

THE ACRES QUARTERLY

Spring 2012 | Vol. 51 - No. 2



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ACRES
LANDTRUST

Letter from the Executive Director

ACRES relies heavily on photographs. We use them to document the conditions of properties, record plant species, and depict the beauty of the nature preserves. Photographs are invaluable ambassadors for ACRES. The photographs in this and every issue of the Quarterly are sent to us by volunteer photographers. For this we are very grateful.

However, as much as I love your photographs, I ask that you intentionally leave your camera in your vehicle during your next preserve visit. Here's why—often when we encounter a stunning plant / animal / scene, we immediately want to capture it so we can share it. Then we spend time framing the shot, thinking about who to send the picture to, posting it on Facebook, etc. While this is great and shares ACRES with others, sometimes we forget to fully appreciate the moment ourselves. The experience is best viewed through our eyes, not our viewfinders. Let savoring the moment—solely for yourself and those with you—be enough.

Effective as they are, photographs cannot depict a natural scene as well as you can if you pay attention to your senses and absorb the moment. Without a camera, you become the only storage device for the scene you want to capture and share. And unlike a camera, you are not limited to storing just the visual element of the scene. Your description can include vivid accounts of temperature, wind, emotions, physical traits (by the time I reached the top of the hill, my calves were burning), the feel of the object, descriptions of the scents present, etc.

Expand your descriptive skills and vocabulary by not relying on mere pictures to share your preserve experiences. If that takes leaving your camera in the car, then by all means do it. Without the crutch of the camera, your artistry in describing a scene may just surprise you! Instead of “look at this picture I took,” share your experience with others through a story, a painting, a poem, a song, or a descriptive account of your experience.

Happy Hiking,



Jason Kissel

P.S. To share your preserve experiences, post on our “Observations from the Field” page on www.acreslandtrust.org. Consider joining us on May 19th to refine your nature writing skills—see page 13 for details.



Wildflower Illustration
by Mary Gustafson

WELCOME

42newmembers!

Russ Amaden
Jason and Denise Anderson
Gary Bergel
Cheri Buker
Ann Butterfield
Emma Coville
Barry and Arlene Deardorff
Raymond and Jill Debolt
gift of Tammy and Jody Swaidner
Justin and Melinda Eutsler
gift of Donald Richey
Pat Evans
Christopher Ford
William and Judith Goodwin
Adam Grimme
Kandice Grimme
Tom Herr and Claire Ewart
gift of Helen Frost Thompson
Alyce Hughes
Brandon Juergens
Mary Knopp
Todd Lamle
Shanna Lloyd
gift of Richard Matzat
Pamela Louks
Travis McEowen
Suzon Motz
David and Carolyn Pillar
Deb Polley
gift of Ann Marlin
John Powell
James and Paula Pritchard
Joe and Kris Rajchel

Jennifer Reichenbach
Anna Richey
gift of Donald Richey
Dameon and Courtney Rinehold
Renee Sinacola
Jens Sorensen
Robert Suedhoff
Jed and Mari Swaidner
gift of Tammy and Jody Swaidner
Larry Walter
Greg Williams
gift of Tina Williams
Karen Winkleblack
Kyla Zehr

new life members

Tony and Gina McGuire
Leland & Sharon Shaum

new corporate members

Custom Creations Hardwood Floors, Ltd

acres' wish list

Bagel sized toaster
Fire proof file cabinet
Use of a bobcat or a rental donation
Chimney sweep poles and brushes for Wing Haven
Outdoor plastic storage shed for the office
Blue jeans to use for decorating
at the Blue Jean Gala



Still not a member?
Scan this QR code
with your smart phone
to join today!



Find us on Facebook

ACRES' MISSION

Dedicated to preserving natural areas since 1960, ACRES manages and protects 81 nature preserves totaling over 4,910 acres.

1802 Chapman Rd.
Huntertown, IN 46748-9723
260.637.ACRE (2273)
email: acres@acreslandtrust.org
acreslandtrust.org



tributes

Thomas Schmidt from Karen Ericson

memorials

Jennie Weber from Joni Weber

JE "Chuck" Fraley from Max and Janet Fraley

Ruby Yoder from Larry Yoder, Tom, Erika, Ruby and Henry Meyer, Jason, Laura, Simon and Landon Moshier, Michael, Shirley, Matthew and Michelle Meighen, Brian and Molly Bogs, Virginia Barker, Al and Sue Diefenbach, Anita Isch, Kitt and Karen Johnson, Fred and Pam Jordan, Chuck and Becky Morris, Gene and Jennifer Pelter, Dale and Jody Warner, Russ and Sue Wright, Wayne and Audra Wilcoxsin, Paul and Rebecca Yoder, Galen and Esther Zern, Juanita Warner, Don and Gretel Smith, Andrew and Geralyn Boyden, Fred and Mary Anna Feitler

Jim Reifenberg from Margaret Metzinger

Betty Seddon from Dan and Judy Kaufman, Rodger Rang, Women's Fellowship of St. John's Presbyterian Church, Dean and Helen Brown, Carol Shedd

Magdalene Hogg from Bill and Kathleen Fuller

Jim Barrett from Paul Shaffer, Monarch Capital Management, PNC Bank, Don and Gretel Smith, PNC Wealth Management - Gary Windmiller, Kevin Carey, Carol Screeton and friends

Joyce Tarr from James and Gwen Seely

John Walter from James and Gwen Seely

Marilyn Lewandowski from Cardinal Chapter of Indiana Audubon

Bob Frantz from Barry and Arlene Deardorff



Fox by Suzanne Rogers



Photo by Shane Perfect

ACRES' 80th Nature Preserve!

by Connie Haas Zuber and Jason Kissel

ACRES Land Trust welcomes its 80th nature preserve, the **D&J Eel River Nature Preserve** in an environmentally sensitive area southwest of Huntertown. In December 2011, longtime landowner Judy Schroff donated 21 acres knowing her husband, David Schroff, who died in 2009, would be as much at peace with the decision as she is.

"I guess it starts back in April 1967 when my husband and I bought the woods," she said. "We wanted to make sure it was never developed. We always wanted it to be so we could see the deer and the squirrels and the fox back there. We bought it because we loved it. We really enjoyed the woods."

After his death, she said, she remembered how he would have liked the woods to always be left the way it was. She knew about ACRES Land Trust back then, but she didn't do anything until she saw an article about our 50th anniversary celebration in the Sunday newspaper. At first she just cut out ACRES' phone number and put it on her bulletin board, but it only took a few weeks for her to actually call.

"It was the easiest thing I ever did," she said. "I am very, very much at peace with that. This is the right thing to do. I am so at peace, and I think my husband would be just fine with this, too."

She is happy that their names are on the property, so people long into the future can learn about them and the story behind the preserve. She has always loved watching the wildlife, but the changing colors of the different seasons in the trees delight her, too. And she marvels at the variety of bird songs she can hear—

(Continued on page 6)

and at her neighbor who can not only identify the species by their songs, but also imitate them.

"It's just very, very peaceful there. That land is one of the best things we ever bought."

The D&J Eel River Nature Preserve includes forest and wetlands and is within the headwaters of the Eel River in northwest Allen County. In addition to its scenic virtues and the role forests and wetlands play in cooling the land and cleaning the air, the land plays a crucial role in maintaining water quality.

This gift of land will now benefit nature and people forever. Judy hopes her example will inspire others to work with ACRES to preserve their land. ACRES success is due to just that—individuals caring about preserving land and doing what they can to further ACRES work. Thank you Judy—and thanks to everyone who supports ACRES, ensuring there is an organization to call when people like Judy want to preserve our area's natural lands.

The property is currently closed to the public as Judy retained life estate rights to the preserve.

Ethel Returns to Volunteer by Jason Kissel

Ethel McClelland began her involvement with ACRES 25 years ago after attending a work day at Ropchan Wildlife Refuge. She became one of ACRES most active volunteers after that event. Her volunteerism turned into employment when Carolyn McNagny, ACRES executive director at the time, hired Ethel in 2002 as a land management specialist.

Since then, Ethel has maintained the equivalent of tens of thousands of miles of trails, removed literally tons of invasive plants from the preserves, torn down buildings, led volunteers, worn out many pairs of boots, endured her fair share of stinging nettles, poison ivy, and mosquito bites, all while maintaining that great smile and "go get 'em" attitude. By doing all these things, she has impacted many lives and greatly furthered ACRES land preservation efforts.

Well maintained preserves result in new preserve being created—visitors gain an

appreciation for nature and join ACRES, potential land donors see demonstrated proof that we will properly manage their land if donated. ACRES obtaining a deed to a property is only the beginning of centuries of efforts that results in the preservation of the land. Ethel, and all those who have come before her and will come after her, create a chain of stewardship that is necessary for land preservation.

Ethel will retire as an employee of ACRES at the end of April, but don't worry, you'll still encounter her frequently on the trails, at ACRES events, and of course, anytime you visit Wildwood, where she will continue to serve as a caretaker.

Please join us on April 19th to celebrate Ethel's contributions to ACRES over the past 25 years. Details are on the events page.

NATURE'S CALENDAR

by Fred Wooley, Park Interpreter, Pokagon State Park

April 25

Visit an ACRES preserve with nice open woodlands and listen for the robust calls of returning male Baltimore orioles. Their flashes of bright orange and jet black as they pop from one high limb to another is a great reminder that the migration is well underway. They and other northern summer residents return from their winter homes in the sunny tropics. Orioles, rose-breasted grosbeaks, and hummingbirds are all splashes of color that shout out greetings from the deep south as they return to our ACRES preserves to nest and raise families. You will get these in your backyard too! Sugar water and grape jelly are hard for them to resist!



Baltimore Oriole by Donna Bumgardner

May 6

This month's full moon comes at a perfect time, before mosquitoes emerge. Pick the closest ACRES preserve or just get outside at sunset—if possible, in a natural area offering a distant view of the east horizon. Experience the rising full moon at the end of a mid-spring day. Algonquin people referred to the May full moon as the "flower moon." Enjoy the blooms around you: spring wildflowers on the woodland floor, redbuds and dogwoods at head height. The fresh smell of new blooms and springtime earth in the damp of an early May evening are rich indeed. Breathe deeply and soak it all in.



Blue Flag Iris by Maggie Jaicomo

Early June

Wetlands are brimming with life now. If visiting Wing Haven, watch and listen for the sandhill cranes. A peek into distant cattails may reveal a stately parent protecting a tiny, brown, fuzz-ball chick. Watch for blue flags in other ACRES preserves with wetlands—the blue flag iris flaunting its reflexed petals of bright blue lined with yellow. What a great time of year to get out. Spring out there ACRES members!



Sand Hill Crane by Fred Wooley

Nesting Time

by Gary Tieben and Carol Roberts

Like the trees, shrubs, wildflowers and creatures, we've been waiting. We're noticing longer days, more sunshine, more blue sky, green shoots pushing through mud, and — at long last — sweet birdsongs confirming the promise of returning spring.

Early spring is a good time to observe and identify not only birds but also their nests, not yet camouflaged in a wilderness of green.

First, you may ask: why do birds build nests? As warm-blooded creatures, birds are compelled not only to supply warmth to protect themselves, their eggs and their young during incubation, but also to conserve this warmth. Since heat production requires increased amounts of food—and birds often feed in an open area where they are more vulnerable to predation—birds use nests to conserve heat, thus reducing their energy needs and concurrently, the time they must feed in the open. In addition, nests create an incubation site where one does not exist, as in bushes or trees, or on wet or swampy ground.

The simplest nest is no nest at all. For example, Killdeer lay their eggs on bare ground where their mottled eggs

blend with the soil. Their energy cost for building? Zero. A slightly more complex nest is made by parent birds turning in a tight circle, kicking back with their feet, scraping away soil to form a shallow depression that helps keep eggs in a tight group, thus making incubation more efficient. Herring Gulls make such a scrape but then add feathers, grass, twigs or other fibers to produce a camouflaging rim. While more efficient than no nest or a simple scrape, this simply lined nest has little additional energy cost.

A simple cup nest (think American Robin) has an indented soft or wet mud base and a rim of fibers, grasses or twigs, with nest materials often brought from a distance. Parents turn in tight circles to mat materials into the base, then pack it into a raised rim with breasts and bills. While this nest requires expenditures of both time and energy, its insulating nest fibers reduce heat loss.



Eagle Nest by Ethel McClelland

Many birds make modified cup nests. Eastern Meadowlarks pull surrounding grass stems over their cup nests to form a sort of grass teepee which protects parents and young from wind and rain and makes the nest less visible to predators. Another common modification is building a cup nest off the ground where it is less vulnerable to flying, walking or crawling predators that can easily feast on a ground nest. Nests in bushes or trees are less vulnerable because leaves make them less visible, and their height reduces the odor of the nesting birds to ground level predators.

As expected, larger birds make larger nests and use larger materials to build the nests. For example, while the American Robin uses fine twigs and grasses, Blue Jays use heavier twigs and coarser grasses. Cooper's Hawks, Red-tailed Hawks, and Bald Eagles use progressively larger sticks. Because larger twigs and branches alone provide little insulation, these birds line their nests with finer insulating materials. Regardless of size, these stick nests are basically cup nests.

Hole nests are unique, with most hole nesters living in forests, using natural or

bird-made holes. Woodland hole nesters include Woodpeckers, Tufted Titmice, and Chickadees. While Woodpeckers drill their own holes, Titmice and Chickadees typically use ready-made holes such as abandoned woodpecker holes or birdhouses, sometimes excavating soft rotting wood in a tree stub 4-10 feet above ground. Other hole nesters, such as Bank Swallows and Belted Kingfishers, make holes in stream or river banks. Whether in banks or trees, hole nesters may add nothing to the hole, or they may add twigs and grass or soft fibers like moss, feathers, and fur. Hole nests appear to be somewhat safer: studies have shown that while only half of the young of open nesters survive, hole nesters fledge about two thirds of their young.

The most complex nest built by a Midwestern bird is the hanging nest or pouch of the Northern Oriole, a cup nest built in the twigs at the tip of a limb. Attached by its rim, the nest is made of long strands of plant fiber (such as milkweed, hair, fine grasses) that the parent birds intertwine, forming an open sack protected from almost all predators except snakes.

While the best way to identify a nest is to see the birds building it, do not disturb nesting birds! To prevent predators from following your human scent to the nest you discovered, take a quick look, then leave the area not to return. Rest content in the knowledge that in a newly built bird's nest, you've witnessed the wonder of returning spring and the birds that will *"sing the wildflowers up from root and seed"* (Robert Frost).



Baby Robins by Shane Perfect

Center Spread: Moss Spores by Shane Perfect

BEHIND THE SCENE

"Moss Spores" is part of a series I am working on called Intimate Nature: a study of nature at a small scale, anywhere from a few square inches to a few square feet. Landscapes can present themselves to us in many forms, and it never ceases to amaze me when I see all of the micro-ecosystems that co-exist on the forest floor. There is a world of nature discoveries waiting for us, right here in our own natural areas.



fieldtrips & SPECIAL EVENTS

For information on all programs, contact the ACRES office at 260.637.2273 or visit acreslandtrust.org
ACRES programs are held rain or shine.

BIRD BANDING

Sunday, April 15, 2 p.m.
Presented by: Ben Cloud

Join the research team as birds are caught within a mist net, examined, measured, banded, then released unharmed. This is a great opportunity to see birds up close and learn about bird health and the international bird banding program.

WHERE: Asherwood, Wabash County,
7496 W. SR 124, Wabash, IN 46992

ETHEL'S WORK DAY

Thursday, April 19, 1 p.m.
Presented by: ACRES

Come celebrate Ethel's 25 years of service to ACRES by doing what she enjoys best—helping others and the land. Bring your gloves and hiking boots as we perform a "spring cleanup" at this wonderful preserve.

WHERE: Ropchan Wildlife Refuge, Steuben County,
4490 N. SR 827, Fremont, IN 46737

23RD ANNUAL ADOPT-A-TREE FESTIVAL

Saturday, April 21, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Presented by: Art Eberhardt, Laurie Eberhardt and Peter Martin, Jim Shearer, David Syler, John Eddy, David and Bonnie Snyder, Paul Nailor and Lee Sauer

Enjoy a variety of events for children and adults: make a bluebird house or suet feeder, look at pond water under a microscope, and adopt a northern white cedar, chinkapin oak, or red maple tree. Entertainment will be fiddle and dulcimer music and caricature drawings.

WHERE: Wing Haven, Steuben County,
180 W. 400 N., Angola, IN 46703

EARTH DAY CELEBRATION

Sunday, April 22, 2 p.m.
Presented by: Ted Yoder, 2010 National Hammer Dulcimer Champion, North Webster, Indiana
Join us in celebrating Earth Day with the soothing music of the hammered dulcimer. There will be a hike after the concert.

WHERE: Wildwood, Kosciusko County,
409 E. SR 14, Silver Lake, IN 46982

WILDFLOWERS AT BICENTENNIAL

Saturday, April 28, 2 p.m.
Presented by: Renee Sinacola

Immerse your senses in the beauty of wildflowers and the sounds of birds on this hike.

WHERE: Bicentennial Woods, Allen County,
340 E. Shoaff Road, Huntertown, IN 46748

BIRD NESTS

Saturday, May 5, 9 – 11 a.m.
Presented by: Gary Tieben

Join us for a bird walk through beautiful Wing Haven near the height of the spring bird migration. We hope to see warblers, orioles, thrushes and year round residents such as cardinals, woodpeckers, goldfinches, and much more. Be sure to look down from time to time and see the beautiful wildflowers at this preserve.

WHERE: Wing Haven, Steuben County,
180 W. 400 N., Angola, IN 46703



Chipping Sparrow by Fred Wooley



Wake Robin by Don Luepke

fieldtrips & SPECIAL EVENTS

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WILDFLOWER HIKE AT KOKIWANEE

Saturday, May 12, 2 p.m.
Presented by: David Hicks

Come and enjoy the beautiful wildflowers and a hike with David.

WHERE: Kokiwanee, Wabash County,
5825 E 50 S, Lagro, IN 46941

WRITING WORKSHOP AND TOUR OF WABASH

Saturday, May 19, 1 – 5 p.m.
Presented By: Kevin McKelvey and Jason Kissel

Join poet and author Kevin McKelvey on a tour of natural areas along the Wabash River as you create intersections between places, people, history, and ecology through your writing. The tour is from 1 – 4 p.m. and departs from Charley Creek Gardens. Tour stops include Hanging Rock, Hathaway Preserve at Ross Run and Paradise Springs Park. There is a fee of \$10/person for this portion of the event. Reservations are required.

The writing workshop will be held from 4 – 5 p.m. at Charley Creek Gardens and is available to the general public in addition to those who participate in the tour. This workshop is free, but requires a reservation. To make your reservation, call the ACRES office at (260) 637 – 2272.

WHERE: Charley Creek Gardens
551 N. Miami St., Wabash, IN 46992

FOREST CONCERT

Sunday, May 20, 2 p.m.
Presented by: Megan King

A short hike will lead you to an outdoor classroom complete with benches overlooking two valleys and a meandering stream. In this beautiful setting, you will enjoy Megan King's voice and guitar playing. Come early or stay after for a longer hike in this spectacular preserve.

WHERE: Asherwood, Wabash County,
7496 W. SR 124, Wabash, IN 46992

BEE WILDERNESS

Saturday, June 2, 2 p.m.
Presented by: Bud and Deb Stroh

Are you curious about the nesting habits and the social structure of bees? After this program you won't be bee-wildered anymore.

WHERE: Wing Haven, Steuben County,
180 W. 400 N., Angola, IN 46703

ASTRONOMY EVENT OF A LIFETIME

Tuesday, June 5, 6 p.m.
Presented by: David Homan and Ethel McClelland

Join us for this incredible opportunity to see Venus pass in front of the sun (called a transit). This will continue past sunset so bring your telescope or use ours. A mylar solar filter is recommended. The next Venus transit will be in 2117.

WHERE: Wildwood, Kosciusko County,
409 E. SR 14, Silver Lake, IN 46982

BLUE JEAN GALA

Thursday, June 7, 6:30 – 9:00 p.m.
Join us at the Joseph Decuis Farm for the VIP Preview Party and Blue Jean Gala. See page 18 for more information.



Blue-eyed Mary by Paul McAfee



Bee Colony by Shane Perfect



fieldtrips & SPECIAL EVENTS

For information on all programs, contact the ACRES office at 260.637.2273 or visit acreslandtrust.org
ACRES programs are held rain or shine.

BUG BONANZA

Saturday, June 16, 2 p.m.

Presented by: Nancy Disbro and Kissel Family

Bring the kids to this program featuring insects. A short hike, stories and activities will explore the wonderful world of bugs; even the snacks will be insect themed!

WHERE: Mary Thornton Nature Preserve, Wabash County
1541 E. 300 N., Wabash, IN 46992

KIDS DAY AT WILDWOOD

Monday, June 18, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Presented by: David Homan and Ethel McClelland

Join us for hiking, crafts, a fun outdoor nature program and lunch.

WHERE: Wildwood, Kosciusko County,
409 E. SR 14, Silver Lake, IN 46982



Kids Day Wildwood
by Heather Baker

WILDWALKERS SPRING SCHEDULE

Hikes are 8:30 – 10:30 a.m. unless otherwise noted.

April 13, 8:45 – 10:45 a.m. Kokiwanee, Wabash County

April 27 McClue Nature Preserve, Steuben County

May 11 Edna W. Spurgeon Woodland Reserve, Noble County

May 25, 8:45 – 10:45 a.m. Asherwood, Wabash County

June 8 Maplewood Nature Preserve, LaGrange County

June 22 IPFW, Allen County

Contact Renee Sinacola (an ACRES Board member) with questions: 260-427-6005
or renee.sinacola@cityoffortwayne.org

promotions/announcements

KOKIWANEE GATE OPEN

The gate at Kokiwanee in Wabash County will be open the first Friday of each month, May thru October, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. to provide access to the interior parking lot for those with limited mobility. The preserve is otherwise available for hiking dawn to dusk, 365 days a year.

BIRDATHON 2012

Birdathon 2012 will be May 12. Make a pledge or donation and help support Wing Haven Nature Preserve. See the pledge form included in this *Quarterly* or pledge online at acreslandtrust.org/birdathon



photo by Fred Wooley

SPECIAL thanks

Carl and Suzon Baker
donating a roll of stamps

Wild Birds Unlimited
donating binoculars for Wildwood

Glen Bickel
donating copier paper

Bill Smith
donating office supplies

David Rezits
performing cello at the annual dinner

Michelle Briggs Wedaman
donating CFL lightbulbs

Molly Puitz
cleaning and helping around the office

Carol Roberts
donating Christmas wreath for the office,
dish towels and editing the *Quarterly*

Pam George, Barb Gorney, Donna Stucker,
Helen Bassett, Barbara Boston, Carilyn Reiter,
Garry Baker
collating the *Quarterly*

Brett Fisher, Bill Smith and
Richard and Barbara Boerger
donating books for the ACRES library

Shirley Meighen
donating birdseed

Neil Case
donating three 55-gallon food-grade drums
for Asherwood sap collection

David Brumm
archiving the Board minutes

Taylor Puitz
cutting birdathon cards

Our *Quarterly* distributors

Larry Drook
updating media list

Karen Griggs
proofreading the *Quarterly*
and donating kitchen towels

Ever wonder how ACRES works?

All are welcome to join us for a committee meeting. Meetings are held at the ACRES office *except* the Education Committee meeting, which is held at the University of St. Francis.

Full Board.....	April 25....	6:30 p.m.
Education.....	May 2....	5:00 p.m.
Land Management.....	May 15....	5:00 p.m.
Fund Development.....	May 16....	11:30 a.m.
Land Acquisition.....	May 22....	5:30 p.m.
Personnel.....	May 22....	6:30 p.m.
Finance.....	June 27....	6:00 p.m.
Full Board.....	June 27....	6:30 p.m.

volunteerPROJECTS

GET INVOLVED! Volunteers needed for:

- Trail monitoring
- Garlic mustard removal
- Parking lot upkeep
- Constructing boardwalk sections for Stark Nature Preserve
- Helping at Kids Day at Wildwood on June 18
- Donating gravel or use of hydraulic lift truck

We're looking for more articles and Back Page submissions for the *Quarterly*. Please consider sharing your knowledge about nature, thoughts and experiences with us. For more information, please call Tina at 260-637-2273.

**Articles submitted to the Quarterly may be edited for space and clarity.*



THE

Gypsy Moth

and its **IMPACT** on our Forests

by Vince Burkle, IDNR, Division of Entomology
and Plant Pathology

photos by Vince Burkle

Imagine yourself walking down a trail under the canopy of a magnificent hardwood forest. The shade the trees provide keeps you cool as you hike during the first week of June. Up ahead you notice the light filtering through the trees seems a bit brighter.

As you get closer, you see that several acres of the majestic forest you have been walking through are defoliated. You hear what sound like raindrops hitting the forest floor, but when you look up, there are no clouds in the sky. You glance over at one of the sapling oak trees and it is covered with hundreds of caterpillars. There is a layer of peppercorn-sized caterpillar droppings littering the ground, and a few are stuck in your scalp. The devastation makes you wonder what type of insect causes such destruction.

Gypsy moth (*Lymantria dispar*) is an invasive insect accidentally introduced into Boston, Massachusetts in the late 1860s by Leopold Trouvelot who wanted to start an American silk industry. By cross breeding gypsy moths with native silk moths, he hoped to create a hybrid that was hardy and inexpensive to grow. Mr. Trouvelot was rearing gypsy moth caterpillars at his home when some escaped.

Gypsy moth overwinters as eggs. The caterpillars begin emerging in late April to early May. They will feed on over 300 different kinds of trees and shrubs but prefer oak trees, initially chewing small holes in the leaves and eventually consuming the entire leaf. Full grown caterpillars are 2 ½" long, dark colored, hairy with 5 pairs of blue dots followed by 6 pairs of red dots down their back (see photo at bottom of page 9). If enough caterpillars are present, they can defoliate large oak trees in 6 weeks. Trees defoliated in a single season usually recover. Trees defoliated 2 or 3 years in succession become stressed, and in combination with other environmental factors, decline and die.

The caterpillars pupate in mid June, and moths emerge in late June to July. Female moths are white with distinctive black markings on the wings, and flightless (see photo above).

Male moths are tan with similar markings, have long feathery antennae and are smaller than the female. Female moths produce a pheromone attracting the male to their location where mating occurs. They then lay up to 1,000 eggs in a mass. The velvety tan-colored egg masses (see photo to right) are deposited in late June to July on the bark of trees, but they will also lay them on anything that is outside. They have been found on picnic tables, bird houses, mailboxes, gas grills and fifth wheel campers. Human activity can easily spread the eggs to new areas.

The gypsy moth population has been slowly moving south and west, defoliating millions of acres of hardwood forest in the Northeast, mid-Atlantic and Midwest. Defoliation and death of mature trees can adversely impact natural and urban forests resulting in:

- Reduction of recreational and timber value
- Changes in forest and wildlife composition to less desirable species
- Development of thicker understory due to increased light penetration
- Establishment of invasive plant species
- Erosion of soil and nutrients from heavy rains and open canopy
- Increased fire load from dead trees and limbs.



What can be done about gypsy moth? Most states on the leading edge of gypsy moth participate in a US Forest Service program called "Slow the Spread" (STS), designed to slow the natural spread rate of the gypsy moth by using integrated pest management strategies. Have you ever noticed green milk cartons or tan tent-shaped boxes stapled to trees and utility poles? They are gypsy moth traps that use the females' pheromone inside of them to attract and capture male moths. The data gathered from the traps allows the participating states to determine where gypsy moth populations exist. Management strategies include aerial or ground treatments with caterpillar-specific bacteria, aerial pheromone treatments to disrupt mating, additional pheromone trap placement and manual removal or treatment of egg masses with soybean-based oil products. The spread rate of gypsy moth in Indiana has dropped to a current average of about 5.3 miles per year from the projected spread of 12.5 miles per year without the program.

While gypsy moth is a very destructive invasive insect, it can be managed. If you see or suspect a gypsy moth infestation, contact your state plant health regulatory agency. In Indiana call 866-663-9684. Early detection helps "Slow the Spread" of this insect. For more information on Gypsy Moth go to www.gmsts.org or www.gypsymoth.in.gov





THURSDAY, JUNE 7, 2012

VIP PREVIEW PARTY TICKET: \$152

4:30 – 6:30 pm

☞ **Limited to 200 tickets** ☜

(Includes ticket to the Blue Jean Gala)

Joseph Decuis hors d'oeuvres with paired wines
Meet and greet Pete and Alice Eshelman
Silent Auction preview featuring “Buy Now” prices!
Special live music

BLUE JEAN GALA TICKET: ADULT \$52 CHILD \$25

6:30 – 9:00 pm

☞ **Limited to 300 tickets** ☜

Cuisine by Joseph Decuis
Wine, Microbrew Beer and Beverages
Guided Walks through the Woods
Carriage Rides & Farm Tour Wagon Rides
Fun Kids' Activities
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The Next Step

Are you holding an ACRES *Quarterly* that a friend or acquaintance gave you? You know that friend or acquaintance hopes it will inspire you to join ACRES Land Trust. Right?

Actually, the next step is yours to determine. You can simply enjoy the beautiful photography and the articles and go on with your life unchanged or you could pass it on to someone else, if you're so inspired.

If the photographs give you that warm, all's-right-with-the-world feeling, you probably should consider becoming an ACRES member. If you learned something that makes you proud of the ACRES members and volunteers whose work and financial support makes possible the preservation and protection of nearly 5,000 acres of the most healthy, vibrant and beautiful natural places around here, please think about joining them and becoming one of us.

If you see a place you want to visit, we urge you to head out the door to explore first-hand how wonderful it is to experience an ACRES nature preserve. Walking through nature is good for us physically and psychologically, and we know from the comments left at our preserves that many, many people find moments of great meaning in our preserves. Your membership will help make the healing and healthy powers of nature at her best available to all of us.

You may have been given this ACRES *Quarterly* by someone who is an enthusiastic ACRES member who wants to share the wealth with you. That's a pretty nice compliment!

What's your next step? See us? Over here? And there? ACRES members are scattered all over. We're all waiting to welcome you.

Take the step of becoming an ACRES member. You'll feel great for having done it.

— *Connie Haas Zuber, ACRES Board Member*



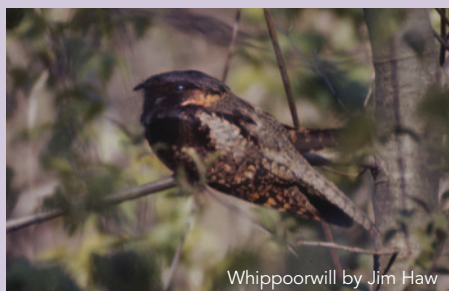
JOIN ACRES TODAY!

Scan the code, use the enclosed remittance envelope, or go to acreslandtrust.org/membership



Trillium by Mark Yoder

the **BACK**page



Whippoorwill by Jim Haw

The Whippoorwill

by Leelia Cornell

The forest holds a secret. Listen and you might hear it! Just after the sun has departed with the light of day, just as night descends, the plaintive cry of the whippoorwill floats through the shrouded woods: “Whippoorwill, Whippoorwill, Whippoorwill!” — a beautiful, haunting melody.

Whenever I hear the voice of a whippoorwill, I’m transported to a camp fire in times long past. The flickering flame crackles and snaps, illuminating faces of many friends, barely invading the forest’s veil of night that crowds close around our circle.

Beyond this orange light is an inky sea. Far below us and down over the ridge, the Salamonie continues its endless journey over its ancient rocks. Yet we cannot see the river. But we hear the whippoorwill hidden deep in an elusive glen at the heart of Kokiwanee.

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