

THE ACRES QUARTERLY

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ACRES
LANDTRUST

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Hathaway Preserve at Ross Run
by Shane Perfect

Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

I love fundraising. If you would have told me ten years ago that I'd ever make that statement, I would have laughed out loud. At the time, I placed fundraising near the top of a mental list of things to avoid (almost rivaling my number one trivial item—cottage cheese).

I should probably narrow my statement about fundraising, I love fundraising for ACRES. ACRES has a unique fundraising approach. I'll let you in on our most effective fundraising strategy: *we tell people what we do and what our current needs are*. Pretty simple... no tactics, methods or even asking involved.

This **strategy** is only possible because ACRES solves a readily recognized need, our results are tangible, and we have a reputation of trust and getting the job done right. ACRES preserves land. Many people find that mission important and want to further it. Together as ACRES, we perform a rare act. We take our own money and time and give it to ACRES so land can be preserved forever. Rather than buying land for personal gain or for ACRES to make money from, donors create nature preserves for everyone. ACRES' supporters recognize the preserves return a much higher value than a monetary one.

This is why I love the fundraising process: ACRES provides opportunities for people to do something valuable and long-lasting that they cannot achieve on their own. I cannot afford to purchase and maintain even 50 acres of land, but through my donations to ACRES, I am part-owner of over 5,400 acres of land—naturally significant land that will just get better over time. I feel very good about that. Why wouldn't I want to give others the same opportunity?

Sincerely,

Jason Kissel

jkissel@acreslandtrust.org

WELCOME

94newmembers!

Bonnie Andrews
Doug Brady
Allen Brenneman
Jason Brooks
Mark Bruhn and Val Kirby
Peggy Burrell
Pamela Chorpenning
Dahlia Cobos
Eric Cobos
Anita Drudge
Mark and Mary Ennes
Armatha Green
Shirley Griffin
Richard Griggs
Dan Harding
Karen Heine
Hugh and Eva Hopkins
Anthony Hubbard
Brian and Greta Ivanovic
Teri Keesler
Linda Kolb

Jerry Landis
Al Leininger
Ben Lockwood
gift from Robert and Carol Bredemeyer
Lani Mahnensmith
Duane Miller
Susan Mitchener
Ashley Motia
Chris Nelson
Pamela Pfrang
Jim Rathge
Walter Ruegner
Jason Satek and Anne LaDue-Satek
gift from Pamela Pfrang
Thomas Schneider
Jeff Stant and Mary Bookwalter
Deborah Tannehill
Kevin and Mary Tonne
John Ward and Debrah Roemisch
Michael Windsor

Thank you to Zimmer, Inc. for providing gift memberships for their employees in honor of Earth Day.

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Chuck Duncan
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Tracy Bloom Kenney
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new life members

Randy and Carol Roberts



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memorials

Jim Reifenberg
from Anonymous
Rick Oliphant
from Angie O'Neill
Florence Swaidner
from Dave and Barbara Kissel
Ruth Kern
from Noel and Patricia Holmgren
Irene Bobilya Hiatt
from Miriam Mendenhall

Vera Dulin
from Dulin, Ward and DeWald, Inc., Fred and Mary Anna Feitler, Monarch Capital Management, Angie O'Neill, Lee and Tuzie Richardson, Sean and Bette Bradley, Lynn and Dorace Smith, Chad and Helen Frost Thompson, Pam George, Stephen and Susan Harroff, Ruth Langhinrichs, David and Cathy Martin, Victor and Nancy Martin, Randy and Carol Roberts, Eric Roberts, Kirsten Roberts and Tom Herbert, Sean and Michelle Bradley, Jane Thomas and Mike and Nancy Tippman



Photo by Shane Perfect

Walter H. and Marie Myers Nature Preserve on Flowers Creek

Dana Davis knows the plants so well at The Walter H. and E. Marie Myers Nature Preserve on Flowers Creek that, come spring, she can visit them like old friends to make sure they're coming up on schedule. As a child she explored and played along Flowers Creek and in the woods. As a youth she learned about the woods and fields as a 4-H and FFA member.

She remembers laughing when she saw a list of all the plants a university team found during a recent visit. "I know every plant on here," she remembers saying. "In fact, there's one you missed."

