

THE ACRES

QUARTERLY

PRESERVING NATURAL AREAS



2003 Land Acquisition
Time to Rejoin!
New Members & Tributes
ACRES' Mission
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Never Bites
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Volume 42 - No. 2



LAND ACQUISITION

G. Richard and Mary H. Culp Nature Preserve, LaGrange County: Dr. Richard Culp donated his prize woods - 20 acres southwest of Shipshewana - for \$300 per acre. He decided he would ask ACRES to compensate him for what he paid in 1976 and no more. Considering the 20 acres was appraised at more than \$130,000 in December 2002, this is an amazingly generous gift. It also gives those of us on a budget the chance to buy land as it was priced in the 1976. You can have the joy of buying an acre

for \$300 or a half an acre for \$150! We will send a photograph of your acre for your gift of \$300 or more!

29-Acre Buffer for Pokagon State Park, Steuben County: In a project initiated by Fred Wooley, Interpreter at Pokagon State Park, ACRES and the Department of Natural Resources' Division of State Parks and Reservoirs have entered into a partnership to purchase 29 acres at Pokagon State Park's entrance. The land is an important buffer to the park and as a valuable natural area in its own right.

On the north edge of the 29 acres is a surprisingly steep ravine and there are walls of massive square-cut stone, built by the CCC, in two smaller ravines. The goal is to tear down the 1955 12-unit Pokagon Motel and plant the entire area into trees. Considering the area was slated to become a

strip mall, water theme park, and a housing development, this land has had a run of good fortune. We need to raise \$625,000. Anything you can do to help will be appreciated.

58-Acre Addition to Acres Along the Wabash, Wells County: We have raised \$127,00 toward the addition. We still need \$9,200 to expand this outstanding preserve. Our business is protecting land. We hope you will make this a successful year!

Carolyn McNagny
Executive Director - ACRES Land Trust

It's Time to Renew Your ACRES Membership!

Never doubt that you are making a BIG difference by being an ACRES member. Your membership sends a message that there are people who support and believe in ACRES' mission. ACRES has slowly grown to 975 members and we are trying to break the 1,000 mark this year. Please renew! There is a remittance envelope enclosed for your convenience.

Mary Anna Feitler, ACRES Membership Secretary

Cover Image: Red color phase of the Nodding Trillium by Ron Everhart at the James M. and Patricia D. Barrett Oak Hill Nature Preserve.



Marsh Wren Nature Preserve by Ron Everhart

Indiana Wetlands Legislation...

Indiana's wetlands are in jeopardy and every Hoosier has a voice in deciding how or if we protect these rapidly disappearing areas. Wetlands are important to a wide variety of wildlife. For example, wetlands provide habitat for more than a third of Indiana's endangered species, including Blanding's turtle, the short-eared owl and copperbelly water snakes.

Be Aware: State legislation is ongoing that will affect Indiana's wetlands. In 2001, a U.S. Supreme Court decision revoked the authority of the federal government to protect wetlands that are isolated, i.e. not associated with rivers and lakes. Since this ruling, in some states, unprotected wetlands have already been destroyed. In other states, protective legislation has already been enacted. By the end of April, your legislators will be deciding whether to add protective legislation to the state's law books.

Now it is Indiana's turn to act. A letter or phone call for wetland protection is a powerful tool. If you wish to keep current on this issue, here are websites and phone numbers:

Indiana Wetlands Web site at www.wetlands.in.gov
Bill Progress: www.in.gov/serv/lsa-billinfo
1-800-451-6027 Ext. 2-8596
U.S. Gov www.epa.gov/owdw/wetlands

Elizabeth Snyder
has baby redbud trees for you to dig up and take home!

Call (260) 432-4408

Redbud leaf and blossom from *Trees of Indiana* illustrated by Mary Rose Wampler



Peggy and Joel Alberda
in celebration of their 25th Wedding Anniversary from Jeff and Sue Britton

James M. and Patricia D. Barrett
in celebration of their 50th Wedding Anniversary from Patricia A. McNagny

Jeff and Sue Britton
In celebration of our 25th Wedding Anniversary

welcome
new members

James H. Barnes
Gift of Helen B. Barnes, M.D.
Paul Beckwith
Karen Buuck
Judy Dusman
Gift of Julia E. Hurley
Doug and Jane Gill
Cheryl Larson
Gift of Julia E. Hurley
Kerry D. McFall
Andy and Clarissa Mellang
Robert Schultz
M. Carol Stidd
Lynn K. Sroufe
Geni Thomas
Gift of Julia E. Hurley



ACRES' MISSION

Dedicated to preserving areas in northeast Indiana, ACRES manages and protects 47 nature preserves in 13 counties.

