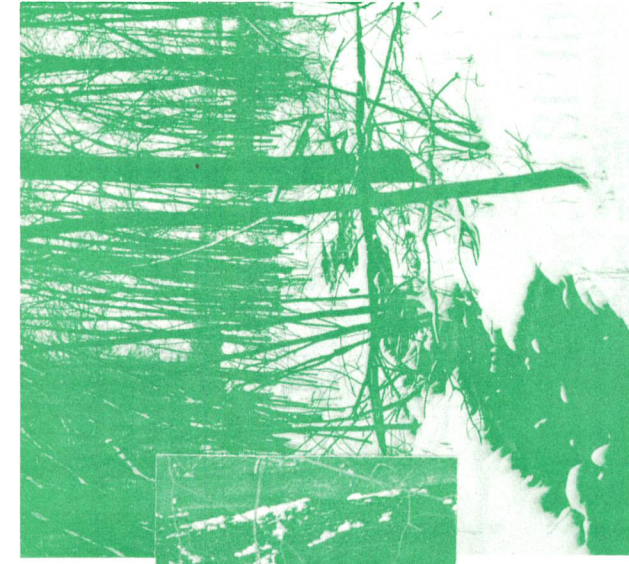
This is the bronze plaque that will mark the FORKS OF THE WABASH and Chief Richardville home site, west of Huntington, Indiana.



Southwest Indiana Natural Areas Conference and Field Days

April 25 & 26, 1987
 Thrall Opera House
 New Harmony, Indiana

COVER ART AND FEATURE ARTICLE by Joy Snyderman of Fort Wayne. Joy is a member of the American Iris Society and the Northeastern Indiana Iris Society. She cites Indiana iris growers Walter Welch of Middlebury; Paul Cook of Bluffton, and Emma Hobbs of Indianapolis as outstanding contributors to the modern iris world. . . . all iris descendants from the wild iris she tells us about.



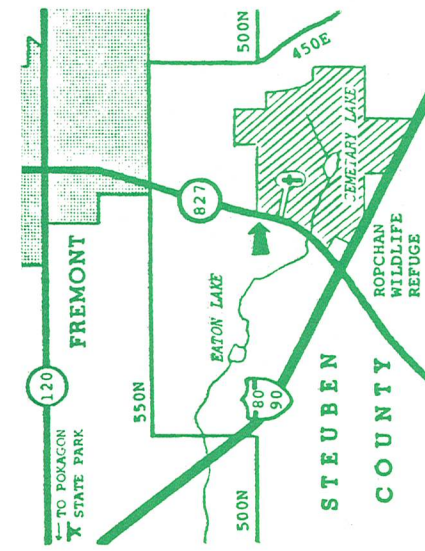
C.J. FOSTER
 adds to
 BEECHWOOD
 NATURE PRESERVE
 STEUBEN COUNTY

ACRES now administers a two acre addition to the Beechwood in Steuben County which extends the nature preserve to Little Otter Lake at the east arm of the lake. The gift of C.J.Foster, Antwerp Ohio, this land protects the forested drainage way from the eastern end of Beechwood Nature Preserve to the lake and approximately 450 feet of natural wetland shoreline. Containing a meandering stream, deep forest of diverse hardwoods and large yellow birch trees, this is a particularly significant gift for the benefit of Little Otter Lake where the shore lands have recently been under severe development pressures.

Although C.J.Foster has the same last name as Mildred and Garnette Foster whose gifts in 1964 and 1973 made possible the Beechwood Nature Preserve, there is no relationship. However, ACRES thinks the name "Foster" must certainly foster natural area preservation! The Beechwood Nature Preserve now totals 92 acres.

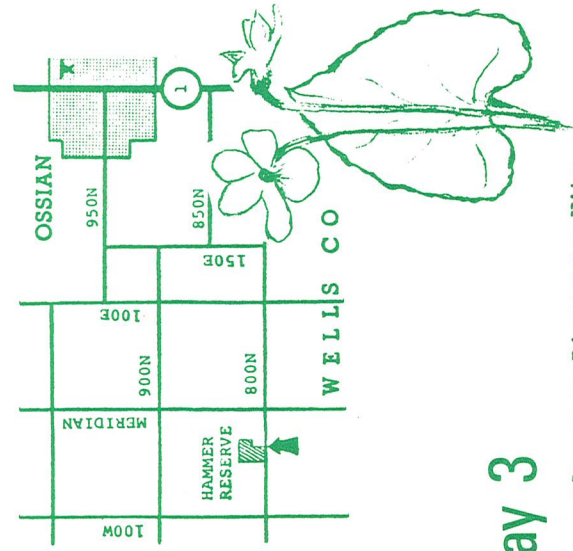


ACRES BOARD OF DIRECTORS welcomes two new members: Tim McNitt appointed by the Indiana Park and Recreation Association is the naturalist for the Decatur, Indiana park system. He replaces Jim Goodwin from Kendallville who ACRES will continue to keep very busy helping us with the Detering Natural Area on Round Lake at Kendallville. Tony Fraundorf, naturalist at Merry Lea Environmental Learning Center, Wolf Lake, replaces Mark DeBrock. Mark, soil Conservationist from the Angola SCS field office accepted a soil conservation position in Walpol, Mass.



april 18

Pitch-In Workday
 9-11, 1:30am Ropchan Wildlife Refuge. We will be building a boardwalk, repairing a bridge and doing trail work. If you have a crowbar, saw, hammer and/or pruners, bring them along.
 Noon Pitch-in lunch at Winghaven. Bring covered dish and eating utensils.
 Coffee and hot tea provided. After lunch we will begin repair work on out buildings. We need a power drill. In-charge: Bob Weber, 747-6030.

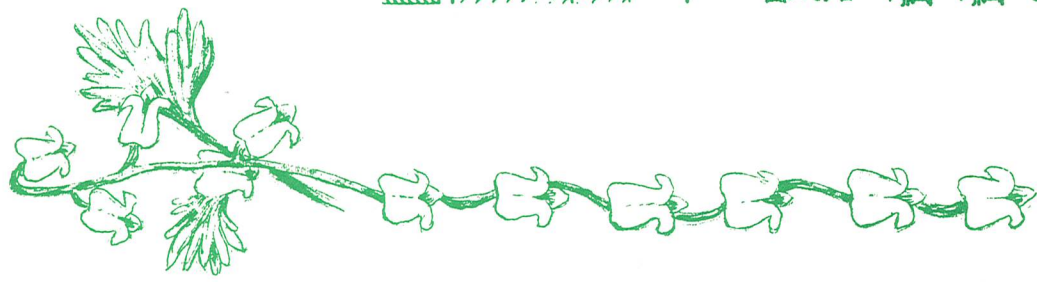


may 3

Afternoon Discovery Hike
 1:15 pm Carpool leaving Rogers (west side of parking lot), Waynedale OR
 1:45 pm meet at Anna Brand Hammer Reserve. We will also be visiting
 Acres Along the Wabash. If Mother Nature cooperates, we may see Shooting
 Star and/or Wild Hyacinth in bloom. In-charge: Larry Bieberich, 547-4265.

ACRES

Spring '87



may 10

Mother's Day Discovery Hike
 1:15pm Carpool leaving Gold Dome Bank, Coliseum Blvd. OR
 2:00pm meet at Edna W. Spurgeon Woodland Reserve. Emphasis on wild-
 flowers and wild edibles. In charge: Judy Esterline, 432-8455.



WING HAVEN

FIRST SUNDAY OF THE MONTH
 WING HAVEN OPEN HOUSE

MAY 3 Wing Haven Open House
 1-5pm The 19th century buildings, once the homestead of Helen and Ben Swenson. Unrivaled wildflower display may be enjoyed by walking the marked trails. Hostess: Pat Pichon, 367-2150.

JUNE 7 Wing Haven Open House
 1-5pm Artwork of Helen Swenson on display. Host: Bob Weber, 747-6030.

JULY 5 Wing Haven Open House
 1-5pm

AUGUST 2 Wing Haven Open House
 1-5pm Hosts: Art and Marion Eberhardt, 665-2421.

SEPTEMBER 6 Wing Haven Open House
 1-5pm Host: Ed Eberhardt, 424-2462.



"Then Art the Iris, fair among the fairest"

Longfellow

The terms "flag", "great flag", "yellow flag" mean a variety of iris, depending upon where an iris is growing and where one lives. Along a stream or in a bog it is very likely "Iris virginica", which grows in many sections of the Mississippi valley - or, "Iris versicolor" which grows adjacent to and east of the Great Lakes.

"I. virg." and "I. vers." are species native to North America. They frequently grow side by side along streams, river banks, and glacial moraine. Both go back to glacial and inter-glacial times. "I.vers." is considered to be the heartiest of all iris. The bloom on both these iris are usually blue. White is rare. "I.virg." has standards and falls of equal length and is a bit taller. "I.vers." has shorter standards than its falls.

Iris pseudacorus is the "yellow flag", native to Europe and the holy land. It arrived by way of the same immigrants who brought the blue German iris to the new-world gardens. I. pseud. is the iris that inspired the use of the Fleur-de-lis in French heraldry and is thought to be the rushes that hid the basket carrying the baby Moses. Since lilies do not grow in the holy land, it is also thought "the lilies of the field" that we read of in the bible, were really I. pseudacorus. Under ideal conditions this iris will grow to heights of six or more feet and also adapts to dryer locations. In our gardens, a damp spot by a water faucet or drain will do very nicely for these sweet-smelling blooms which come in a couple of shades of yellow and a rare white.

In the older gardens of our childhood, "flag" is very likely referring to the German iris that grows to a height of about thirty inches. There are four to five flowers on a stalk that are usually fragrant. However, fragrance varies. The root can be used for a brown or black dye. This is not the iris for herbal use. As with mushrooms, know your varieties and practice caution.

"Germanica" is often incorrectly listed as "Iris germanica". Since it is the result of frequent hybridizing in the wild that does not come true from its seed, it is not a species such as "I.virg.", "I.vers." or "I. pseud.".

The iris has an impressive ancient history and to find the homeland of the bearded iris, which is what "germanica" is, one must go to Europe, and from there eastward to Asia. No bearded iris is a native of North America.

There were German hybridizers listing "germanica" in their sales catalogs in the 1800 's and there were those with special gardening interests who imported them from these German growers. However, most of the iris growing in today's gardens are there because European immigrants to a new country could easily carry a piece of their beautiful homeland with them.

As the iris flourished and plants increased, the extra rhizomes were eventually moved from the homestead gardens into the church yards and school grounds. Having seen the blue flags in so many places at an early time of our history is very likely the reason many believe them to be native vegetation.

It isn't surprising "germanica" was a precious part of the immigrants' meager belongings brought to North American shores and gardens. The thick tuberous rhizomes traveled well. They were not very fragile and could remain unplanted for several months but still keep the promise of a hidden fragrant and lovely bloom that would enhance a new garden season.

Hardiness, along with intoxicating beauty made the blue flags excellent candidates for travel and transplanting in new and unknown environments. "Germanica" can survive under terrible growing conditions which made it an easy naturalizer in the northern states of our country where it was provided with a necessary winter season.

A friend's garden has an over-grown patch of "germanica" that to my gardener's eye needs an ax and pitch fork to free them of their many years of convoluted growth as each rhizome struggles for its space. One does admire these plants for having survived such adversity. The fact that each Spring sees them making their flower offering to the season's beauty - be it a faint one compared to their many cousins or more finicky hybrid descendants of today, is admirable.

My heart always beats a little faster upon discovering an older garden that has over-looked the modern world. Those lovely blues revive warm childhood memories of my German grandmother's orderly garden with garden path wrapped in a ribbon of vibrant blue and lavender. No other blue in the garden could match that beauty and create such an exciting response.

Monet claimed he was a painter because, first, he was a gardener. How I wish those in the past who shared so much for our enjoyment of beauty could see what the early iris have done for today's gardens. If the simple blue and yellow flags could evoke such strong emotions and nurture such beauty as Monet's garden and paintings, one can't help but wonder how these same gardens and painters would react to today's stately and elegant hybrid iris. By 1890 the iris was considered to have reached such perfection that many growers claimed it was no longer worthwhile to keep hybridizing for better plants or blooms. How wrong they were!

If royalty and the gods found the simple flag's beauty so deserving of a special place in history and lore, to what extremes would they go honoring them today?

This flower is aptly named. Iris was a messenger for the gods who used the rainbow as a pathway through the heavens. Where her feet touched Earth, the flowers arose that bear her name.

Joy Snyderman



Iris Versicolor

EDITOR'S NOTES:

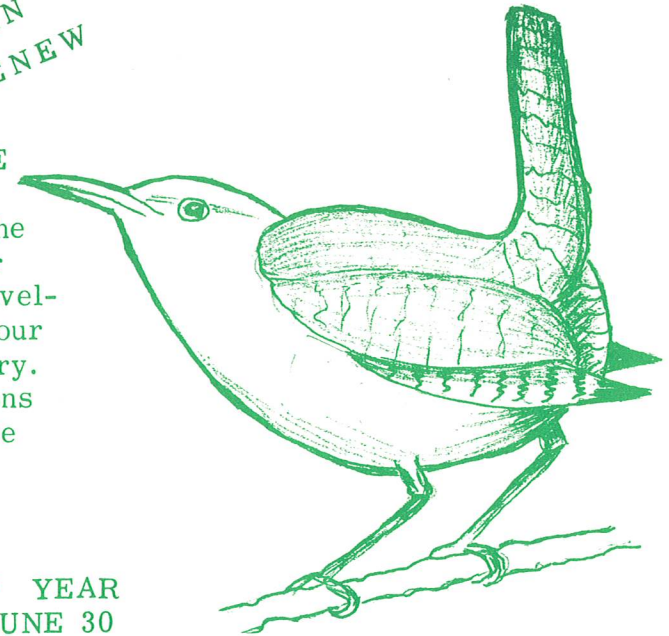
Join ACRES "Discovery" Hike scheduled for May 3 where we are likely to discover Iris versicolor, in-the-wild.

MAY 24, 1987 12:30 to 4 PM IRIS viewing Northeastern Indiana Iris Society Foellinger/Freimann Botanical Conservatory 1100 S. Calhoun, Fort Wayne, IN

CELEBRATE
NATURAL AREA
PRESERVATION

JOIN
RENEW

ACRES MEMBERSHIP TIME
You fill in the membership
card and keep it. Return the
address portion with your
remittance in the return envel-
ope provided, marked for your
selected membership category.
Please make recommendations
for new members on reverse
side.



SPRING

ACRES MEMBERSHIP YEAR
IS JULY 1 TO JUNE 30

A gift to the LAND ACQUISITION AND MANAGEMENT FUND
contributes to land acquisition; establishment of
area access, fences, signs, trails & markers; sur-
veys and legal defense. SUPPORT ACRES!

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MEMBERSHIPS: Patron, \$100; Sustaining, \$50; Share, \$25; Family, \$10; Regular, \$5; Senior Citizen, \$2; Student, \$1. Payable annually. Membership yr. - July 1 to June 30

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