Thanks to the decision she and her husband Duane made in 2013 that let the farm she grew up on become a new preserve protected by ACRES Land Trust, now everyone else can get to know those plants, too. And so much more.

Dana Davis' family practiced careful stewardship of the farm for more than 100 years. Eighty of the 135 acres are currently farmed and will continue to be for the near future before being allowed to return to a natural state. Wetland forest covers 54 acres, with five acres of sedge-filled fen (increasingly rare in Indiana). There is a one-acre home site featuring the home built by her grandfather and his master carpenter brother. A granary and smokehouse have survived with woodwork from sycamore trees cut from the property.

The land is a natural historic treasure, thanks to the family's ongoing decision not to disturb the forested areas along Flowers Creek as it empties into Eel River. The area is a documented maternal roosting area for the Indiana Bat, and this portion of the Eel River contains six endangered mussels and the greater redhorse sucker's only known population in the entire Ohio River Valley.

Dana and Duane live in Delaware County and decided not to move back to the farm when she inherited it after her mother's death in 1992. Their daughters decided they were not interested in living there either, so Dana was faced with the challenge of what to do with the beloved property.

She considered selling it to be farmed, which was logical since they currently rent its farmable acres to an area farmer. But that didn't work out, at least partly because of the difficulty of getting large, modern farm equipment to the farm over the small, old bridges and down the small roads. She considered selling it for development but knew that likely meant the trees would be cut for lumber and the property would be subdivided into house lots.



Photo by Jason Kissel

Walter H. and Marie Myers Nature Preserve (continued from page 4)

"I got to thinking," she said. "I grew up here. I lived here. I played here." She knew that in Delaware County, Red Tail Conservancy protects natural areas, so she talked to them. Red Tail sent her to ACRES' executive director, Jason Kissel.

Dana and Duane appreciate how Jason and other ACRES' staff and volunteers hiked the property, recognized, and were excited by what they saw. And they and their daughters looked into ACRES, too.

"One of our daughters researched the whole ACRES' project online," Duane said. "She is pretty critical. She appreciated what ACRES is doing, and she is not someone who passes out compliments left and right. She said it looks

all right to her. Not that we were asking her permission, but we really questioned what they were going to do with the place.

"We went up and visited them at their office. It's out in the country, and that set a tone. They are actually into what we are interested in. It makes you feel good. They are doing what we want to see done to the place."

Dana sees her love of the farm coming full circle.

"It looked like something that would be useful to people, would be taken care of," she said.

"It's like you can have your cake and eat it, too, because everything's going to be here, and we're always welcome to come here and walk around and see what's here. It just seemed like a good idea to have the property as it is."

Motts Nature Preserve



Photo by Casey Jones

Darlene Schenck treasures how it feels going to the 55 quiet, pristine acres that are now Motts Nature Preserve in St. Joseph County. "It's not a path road," she explained. "There's no grass down the middle, but with the Amish farmer and our land as the only properties on the mile stretch, you seem to be going back in time a little bit. It's what it was like in the 1940s and 1930s."

Many of the 55 acres have been undisturbed for longer than that. Darlene said that the family believes it has been called Indian Ridge and Indian Hill because the area was the last where the Potawatomi Indians lived freely in the 1830s and 1840s. (She has bottles of arrowheads collected on the family farm north of the preserve, plus a larger piece that looks like a hatchet head. Her mother mounted the arrowheads in a frame for display.)

Her grandfather, Jacob Motz (who later Americanized "Motz" to "Motts") had his cabin on this part of the original 180-acre property. Darlene has a property tax receipt from 1889 for \$2.12. She believes that about the time Jacob married her grandmother, he built and moved to the farmhouse on the north end of the 180 acres.

When the U.S. 20 bypass was built decades ago, the 55 acres that are now in the Preserve were cut off from the farm. The farm lost a row of Northern Spy apple trees and a then-old and unused sugar shanty. "That was a very sad thing for the family. The bypass was traumatic for the whole area." Darlene said that Motts Nature Preserve will now add something healthy and beautiful to the area which otherwise has very limited natural areas (one township does not even have a park).

The preserve property is a beech and maple forest and includes an ephemeral wetland. Deer roam the area, and Schenck notes that it appears to be in the flyway for major bird groups.