2000 North Wells Street
Fort Wayne, IN 46808 -2474
260-422-1004
email: acreslt@fwi.com
Web site: www.acres-land-trust.org

Good News!

IDNR Division of Fish and Wildlife's Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Program Update on Restoration Projects

By Carolyn McNagny

In past ACRES Quarterlies, we had highlighted information about the river otter and bobcats - two projects of the IDNR Division of Fish and Wildlife's Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Program. A new project for 2003 is enhancing the osprey populations in Indiana.

BOBCATS *Felis rufus*:

In April, bobcats have their young, on average three blue-eyed kittens. The females hunt for mice, rats, rabbits, and squirrels, with an occasional skunk or snake, to feed the kittens. Denning in remote, well-forested or swampy areas, the bobcat family will move several times as the kittens grow. Where is the father? Bobcats are generally solitary animals and the mating season is the only time of year when the males and females see each other.

Secretive, hunting and moving during the early morning and late evening hours, bobcats and people seldom cross paths. Their eerie screams during the night, which sound like a woman in distress, are the only hair-raising clue most people have that bobcats are in an area. Persecuted by farmers in the past, bobcats are actually a beneficial predator, since they can make a substantial dent in mice and rat populations.

Bobcats have been listed as a state endangered species since 1969, but evidence indicates that Indiana's bobcat population has increased markedly in the last ten years. There have been 51 confirmed reports of bobcats from 24 Indiana counties since 1970. Forty-one reports (80 percent) have occurred in the last seven years. The two bobcats that have been found in Steuben County, both sadly roadkills, were near ACRES' Ropchan Memorial Nature Preserve. In 1993 and then in April 2003, Fred Wooley said bobcats were found on SR 120 just west of 700 W, where Ropchan Memorial is located.

To better track their distribution and abundance, the Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Program began a study in December 1998. Bobcats are trapped, radio-collared and then tracked to determine habitat use and reproduction. Data will be used to create management guidelines.

OSPREYS *Pandion haliaetus*:

In 2003, the IDNR Division of Nongame will be working on restoring ospreys to a few of their original nesting sites in Indiana. Sites selected for releases are Patoka Lake, Minnehaha Fish and Wildlife Area, Tri-County Fish and Wildlife Area (Kosciusko County), and Jasper-Pulaski Fish and Wildlife Area. Eight 6-week old chicks, obtained from nests in the Chesapeake Bay area, are to be released at the sites.

The IDNR Crooked Lake Nature Preserve/ACRES Ralph F. Gates Nature Preserve were home to an osprey for several springs. In March and April, the singular osprey could be seen hovering over the shallows along the nature preserve's edge watching for fish. As our only raptor that plunges into the water, with a stylish "feet first" tactic, ospreys are also known as the fish hawk. Once capturing the fish, the osprey flaps mightily to gain altitude, shaking the water from its feathers and adroitly maneuvering the fish so that it is always "face first" in its talons.

With its aquatic method of catching prey, the osprey has made adaptations that set it apart from the terrestrial hawks. Its feathers are slightly oily, to help water roll off, and its legs are scaled, not feathered.



The pads of its toes are covered with small spikes, called spicules, the better to hold on to fish. In a talented piece of evolution, the osprey's outer toe is reversible and can be either at the front of the foot to land on a nest (3 toes forward and 1 toe back) or at the back of the foot to better carry fish (a 2 toe forward, 2 toe back formation). The osprey is one of the most widely distributed birds in the world, found on every continent except Antarctica. The population declined rapidly from 1950-1970, due to DDT, loss of breeding grounds and poaching. The banning of DDT and local conservation groups setting up artificial nesting platforms helped the osprey populations regain their footing.

Osprey populations have been slowly growing in the Midwest, but nests are widely scattered and restorations can greatly enhance local and regional populations. It is hoped that the chicks placed at the Tri-County Fish and Wildlife Area in Kosciusko County will multiply and establish other nesting sites in our area.

