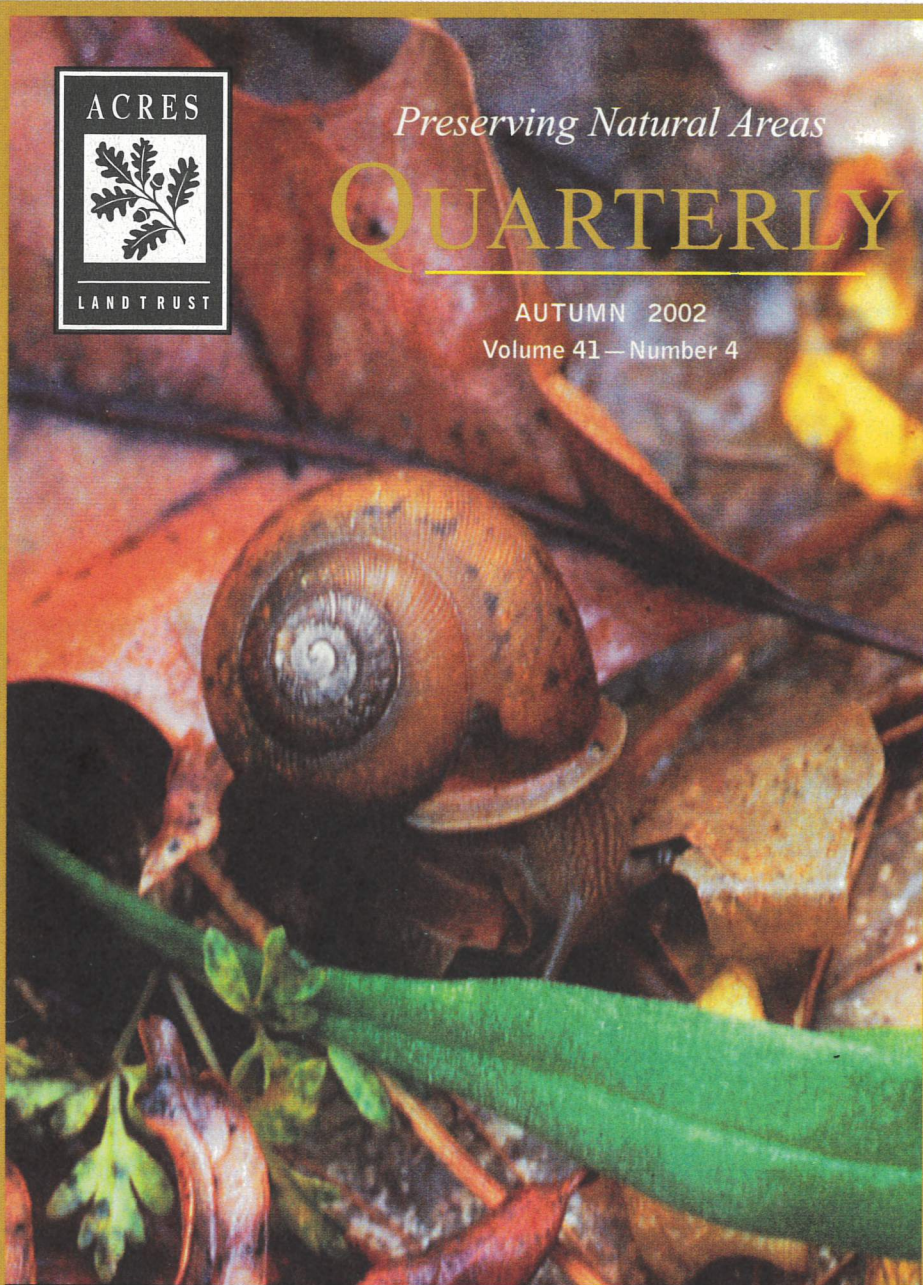


Preserving Natural Areas

QUARTERLY

AUTUMN 2002

Volume 41—Number 4



- Annual Fall Dinner
- Bird Banding
- Nominations Sought
- New Members & Tributes

- ACRES' Mission
- Star-Nosed Moles
- Field Trips & Events
- Wildwood Donations

- William C. Bloch
- Memorials
- Florence Badger
- The Back Page

ACRES Annual Dinner and Program

Friday, November 8th

6:30 p.m. Dinner - 8:00 p.m. Program

Concordia Seminary Dining Hall

6600 North Clinton Street

Fort Wayne, Indiana

\$14.00 a plate

Phone reservations to:

Mary and Howard Schneider 260-484-3986

Ethyle Bloch 260-747-4450

Reservations must be made and honored.

