

Preserving Natural Areas

QUARTERLY

Winter 2001

Volume 40—Number 1



ACRES' Heron Rookery

...See Page 4

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A RECORD YEAR IN LAND ACQUISITION!

In 2000, ACRES acquired 332 acres in 6 counties. Four of the projects are being announced for the first time in this Quarterly.



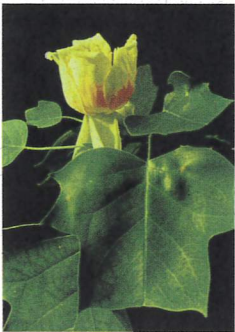
Donald and Susan Richey are dedicated to seeing their family farm, with its steep ravines covered with large-flowered trillium in the spring, towering sugar maple and white oak trees, groves of pawpaw, and beautiful vistas, protected. The Richeys are gifting 80 acres of their woods to ACRES in a life estate. Donald and Susan have also restored 18 acres of their land into a wetlands, which will be permanently protected with ACRES holding a conservation easement on the land. [See page 11 for an article on the Richey Woods Preserve.]



Charles J. Foster Nature Preserve - Through the generosity of Charles J. Foster, ACRES has been given a 2-acre preserve along Little Otter Lake, Steuben County. The preserve protects the wetlands along the lake and is adjacent to the Beechwood Nature Preserve. On Sunday, May 20th, ACRES will have a work day to improve an existing trail, build a small footbridge, and install a bench. Charles would like visitors to the preserve to have a bench to sit on, so they can have a peaceful spot to go and enjoy "a place I've always loved with all my heart".



Muriel C. Majneri Nature Preserve - Giving protection to the highest point overlooking Little Otter Lake. Muriel Majneri unselfishly donated her land to ACRES in December. Stately red and white oaks, shagbark hickories and tamaracks march steeply down to a fringe of wetlands bordering the lake. The new preserve is adjacent to the Beechwood Nature Preserve, Steuben County. [An article and photographs of Muriel's and Charles J. Foster's gifts will be in the Spring Quarterly.]



Art Hammer's gift to Herman F. Hammer Wald Nature Preserve - Eighteen years ago, Art gave his first preserve to ACRES, the 20-acre Anna Brand Hammer Nature Preserve, in honor of his Mother. Eleven years ago, Art Hammer gave his second preserve to ACRES, the 42-acre Herman F. Hammer Wald, in honor of his Father. Now Art has donated 20.7 acres as an addition to the Herman F. Hammer Wald Preserve, increasing the preserve from 42 to 63 acres. Art says that "This is a concern. Now my Father's preserve is much larger than my Mother's."

The 20.7-acre addition has been planted with more than 10,000 hickory, tulip, red and white oak, walnut and sugar maple trees. Art inherited a love of trees from his Father, who, in 1903, walked miles outside of Fort Wayne

to find basswood saplings to transplant into their yard. Art has certainly continued the family tradition, planting thousands of trees in his lifetime and protecting 435 acres in nature preserves.

Eastern cottontail photo by William J. Weber, from the book *Mammals of Indiana*. Painted lady butterfly photograph by Gary Meszaros from the book *Creatures of Change* by Carolyn V. Platt. Red-headed woodpecker photo by Delano Z. Arvin, and tulip tree photo by Ron Everhart, from *The Natural Heritage of Indiana* by Marion T. Jackson. **Cover page:** Female mallard photo by Paul McAfee, Director and past President (for 9 years) of Little River Wetlands Project, a land trust working to restore the Little Wabash River marsh in southwestern Allen County.

A Note from the Executive Director...

As ACRES begins its 41st year, the organization is finishing a record land acquisition year and stands ready to acquire more than 400 acres in 2001. We renew our dedication to protecting the best remaining natural areas in northeast Indiana and to communicate to the public the importance of our work.

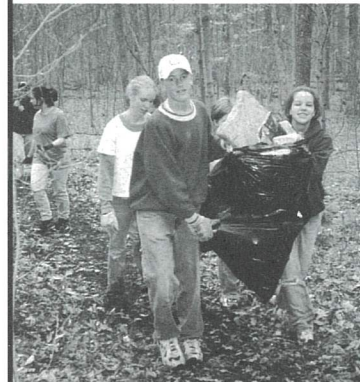
To all of you who make this work possible, my sincere thanks.
Carolyn McNagny, Executive Director

Welcome NEW ACRES Members!

Linda M. Binek and Michael E. Dobbs
David Bowers-Gift of W. Paul Wolf
Wayne and Linda Boyd
Phil and Joyce Brinkroger-Gift of James Seeley
Alicia C. Brinton
Steve and Toni Carr
Dr. James Curry
Tamara Dyer
Dale and Corinne Fulkerson
Mr. and Mrs. Keith Gotsch-Gift of W. Paul Wolf
Richard and Sara Hobson
Ralph and Nancy Koebke
Richard Kolb-Gift of W. Paul Wolf
Diane, Brooke, and Megan Laramore-Gift of Joy and Hamilton Hunter

William and Amanda LaSalle
Steve and Nancy Leininger
Bill Lambert and Alexandra McQuade
Tony McGuire
Richard Snavley
Jack and Cherie Stark
Ron Trigg
Linda A. Young

Whitley County Soil and
Water Conservation District
Dean Slavens
Dayne Wilkinson
Dennis Easterday
David K. Schulenburg
Kent E. Reese



Blackhawk Christian Schools students at the Emanuel M. Popp Nature Preserve

For the last six years, Blackhawk Christian Schools have sent students each year to work on an ACRES preserve. The students are a great help pulling garlic mustard, hauling out trash, cutting back multiflora rose, and improving trail systems.

Our thanks to the enthusiastic students, their teachers, and Maryann Rich, who arranges the work day every spring! ACRES has owned the 40-acre Emanuel M. Popp Nature Preserve, a gift of Mrs. Jeannette Kent, since 1996. The preserve is not open to the public at this time.



Paul McIntosh, Leader	April Bane
Kaicy Guthrie	Phil Schamehorn
Molly Glock	Micki Smith
Ross Giebole	Jared Bowersock
Tay Gaskill	Becca Franklin
Carrie Gohanningsmeier	Natalie Sorg
Sarah Norris	Jonathon Morris

Photos by John Ellenwood

THE GREAT BLUE HERON ROOKERY ON CEDAR CREEK

By Carolyn McNagny, ACRES Executive Director

Great blue herons traditionally return for decades, even for centuries, to the same nesting places. A few Indiana rookeries have been recorded since pre-settlement times in the 1800s.

ACRES is protecting a large rookery, with a possible 150 nests, along Cedar Creek in

northern Allen County.

A great blue heron rookery is a noisy, bustling, messy place. The rookery ACRES is preserving can be heard from 1/2 mile away! Blue herons usually nest in large colonies;



Baby's First Photo
Heron chick by Lynn M. Stone

the largest known rookery in Indiana has more than 350 nests.

When the great blue herons return from migration, after spending the winter haunting the frog-filled ponds and canals of Florida and Georgia, they establish a casual bond for the year. Herons are fickle, and may or may not mate with the same heron that turned their heads the year before. Once the pair establishes a bond, they set about improving an existing nest with some new sticks or building one from scratch. The ungraceful nests are flimsy affairs, bulky platforms of sticks up to 100 feet above the



ground. Three to seven pale blue-green eggs are laid, which hatch in about 28 days.

The first heron out of the egg has the best chance of making it. Competition for food is brutal, with only one to two young usually making it to adulthood. The parents spend their days spearing fish and frogs in nearby lakes and ponds, catching the occasional muskrat or snake. Herons travel miles to their favorite feeding sites, and the adult herons from this rookery can be seen in Allen, DeKalb, Noble, and even Whitley Counties.

After a successful hunt, the adult birds return, slowly flapping their wings as they land, which sets off a riot of activity. The young birds, snoozing in the shallow nests, all awake and begin to hop and flap their wings, squawking and screeching. Older birds, frantically flapping to keep their balance, perch on branches outside of their nests. As soon as the adult lands, it is surrounded with the sharp bills of the young fighting over the delicacy the parent has brought back.

The young herons grow quickly and are soon out and about and hunting with the adults. By July, the rookery falls silent and the empty nests wait for the following spring.

For all of us who have enjoyed watching these stately four-foot birds land and begin their



Heron rookery photo by Jane Dustin

hunt, the opportunity to protect this rookery and the surrounding habitat is welcome. Special thanks to David Gall, David Van Gilder, Jane Dustin and Ron Gehring for their work on this project.

The herons are easily disturbed when nesting. In an effort to protect the rookery, the exact location will not be disclosed.

**ACRES needs to raise an additional \$4,400 locally. If you wish to contribute to this project, please send donations to:
ACRES, 2000 N. Wells Street, Fort Wayne IN 46808**

Thank you to the donors for the rookery!

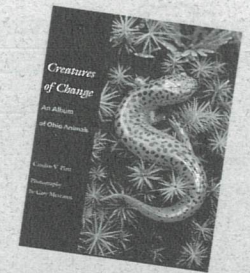
Cedar Creek Wildlife Project, Inc.
Great Lakes Aquatic Habitat
Network and Fund

Wayne and Linda Boyd
Frederick and Alfreda Mackel
Jerry and Diane Mackel

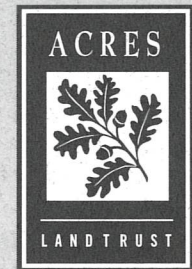
Glen and Chris Bickel
Robert Binder
John and Nancy Brier
Sharon Brommer
Willard and Nena Clark
Ann H. Goodrich
Albert A. Guilford
Mary K. Gynn
Richard and Marian Harber
Don Hoagland
Jack and Lauana Humbrecht
Diane Humphrey
Robert and Carolyn Huvendick
Alexander and Sharon Jokay
Glenn R. Kinduell
Patricia Kinsey
Jean S. Langohr
William and Amanda LaSalle
Robin and Mary Lemberger

Margien Lund
Gregory and Susan Mauk
Mary McCormack
Carolyn McNagny
Patricia McNagny
John and Lavonne Miller
Elizabeth M. Perry
Edwin and Cynthia Powers
Daniel and Mary Quigley
Randy and Carol Roberts
Janel Rogers
Tom and Jerry Schoenherr
Samuel Schwartz
Gregory Smith
David and Faith Van Gilder
Don and Cheryl Wyckoff
W. Paul Wolf
Loyal and Ruby Yoder
Jan R. Zwiep

Creatures of Change: An Album of Ohio Animals



Some of the photographs in this quarterly were used with permission from the beautiful book; *Creatures of Change: An album of Ohio Animals*, by Carolyn V. Platt, illustrated with photography by Gary Mezaros. This book is available for purchase through the ACRES office by calling 219-422-1004.



ACRES' MISSION

Dedicated to preserving natural areas in northeast Indiana, ACRES manages and protects 43 nature preserves in 12 counties.

2000 North Wells Street
Fort Wayne, IN 46808
Phone/Fax: 219-422-1004

www.acres-land-trust.org
e-mail: acreslt@fwi.com

FIELD TRIPS & SPECIAL EVENTS



Native Landscape Restoration: A Community Approach Sunday, March 4th



Photo from Tallgrass Prairie Wildflowers by Frank Oberle

Presented by: Nate Simons, ACRES Director, Landscape Architect and Director of Restoration Services for Heartland Restoration.

Celebrating the landscapes where you live and learning "what is native?" Come learn some of the basic principles of the growing trend in home landscaping. Take home ideas to get you started this year!

When: 2:00 p.m.

Where: Wing Haven Nature Preserve, Steuben County. Take I-69 to Pokagon State Park Exit (Exit 154), turn south onto SR 127 and immediately left onto 400 N. Preserve located on north side of 400 N in 1 mile.

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



New Trees for the YWCA Saturday, March 24th

(or if snow or rain, Saturday, March 31st)

Presented by: Bob Bryan, ACRES Director, Master Gardener and IDNR certified tree steward.

ACRES' office is at the 26-acre YWCA complex on Wells Street, Fort Wayne. ACRES will be helping the YWCA by planting 50 four-foot trees.

When: 9:00 a.m. (Come anytime in the morning.)

Where: ACRES' Office at the YWCA, 2000 North Wells Street, Fort Wayne, Allen County. **Bring:** Shovels, buckets and gloves. ACRES will supply refreshments at the Office. **Contact:** ACRES Office at 219-422-1004 for more information.



Sean, Eric, and Evan Anderson
Photo by John Ellenwood



Hepatica Hike at Little Cedar Creek Wildlife Sanctuary Sunday, March 25th

Presented by: Ellsworth Smith, Steward for Little Cedar Creek Wildlife Sanctuary.

If the weather cooperates, beautiful bunches of the vibrant blue hepatica will be showing through last year's leaves. Take a hike to shake off winter in this hilly preserve along Cedar Creek. To help the preserve's flora, we will be pulling the pesky garlic mustard, an alien plant that crowds out our native wildflowers.



Photo by John Ellenwood

When: 10:00 a.m. **Where:** Little Cedar Creek Wildlife Sanctuary, Allen County. Take Coldwater Road north of Fort Wayne to Fitch Road. Turn west on Fitch, go approximately 1 mile and then turn south onto Sunlight Lane. Parking area for preserve at end of Sunlight Lane.

FIELD TRIPS & SPECIAL EVENTS



Music of Rosewood Sunday, April 1th

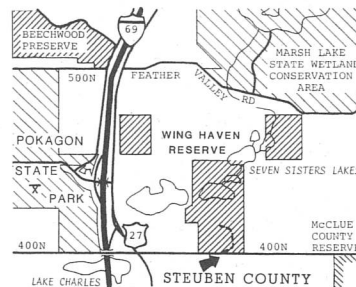
What better setting than a log cabin in the woods to hear the traditional music of the British Isles! Rosewood, a five-member troupe, will play the lap dulcimer,

guitar, cittern, whistle, bass and banjo. This is the third time Rosewood has presented this popular concert for ACRES.

When: 2:00 p.m. **Where:** Wing Haven Nature Preserve, Steuben County. Take I-69 to Pokagon State Park Exit (Exit 154), turn south on SR 127 and immediately left onto 400 N. Preserve located on north side of 400 N in 1 mile. **Contact:** ACRES Office, at 219-422-1004.



Wild rose photo by Bill Krebs



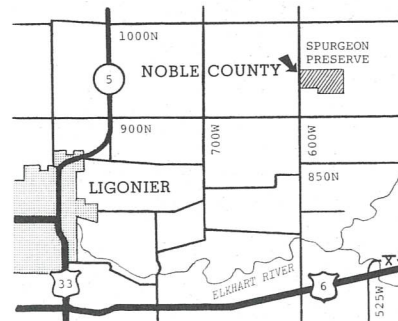
Visit ACRES First Preserve Saturday, April 7th

Presented by: Else Matott, ACRES Hike Leader and Naturalist.

The 65-acre Edna W. Spurgeon Woodland Reserve dresses up in all its finery for spring. Hillside of Dutchman's breeches, hepatica, bloodroot, spring beauty, celadine poppy decorate the hillside with yellow, white, and blue. The towering beech, tulip and sugar maple trees will be starting to leaf out. Beautiful any time of year, the Spurgeon Preserve is not to be missed in the spring. **When:** 10:00 a.m. **Where:** Edna W. Spurgeon Woodland Reserve, Noble County. Take SR 6 west of Kendallville, turn north on 600 W and preserve is located between 900 N and 1000 N on 600 W.



Trillium on the hillside photo by Art Eberhardt



Mark your calendars! Saturday, April 21st 12th Annual Adopt-A-Tree Festival

When: 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
at the Wing Haven Nature Preserve



300 trees planted...

at Little Cedar Creek Wildlife Sanctuary

ACRES acquired the 18-acre Little Cedar Creek Wildlife Sanctuary, located in northern Allen County, with the strong support of Dr. Jerry and Mrs. Molly Mackel. When ACRES acquired the preserve in 1997, we tore down two houses at the site, leaving a 2-acre open field at its entrance.

Last spring, ACRES members planted the 2-acre field with baby redbuds, white oaks, sugar maples, and hickory trees. Ellsworth Smith, steward for the preserve, organized the day and more than 20 hard-working volunteers carefully planted the trees.

On Sunday, March 25th, Ellsworth Smith will lead a hike at the Little Cedar Creek Wildlife Sanctuary (see Field Trips and Special Events, page 6). We will also pull garlic mustard and check the tiny trees' progress

The Land Management Committee has 16 to 20 work days a year at the ACRES' preserves. If you want to become a Land Management volunteer, call the ACRES Office at (219) 422-1004.

Thanks to these dedicated tree planters:

Linda, Eric, Sean, Evan and Annalise Anderson
Mark, Renee and Mark Dolezal
John Ellenwood
Allen Hetrick
Claude Keller
Nancy Malis
Rainne McPherson
Debby and Cathy Meade
Ken Millikan
Cindy Moore and Tim Houghton
Everitt Padgitt
Ellsworth Smith (steward)
Carol Telschow

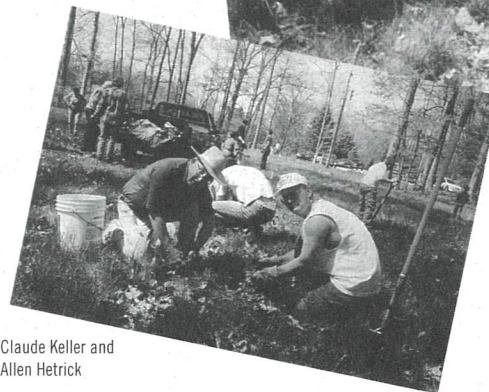
Our sincere apologies for any omissions



Mark, Renee and son Mark Dolezal



Ken Millikan and
Ellsworth Smith
(steward)



Claude Keller and
Allen Hetrick

Photos by
John Ellenwood



Tobi Van Dyck

by Elsa Littman, friend

Tobi Van Dyck was a lover of nature, and quickly connected with sites of preservation wherever she lived. A professional librarian, she also became certified in Wildlife/Forestry Conservation.

Tobi worked in many libraries in the midwest, especially the South Bend area, Angola, and Goshen, where she was last employed as a cataloguer. Her friends and co-workers in both Steuben County and in Goshen have contributed to the endowment for Wing Haven, a place Tobi dearly loved.

She was a faithful correspondent with her many friends across the country, who remember her as a unique person, bright, with a wonderful sense of humor.

Tobi had struggled with cancer since fall of 1998 and died at age 61, on June 28, 2000 in Valentine, Nebraska.

Staffs of the Steuben and Goshen Libraries gave \$500 in honor of Tobi's memory to the Wing Haven Endowment. Tobi had a great love of Wing Haven and her gift will always benefit the preserve.

REDBUD & MAPLE SEEDLINGS

Elizabeth Snyder, ACRES member, has baby redbud and maples to transplant!
Call (219) 432-4408 to talk to Elizabeth.

In Memoriam

Janice Lee Welch

From Debbie and Steve Sarrazine

Michael R. Henderson

From Debbie and Steve Sarrazine

Dorothy M. Roth Fogwell

Glenn Fogwell, Dorothy's husband, was a donor of the beautiful Fogwell Forest Nature Preserve. Dorothy loved gardening, quilting, and playing the organ for Mount Zion Church for 30 years.



From

William and Ethyle Bloch
Lynn and Mary Ann Bunsold
Roy and Karen Buskirk
Tom and Jane Dustin
Bonnie Dye
Dale and Ruth Graft
Mark and Mary Hardy
M. K. Kaiser
Jerry Krick
Harold and Margaret Longstreet
Carolyn McNagyn
Scott and Bonnie Niemann
Steve and Sue Simerman
Chris Tyner

Lila Springer

From Tom and Jane Dustin



Special Thanks!

Thanks to **Don Moehlenkamp** and **Ellsworth Smith** for their work creating new stairs at the Tel-Hy Nature Preserve. Fifteen members of **The Jewish Federation, John Ellenwood, Ken Millikan, and Everitt Padgitt** improved the trail system at an October work day.

Thank you to **John and Marcella Ellenwood**, for a generous gift to the Wing Haven Endowment (managed by the Steuben County Community Foundation.)

Thank you to **Don McCormack**, for his time and efforts with the finances.

Slate-Colored Juncos

by Margien L. Lund, ACRES Member

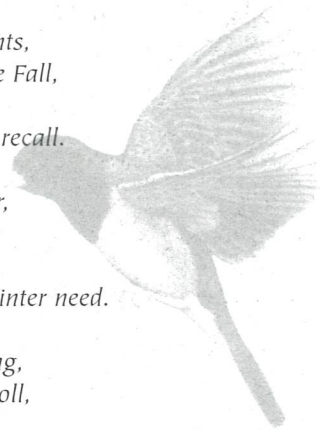
*Juncos with tail lights,
Come late in the Fall,
Stopping at sites
They quick can recall.*

*Spending the winter,
Eating my seed;
Calm in my yard,
For their cold winter need.*

*But, come the Spring,
they act very droll,
Darting and flying,
Gyroscoptes out of control.*

*All too soon,
The feed ground is bare.
Juncos have flown
To Heaven knows where?*

*Up in the Northland,
In forest and glen,
'Til frost fills the air,
When they come south again.*



Tributes

**Dr. Jerry and Mrs. Diane Mackel's
1st Wedding Anniversary
for the Little Cedar Creek
Wildlife Sanctuary**

From
Linda M. Diaz
Linda K. Gross
John and Leslie Wilson
Bob and Monia Alexander
Don and Sue Graber
George and Martha Weatherford
Darrell and Phyllis Thompson



Little Cedar Creek Wildlife Sanctuary photo by John Ellenwood

Richey Woods - A New Preserve



Don and Susan are well known in Whitley County for their generosity and concern for both people and animals. Susan has been the Curator of the Whitley County Historical Museum for 12 years. As a veterinarian, Don became concerned about Whitley County's lack of a humane shelter, and so became a founder and a President of the Humane Society of Whitley County. Their farm is teeming with llamas, goats, miniature donkeys, geese, and even a potbellied pig, many animals that Don has rescued during his work as a veterinarian.

Whitley County has its first ACRES nature preserve! Donald and Susan Richey are gifting an 80-acre woods to ACRES in a life estate and protecting a restored 18-acre wetland on their farm with a conservation easement. The 80-acre preserve (which does not have a permanent name at this time) protects towering white oaks and sugar maples, steep ravines covered with spring wildflowers, and a peaceful pond - a spectacular reminder of the true beauty of Whitley County and Indiana.



The protection of this fine natural area came about because of a promise Don made his father, Earl Richey. Having purchased the family farm in 1953, Earl and Mildred Richey and their children developed a deep affection for their land. As development started changing the face of the countryside, Earl became concerned about the future of the farm, especially the woods. Don promised his father he would save the woods. His wife Susan and their daughters, Anna and Melinda, agreed.

Don says that preserving this beautiful woods is "what my Dad wanted, what I want, and, if we can encourage other people to do the same, that's fantastic. We've only got so much natural land, so the more we can preserve the better."

By Carolyn McNagny, ACRES Executive Director

Photos above by John Ellenwood, except
Canadian goose and goslings photo by Gary Mezaros





THE BACK PAGE

By Susan Britton

Above: Great horned owl



Saw-whet owl

*Quoted from *Creatures of Change: An Album of Ohio's Animals* by Carolyn V. Platt. Great horned owl photo by Russell Mumford. Saw-whet owl and barred owl photos are by Gary Mezars.

It's no wonder owls have always been considered wise. They can fly through the woods at night without crashing into things, and when they speak everyone listens. Oh! That and they can swivel their heads 270°!

This time of year, a pair of great horned owls come back down the ravine, running through the Vandolah Nature Preserve, to nest near our home. In the ravine is a huge, 150-year old sycamore tree, we call the Owl Tree. It has the most perfect nesting hole near the top, with a limb arching over it, like God made it just for the owls. One of the most welcome sounds, in early

February, is the male and female calling and answering each other in their deep, resonating, courting duets. Every dusk and dawn they call, "Hoo-hoo-hoo-hoo-hoo. Hoo-hoo-hoo-hoo-hoo!" You can't help but listen.

We often see the barred owls fly here during the day as well (pictured right.) Their familiar call asks, "Who cooks for you? Who cooks for you?"

There are nineteen species of owls in North America, but one of my life goals is to see a saw-whet owl (pictured left.) These small birds are only about 8" tall. Once, my husband Jeff, saw one flying across the back yard and described it as "a fluffy, flying softball."

While hiking one day, I found an owl pellet. Recalling my husband's predilection for investigating anything from the natural world...and knowing that these spit-up "furballs" are pieces of bones, fur, and hard insect parts, that do not pass through the owl's digestive system, ...and knowing that he usually carries a ziploc bag for just such oddities to dissect later, I observed it silently and we kept walking. Kidding aside, locating owl pellets **can be** a good way to find where an owl may be roosting.

Owls certainly have captured the imagination of many a story-teller over the years. *In 1875 the English magazine *Punch* published this anonymous verse:

*"There was an old owl who lived in an oak'
The more he heard, the less he spoke;
The less he spoke, the more he heard'
O, if men were all like that wise bird!"*



Barred owl

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, 2001. For information on ACRES call 219-422-1004. www.acres-land-trust.org

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Fort Wayne, IN 46808-2474
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PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

Preserving natural areas in northeast Indiana