



QUARTERLY

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Honoring Esther L. Cooper and Agnes Munro: Donors of Munro Nature Preserve



*Agnes Munro and Esther Cooper
Photograph by Bob Weber*

Esther L. Cooper, a member of the Munro family whose gift of 20 acres in 1994 created the Munro Nature Preserve, died in late December at age 97. She was a resident of Muncie; survivors include a brother, Warren Munro.

Mrs. Cooper was the widow of Ball State science educator Robert H. Cooper, who died in 1990. Originally from Piper City, Illinois, she was a graduate of Indiana University and had taught at Burriss School and Hartford Township schools in Geneva, Indiana. ACRES Board Member Bob Weber said the Coopers were "very generous people who felt strongly about the health of both nature and their fellow humans." She and a late sister, Agnes Munro, donated the 20-acre site which was once part of the land owned by Gene Stratton Porter. Both Mrs. Cooper and Mrs. Munro were able to attend the dedication ceremony in 1995.

The Nature Preserve is located at the northern edge of the historic Limberlost Swamp at the corner of Adams County roads 400 west and 1100 south. The site included the Brushwood School, which was frequently mentioned in "Girl of the Limberlost" by Gene Stratton Porter.



Photograph by Bob Weber

Twelve for Tel-Hy

Through the generosity of Hy and Lorry Goldenberg, the Tel-Hy Nature Preserve is 12 acres larger in size! In 1997, Hy and Lorry gave an additional 12-acre field and, with the field, Hy's outhouse collection. Hy is promising to maintain all 18 of them in their present splendor.

The original 30-acre preserve was donated by the Goldenbergs in 1995 and is an area of great beauty. Spectacular high bluffs over the Wabash River, Tel-Hy is ACRES first nature preserve in Huntington County. The Goldenbergs are to be commended for creating a nature preserve for all of us!

SPRING WORK DAY PLANNED Sunday, April 26. 1:00 p.m.

Work Day at Tel-Hy Nature Preserve. We will plant more than 200 trees, build the new trail across the field and put in the preserve signs. Since it will be the height of the wildflower season, we will take a hike after completing the work. Work Days Leaders: Tom and Karen Bennett, Stewards.

IMPORTANT: Tel-Hy does not have a parking area at this time. Please visit preserve after April.

Little Cedar Creek Wildlife Sanctuary



Sharon Little

Photographs by John Ellenwood

Molly and Jerry Mackel literally live their love of nature on a site that has been close to "home" for Jerry since he was in the seventh grade and his family moved to the area.

The couple and their three children—Jennifer, Erin, 23, and John, 17 —have just shared the holidays together in their spacious numberframe style home which affords a view of the beauty of the Little Cedar Creek area no matter in which direction one looks. The Mackels cherish the natural abundance so much that they have recently donated a conservation easement to ACRES Land Trust to ensure that the natural wetland nature of the property will always be protected.

The Mackels' gift is further enhanced by the fact that their tract is bordered on the north by the 89-acre James M. and Patricia D. Barrett Oak Hill Nature Preserve. Doctor Mackel readily explains that the Barretts set an example that was "a motivating factor" in the decision he and Molly made to establish the easement. The Mackels also donated a substantial amount toward ACRES' purchase of an adjacent 33-acre site which is to be known as the Little Cedar Creek Wildlife Sanctuary, dedicated to the memory of their late son, William, "a boy who

loved the woods." William died in an automobile accident in 1991.

Molly and Jerry have taken an active interest in retaining the integrity of the land on which they built their home about 10 years ago. Dr. Mackel, an orthopaedic surgeon, considers residential architecture one of his "passions" (for those who "surf the internet" feel free to visit his web site at URL: <http://www2.fwi.com/~jlmackel/to> share in some of his other interests). Therefore, in collaboration with his brother-in-law, a timber framer, he designed their home to be in complete harmony with the surrounding land, maintaining the views that first attracted him to the site. The home rests high over Little Cedar Creek, about 30 feet wide at their site, and affords extensive views of trees, animal and plant life. His parents, Dr. and Mrs. Fred Mackel, live nearby in the home where Jerry grew up.