(continued on page 7)



Photo by Shane Perfect

Spring Lake Woods and Bog

In *Natural Areas in Indiana and Their Preservation* (Purdue University, 1969), the authors Alton Lindsay, Damain Schmelz and Stanley Nichols described significant natural areas throughout Indiana and viewed the book as a “guide for those who can save some of it.”

ACRES took the challenge the book presented and has obtained many of the areas listed that are within our service area.

Spring Lake Woods and Bog was included in the book due to its sphagnum bog, orchids, pitcher plants, and “herb flora distinctive of northern muckland woods...including cinnamon ferns five feet tall as it stands, the most profuse and tallest of this species we have seen.”

Lee Casebere remembers seeing the site in the 1970s with one of ACRES founding members Bob Weber. *“I can vouch that giant ferns are lush there, giving it somewhat of a tropical feel. I’m delighted that this special place is now protected.”*

ACRES now owns the bog and 107 acres of forest that surrounds it. In addition to the diverse plant life, the property is also home to the rare four-toed salamander. The property also contains shoreline of Lake Everett—the only natural lake in Allen County.

Funding for the property was made possible by a significant discount by the owners of Moosehead Enterprises, LLC.—Mike Stafford and Larry Smith. Funding has also been pledged from the Bicentennial Nature Trust,

Indiana Heritage Trust, and the Indiana DNR Division of Nature Preserves.

This property is not open to the public but will be in the near future.



Photo by Shane Perfect

Motts Nature Preserve (continued from page 5)

Darlene reached out to ACRES in 2013 to protect the land, but ACRES and the Motts family had met before. On the day Carolyn McNagny, former executive director, visited Darlene’s mother, Grace Motts Hill, they walked the forest together. As Darlene remembers it, they bonded over the beautiful beech trees.

Darlene and her husband Lyle decided to donate the land—which she inherited from her mother and her Uncle Clyde Motts—to ACRES “to do honor to the older folks” and because it seemed like the logical next step based on how they had managed the land.

She said they had already enrolled it in a conservation program.

“I can say it will be lovingly cared for [by ACRES], and that is what I needed. The land just needs to have some love. There’s a lot there to love.”



Photo by Jason Kissel

DID YOU KNOW?

This year, ACRES has introduced a new strategy for trail maintenance: **we’ve hired it out**. Five different landscaping companies are mowing, spin-trimming and clearing obstacles and trash through the trails and parking areas at a majority of the preserves. We are very positive about the companies selected. These like-minded, conscientious contractors will continue to maintain the trails that ACRES is known for. Because each company can more efficiently cover smaller areas within our entire service area, they save the organization time and resources. They also allow me, as Land Management Specialist, to focus my attention towards more specialized initiatives such as natural resource management and boundary protection.

More importantly, we owe a great deal of gratitude to stewards and caretakers who voluntarily maintain 16 nature preserves! This is great, but it can be greater; let’s make it 20 (my contact information is below)! An even larger team of volunteers help to maintain our nature preserves by clearing smaller obstacles with hand tools, picking up trash and reporting the condition of the preserves to me. A quick e-mail, as simple as “Dygart is in good shape” gives me peace of mind. It is important that ACRES members and visitors offer feedback—good or bad—as we test this new maintenance strategy. You may record your comments on a sign-in sheet or contact me directly.

Casey Jones, Land Management Specialist

cjones@acreslandtrust.org

(260) 637-2273 ext. 6



Spring Beauty by Bill Bloch



Ethyle and Jane Dustin, c. 1960

Ethyle Bloch
(1920 – 2014)

Ethyle 

Ethyle Bloch supported ACRES in many ways and for the longest time she possibly could. Ethyle was at the first meeting in 1959 when a group of people discussed forming Indiana's first land trust. She served as a founding member of ACRES and remained a member for 54 years, served on its board, volunteered for decades, and continued to correspond with ACRES just two days before her death in February 2014. That is true dedication to an organization.

Ethyle's half-century-plus commitment to ACRES continues to reap benefits. Ethyle helped acquire ACRES' first nature preserve in 1961 as well as numerous others, including beginning the process that led to Spring Lake Woods and Bog's recent acquisition described on page 6. She was responsible for recruiting many current ACRES' members, thus ensuring the chain of support for ACRES continued past her lifetime. Ethyle's knowledge of the environment, friendliness and trustworthiness helped build the stellar reputation that ACRES benefits from each day.

Ethyle made many ACRES friends. We've included remembrances from some of them on the adjacent page.

memorial

Ethyle Bloch

from Frank and Dorothy Frary, Richard and Joyce Pacer, Beverly Hart, Paul and Maria McAfee, Mary Frances Schneider, Ken and Susan Till, Brian and Sally Witwer, Prudy Widlak, Michael Shaver, James Sweeney, Art Eberhardt, Terry and Elizabeth McCloskey, Pam Malicoat, and Fred and Jackie Wooley

My adventure with her was a turning point in my life.

Great person.

I learned a lot from her.

Sweet Ethyle.

She will always be in my heart.

Ethyle would type her letters but always include a handwritten note, too.

My personal growth was started by her guidance, her wisdom and her love.

I will miss her greatly. She was a truly wonderful person.

I remember her from our annual dinner meetings reading the prayer before the meal. She would slowly make her way to the microphone and hold a white, 3x5 notecard and read a prayer that she had typed. It was always of carefully chosen words mentioning the greatness and wonder of nature and giving thanks to God.

I was told Ethyle was the expert on environmental quality.

Generous with her time.

We kept in touch via letters and cards.

Dear friend.

If she had an opinion on something, she would voice it and could back it up from experience.

Ethyle Bloch was amazing.

She was my mentor.

She spoke her peace but was also flexible.

I was blessed to have known Ethyle.

She will be missed.

Shown in photo: Bill and Ethyle Bloch, John Klotz and Jane Dustin

Center Spread: Spring Lake Woods and Bog Nature Preserve, Allen County, Shane Perfect

BEHIND THE SCENE

May 29, 2014 – ACRES staff and I traversed through the tall brush and briars of the bog to reach Spring Lake. We found ourselves standing among majestic 5' cinnamon ferns, sphagnum hummocks, and moss-covered buttressed trees. At the southern fringe of Spring Lake we captured the photos on page 6.



programs & EVENTS

ACRES' nature preserves host a growing number of events and activities—so many that we've decided to list only larger events in the *Quarterly*. You can read the full list of activities on ACRES' website where events are updated weekly, so check the website often at www.acreslandtrust.org/events

13TH ANNUAL WING HAVEN CANOE TRIP

Saturday, August 9, 2 pm

Presented by: Nate Simons

Join Nate as he leads an interpretive program, and relax as you explore the Seven Sisters Lakes. Bring your own canoe or kayak. Limit 25. Call the ACRES' office to reserve your spot. 260-637-2273.

WHERE: Wing Haven Nature Preserve, Steuben County
180 W. 400 N., Angola, Indiana 46703



2013 Canoe Trip by Shane Perfect

CREEK STOMP VI

Saturday, August 9, 2 pm

Presented by: Kissel Family

It's time again for brave souls to converge on Ross Run Creek to encounter crayfish, leeches, salamanders, snakes, fish, insects, fossils and waterfalls. This creek stomp is a great opportunity to get soaked, muddy, bitten by mosquitos, and maybe even a little bruised or scratched up, so, as always...no sissies allowed.

WHERE: Hathaway Preserve at Ross Run, Wabash County
1866 E. Baumbauer Rd., Wabash, IN 46992

WILDFLOWER HIKE

Saturday, August 30, 3 pm

Presented by: Tony Fleming and INPAWS North Chapter

Join Tony as he explores this wetland preserve for summer wildflowers.

WHERE: Marsh Wren, LaGrange County
0.25 mile west of 0250 E 550 S, Wolcottville, IN 46795.

IN THE GARAGE

Saturday, August 30, 8 pm

Presented by: Casey Jones

Join the Matchsellers, an alternative bluegrass duo that formed in Leipzig, Germany. The group's members Andrew Morris and Julie Bates are midwesterners (from Indiana and Kansas City, respectively). Their music is a mix of traditionals, covers and original which are sure to please die-hard bluegrass fans as well as those new to the genre. Find more information at thematchsellers.wordpress.com

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



The Matchsellers

PRAIRIE REMNANT STEWARDSHIP DAY

Saturday, September 6, 10 am

Presented by: Nate Simons - Blue Heron Ministries

Located in the northwest corner of this 264-acre preserve is a prairie remnant discovered by Nate in 2003. Join us as we remove invasive species to expose this native seed bank to the sun. Bring a sack lunch and liquid hydration.

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

DUSTIN BARN EVENTS

Tom and Jane Dustin Nature Preserve, Allen County

1802 Chapman Road, Hometown, IN 46748. Entrance to the barn is east of the main entrance to the ACRES office.

FORT WAYNE CHILDREN'S CHOIR CONCERT

Saturday, August 16, 5:30 pm

Join us for a free summer concert performed by the Fort Wayne Children's Choir, including a cookout and docent-led hike. Seating at picnic tables will be available, but feel free to bring lawn chairs if you'd like. Appropriate footwear for hiking is suggested. Sponsored in part by the Edward D. and Lone Auer Foundation.

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION DINNER

Thursday, October 2, 6 pm

ACRES wants to celebrate the efforts of our volunteers and show our appreciation of their time and talents helping ACRES. If you are one of our many volunteers, please join us for a cookout at the Dustin barn. Dinner compliments of ACRES' staff and Board. Please call to make reservations at 260-637-2273.

OCTOBER BARN SERIES

Join us on Thursdays in October from 6-9 pm for FREE food and drinks, good company and live, local performing artists. October 9, 16 and 23.

Come early, stay late. Enjoy a hike.

Made possible by the Edward D. and Lone Auer Foundation.



Dustin Barn



October Barn Series

4TH ANNUAL ALLEN COUNTY TRAILBLAZERS KICKOFF

Join us for the 2014 Kickoff on Sunday, September 7, from 2-4 pm at Metea County Park. ACRES Land Trust, Allen County Parks, Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation, Fort Wayne Trails, Little River Wetlands Project and New Haven Parks and Recreation have partnered to provide the trail network for this annual hiking rewards program.

For more information visit www.allencountytrailblazers.org

ALLEN COUNTY
TRAILBLAZERS



November

8

SAVE THE DATE!

ANNUAL DINNER at University of St. Francis

Guest Speaker Joel Greenberg, author of
A Feathered River Across the Sky

funddevelopment

by Heather Barth

Non-Traditional Gifts

Support for ACRES comes in many forms. Volunteers work tirelessly to help us promote our mission, maintain our nature preserves, and generally keep us afloat. Your membership supports our ongoing efforts to purchase land, maintain preserves, and continue our land management practices. Donors contribute in-kind goods and services, as well as make cash contributions.

These kinds of support all add up to help us continue our mission of preserving natural areas. Sometimes people like to get a little creative in how they support ACRES.

ACRES wouldn't be the organization it is today without the generosity of landowners. We work with families for years, even decades, to help them realize what is most often a life-long dream of protecting land and supporting land conservation. Sometimes landowners are able to donate land to ACRES during their lifetime, or even offer it for sale at a deep discount to us. Other times, individuals make plans in their estate and will for property to be donated to ACRES. Per tax law, these all qualify as tax-deductible donations.

ACRES accepts all types of land donations. Often the land is what we deem "nature preserve-quality." Other times it is farmland that the farmer continues to work for a few years before we turn it into a nature preserve. We also accept investment property donated to ACRES for the purpose of our selling the land and using those proceeds to invest in land acquisition or other land management practices.

There are other outside-the-box ways to donate. Although many people think of cash when making a donation to ACRES, we also accept gifts of stocks, securities, and life insurance policies. Additionally, farmers have the option to donate gifts of grain—gifts which are coordinated through grain elevators.

Any of these methods of donating to ACRES helps us continue our mission of preserving natural areas while providing tax benefits to you. To learn more about how you can support ACRES, please contact Heather Barth, Director of Fund Development, at hbarth@acreslandtrust.org or (260) 637-2273, extension 5. Please consult your tax and legal professionals for information on the benefits you may receive for making a donation.



THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 2014

This isn't your typical dinner and silent auction at the clubhouse. We'll have live performances, a charity auction, amazing wines and beer, and of course, gourmet farm-to-fork cuisine from the Joseph Decuis kitchens.

MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS NOW

\$100 an individual, or \$75 for two or more

acreslandtrust.org / **BJG2014**

This is a ticketless event. Attire is casual—you're at the farm, after all!

ACRES Land Trust

celebrating 54 years of preserving natural areas



A Big Thank You to our Wish List Contributors

Mary Anna Feitler
Sharp kitchen knives and collapsible easel
Jim Firestone
Tarps
Bill Smith
Convertible hand truck, copier paper
Edwin Dally and Deborah Hoehn
Digital cameras and SD cards
Faith Van Gilder, Louise Pomeroy,
and Sue Diefenbach and family
Homemade cookies for the staff
Dave Brumm
M&Ms
Craig and Nancy Bobay, and
Terry and Julie Bobay
ACRES benches
Leland and Sharon Shaum
Gas cards
Tom and Margaret Kownover
Collapsible easels

Karen Griggs
Birdseed
Barbara Boerger
Suet dough and feeder and 8 GB flash drive
Tamazon O'Malley and the IPFW Engineering
Department administrative staff
Rubber bands
Jim Shearer and Joe and Nancy Conrad
Cash donation
Josie Fox and Randall and Carole Smith
Postage stamps
Ted & Tedra Hemingway
Cash, cutting board, copier paper,
M&Ms, coffee
Heather, Kody and Ameerah Baker
M&Ms, snacks and rubber bands
Gary and Elma Chapman
Shares of stock
Larry Biggerstaff
providing pie for the office staff

WHO LEFT THE TRACK?

WHAT HAS THIS ANIMAL BEEN UP TO?

by Chris Barlow, Associate Professor of Biology, Ivy Tech Community College

When we hit the trails in our local ACRES' preserves, we more frequently find animals' tracks and signs rather than seeing the animals themselves. Learning to identify our common mammal tracks adds a wonderful dimension of adventure to any hike.

If you are new to learning tracks, a great place to start is learning the difference between squirrel and rabbit tracks. Here, we will refer to the tracks of the common eastern fox squirrel (*Sciurus niger*) and the eastern cottontail rabbit (*Sylvilagus floridanus*). At first glance, the tracks of these species are roughly similar in size and often found in the same habitats, such as open woodlots and forest edges. When you encounter a track you suspect is either rabbit or squirrel, I recommend standing back and taking in the shape of the set of four footprints. Both species typically move with their larger hind feet landing in front of their smaller front feet. Squirrels tend to leave tracks where their hind feet and front feet form the rough outline of a square (think...square squirrels). In contrast, a rabbit's hind feet and front

feet tend to form the rough outline of the letter "Y." Be aware that in nature there will always be variations to this general rule, but it's a good place to start.

After studying the track's shape, follow the path of the trail. Squirrel tracks tend to start and end at the base of trees. Rabbit tracks often move right by trees and disappear into low-growing vegetation, shrubs or grasses.

While identifying "Who left the track?" can be challenging and satisfying, don't stop there. Continue to look at tracks and signs to see what you can learn about what the animal was doing. Was it running? Ambling along? Looking for food? Sitting on a log and feasting? What has it been up to?

On a good day for rabbit signs, you may stumble upon an area where rabbits feed. Browsing rabbits usually leave a perfect 45-degree angle cut on woody twigs. (If you find woody twigs that look rough and torn or squared off, you are probably looking at the browse of white-tailed deer.) Rabbits also tend to leave pellets where they eat. Sometimes rabbit pellets—slightly flattened spheres a little less than half an inch wide with a texture similar to sawdust—can be confused with deer pellets, which are usually more elongated and smooth.

On a good day for squirrel signs, you may encounter small shallow excavations

in either forest leaf litter or snow, created by a squirrel digging up nuts. Squirrels are very fond of hickory nuts, so you may find nutshell remnants in the area of these shallow excavations. Often the squirrel will eat the nut right at the excavation. At this point, also look up to see if you can find large, globular leafy nests in the trees. These squirrel nests, common in our forests, parks, and neighborhoods, are often mistaken for bird nests. If you find a squirrel nest, keep an eye on it throughout the year as you hike. You may have the opportunity to observe squirrels coming in and out of their nest, or even bringing materials to the nest to maintain it.

Over time, as you accumulate these small simple observations in your favorite

preserve, you deepen your connection to this beautiful place by tuning in to its inhabitants' activities.

Whether people or preserves, we can learn so much by asking: "What have you been up to?" My favorite guides for local mammals and tracks:

Whitaker, John O., Jr. 2010. *Mammals of Indiana: A Field Guide* (Indiana Natural Science). Indiana University Press. Bloomington, IN.

Rezendes, Paul. 1999. *Tracking and the Art of Seeing*. Harper Perennial. New York, NY.

Stokes, Donald and Lillian. 1986. *Guide to Animal Tracking and Behavior*. Little, Brown and Company. New York, NY.

promotions/Announcements

ACRES Avocets Birdathon Team Tallies 135 species to Benefit Wing Haven Nature Preserve

by Fred Wooley, Park Interpreter, Pokagon State Park

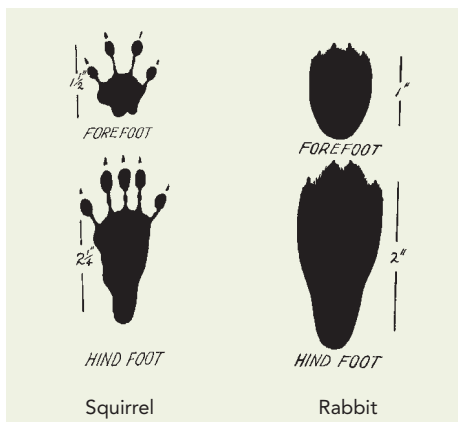
On May 17, another great day of birding in the 26th annual Southwest Michigan Team Birdathon, 20 teams representing various conservation and environmental organizations in the region raised nearly \$31,000 for their respective groups. One of the most successful groups, in both birding and fund raising, was our very own ACRES Avocets! Our team saw 135 of the 177 species of birds tallied by all teams that day and will collect a total of \$2,726.25—a new Birdathon record!

The ACRES Avocets have fielded a team in 17 of the Southwest Michigan Team Birdathon's 26 years. Over those years we have raised a total of \$29,115.76 to support ACRES' efforts. Thank you to all who contributed to this success. We hope you can give your support to next year's Birdathon, May 16, 2015!

Thank you to all who gave to the 2014 Birdathon. The following pledged \$1.00 or more per bird: Mary Anna Feitler, Mark and Anne Shure, Angie O'Neill, Dave Brumm, Diane Humphrey, Heather Barth, Tom and Hope Wilson, Mike Findley, Jim Shearer, Art Eberhardt, and David and Faith Van Gilder.

Science Fair Winners

Dahlia and Eric Cobos, sixth grade twins attending St. Jude Catholic School, were this year's ACRES Land Trust Regional Science Fair Annual Award winners for a project demonstrating environmental excellence. Read the full story to see what they discovered by visiting the ACRES website at www.acreslandtrust.org



FOX FIRE WOODS

by Terri Gorney

Glenn and Winifred Poe shared a passion for education and conservation and a deep love of the land. They were two of ACRES' founding members. Both were native Buckeyes. In 1974, Glenn and Winifred Poe gave to ACRES Fox Fire Woods, the first preserve donated in Allen County and, at 7.9 acres, one of ACRES' smallest preserves. Their grandson, David Menge, built the trails at Fox Fire Woods in the early 1980s for his Eagle Scout project.

Fox Fire Woods received its name from an unusual fungus which glows in the dark on the property. The woods also has oak, hickory, plum and hawthorne trees.

According to their daughter, Mary Scrogam, Fox Fire Woods was once a private retreat for Glenn and Winifred. Both grew up on farms, and when an 80-acre farm at the corner of Hull and Hollopeter Roads became for sale, they purchased it. Glenn wanted to put a lake on the property. The 20-acre lake he created is still there today, in private ownership. The Cedar Creek Women's Club used the lake to take children from the city out to fish.

Glenn was born in 1906 in Hardin County, Ohio, to Marquis and Mary (Able) Poe. His boyhood was spent on the family farm by Roundhead, Ohio. He attended Ohio Northern for two years, then transferred to Ohio State University where he received a BS in agriculture.



Fox Fire Woods by Casey Jones

He taught agriculture in several high schools, and in the 1930s, directed a Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Camp. Later, he was a Soil Conservationist with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. When Glenn was transferred by the U.S. