

ACRES CELEBRATES 40th YEAR! QUARTERLY

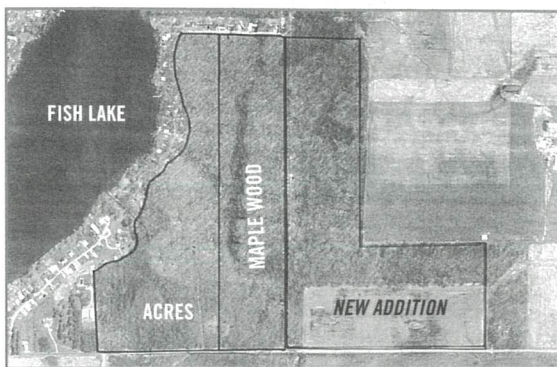
Winter 2000
Volume 39—Number 1

*"There is no
sorrow in thy song,
no winter
in thy year."*

RALPH WALDO
EMERSON

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Aerial Photograph of Maple Wood

ACRES 40th YEAR!

LAND ACQUISITION UPDATE

New Addition for the Maple Wood Nature Preserve!

The LaGrange County Parks Department and ACRES are completing a joint project

to acquire 54 acres as an addition to Maple Wood. Ted Heemstra, Land Acquisition Committee, handled the closing for the new property, which more than doubles Maple Wood's size (40 acres to 94). ACRES will own the property while Mike Metz, Director of the LaGrange County Parks Department, completes a fund drive for the addition.

The property includes an estimated 30 acres of woods, with the remainder in farm field. Scott Beam, the naturalist for Maple Wood, and Mike have plans to use the addition as an environmental education area, with a restored wetland and prairie. ACRES and the LaGrange County Parks are hosting an open house for the public to see the new addition on Saturday, March 11th.

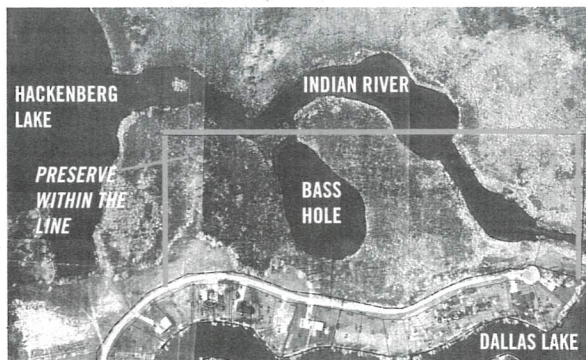
New Preserve!

"Indian River Nature Preserve", our forty-first preserve, was acquired thanks to the hard work of Ted Heemstra, David Gall, and Mary Berghoff. We would also like to extend our appreciation to Ronald Gehring, who was our attorney for this acquisition. The new 30-acre preserve includes Bass Hole, a small pond, and connects with a 350-acre marsh to the north. The marsh is ranked third by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as needing protection in the state, after Kankakee and Patoka.

Bass Hole is surrounded by white water lily, spatterdock, swamp loosestrife (native), and willows. The preserve protects two endangered species: marsh wrens and massasauga rattlesnakes.

Don and Pearl Wingstrom called ACRES about this property in 1995. Their help and interest has been crucial in this project and they also hosted our fall canoe trip at the preserve. Your spring remittance envelope will include information on how to give to these two projects. Thank you!

Janel Rogers, Chairman,
Land Acquisition Committee



Aerial Photograph of Indian River Preserve, LaGrange County

On the Cover: *Winter Wren* photograph by **Lang Elliott**, from his new book, *Music of the Birds*, 1999 Houghton Mifflin Co.

THANKS TO OUR CORPORATE & FOUNDATION SPONSORS!

...Without whose help many land acquisition efforts would not be a reality.

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Colonial Development
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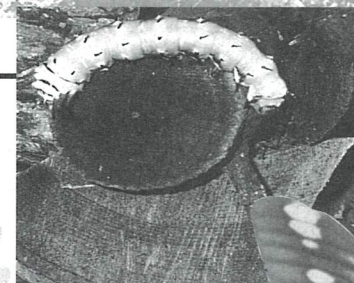
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Robb Hidden Canyon Nature Preserve Photograph by Phyllis Robb

Welcome NEW ACRES Members!

Joel and Peggy Alberda - *Gift of Jeff and Sue Britton*
Phil and Joyce Brinkroeger - *Gift of Jim, Gwen, Galen and Sheryl Seeley*

Robert and Jo Ann Coggeshall
William E. Deeter
Barbara Derr and Katie Schoelkopf
David and Heidi Finley
Mrs. Simon Heemstra - *Gift of Ted and Pat Heemstra*
Terry and Constance Marbach
Robert O. McCarthy
Donald and Rosemarie Moehlenkamp
Mark Petit - *Gift of Todd Davis*
Dwight and Waneta Pinkerton
Dick and Alice Ummel
Eric R. Ummel
Bill and Linda Valley - *Gift of Jeff and Sue Britton*
Barbara Vonderhaar - *Gift of GERALYNN VONDERHAAR*



Hickory Horned Devil, 4-6 inch long caterpillar of the Royal Walnut Moth (below.)
Photograph by Bob Frantz



If you enjoy the ACRES Quarterly, why not give a gift subscription to other nature lovers you know? Call 422-1004

RED & GRAY FOX OF INDIANA

By Carolyn McNagny, Executive Director for ACRES Land Trust



RED FOX
Photograph by Gary Mezaros, from *Mammals of the Northeast* by Whitaker and Reeves

When you mention fox, most people think immediately of the red. And the red fox is the most successful of any carnivore in the world, found on 4 of the 6 continents. Adapted to habitat as diverse as the tundra of Canada and Siberia to the deserts of northern Africa to the outback of Australia, where it was introduced in the mid-1800s, the red fox is expanding its range and taking on suburbia.

The red and the grey fox, two of fourteen species located worldwide, live in northeast Indiana. Their populations are remaining steady, except for some threat from the growing coyote population. ACRES has fox dens in many of our preserves, some used for 5-10 years.

While people may see the red fox, a grey fox sighting is rare. The grey fox is almost totally nocturnal and is out and about only on the most cloudy of days. Long legged, the fox has a beautiful gray coat which turns red along its underside. An expanding black stripe follows the top side of its tail to the tip, which is almost meager compared to the magnificent red fox tail.



GRAY FOX
Resting in a Tree. Photograph by James H. Robinson, from *Mammals of the Northeast* by Whitaker and Reeves.

Sue and Jeff Britton saw a pair of grey fox at the Vandolah Nature Preserve. Sue said "they came into view and we were just so surprised to see them." The fox moved quickly through the trees, went up a rise and disappeared from view. "I thought they were more beautiful in their coloration than even the red", Sue said, "and their faces were catlike, not what you usually picture as a fox.

With the nickname of the "tree fox", the gray is an impressive tree climber. Grays have been seen in branches less than 3/4" thick and sometimes even have their pups in hollows in trees. Tending to be more of a woodland animal than red fox, they quickly climb up a leaning or heavily branched tree when threatened. Originally native to Central America, they have extended their range to the eastern United States and parts of the west, especially the dry areas of California, Oregon and Nevada.

Since the small prey that both foxes eat is found in "edge" habitat, the foxes are especially prevalent where there is a mixture of habitats: woodlots, brushlands, pasture, and small wetlands. Omnivorous, meaning they will eat plants or animals, the fox are opportunistic, feeding on cottontail rabbits, mice, voles, birds, grasshoppers, crickets, beetles, crayfish, cherries, corn, apples, and the famous grapes. When living near man, two unusual food sources are earthworms, harvested off lawns at night, and garden produce.

When presented with an overabundance of prey, fox cache it in holes, scattered over a large area. The fox never buries more than one item in its food locker. Even fox faced with a colony of nesting birds, such as gulls, will take the eggs each to its separate cache. An unwelcome tag-along are crows, which follow the frustrated fox to see where it buries its catch and then digs it up when the fox leaves. Unfortunately, the red fox does not escape the tag-alongs on any of its four continents. If not crows, then magpies; if not magpies, then gray jays.

With the brilliant red color, black legs, and white throat, a red fox on a backdrop of snow is one of the most

beautiful sights in nature. Red fox have three color variations, including a black phase, a silver phase, and a cross phase (reddish-brown with a dark cross on its shoulders). Their color is dependent on genetics, the same as eye color is in humans.

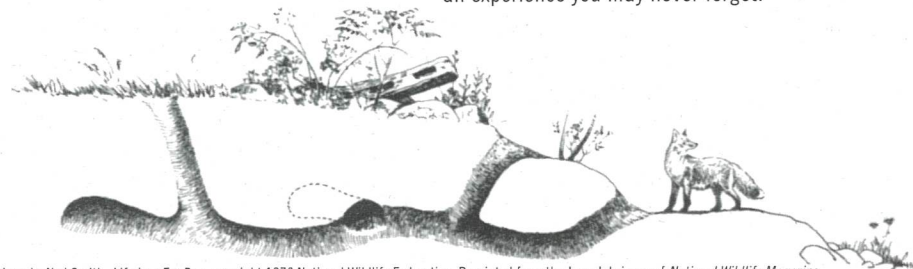
All of the red fox have the white-tipped, bushy tail. Naturalists have a theory for the reason for the white-tipped tail. Red fox are crepuscular, meaning active at dawn and dusk. The male fox attacks any other males in their territory, so approaching another fox is dangerous. In the gray light of dawn or at twilight, the white tip shows up very well. When one fox greets another, the submissive fox crouches close to the ground, lashing its tail back and forth excitedly as if waving the white flag of surrender.

A red fox tends to den in the open in winter, curling up with their fluffy tail over their nose and paws. Sometimes, the snow will completely blanket them. When the female is ready to establish a maternity den, she will look for an area where she can have a view of her territory, a stream bank, rock pile, or a slight rise, as along a railroad track. Another favorite den site is to enlarge a woodchuck burrow, sometimes after dispatching the resident.

Not climbers like the gray, they seldom den in a hollow tree.



In March or April, the tiny, charcoal gray kits are born, weighing in at 1/4 of a pound. The vixen surrounds them, keeping them warm. For the first 10 days, they remain dependent on the male for food. The kits grow very rapidly and by five weeks are out of the den and into mischief. If you ever have the experience of watching roly-poly kits playing by their den, it is an experience you may never forget.



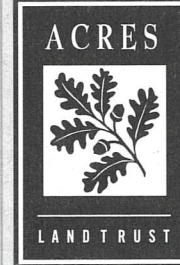
Drawings by Ned Smith, *Life in a Fox Den*, copyright 1976 National Wildlife Federation. Reprinted from the June-July issue of *National Wildlife Magazine*

Special Thanks!

Courier Printing for their excellent work with publishing the ACRES Quarterly, Brochure and Field Guide.

Joel Robbins for quickly repairing the Edna W. Spurgeon Reserve sign-in box.

Kathryn Bloom for organizing photographs into an ACRES Scrapbook.



ACRES' MISSION

Dedicated to preserving areas in northeast Indiana, ACRES manages and protects 41 nature preserves in 11 counties.

2000 North Wells Street
Fort Wayne, IN 46808
219-422-1004

www.acres-land-trust.org



Red Fox by the entrance to their den. Photograph by Erwin and Peggy Bauer, from *Mammals of the Northeast* by Whitaker and Reeves.

FIELD TRIPS & SPECIAL EVENTS

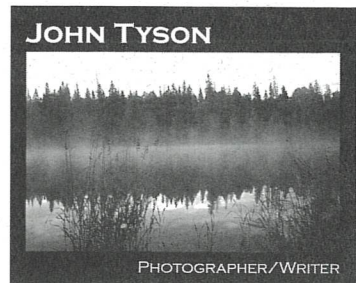


Nature Photography

Friday, January 28 — 7:00 p.m. ACRES Office

Presented by: John Tyson, Professional photographer of nature and animal photography, John will give a 1-hour slide program on tips for better 35mm photography. John is a nationally published and award winning photographer and author of the book *Homes and Shelters for Backyard Birds*.

Where: ACRES Office, YWCA, Fort Wayne. Take Goshen Road into Fort Wayne, turn east onto State Street and then



JOHN TYSON

PHOTOGRAPHER/WRITER

south onto Wells Street. The YWCA campus is located two blocks south on Wells on the east side. ACRES office located in building 4 upstairs. Refreshments served.

Contact: ACRES office at 219-422-1004



Sapsucker Secrets

Sunday, February 13 - 2:00 p.m.

Presented by: Dr. Laurie Eberhardt, Professor of Ecology, Valparaiso - For Stockbridge Audubon Society. Woodpeckers are one of the few animals that are able to overcome a tree's defenses and obtain the nutritious sap. Dr. Eberhardt has spent 8 years studying the feeding and breeding biology of yellow-bellied sapsuckers at the University of Florida. **Where:** Achatz Hall, University of St. Francis, 2701 Spring Street, Fort Wayne. **Contact:** Valerie Pelz, President of Stockbridge Audubon Society, at 219- 486-3718.



Artwork 1902, by Louis Agassiz Fuertes



A Year in the Life of a Prairie

Wednesday, February 16 — 7:00 p.m., Presented by: Kevin Tungesvick, Manager of Spence

Restoration Nursery, Muncie. Kevin will give a slide presentation on a year in a prairie: What flowers are in the spring through to the fall, how to gather seed, what burning does, and where prairies were once located in Indiana.

Where: Jay County Library, Portland. Take 27 S to Portland, turn west on Arch Street, library will be located at the corner of Ship and Arch Streets. **Contact:** ACRES office at 219-422-1004.



FIELD TRIPS & SPECIAL EVENTS

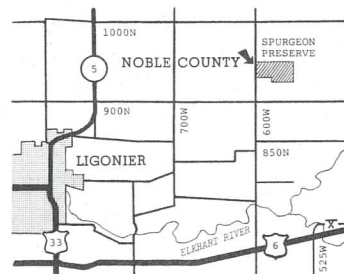


Edna W. Spurgeon Reserve Hike and Potluck

Saturday, February 19— 10:00 a.m.

Led by: John and Rosemary Rouch, Stewards.

We will have a winter work day, so bring gloves (for trash) and clippers (for trail). The Spurgeon Reserve is a peaceful, beautiful place in winter and then join Janel Rogers at her log cabin on Cedar



Lake for a potluck. We will provide the soup - please bring salad, dessert, or dish of choice. **Where:** Edna W. Spurgeon Woodland Reserve, Noble County. Take SR 6 west of Kendallville to 600 W, turn north on 600 W and preserve is located between 900 and 1000 N. **Contact:** ACRES Office at 219-422-1004.



Spurgeon in winter by John Ellenwood



Cabin Fever Weekend!

Friday and Saturday, February 25 and 26

Walter Crawford and His Birds of Prey

from World Bird Sanctuary - For Soarin' Hawk Rescue.

If you have ever paused to watch a hawk soaring over the trees, fed the birds in your backyard, strained to hear an owl calling from the distant woods, or marveled at a spring robin rustling worms on your front lawn, then please come and help us celebrate bird life!! Soarin' Hawk is raising funds to purchase a facility so that they can provide a place for injured and orphaned birds.

For Tickets, Call: Bob Walton, President, Soarin' Hawk at 219-637-3018.



Open House at Wing Haven

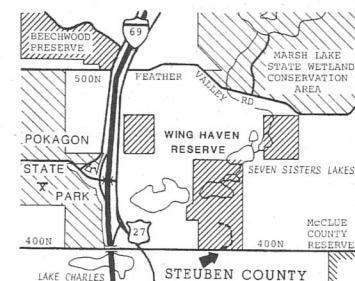
Sunday, March 5 - 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.



Open House at Maple Wood

Saturday, March 11 - 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Presented by: Scott Beam and Mike Metz. To see the new 54-acre addition to Maple Wood, come to the Maple Wood Nature Center for a day of hikes, food, and fun! We will have hot cider and cookies at the Nature Center and there will be guided hikes. **Where:** Maple Wood Nature Center and Preserve, LaGrange County. Take SR 9 north to 1 mile south of LaGrange, turn east onto 100 S and preserve is located 4 1/2 miles down 100 S on south side of road. **Contact:** Maple Wood Nature Center at 219-463-4022



Art Eberhardt

CONSERVATIONIST, LAND STEWARD AND INSPIRATION TO MANY

by Fred Wooley, Wing Haven Caretaker and Interpreter at Pokagon State Park

There is a quiet, gentle man who has lived most of his adult life in Steuben County, Indiana. If you talk about trees, or nature, or natural areas in the Angola area, the name of Art Eberhardt will inevitably come up.

By vocation, Art is an electrical engineer and retired from Tri-State University, where he taught for 38 years. By avocation Art is a naturalist, conservationist, land steward, wood worker, photographer, hiker, camper, bicyclist, musician, and, in general, a lover of the natural world and the rich life that can be found in it. From these avocations, Art will never retire



Bob Welchel (left) and Art Eberhardt, Photograph by John Ellenwood

and, if anything, continues to be busier and more active in them with each year.

Those of us associated with ACRES know well of Art Eberhardt's deep love of and dedication to natural areas local to him, which reached far beyond the lake county of Steuben. Art became a board member of ACRES in the mid 1960's, while it was still in its formative stages. In these nearly 35 years of ACRES involvement, Art has been an active ingredient in searching for and exploring new natural areas, working for their preservation, taking care of their features and integrity, and promoting their love, proper use and enjoyment by people.

When ACRES acquired Wing Haven in 1984, Art began serving on the preserve's management committee. In recent years, he has also been active on the ACRES education committee. Combining these main interests, Art was a natural to be involved with the Annual Adopt-A-Tree Festival. The festival, now in its 11th year, offers many programs organized by Art. Over the years, the festival has given away nearly 2,000 young trees that are now, hopefully, taking root and reaching for the sky all over northeast Indiana and beyond.

It is only fitting that Art would be involved in such a successful festival. Always having a deep love for trees, he can speak of an individual tree with the reverence of an artist discussing a fine painting. While he is an accomplished wood worker, he has great

respect for the origin of his medium. A small nursery can be found in his backyard and many have benefitted from trees that have come from it. Art has served on the city of Angola's Tree Board for four years.

In 1962, Art became a founding member of the Charles McClue Nature Reserve Board. This group of 10 volunteers helps manage and promote a beautiful 80-acre tract of land owned by Steuben County and dedicated to the school children of Steuben County.

It is difficult to speak of Art's love of and commitment to nature without also speaking of Marion, his wife of 50 years. They are truly a package deal. She shares all of his same interests and accompanies him on all outdoor adventures, whether it be planting trees out in the country, biking across upper Michigan, camping along the shores of Lake Superior, working the festivals and special events, photographing wildlife in one of the preserves, or just strolling through some nearby woods. For many years, Marion was the recording secretary for ACRES and accompanied Art to all meetings.

They also share a love of music and love sharing it with others. For many years, they have played dulcimers and led friends and guests in the annual Christmas Sing-A-Long at Wing Haven's December open house.

Like ripples from a stone tossed into a pond, the influence of Art and Marion has spread in all directions and touched many. Carrying their love of nature and life have been the lives of their three children. Roger is in water quality management with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Laurie is a professor of biology at Valparaiso University. Ellen was a naturalist with the Massachusetts Audubon Society of Martha's Vineyard before succumbing to a life-ending illness at an all too young age.

In memory of Ellen, at the Wing Haven Preserve, is a beautiful hemlock tree planted in the arboretum and a wooden pier giving canoe access to the north shore of the lake. They are two simple provisions in a beautiful area. They typify the contributions of Art and his family. The tree will grow well into the future, providing beauty for anyone passing by and room and board for wildlife. The pier will encourage and provide access to a unique natural area. Both were provided by Art and Marion...mom and dad, volunteer and board member, caretakers of the earth, and inspirations to us all.



Marion Eberhardt

Tails Up! Wrens of Indiana

by Carolyn McNagly, based upon an interview with Jim Haw, Stockbridge Audubon Society

If there is such a thing as a cheerful bird, the wren would win the prize. They have a indomitable spirit which shines through in their song and manner. In Indiana, we have the happy gift of five wren species - house, Carolina, winter, sedge and marsh.

For once, the name fits the bird. **House wrens** are sociable with people, nesting in such unlikely places as a rural mailbox, a tin can on a fence, and washing hanging on the line. They arrive promptly in spring and spend the summer delighting us with their rollicking, incessant song.

Another well-known singer is the cinnamon colored **Carolina wren**, with its loud, ringing *tea-kettle, tea-kettle, tea-kettle, tea*. Male Carolinas average an amazing repertoire of thirty-two songs. Groups of Carolina wrens roost in winter, snuggled together in their own or eastern phoebe nests.

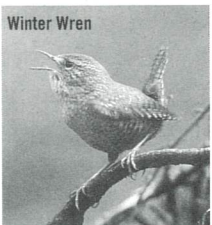
Winter wrens live in Canada and northern Michigan in the summer, migrating through this area in spring and fall. Winter wrens can be heard, especially in spring, singing its delicate, high pitched song. Our smallest wren, with the stubbiest tail, winter wrens can be seen along brushy stream banks. If the wren is disturbed, it may hop out of the undergrowth, sit on a branch, and bob up and down on its short legs while observing the intruder. Continued pursuit results in a short note of disgust, then the wren beelines to its next hiding place.

Sedge wrens are not known for their song, but certainly like the sound of chap, calling *chap chap chap chap chap chapper-rrr*. As with **Marsh wrens**, they are habitat dependent for nesting, preferring damp sedge meadows bordering the edges of ponds and lakes. With their striped back and barred tail, they are well camouflaged and seldom seen.

Both marsh and sedge wrens make an unusual nest - an unwieldy football size structure, woven of plant materials. For protection against predators, the wrens usually place their nests a foot or two above shallow water. The best way to see a marsh wren is to wade into a marsh. Any resident male will speedily fly to scold you as you travel through his territory.

With 87% of Indiana's wetlands gone, and the cattail marshes and sedge meadows with them, the sedge and marsh wrens are listed as endangered by the IDNR Division of Fish and Wildlife. ACRES is working to protect the habitat of these small birds, through such preserves as Art Hammer Wetlands, Ropchan Wildlife Refuge and the new Indian River Nature Preserve.

Photographs courtesy of *Music of the Birds: A Celebration of Bird Song* by Lang Elliott, pub. 1999



Bob Coggeshall gave a popular program at Wing Haven last fall. He gave a demonstration on making his beautiful wooden lamps to more than 40 people.

Thank you Bob!

Photograph by Art Eberhardt

DR. ALTON A. LINDSEY:

PIONEER IN INDIANA LAND PROTECTION



Author of *Natural Areas in Indiana and Their Preservation*, Dr. Lindsey died in December 1999 in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Serving on ACRES Advisory Board since 1960, Dr. Lindsey was considered the father of Indiana's nature preserve system. He was 92 and believed to be the last living scientist from the Antarctica expedition of Admiral Richard E. Byrd.

Alton A. Lindsey was born in Pittsburgh, the son of a Methodist minister, in 1907. A former Eagle Scout, he worked as a ranger at Mount Rainier and Glacier National Parks. A graduate of Allegheny College and Cornell University, Dr.

Lindsey was a vertebrate biologist by age 25, with expertise in polar biology, zoology, glaciers and taxidermy.

Chosen from 3,000 applicants for the 19-month Byrd expedition, Lindsey served from 1933-1935 on Admiral Byrd's second trip to the Antarctic. Traveling on a 1874 arctic whaler, *The Bear*, Admiral Byrd and 55 men researched Antarctica, proving that it was a single continent surrounding the south pole. While Admiral Byrd led an expedition to the South Pole, Dr. Lindsey stayed on the coast to study penguins, seals and other animals.



Dr. Lindsey, (left) weighing a seal.

Millions at home followed the mission by radio and newspaper columns. "The beauty of the place was so tremendous, so totally unspoiled," Lindsey remembered in a 1995 interview. "That, alone, was reason enough to go." At Admiral Byrd's suggestion, 12 islands on the coast of Antarctica are called the Lindsey Islands.

Dr. Lindsey taught at several universities before joining Purdue in 1947 as a professor of ecology. He became an early and strong proponent of the natural areas preservation movement. He researched the sand dunes and waterfowl at the Indiana dunes and later worked to see the area become the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore. In 1960, he persuaded The Nature Conservancy to buy the land that became Indiana's first nature preserve: the Pine Hills Nature Preserve in Montgomery County.

In 1969, Dr. Lindsey wrote the nation's first statewide inventory of natural sites: *Natural Areas in Indiana and Their Preservation*. Visiting 340 of Indiana's most outstanding natural areas, Lindsey described and ranked the areas as to their importance. "That book became a real catalyst when you tried to convince senators and representatives of the need to establish nature preserves", said John Bacone, Director of the IDNR Division of Nature Preserves. His recognition became a saving mark on an area. Wing Haven, Lonidaw, Beechwood, Lloyd W. Bender, Woodland Bog and the Edna W. Spurgeon Woodland Reserve are the ACRES' preserves that were included in his book.

His wife, Elizabeth, said that her husband's prime desire was to preserve all natural areas and habitat. "He was always working on some new project," Mrs. Lindsey said, "and as soon as he completed one he would go to the next." Mrs. Lindsey said "he knew his botany and he knew his birds. He had over 600 birds on his life list. His favorite flower and bird were the Yellow Lady's-slipper and the Chestnut-sided Warbler."

It has been a source of pride to have such a distinguished and fine scientist serve on the ACRES Advisory Board.

In Memoriam

Betty Jackson Hines

for the addition to Maple Wood.

Betty enjoyed hiking the area.

Richard, James, John and David Seeley

Joanne Clem Brewer

Kristy Bredemeier

Alton Lindsey

ACRES Board of Directors

William B. Barnes, Sr.

Natalie Vakulin

for the Indian River Nature Preserve.

Natalie spent her summer on Dallas Lake,

which is next to the new preserve.

Kathryn Bloom and Marion Kroll

Jerry Carpenter

Phil and Phyllis Kaiser

Dudley J. Johnston

for the 68-acre Wing Haven addition.

A life-long bird watcher, who especially enjoyed sandhill cranes.

James and Bonnie Caseldine

J. Marshall Foelber

Art Hammer

Lynn D. Johnston

Sidney and Maxine Johnston

Rinetta, Ben, Jonathon and

Kendra Parker

Joseph and Barbara Vernasco

Barbara Willinger

Northcrest Elementary School

Lorraine Grass

Deborah and Stephen Sarrazine

ENDOWMENT

by Richard E. Walker, ACRES Treasurer

Last December, your Board of Directors voted to become part of the Fort Wayne Community Foundation. We opened an organizational endowment fund, which Fort Wayne Community Foundation will hold and manage. An agency endowment fund is a permanently protected account for a particular organization. All gifts to the endowment earn income which is, in turn, paid out to ACRES. Advantages are professional investment management, low charges, additional community exposure, and investment performance measurement and monitoring.

Until September 30, 2000, Fort Wayne Community Foundation is offering a 20% match for all funds donated to the ACRES endowment fund. If you donate \$100, ACRES will receive an additional \$20 for a total donation of \$120. This match is made possible by a new program called "Building for the Future", which is funded by a generous gift from the Lilly Endowment. Of course, all gifts made to ACRES are fully tax deductible.

A gift of cash is the simplest form of charitable giving. Another form of giving are gifts of appreciated assets. Real estate, stocks, bonds, and other securities can be given to a charity, thereby avoiding capital gains tax on the appreciation. A charitable deduction is allowed based on the fair market value of the asset at the time of the gift.

Send your donation to ACRES and please write "Endowment Fund" in the memo section of your check or contact the ACRES office at (219) 422-1004 for more information. As always, your help is vital to ACRES' continued success!

On the Subject of ...

Moss. Personally, I don't think there's anywhere near enough been said about moss. On the subject of moss naturalists have been strangely silent. There have been no documentaries on PBS, there are no 400-page coffee table books, and no devotees like there are for say, orchids. No one goes driving on Sundays to look at moss like they do fall leaves. The TV weatherman never points at the map, turns to the audience and says sadly, "Folks, there just hasn't been enough moss this year."

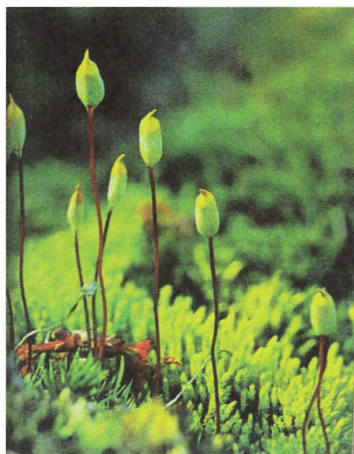
If you would (or could) get down on your stomach and take a closer look at the moss, you'd see a veritable jungle down there! Imagine yourself about a quarter inch tall. At that scale, the density and earthiness would rival any rainforest on the globe. The deep spongy texture would beg to be run into, jumped into, rolled in! The cool dampness would be a refreshing place to be on a hot summer day. If you were small enough, the spore capsules would rise over your head like red light posts.

OK, OK, maybe I'm going a little too far on the Lilliputian thing, but I DO know that one of my favorite memories as a kid, was laying on a giant

hummock of moss that was twice as big as I was. It was on the shores of Trout Lake. The trout had little to fear when I laid down in this secret mossy spot, because I always fell asleep. And frankly, that sounds pretty good right about now on this cold and rainy January day, so I think I'll go take a nap, now.

Good-bye until next time.... Jeff Britton

Jeff Britton works, writes, and naps at his home next to the Vandolah Nature Preserve.



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, 2000. For information on ACRES call 219-422-1004

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