The site, farmed by its previous owners, attracts deer, red fox, opossums, raccoons, groundhogs, little brown bats, coyotes, snapping turtles, and black rat snakes. Beavers have also visited the area. Little Cedar Creek is home to wood ducks, mallards, and great blue herons. A



Photograph by John Ellenwood



Left to right: Jerry, John and Erin Mackel
Photograph by Sharon Little

woodcock once visited, and Molly saw a flock of cedar waxwings last fall. Molly, whose vocation is teaching, has been active in Riverwatch, an endeavor undertaken by the Cedar Creek Wildlife Project, in which water from both Little Cedar Creek and Cedar Creek is tested regularly for a three-year period to detect any potential pollution problems.

Secondary forest growth covers about five acres of the preserve; trees include blue beech, silver maple, ash, wild cherry, red maple, willows, white oak, cottonwood, hop, hackberry, basswood, pawpaw, and sycamore. Wetland areas harbor duckweed, watercress and buttercups; in the woods are Jack-in-the-pulpit, Jacob's Ladder, horsetails, and various sedges. Jerry maintains trails through a thicket which encompasses about three of the easement acres.

Molly, who has been treasurer of the Cedar Creek Wildlife Project, says living in the midst of so much natural beauty has been enjoyable in many ways. Jerry, who believes the trend today is toward "development," considers it "important" to preserve land such as theirs "wherever you can" for future generations. He contends that it is attitudinal change, not governmental regulations, which will give preservation efforts their just impetus. "Do it by example," he says; "it's like religion, you live it or you don't." He and Molly take pride, he says, in the realization that while building their home, they "did not destroy what attracted us here. We were in harmony with the site and will always enjoy it."



PILEATED WOODPECKERS

One of the residents of the Cedar Creek corridor is the noisy and flashy Pileated Woodpecker. If the Ivory billed is extinct, which many fear, the Pileated is the largest woodpecker in North America. Quite conspicuous and loud, the Pileated announces its presence with its ringing cuk-cuk-cuk-cuk call.

The Pileated fly in the characteristic swooping motion of all woodpeckers. They land decisively on a tree and begin to search for insects. Their favorite foods are termites or carpenter ants, which form 60% of their diet. When searching for food, the crow-sized birds can make the wood chips fly and create distinctive rectangular excavations, up to 7" across. Surprisingly to most people, who assume they feed only on insects, pileated will also eat fruit, nuts and berries.

There are probably more pileated woodpeckers in northeast Indiana than there were 20 years ago. The greatest threats to their populations are the increasing raccoon population and forest fragmentation. By protecting areas around Little Cedar, Cedar and Willow Creeks, ACRES provides these magnificent birds wooded corridors in which to feed and nest.

Field Trips & Special Events



Saturday, February 14.

Special Program for the Unromantic:

The Huntertown Aquifer and its Protection.

Tony Fleming, Certified Professional Geologist and the Author of the "Allen County Groundwater Study," will lead a hike through the landscape of the Huntertown aquifer system. Learn how this vital system functions and how wetlands are a critically important part of this groundwater resource. Tony's paper on the "Origin and Hydrogeologic Significance of Wetlands in the Interlobate Region of Northwestern Allen County" (Indiana Academy of Science, 1994) will be available at the hike.

When: 10:00 a.m.

Where: The Bicentennial Woods, Allen County.

Take Coldwater Road north of Fort Wayne to Shoaff Road. Turn west on to Shoaff and parking area located 1 mile on south side of road.

Bring: Wear warm clothing and bring hiking boots.

Contact: ACRES Office at (219) 422-1004 for more information.



Sunday, March 1. Wing Haven Open House (1-5 pm)

Special Event: Coots, Moorhens and Rails.

Jim Haw, Stockbridge Audubon member and expert birder, introduces the birds of our marshes, rivers, and lakes. Seldom seen and with mysterious voices, moorhens and rails are secretive birds. Along with their relatives, the coots, they are members of the Rallidae family.

Learn about their habits and haunts and about our more visible waders, the herons and egrets.

When: 2:00 p.m.

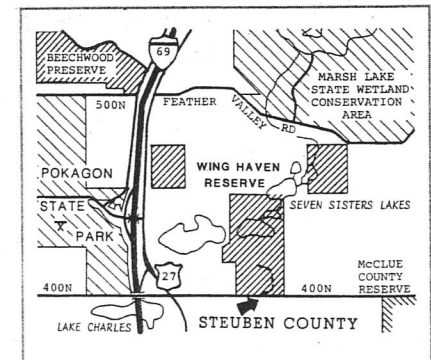
Where: Wing Haven, Steuben County. Take I-69 to Exit 154, turn south on SR 127 and then take an immediate left onto 400 N. Wing Haven is 1 mile down 400 N on the left.

Common Moorhen
Gallinula chloropus



Contact: ACRES Office at (219) 422-1004 for more information.

Refreshments served.



Field Trips & Special Events



Sunday, March 8.

Special Event: Early Life in the Solar System.

Ed Eberhardt, physicist, ex-ACRES board member and amateur biologist, will discuss some of the unexpected and hard-to-find places where life has already been found on Earth and where indications of possible pre-life forms or favorable life habitats have been found on Mars, the moon, meteorites, and comets. He will also show his sample of the oldest known exposed rock formation on Earth (over 2 billion years old) containing equally old fossilized life.

When: 2:00 p.m.

Where: ACRES Office. The ACRES Office is located at the YWCA Campus in Fort Wayne. If coming from out-of-town, take I-69 to Goshen Road into Fort Wayne. Turn east onto State Street from Goshen Road and then turn south onto Wells Street. The YWCA Campus is located two blocks south on the east side of the road. Drive in the entrance and the ACRES office is located on the second floor of Building 4.



Saturday, March 21 - Merry Lea Sugaring Program:

Maple Syrup Camp Tour and Breakfast at the Yoder Sugarbush.

Hands-on sugaring experience that includes native American techniques, as well as modern maple sugaring. Delicious breakfast with pancakes and sausage and the highlight is maple syrup fresh off the tree!

When: Arrive at 8:30 a.m., tours start at 9:00 and breakfast at 10:30!

Where: Yoder's Sugarbush, 2427 Chapman Road. Take Coldwater Road north of Fort Wayne to Chapman Road. Turn east onto Chapman and the Yoder Sugarbush is located 1 1/2 miles on the north side of the road.

Cost: \$5 for adults and \$3 for children. Benefits the Merry Lea Sugaring Program.

CALL FOR RESERVATIONS AT 219-422-1004 BY FRIDAY, MARCH 20TH.



Sunday, April 5.

Wing Haven Open House (1-5 pm)

Special Events: River Otters return to Indiana!



Kathy Quimbach, Information Specialist for the Nongame Division of the IDNR, will discuss the importance of river otters to Indiana, how they became endangered and how they are being restored to the state. Individuals can help by supporting the "Adopt An Otter" program and by giving to the nongame and endangered wildlife program. The 1-hour slide program will cover where the otters have been released, which includes the Pigeon River area in January, 1998.

When: 2:00 p.m.

Where: Wing Haven, Steuben County, on 400 N just east of SR 127.

Contact: ACRES Office at (219) 422-1004 for more information.

THE BED OF A GLACIAL LAKE: THE BLACK SWAMP NATURAL REGION



Photograph by Dr. Marion Jackson

This "Black Swamp" was a scope of country extending through western Ohio. It was low and flat, thickly timbered and had a very fertile soil. The roads were new, the country sparsely settled, and the mud at that season of the year was in many places nearly hub deep. All this region is now cleared up, ditched, and under cultivation, and is splendid farming country. But at that time, traveling was tedious. One day a distance of only three miles was made, due to a broken axle-wheel in the "Big Wagon."

--Aaron Work of his family's trek by covered wagons from southeastern Ohio to settle in Elkhart County, Indiana, in 1842.

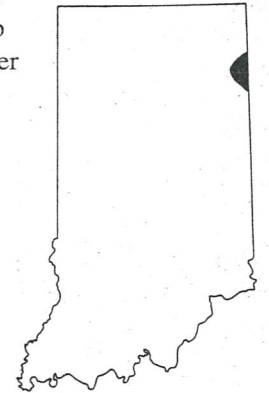
y Richard Dunbar, Regional Ecologist, IDNR Division of Nature Preserves

Eastward from Fort Wayne toward the Ohio state line is the region of Indiana that has changed the most since settlement. East of New Haven, the land is almost tabletop flat. This area was once a part of the great Black Swamp that covered much of northwestern Ohio and extended westward into Indiana as a broad triangle with its apex at Fort Wayne. The extreme flatness is a marked change from the rolling glaciated lands found elsewhere in northeastern Indiana, yet this level landscape is as much a product of the glaciers as are the rolling moraines and till plains.

The Ontario-Erie Lobe of the Wisconsin ice sheet formed the Fort Wayne Moraine at the western margin of its advance. When the glacier receded, meltwater was trapped behind the moraine, forming Lake Maumee, the much larger predecessor of modern Lake Erie. Silt deposits which had accumulated on the bottom of this lake were exposed when Lake Maumee eventually cascaded through a break in the Fort Wayne Moraine--known to geologists as the Maumee Torrent. The flat terrain and highly

productive farmland located east of New Haven in Allen County are products of lacustrine sediments from this vast glacial lake. The soils left behind by glacial Lake Maumee were clays and silt loams with poor internal drainage, and flat terrain greatly retarded surface runoff. A dense swamp forest dominated by American elm, black ash, and red and silver maples formed on the old lake bed.

When the settlers arrived, the forest community was rapidly cleared, and through aggressive drainage programs almost all of the swampland was converted into agriculture fields. Most of the few woodlots that remain have been cut numerous times over the years. Trees in these stands are young enough that their roots never grew in the wet soils of the Black Swamp. The decimation of American elms especially, but also some red elms, by Dutch elm disease removed the large canopy trees of those species, which must have been an important component of the original forest of this natural region.



Location of historic Black Swamp

Now we can only imagine what the Black Swamp was like: large areas of standing water in spring, perhaps shrinking to small ponds by late summer; trees several feet in diameter reaching high into a dense canopy, which excluded almost all sunlight; trees falling to earth when the wet soil would no longer support their weight, creating a jumble of fallen logs and dead wood; the air thick with mosquitoes during much of the summer. The swamp environment was doubtless intimidating to the first settlers. Could they have imagined that one day the swamp and its forest would be gone, and highly productive farm fields would dominate the entire landscape?

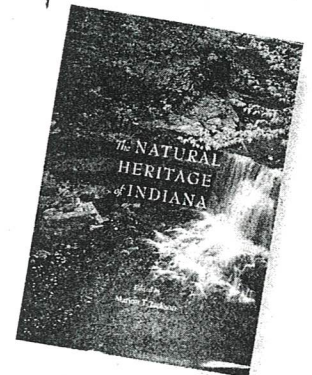
Richard Dunbar has been a great help to ACRES in viewing possible acquisitions and in maintaining our existing preserves.

Article taken from Natural Heritage of Indiana by Dr. Marion T. Jackson, editor. Published in 1997 by Indiana University Press. Reproduced with permission of Indiana University Press and further use is prohibited by law.

The Natural Heritage of Indiana

Edited by Dr. Marion T. Jackson, The Natural Heritage of Indiana is the first popular survey of the natural heritage and environmental problems of the state. Highlighted in this Quarterly are articles from the book by John Bacone and Richard Dunbar. Illustrated with maps, drawings, diagrams and nearly 500 full-color photographs by the state's best nature photographers. It contains 58 essays by Indiana's leading scholar-teachers and naturalists.

The book is on sale at the ACRES office.
Call 219-422-1004 for more information.



Car Heaven

by Don Gorney



I never named my 1987 Chevy Celebrity, but I sure loved that car. Fresh out of college and in my first full-time job, I splurged and bought a new car. The car treated me well for the next several years. However, in 1994, the Celebrity was getting sicker, so in August 1994, I purchased a new car. I didn't consider trading in the Celebrity because I knew it still had some life left in it. I also know that the dealer would give me a pittance. The Celebrity continued to decline in health. When the mileage crept past 175,000, I knew that I would have to part ways with this great car.

Knowing that the Celebrity would fetch only pocket change, I thought of an alternative. I phoned Carolyn McNagny and told her that I wanted to sell the car at auction and donate the proceeds to ACRES. Carolyn called Indiana Auto Auction to obtain details. I signed the title and let Indiana Auto Auction tow my baby away. Towing was necessary because of a really dead battery. My 1987 Celebrity brought nearly \$600 with the net proceeds going to ACRES. While disposing of a car that was no longer functioning, I could support ACRES in its effort to preserve northeast Indiana's native lands.

Now it's your turn. When you are ready to part ways with an older vehicle, consider selling with Indiana Auto Auction with the proceeds going to ACRES. You get a tax deduction and benefit a great charity. Call the ACRES Office at 219-422-1004 to learn how you can donate your automobile to ACRES!

HOME AND GARDEN SHOW

February 25 through March 1

Volunteers needed to babysit the booth. Sign up to work in two-hour shifts. This is a great way to advertise ACRES! If you have time to give, call the ACRES office at (219) 422-1004.

Hats off to:

Overdue thanks to Tony Acosta and David Deimling for hauling the map case up the stairs to the ACRES office!

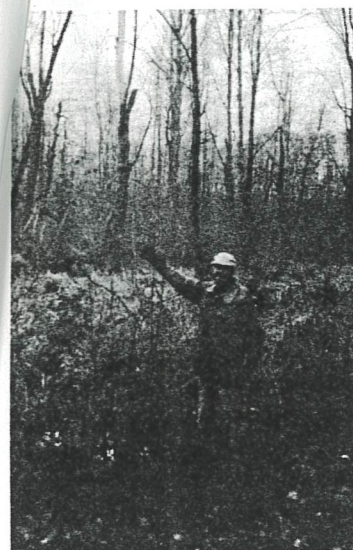
Kathryn Moore and Mary Berghoff have visited over 30 ACRES Preserves to write reports on land management problems and to stock sign-in boxes. The information they gather will be helpful in planning work days for 1998!

Thank you to everyone who remembered ACRES at the end of the year. We received donations of stock and money from generous members. Your donations will help our land protection efforts!



Photograph from left to right: Alison Adams, Charles Kinsey, Dave Pettit, Craig Williams, Ken Millikan, Gretel Smith, Beth Cance, Shawna Niblick, Ray Niblick, Don Smith, Marcella Ellenwood and John Ellenwood.

Work day volunteers in October had a fun day installing the new sign, courtesy of John Ellenwood, at Robb Hidden Canyon Nature Preserve. A trail was mowed through the meadow and the sign-in box was placed next to the trail. Bob Weber arranged for a construction company to build a parking lot. The preserve is now open to the public and we hope you can see its hillsides of wildflowers this spring!



Sean Carroll Steward of Ropchan Memorial Nature Preserve

Work Day at Ropchan Memorial Completes Bridge!

A "Frank Lloyd Wright" bridge was completed at the Ropchan Memorial Nature Preserve in October by Sean Carroll, David Deimling, Judy Hestermann, and Alison Adams. The bridge has a clever cut-out around a resident tree. Sean has worked many hours improving the trail system at the preserve. This fall, the golden ferns, vivid red winterberries, and orange leaves of the swamp maple made for a beautiful display. Flocks of Cedar Waxwings swoop into the preserve each fall to feed on the many kinds of berries.

The Back Page...

Prior to European settlement, Indiana was one large natural area. Human habitation was sparse, and aggressive weeds and alien animals from the "Old World" flora and fauna had not yet arrived...Indiana was then a large, intact complex ecosystems with random patches of disturbance that are so necessary to a healthy but dynamic ecological "steady state."...

Within a short time after the arrival of the settlers, the landscape was quickly and radically altered. Forests were cut down and converted to agricultural fields and village sites. Market hunting pressure reduced game populations. Wetlands were drained, and prairies were plowed.

We can never know precisely how many species were extirpated as wild Indiana was tamed. Some of the larger vertebrates disappeared almost immediately. The last bison and elk were seen in 1830, the last Canada lynx and red wolf in 1832. The black bear, mountain lion, wolverine, fisher, and ivory-billed woodpecker were extirpated in the 1850s, the common loon and trumpeter swan

in the 1890s. As more of Indiana was converted to agriculture and cities, more species disappeared. The last whooping crane was seen in 1907, the last passenger pigeon in 1902, the last timber wolf in 1908. Porcupines were gone by 1918, the spotted skunk by 1920, the river otter by 1942. We lost the prairie-chicken in the early 1970s...

Accelerated land-protection efforts, combined with increasing attention to habitat restoration, may yet turn the tide on the forces which continually diminish natural diversity. While the "progress" that has resulted in so many negative changes to the Indiana landscape for so many years often appears insurmountable, an increasingly concerned and informed army of citizens and professionals are doing all they can to retain our natural heritage. Who knows, perhaps one day we will view "progress" as saving species, not destroying them.

by John A. Bacone, Director, Division of Nature Preserves

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The ACRES Quarterly welcomes letters, articles, artwork, photos, and anything else of interest to our readers. Send any and all items to Susan Britton, Editor, ACRES Quarterly, 2000 North Wells Street, Fort Wayne, IN 46808-2474. Deadline for Spring issue is March 1, 1998.

ACRES Land Trust
2000 North Wells Street
Fort Wayne, IN 46808-2474
Address Correction Requested

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