Deadline: November 6th

Menu:

Roast pork with dressing,
mashed potatoes & gravy,
peas with pearl onions, Waldorf salad,
pumpkin pie with the trimmings
Iced tea and coffee

Vegetarian: Regular meal without the pork
or pasta primavera with vegetables

20,000 Years of the Limerlost Swamp

Guest Speaker - Ken Brunswick,

Director, Limerlost Swamp Remembered and Wetlands Manager, IDNR Limerlost State Historic Site

During the spring rains of 1983, Ken Brunswick stood on the front porch of his farm and looked north. As far as he could see, flooded fields stretched to the horizon. Ken went to his local library and researched his area of Jay County, discovering the farmland was once the vast 13,000-acre Limerlost Swamp. Made famous by the books of Gene Stratton-Porter in the early 1900s, the swamp was gaining appreciation just as it was being timbered and dredged. In 1992, Ken began a project to restore the Limerlost Swamp, with less than 30 acres remaining of the original swamp. Today, 1,100 acres are being restored.



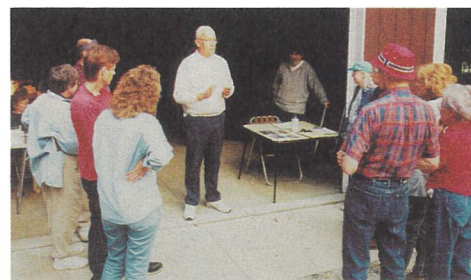
Traveling back through glacial times, the Limerlost Swamp has a fascinating history. Hear how the swamp was formed and learn about the butterflies and moths, river otters and black bears that once inhabited the area. The massive restoration project being undertaken today

leads the Limerlost Swamp towards a bright future.



Photos of Limerlost by Gene Stratton-Porter

Drawings by Ethyle Bloch



Wildwood & Wing Haven

B I R D B A N D I N G



In a program in cooperation with Tippecanoe Audubon Society, Jim and Janet Meyer presented bird banding workshops at

Wing Haven and Wildwood. More than 50 people attended, as Jim explained the importance of bird banding for scientific research and to track bird populations. Nets were set up and checked on a regular basis. Goldfinches, Northern waterthrush, juvenile Red-headed woodpecker and two Ruby-throated hummingbirds were netted at Wildwood. All of the Goldfinches exhibited their unique trait of "singing" as they were released.

Photographs by William A. Smith IV

NOMINATIONS SOUGHT

ACRES' election of board members is upon us. If you would like to nominate someone for the board, please do so by October 30th by contacting the ACRES Office at 260-422-1004. Jim Haddock, Nancy Bradtmiller, and William A. Smith IV are serving on the nominating committee this year.

If you are a current member in good standing, you will receive a return-by-mail ballot by November 20th or you may vote in person on December 15, 2002 between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. at the ACRES Office, 2000 North Wells Street, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

WELCOME NEW ACRES MEMBERS!

Joel Bredemeyer
Dr. and Mrs. Jerald L. Cooper
Marjorie M. Ehrman
Archie and Betty Ferguson
Edwin L. Gordon
Dottie Hall *Gift from Dolores Tomusk*
Janet Houghton
Daryl Hull
Lynn and Darlene Hyndman
Dr. Norman & Mrs. Carol Kempler
Paul and Amy Kocsis
Don B. Lieberum
Ramona Meidinger
Tory Smith
Lynn M. Taylor
Tim Thomas
Daniel and June Walcott
Monica Wehrle
Dale and Susan Will
Becky L. Zimmerman
Bart's Water Sports