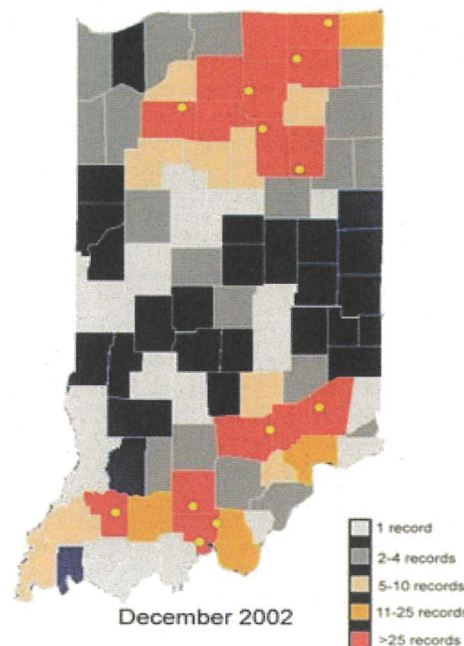
NORTHERN RIVER OTTERS *Lutra canadensis*:

This playful and inquisitive animal was gone from Indiana for over 50 years. Once common in all the river systems in the state, unregulated trapping and loss of habitat resulted in widespread population declines. By 1942, it is believed that all breeding populations had disappeared. From 1995 to 1999, 303 otters were released at 12 sites in Indiana. Encouraging news is that River Otters are becoming established throughout the state. The otters are secretive animals and it has been difficult to track their populations in years without snow.

But people who are either lucky or wood-wise are aware of their presence in Noble County. Mike Shellman, a neighbor to the Lloyd W. Bender Preserve, said he saw signs of River Otters along the Elkhart River from November to January. Tom Sims, who has a cottage next to the Art Hammer Wetland Preserve, woke early one morning to see an otter on his dock.



Post-Release Records of River Otters in Indiana



There has been little encouraging environmental news in the last few years, but the work of the Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Program to bring back these three species and many others is a bright spot. May you have the unexpected joy of seeing an osprey, river otter, or bobcat in your lifetime!

The Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Program protects and manages over 550 animal species in Indiana. You can support these efforts by donating to the Endangered Wildlife Fund on the Indiana State Income Tax Form (next year) or through a direct donation.

Indiana Endangered Wildlife Fund
402 W. Washington, Rm. W273
Indianapolis, IN 46204
www.in.gov.dnr.fishwild/endangered

Congratulations to the Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Program of the IDNR Division of Fish and Wildlife!

All photographs courtesy of IDNR Division of Fish and Wildlife's Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Program

WILDFLOWER WORKSHOPS



Presented by Joanne Michael, self-trained botanist with a Biology degree and Masters in Environmental Science.

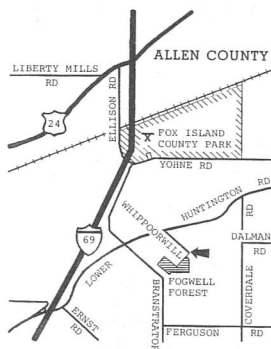
If you have ever wanted to learn about wildflowers in depth, these hikes are for you! Joanne will concentrate on 10 species per hike, with discussion of the plant's history and taxonomy. Important: Pre-registration is required and hikes will be limited to 12 people.

Large-flowered trilliums by Ron Everhart at Fogwell

WORKSHOP No.1 - FOGWELL FOREST NATURE PRESERVE

Saturday, April 26th

Wildflowers include: Large-flowering trillium, blue phlox, bloodroot, spring beauty, cut-leaf toothwort, buttercups, spring cress, trout lily, marsh marigold and mayapple. **When:** 9:00 a.m. **Where:** Fogwell Forest Nature Preserve, Allen County. Take Lower Huntington Road between Brandstrator and Coverdale Drives. Turn south on Whippoorwill Drive and Preserve located at end of Drive. **Bring:** Waterproof hiking boots - Fogwell Forest can be wet!



WORKSHOP No.2 - EDNA W. SPURGEON WOODLAND RESERVE

Saturday, May 3rd

Wildflowers include: Celadine poppy, blue-eyed marys, Dutchman's breeches, squirrel corn,

Prairie Trillium, wild geranium, wild columbine, rue anemone, Bishop's cap, and pussy's toes. **When:** 9:00 a.m. **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 N and 1000 N on 600 W.

BENEFIT CONCERT FOR POKAGON STATE PARK ADDITION

Sunday, April 27th.

Presented by: David Rezits and members of the Fort Wayne Philharmonic

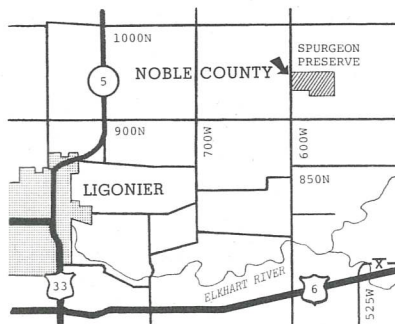
Donation: \$10.00 to benefit

the Pokagon State Park acquisition project. Enjoy a wonderful quartet of cello, two violins, and viola playing a selection of light classics, ragtime, and Broadway musicals. Fred Wooley will show slides of Pokagon State Park during the first musical number. All donations will help to acquire the 29-acre addition to Pokagon State Park - have a relaxing afternoon listening to outstanding music while helping nature! **When:** 2:00 p.m. **Where:** Pokagon State Park, Steuben County. Take I-69 to Pokagon State Park Exit (Exit 154) and follow signs to park. Potawatami Inn, Lake James Room **Contact:** ACRES Office at 260-422-1004 or Fred Wooley, Pokagon State Park, at 260-833-2012.

NORMA WIESNER MEMORIAL AT BEECHWOOD NATURE PRESERVE



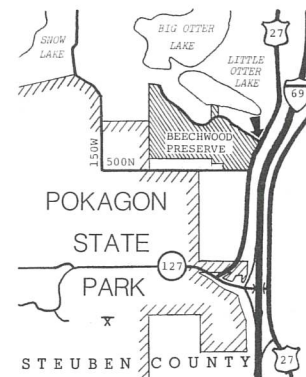
White trout lily by Ron Everhart



Blue Hepatica by Tim Dygert

Sunday, May 4th - (Program at Beechwood instead of Wing Haven.)

Presented by: Ralph Thiele, friend of Norma Wiesner and ACRES
ACRES Members Garnett and Mildred Foster donated the Beechwood Preserve to ACRES in 1964. A close friend of the sisters was Norma Wiesner, who made all the original Beechwood signs by hand. Norma thought the protection of Little Otter Lake was so important. She was instrumental in convincing the Foster sisters to donate Lot 13 on Little Otter lake to ACRES. ACRES and the Little Otter Lakes Property Owners Association are having a tree-planting to honor Norma Wiesner. **When:** 2:00 p.m. program starts, 2:30 ceremony. **Where:** Beechwood Nature Preserve, Steuben County. Take I-69 north to the Pokagon State Park Exit (Exit 154). Go under I-69 as if you are going to Pokagon State Park and then turn north onto SR 27. Beechwood is located on the west side of SR 27. **Contact:** ACRES Office at 260-422-1004.



NEW PRESERVE CELEBRATION!

at the 20-acre G. Richard and Mary H. Culp Nature Preserve
Saturday, May 10th.

A gift from Dr. G. Richard and Mary H. Culp in December 2002, this preserve is nestled in the heart of the Amish countryside. The new preserve is a gem. Sugar maples shade a beautiful Indiana woodland. We will see Putty root orchids, heart's a bustin', and colorful wildflowers on a one mile hike. **When:** 10:00 a.m. **Where:** G. Richard and Mary H. Culp Nature Preserve, LaGrange County. **Important:** Because of lack of



Marsh marigolds by Ron Everhart

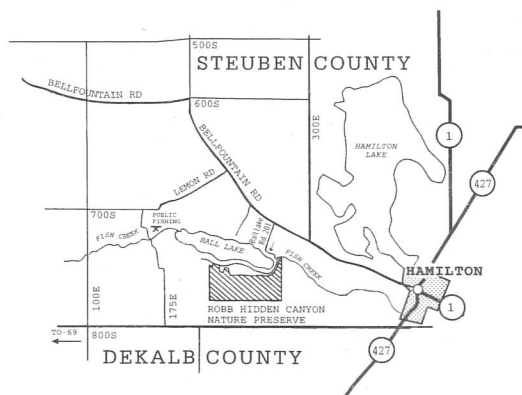
parking at the preserve, we will be parking at the corner of SR 20 and 900 W. Travel south of Shipshewana to the intersection of SR 5 and SR 20. Then take SR 20 west 2 miles and park at the corner of SR 20 and 900 W. A horse and buggy will take you to the preserve entrance. **Contact:** ACRES Office at 260-422-1004.

ROBB HIDDEN CANYON NATURE PRESERVE

Sunday, May 11th

Presented by: Mrs. Phyllis Robb, Donor of the Preserve with her husband, Dr. Robert Robb

A combination of towering beech trees and a spectacular wildflower display makes for a fun nature hike! Phyllis and her family recognized the high quality of this beautiful 65-acre property before it became a nature preserve. The trail system at this preserve is now complete, thanks to Eagle Scouts Steve Fox, Mike Scott and Kyle Cyr (Troop 354) and Kevin Rothgeb (Troop 27). **When:** 2:00 p.m. **Where:** Robb Hidden Canyon Nature Preserve, Steuben County. Take SR 1 to Hamilton and then northwest on Bellefontaine Road to Ball Lake Road 201. Follow Ball Lake Road 201 to the east side of Ball Lake. **Contact:** ACRES Office at 260-422-1004.



Buckeye tree and blossom by Ron Everhart



OPEN HOUSE AT THE EMMANUEL

FieldTrips & Special Events

M. POPP NATURE PRESERVE

Sunday, May 18th

Presented by: Larry Biggerstaff, Caretaker and Steward.

Larry's hot dog roast with the trimmings was so popular last year, we are having an encore! **When:** 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Stop by anytime! **Where:** Emanuel M. Popp Nature Preserve, Allen County. Take Dupont Road east of I-69. Go north 1/2 miles on Tonkel Road and preserve is on west side of Tonkel at 12129. Preserve is normally open to the public by permission only.

MARYLANDS FARM - CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

Saturday, May 31st - Rescheduled due to freezing temperatures in March.

Alison Adams and Ron Clifford invite you to their historic 10-acre farm to help feed the animals. With everyone from pigs to horses, sheep, peacocks, turkeys, pheasants, geese, ducks, chickens, and rabbits - there are plenty to feed! Alison and Ron are building a "living fence", which is common in England, and will show you how to create one on your land. **When:** 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. **Where:** Take Lincoln Highway east into New Haven. Turn left onto Hartzell Road. Hartzell Road T's into Rose Avenue. Turn right onto Rose Avenue and Marylands Farm is at 549 Rose Avenue on the north side of Rose Avenue. Contact: ACRES Office at 260-422-1004.



YO YO PA Sunday, June 1st

Presented by: Steve Black and Yo Yo Pa

One-hour concert will be on the lawn at Wing Haven if the weather cooperates. Wing Haven is the perfect setting for Yo Yo Pa's blend of folk and blues. Listen to their guitars, cello and small percussion music and celebrate the first day of June! YoYo Pa CD for sale! Follow up to the hugely successful first CD that just turned "tin" (over a 100 copies given away!) after only three years. **When:** 2:00 p.m. **Where:** Wing Haven, 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 north side of 400 N in one mile.

"The Sunflower Family in the Upper Midwest"

Sunday, June 8th

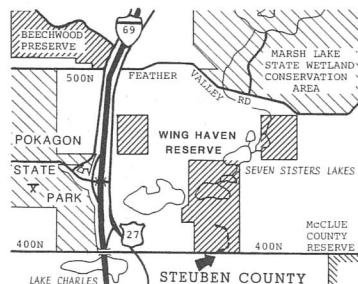
Presented by: Thomas M. Antonio, Curator of Collections for the Chicago Park District's Garfield Park and Lincoln Park Conservatories.

"Worldwide in distribution, members of the Sunflower family, or Asteraceae, are familiar plants in prairies, woodlands, fields, roadsides, and gardens. From the well-known Asters, Goldenrods and Sunflowers to Blazing Stars, Thistles, and Dandelions, plants in this family are prominent in the midwestern landscape." Come out for a 1-hour program on the Sunflower Family and meet Dr. Antonio! **When:** 2:00 p.m. **Where:** Wing Haven, 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 north side of 400 N in one mile. **Dr. Antonio will be signing his book, "The Sunflower Family in the Upper Midwest".**

Downy sunflower from the book, *Family in the Upper Midwest*



No Program at Wing Haven on July 6th



The Bark That Never Bites

By Steve Ross

In the spirit of our recent tree hikes and also, of the leafless season which we have endured for some time now, let us focus on the bark that never bites, that is, tree identification by the bark. For those of you who were not able to attend one of the tree hikes, here are three examples.

One of the easiest trees to identify using bark features is **Black Walnut (*Juglans nigra*)**. It has what I would term "ridge and valley" bark. Think of a cross section of a *Juglans nigra* from about 3 feet off the ground. If you observe closely the outer bark, you will see that it has high points (ridges) alternating with low point (valleys), not unlike dissected topography, yet on a different scale. Before you say, "what's so distinctive about that" think of the very smooth and non-ridge and valley cross-section of an American Beech (*Fagus grandifolia*). Back to *Juglans nigra*. The ridge-valley cross section can be mistaken for, say, white ash (*Fraxinus americana*) but, lo and behold, we have another clue at our disposal to avoid such an error. If you were to scrape, with a small pocketknife, the peak of one of those ridges, you would notice a distinctive chocolate brown color that is unique among Indiana hardwoods to *Juglans nigra*. So it is simple to see that, for at least one tree you will encounter, identification by means of bark characteristics is pretty simple.

Our second example is **muscle wood (*Carpinus caroliniana*)**. It is also known as blue beech because it has smooth bark much like American beech. However, *Carpinus caroliniana* is unlike American beech (and *Juglans nigra*) in that it is never an overstory tree and has a fluted (or sinewy) shape in cross section. If you have a medical text (or a sharp knife and the ability to withstand blinding pain) you can see that the cross section of the muscles on a human limb, when stripped of their skin, are fluted or sinewy. So, if you have a small tree with bluish-gray bark that is smooth and fluted, you probably have *Carpinus caroliniana*!

Our final example for this time is **American elm (*Ulmus americana*)**. It has neither ridge and valley bark nor smooth bark. *Ulmus americana* has what I would term platy bark. It has thin plates broken most prominently by vertical cracks. These plates are also quite spongy and, in cross section, have alternating red and white stripes (like the American flag - American elm!). Pretty distinctive!

So, if pure stands of *Juglans nigra*, *Carpinus caroliniana* and *Ulmus americana* were to be commonly (or ever) found, it would be an exceedingly simple matter to master tree identification. O.K. That's not gonna happen, but if you simply learn to identify these 3 species using these categories of clues you will be ahead of the masses. If you desire further distinction you can enlist the help of various texts or knowledgeable individuals to extrapolate this method over a wider variety of species.

I hope that these simple clues have been helpful as well as inspirational to you. Go to your nearest forest and apply them today. Don't forget the wildflowers!



Black Walnut Bark and Leaf



American Elm Bark and Leaf

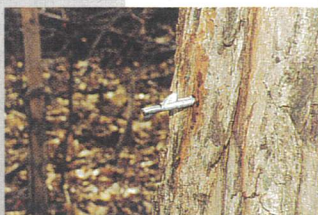


Hornbeam Bark and Leaf

Maple Sugaring Program at Yoder's Sugar bush

By Jeff Britton, ACRES Board Member

It's Saturday morning. I drove up the gravel lane to Yoder's Sugar bush just ahead of three bus loads of kids from Franke Park school. You could feel the energy crackling when the kids got out and were assembled into groups. This is one field trip that started with a real field! Between the parking area and the sugar bush camp is a farm lane that must be almost a quarter mile through a field. "Field" trip get it?



Yoder's Sugar bush maple sugar camp has been in operation since the 1920's. These days, the main purpose is educational with hundreds of kids visiting each spring. In the days of simulation and virtual everything, the Sugar bush represents an authentic experience.

If you would like to visit Yoder's Sugar bush next spring, call Merry Lea at 260-799-5869.

The "Spile" only goes into the first layer of the tree where the sap runs. The collection bucket hangs on this as it fills.



Chopped wood - used in the fire that cooks the maple trees sap.



Franke Park Student helps collect maple tree sap.

"Sugar Bush" Larry Yoder says "Carrying 40 gals of sap for only one gal of syrup is a lot of work for an old guy like me! So you're going to help!"



Dr. Larry Yoder

"Pull... pull... never push... cutting wood for sugar bush."



The old fashioned way to boil down sap.

MEMORIALS

Susan White Cooper
from Fred and Mary Anna Feitler
for the ACRES Land Acquisition and Management Fund

Wava Davis
from Steve and Debbie Sarrazine
for the Edna W. Spurgeon Woodland Reserve

Issac Essex Sr.
from James and Gwen Seely
for the Evelyn and Wendell Dygert Nature Preserve

Eleanor Hummel
from William and Cecilia Weakley
for the Evelyn and Wendell Dygert Nature Preserve

Paul Moore
from Steve and Debbie Sarrazine
for the Edna W. Spurgeon Woodland Reserve

John M. Smith
from Joyce W. Gottschalk
Joyce Gray
Kathryn Moore
for the Cedar Creek Heron Rookery

Ed Wick
from Dale and Judy Zinn
for the Wing Haven Nature Preserve

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from Benjamin F. Arnold III
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Gregg and Deb Frisinger
Brian and Sheila Gillett
Steve and Janelle Graber
Joe and Nancy Harber
George and Susanne Hiatt
Ned and Glenna Hirschev
Fred and Pam Jordan
Timothy R. Kearney
Shirley Meighen
Kay Nannet and the EEWC Indy 8
Gene and Kathy Price
Otis and Brenda Ratliff
Phil and Barb Rentschler
Mike and Kathy Schnurr
Rick and Tracy Shaffer
Sandra R. Schmidt
Larry and Marianne Vandenberg
Sarah Vetter and Lynn Berry
Larry and Kathy Yarrington
Ruby Yoder
for the Cedar Creek Heron Rookery

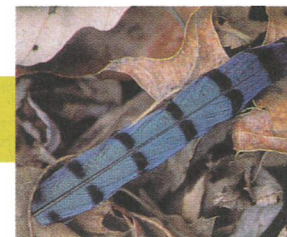
Thanks Endowment Supporters!

Steuben County Community Foundation Wing Haven Endowment Fund

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Richard J. McNett
John and Lavonne Miller
Darlene L. Stucky
Kevin Truelove
David and Faith Van Gilder
Allen W. Wetter



Blue jay feather by Paul McAfee



Photographs of bird-banding workshops (left to right) Peg Zeis, Barbara Baus and Gary Baus at Wing Haven last September by Ethel McClelland

Good things are happening all around us! Here are just a few: ACRES has preserved 350 more acres in this past year, new lands are available to protect like the Pokagon land adjacent to the state park (see page 2), endangered populations of otters, ospreys & bobcats are increasing (see page 4), and spring is here with all the gorgeous wildflowers (see hikes on page 6-8). Just a few things we can take heart in!

It's really amazing to me what a few people can do when they get organized. So let's keep it going! If we give just a little of ourselves, regularly, there is nothing we can't do. There are so many benefits, not the least of which is that you feel great about it!

Free things you can do that could make a big difference:

- Thank a teacher or someone you know who has invested their time in teaching or volunteering for the greater benefit of yourself or your children, like Larry Yoder (see page 10).

- Give your ACRES Quarterly to someone else to enjoy when you are through reading it.
- Let your government know that the environment is important to you. (see page 2).
- Take someone you love on a wildflower hike (see page 6).
- Drag some kids you know, away from their TVs and get them into the great outdoors! They'll thank you for it.
- Volunteer to help at a local land management group like ACRES. (i.e.) Eagle scouts often will take on a project to improve one of the ACRES' preserves.

Call ACRES for more information. 422-1004.

Financial help that costs less than .10 a day and could double as a tax deduction at year-end!

- Buy an environmental license plate. Environmental License Plates: Your donation of \$25 will go directly to land acquisition projects all over the state. You can help buy a prairie near the Illinois line, a fen near Lake Michigan, protect a lakeshore in the northeast or an old-growth woods along the Wabash River. Most importantly, your buying an environmental license plate sends a message to our state legislators that you support the protection of natural areas. Never underestimate the value of your license plate! In the last ten years, the Environmental License Plate program has helped to protect more than 31,700 acres at a cost of over \$53 million dollars.
- Donate to new land acquisition projects by ACRES (see page 2) Do something that lasts forever. Wow. Think about that!
- Buy a friend an ACRES subscription or give a Tribute to honor someone special (see page 3).

Put a couple of these items on your to-do list this week and you'll sleep better at night, knowing that YOU contributed, yes...you... made the world a better place!

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 Summer issue is June 1. For information on ACRES call 260-422-1004. www.acres-land-trust.org

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Dedicated to preserving natural areas in northeast Indiana.