Tributes

Alicia Brinton and John Roe

*in honor of their Wedding
from Boris and Nancy Bagranoff*

Kathy Kauffman

Mary C. Linton

Scott Pearson and Leslie Propp

Erik M. Vosteen

for the Edna W. Spurgeon Woodland Reserve

Neil and Mona Case

*for their kindness in helping her move
from Eleanor A. Green
for the ACRES Acquisition and Management Fund*

Jonathan Hurley

*In honor of his new college career
from James M. and Patricia D. Barrett*

Mary E. Loeschner

for her unselfish gift to ACRES

Carter Snider

for his gift to the Wing Haven Birdathon

Searching for the Star-Nosed Mole

by Elizabeth Hasenmyer,
Graduate student
at Ball State University

With 22 finger-like rays protruding from its nose, the star-nosed mole, *Condylura cristata*, is hardly a routine find. In fact, it is as elusive as it is unique. Unlike the common eastern mole found in your yard, these moles live exclusively in wet areas such as cattail marshes, swamps and along rivers and streams. They are dark brown in color, about 4 to 5 inches in length and weigh 1.5 to 2.5 ounces. Their trademark nose is used to feel around for food as well as navigating their subterranean world. Active year-round, star-nosed moles are adept swimmers and spend a good deal of time in the water.

Over the past two summers, I have spent my weekdays trudging through the mucky wetlands of Northeastern Indiana's State Parks, ACRES Preserves, and IDNR Fish and Wildlife Areas in the relentless search of the star-nosed mole. As a second year graduate student at Ball State University, I am studying the habitat characteristics of the star-nosed mole in Northern Indiana. Why you ask? Well, two reasons really; 1) there is very little information known about their habitat needs, and 2) they are just plain interesting!

Since little is known about them, star-nosed moles are currently listed as a species of special concern by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources. This designation is typically given if a species' population size is unknown. The data I am compiling will be useful to resource managers in determining habitat management practices.



The incredible sensitivity of their noses (it is 6 times more sensitive than the human hand) coupled with their subterranean habits has made trapping star-nosed moles extremely difficult. However, I have been fortunate enough to trap 19 different individual moles over the past two summers. Before I began trapping at a new location, I first had to locate star-nosed mole habitat by searching wet areas for their shallow U-shaped tunnels. Once I located a tunnel, I set a trap in the run itself. During a typical week, I would set up to 70 traps, checking them every four hours day and night. Checking traps requires donning waders and trekking to the trap sites, at times as far as a mile away. Sometimes, all traps were empty, while at other times, I was rewarded with a combination of short-tailed shrews, deer mice, meadow voles and an occasional star-nosed mole. I even caught a green frog once!

In Indiana, star-nosed moles can only be found in the northeastern portion of the state and even there, distribution is spotty. In order to determine what has caused this unusual distribution pattern, I am studying the immediate area surrounding each trap site where I caught a mole (use site). I identified and logged all vegetation, as well as soil type, pH, and percent soil saturation. I am also documenting the distance to open water,

forests, roads and human habitation. Furthermore, I am recording the same parameters at sites where star-nosed moles are not known to occur (non-use sites). I will then compare the use sites to the non-use sites to determine if a difference between the two exists that will explain why star-nosed moles live in some wetlands and not in others.

The star-nosed mole is one of Indiana's little known curiosities, and with the continuing destruction of wetlands, it is perhaps good that we study them more closely. My findings will augment what little information is available, allowing a better understanding of these unique, elusive and apparently finicky creatures.

ACRES receives periodic requests for permits from graduate students, professors, biologists and botanists working on research projects. Since the majority of ACRES nature preserves are dedicated under the Indiana Nature Preserves Act, we work with the IDNR Division of Nature Preserves in deciding whether to grant permits. Top consideration is given to protecting the plants and animals under ACRES' care and whether the research project can further the protection of our natural areas.



Photograph by Amy Oberlin

FACTS:

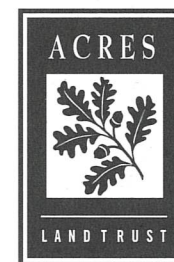
North America's only semi-aquatic mole, the star-nosed mole are accomplished swimmers. They can be seen burrowing through snow and even diving under the ice during winter!

Famous for its 22-tentacled nose, which relentlessly searches for a dinner of earthworms, insect larvae, aquatic invertebrates and small fish. No snout in the animal kingdom, not even the elephant's trunk, is as mobile, complex or touch-sensitive.



Mole photographs by Kenneth C. Catania

Elizabeth Hasenmyer (pictured above) received a permit from ACRES and the IDNR Division of Nature Preserves to search for star-nosed moles at several ACRES preserves.



ACRES' MISSION

Dedicated to preserving areas in northeast Indiana, ACRES manages and protects 45 nature preserves in 12 counties.

2000 North Wells Street
Fort Wayne, IN 46808-2474
260-422-1004

email: acreslt@fwi.com

Web site: www.acres-land-trust.org

FIELD TRIPS & SPECIAL EVENTS



Wander Willet's Lake

Sunday, October 13th

Presented by: Larry Bieberich, Botanist

Called Willet's Lake or the New Atwood Bog, this fascinating 35-acre property is owned by Steve and Lynn Hossler. Once a shallow lake, the lake evolved into a sphagnum bog, its edges lined with poison sumac. In the woods surrounding the bog are plants seldom seen in Indiana - Canadian mayflower, ferns up to 4 feet tall, and sarsaparilla! Steve and Lynn are working with ACRES to protect this unusual and wonderful property. **When:** 2:00 p.m. **Where:** Willet's Lake, Kosciusko County. Take US 30 west of Warsaw. Turn north on 700 W and 700 W will dead-end into 650 N. Park in the lane that is a continuation of 700 W. **Bring:** Boots and gloves. **Contact:** ACRES office at 260-422-1004.



Downy Rattlesnake Plantain by Michael Homoya



Canoe Crooked Lake

Saturday, October 19th

Presented by: Debby Meade, ACRES Member

Bring your canoe or kayak to the public landing at Crooked Lake for a tour of undeveloped shoreline of the 150-acre Crooked Lake Nature Preserve. We will visit the small fen along the lake, which has grasses-of-parnasses, bottle gentian, sedges galore, and many other fall flowers. Debby is inviting everyone to her Crooked Lake cottage after the canoe trip. **When:** 10:00 a.m. **Where:** Crooked Lake's public access site, Whitley County near the Noble County line. Take US 30 to Columbia City, turn north on SR 109. Travel 7 miles on SR 109 and the Crooked Lake access site will be on right side of road, past Crooked Lake Golf Course. **Bring:** Your canoe or kayak, paddles, life jackets, and a pair of shoes that can get wet. **Contact:** ACRES office at 260-422-1004.

Kayakers by Ken Millikan



Spadderdock by Ron Everhart



Fantastic Fall Foliage

Saturday, October 26th

Presented by: Larry Biggerstaff, Caretaker of Emanuel M.

Popp Nature Preserve. A gift of Jeannette Kent, this 40-acre gem is hidden away off Tonkel Road. The preserve has an impressive old-growth sugar maple, oak and hickory woods, which should be at its colorful height. Larry has restored the cabin on the property, and it is now beautiful to see. Larry will be serving hot dogs with the trimmings and drinks, if you want to stay for lunch. **When:** 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. **Where:** Emanuel M. Popp Nature Preserve, Allen County. **Contact:** ACRES office at 260-422-1004.



Sugar Maple by Bob Weber

FIELD TRIPS & SPECIAL EVENTS



Sandhill Cranes by the Thousands

Saturday, November 2nd

Presented by: Ted Heemstra and Ed Powers,

Directors of Stockbridge Audubon Society.

If you have never seen the migration peak at Jasper-Pulaski, this is an astounding experience where 20,000 to 25,000 sandhill cranes are before you! With a wingspan of 7 feet, majestic cranes gather in huge flocks and their trumpeting calls can be heard for miles. **When:** 9:00 a.m. **Where:** Meet at the Southwest Corner of the Park West Shopping Center, West Jefferson and Illinois Road, to carpool to the Jasper-Pulaski Wildlife Area. Return to Fort Wayne at 9:00 p.m. **Bring:** Pack a lunch and remember your binoculars! **Contact:** Jim Haw for information on this event or other events with Stockbridge Audubon at 260-485-7802.

Sandhill Cranes Mark Romesser



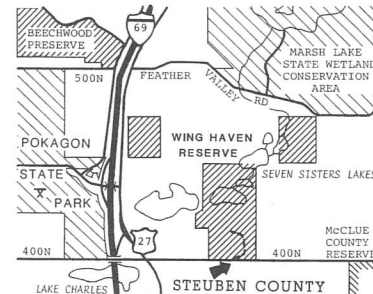
Rosewood: Traditional Music of the British Isles

Sunday, November 3rd

Presented by: Jane and David Dawkins.

The five musicians of Rosewood will plan a selection of favorite dance and music songs. As they play their fiddle and penny whistle, come out for a toe-tapping time at Wing Haven's log studio. **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. The preserve is located on the northside of 400 N in 1 mile. **Contact:** ACRES office at 260-422-1004.



ACRES Annual Dinner Meeting and Program.

For reservation information, please see page 2.



7th Annual Christmas Sing-A-Long

Sunday, December 8th

Presented by: Art Eberhardt, ACRES Board Member

Now in its 7th merry year, the Christmas Sing-A-Long gets one and all in the holiday spirit! Jim Shearer, Art and Marion Eberhardt will lead you in harmonic splendor. Hot cider and cookies served. **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. The preserve is located

on the northside of 400 N. **Contact:** ACRES at 260-422-1004.

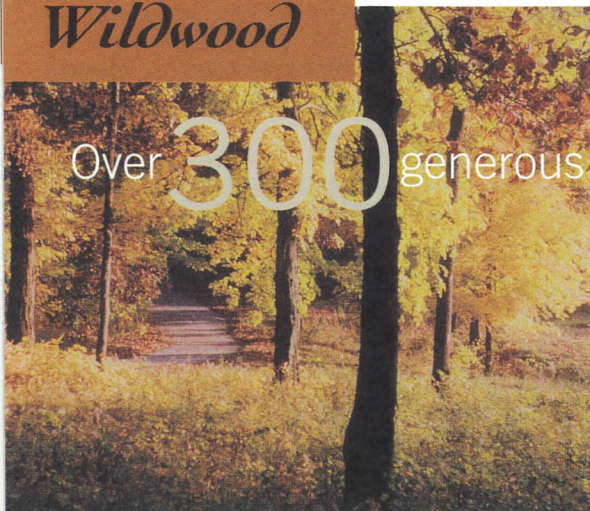


Wild-Rose Leaves by Ron Everhart



Rabbit by Gene Stratton-Porter

Over 300 generous people!



Thank you to all who have donated to Wildwood! ACRES has finished its goal of raising \$250,000 locally and we are happy to announce that Wildwood will become an ACRES nature preserve in February of 2003. The generosity of the ACRES and Tippecanoe Audubon membership was overwhelming - we raised more than \$37,000 in individual donations.

With grateful appreciate to Bob and Alice Frantz, caretakers of Wildwood for the last 54 years, and their children, Philip and Linda Frantz, Bruce and Beverly Frantz, and Mary and Wayne Young. There is still work to be done, but Bob and Alice's goal of seeing their land protected will be accomplished.

Indiana Heritage Trust Fund

Lupke Foundation

The Ropchan Foundation

The Indiana Chapter of the Nature Conservancy

USDA-NRCS Farmland Protection Program

Ferne Baldwin

Harold and Amy Bush

David Cordray and Debra Noell

David W. and Karen Doudt

Bruce and Beverly Frantz

and the Greens: Holly, Nathan, Isaac and Anne

John and Marcella Ellenwood

Lorry Goldenberg

Don Gorney

Joann Martin

Debby and Paul Meade

Arthur and Anna Mae Parry

James and Margaret Townsend

Joann A. Weber

Alison R. Adams
Parks and Paula Adams
Cheryl H. Allen
Ruthann Angle

Evelyn M. and Francis H. Barr
James M. and Patricia D. Barrett
Kay Batdorf
Brian Becker
Mark and Mona Berghoff
Glen and Chris Bickel
Larry and Karlann Bieberich
Robert Binder

Thomas and Mary Jo Bland
Gordon Bloom
Barbara and N. Richard Boerger
Ruth Brake
John Brennan
John P. Brennan
James A. Brenock
Sharon Brommer
Emily K. Burkhalter
Kathleen Bush
Linda Bustamante
Galen and Doris Case
Greg and Anne Clark
Nena and Willard Clark
Mr. and Mrs. William. J. Cline
Harold E. Cook
Wendy Crider

Mark and Monica DeBrock
Anthony and Jill DeHoff
Pauline Delk
Joe Dell
Charles A. Dick
and Judy M. Archer-Dick
Andrew and Margaret Dirksen
Joel Eichenauer and Lori Zimmerman
David and Ruth Eiler
Tim and Nancy Eviston
Tony Fleming and Victoria Ferguson

Thomas Foltz
Laura Frank
Andy Frantz and Dayna Duvall
Merlo and Imo Jean Frantz
Philip and Linda Frantz
Andrew Gebhard
Jeanne C. Gehring
Robert and Ines Gillespie
R. Michael and Debra S. Gasper
Jeffrey and Betty Goris
Matthew and Hallie W. Grant
Neil Grider
Bob and Karen Griggs
Marvin and Kate Hall
Arthur W. Hammer
Steven and Lila Hammer
Lonnie E. Hanson
Richard and Jane Harshbarger
Fayne E. Harter
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Robert and Pauline Hoover
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Alex and Sharon Jokay
Paul and Hazel Keller
Richard and Sandy Kelty
Glenn Kinduell
Frances L. Kipp
Frank Kirschner
Charles and Susie Klinger
Dorothy and Douglas Knuth
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Mary F. Lee
Mary G. Leggitt
Steve and Nancy Leininger
Robin and Mary Lemberger
Dr. and Mrs. H.B. Liebgood
Wilson and Mary Lutz
Pat MacWhorter
Louise Magoon

Nancy Malis
Jeff Marchant
Jo Ann Martin
Jim and Dorothy Mason
Paul and Marla McAfee
Ethel V. McLelland
William and Joyce McFadden
Dr. and Mrs. Earl O. McKinley
Carolyn McNagny
Marcia McNagny
Pat McNagny
Richard McNett Howard
and Carolee Mehlinger
Carolyn F. Miller
Martha Miller
Roy and Lois Miller
R. Stephen and Jan R. Mock
Anna Spurgeon Moll
Kathryn Moore
John and Linda Mowry
Dan and Weebe Naragon
Steve Naragon and Pam Higgins
Lila O'Connell
John and Julia Oldenkamp
Richard and Joyce Pacer
Max and Helen Parker
Elizabeth M. Perry
Virginia Petit
Anne Pinkney
Avis E. Rayl
Ann Reidenbach
John D. Reynolds
Andrew and Sally Rich
Kevin Richards and Orene Colcord
Mary Lee Richeson
Janel Avery Rogers
Rosemary Rouch
Ben and Renee Roush
Clyde "Apple" Sanders
Anton M. Schmidt
Ken and Mary M. Scrogam
Michael Shaver
Eric Sheibley

Marsha Shively
Ernest M. and Lois I. Shull
E. Stanley and Jean Smith
Randy and Carole Smith
Sharon Smith
Edith Stone
Eugene and Elizabeth Stone
Gene R. Stout
Thomas L. Stucky
Bill and Doris Taketa
Carol N. Telschow
Carol A. Thomas
Darrell D. and Phyllis S. Thompson
Jack and Carolyn R. Thrush
Frances Townsend
James and Margaret Townsend
Howard and Mary Uhrig
Nancy Venderly
Barbara Vernasco
Robert T. and Ann P. Walton
Gerald E. Warfel
Ella Mae Weaver
Herbert and Lorraine Weier
Gilbert and Dorothy Weldy
Allen W. Wetter
Thomas J. Whaley
Dennis White
Phil and Sherilyn Wilcox
Win-A-Couple Sunday School Class,
Methodist Church, Claypool, IN.
Eugene F. Winicker
Ann Winkleblack
Richard and Joyce Wolf
W. Paul Wolf
June H. Wolfe
Fred and Jackie Wooley
Don and Cheryl Wyckoff
Mrs. Ruby Yoder
David and Jane Young
Wayne and Mary Young
Nadine M. Zabierek

Photographs by Bob Frantz





William C. Bloch

At last year's ACRES Annual Meeting, there was a basket brimming with apples, so everyone who attended could take one home. Standing next to the apples, beaming when someone asked him what kind they were, was Bill Bloch.

A lifetime of kind gestures and dedication to a wide variety of interests was Bill Bloch's trademark. Serving six years in the Signal Corps of the Army, Bill reached the rank of Colonel and, while in the military, had the good fortune to meet Ethyle. They moved to Fort Wayne when Bill accepted a position with General Electric and northeast Indiana is the better for their presence.

Founders of ACRES in 1960, Bill and Ethyle have given decades of service to the environmental cause, dedicated to ACRES, Izaak Walton League, water and drainage issues, and fighting the good fight through editorials to the Fort Wayne newspapers. Bill devoted an amazing 45 years to the Waynedale Lion's Club, serving as President. "Bill was really primarily responsible for the creation of the Allen County Park Board," said Tom Dustin, Environmentalist and ACRES Founder, "by carrying the petition to the public, mainly through his contacts with the Lion's Club."

"I always thought of Bill Bloch as a conservationist's conservationist," said Jean Ross, Chairman of the State IWL's Environmental Education Committee. "He was the epitome - he not only talked the talk, he followed through." From convincing five hesitant siblings to protect their 600-acre family farm in Wisconsin (now the *Bloch Oxbow Preserve* on the Peshtigo River) to researching and purchasing a hybrid car, "Bill was an individual who didn't have to wait for someone else," said Jean.

"I will miss Bill," said ACRES Director Art Eberhardt, "especially seeing him at the ACRES Annual Meeting ready to strike up a conversation about nature and the environment. He was, best of all, a good friend."

In Memoriam

William C. Bloch

Stanley and Edna Antalics
Robert and Kathryn Baerent
James M. and Patricia D. Barrett
William F. and Margaret S. Briney
Charlotte Ann Brooker, Chairman of the
Executive Board

Izaak Walton League of America
Alan and Susan Diefenbach
Frank and Vera Dulin
Tom and Jane Dustin
John and Marcella Ellenwood
Larry and Judith Esterline
Fred and Mary Ann Feitler
W. Glenn Fogwell
Frank and Dorothy Frary
Pam Garrison
Lorraine Goldenberg
Mitch V. Harper
Theodore and Patricia Heemstra
Margery Hughes
The Lerner family -

Ed, Ruthie, Jenn and Jeremy
Mary E. Loeschener
Kathryn M. Mayland
Terrence and Elizabeth McCloskey
Patricia A. McNagny
M. L. Miller
Kathryn L. Moore
Richard and Joyce Pacer
Herbert and Charlotte Read
Philip and Jean Ross
Mary Roth
Howard and Mary Schneider
Samuel R. Schwartz
Michael L. Shaver
Kenneth and Susan Till
David and Faith Van Gilder
Gordon E. Walter
Robert and Janet Weber
Frederic and Prudence Widlak
Brian, Sally, & Jeff Witwer,

Amy Clements, Nita Gelow
Louis and Patricia Wuellner
Ronald L. Zartmam
Indiana Division, Izaak Walton League
for the *Edna W. Spurgeon
Woodland Reserve*

Linda Davis

from Rollyn and Julie Coverdale
Alan and Ellen Franken
Sam Hyde
Don B. Lieberum
David and Joan Myers
Charles and Pamela Waltemath
for *Cedar Creek Heron Rookery*

Arthur Hammer

from Carl and Ruth Deimling
Fred J. Wooley
for *Art Hammer Wetlands
Nature Preserve*

Evelyn Hedrick

from Collette M. Beeler
for the *ACRES Land Acquisition
and Management Fund*

Sheldon Hine

from Tom and Jane Dustin
for the *Edna W. Spurgeon
Woodland Reserve*

Else Matott

from Alan and Ellen Franken
Shirley A. Marsh
Debby Meade
for the *Edna W. Spurgeon
Woodland Reserve*

Lawrence F. Rue, Jr.

Doctors and Staff of St. Joe
Center Veterinary Hospital
Friends at Superior Essex
Maryann Cannaday
Harold and Margaret Persing
Larry and Patricia Pichon
Carolyn J. Reasoner
Edward and Lisa Shirey
for *Wing Haven*

Dr. Philip Smith

from Joy Hunter
for the *new Tippecanoe River Project*

In honor of ancestors

Monica Wehrle
for the *ACRES Acquisition
and Management Fund*

FLORENCE BADGER

A Gift of Thirty-Six Acres

By Carolyn McNagny,
Executive Director, ACRES Land Trust

ACRES has received a very generous gift of land from Florence Badger. The land was gifted in her will and we were completely surprised when her attorney called us. But Florence's many friends at General Electric were aware that she wanted to keep the 36-acres from being developed. Art Seddon, the head of the Advanced Engineering Department where Florence worked, said she was "trying to preserve the farming culture that she grew out of," by protecting a portion of her family's farm.



The Badger family settled, near the small homestead of Swan, Noble County, in the 1840s. Building a one-room house, the family cleared the land and became prosperous farmers. In the 1800s, the old Lima Road was laboriously built across the Badger farm - called a corduroy road because of the very bumpy ride the hand-hewn wooden planks created for horse and buggy traffic. Florence had planks of the corduroy road in her basement.

As Florence watched the land around her family farm develop, with houses being built on all of the surrounding roads, she "did not want people to get a dollar value for land that had meant so much to her and her family," according to Art.

Florence was the first woman to graduate with a degree in Mathematics from Manchester College. Art said Florence was a "very talented computer programmer...talent that was unbelievable." Working on a mainframe computer that filled an entire room, Florence set about designing new lines of motors for General Electric. "If she had been born 30 years later", said Art, "she would have been at the forefront of the computer programming industry."

Betty Rose, who worked side by side with Florence, said she volunteered at Parkview Hospital and kept a yard filled with flowers and bird feeders. Florence was a "lovely lady," very interested in people and nature.



Thank You Florence!



Turkeys look prehistoric because they **are** prehistoric!

...I figured that out the day I met some of these weird looking birds eye-to-eye. I was walking down the lane, by my house, minding my own business, when I got the eerie feeling I was being looked at. Out of the corner of my eye... in the tall grass to my left... there was a swift movement. My heart beat a little faster, because I didn't know what it was. I'm five feet tall and these shapes were about five feet tall, and I didn't know what they were! They had blue heads and they weren't deer. And on top of these long blue necks - stretched and wrinkly - were really pointy red heads. I walked faster and they kept pace, crashing through dead leaves and rustling grass. Now I've seen Jurassic Park, and I know what happens when dinosaurs stalk you, and I was being stalked. When they ran out into a clearing I was relieved to see that they were just turkeys.

Just turkeys? These aren't just turkeys! They are prehistoric beasts that look like half-bird and half-lizard, and what's up with that red thing hanging down from their chins? Yes sir... six turkeys, in the Vandolah Preserve, right where I live, in the year 2002, not some time back in the Tertiary Period.

Wild turkeys have been successfully reintroduced in Indiana. Overhunting had eliminated most of the turkey population in the midwest in the 1900s. They are coming back, due to the fact they can live in fairly close proximity to people. Currently, wild turkeys can be found in 70 Indiana counties, and eight counties where ACRES preserves are located. And by the way, the first known turkeys did originate in Central America 10-15 million years ago, which makes them authentically, bona fide, prehistoric. And... I guess if I was that old, I might look a little wrinkly too!

Wild Turkey by Gary Meszaros

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 the Winter issue is **December 1**. For information on ACRES call 260-422-1004. www.acres-land-trust.org

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Fort Wayne, IN

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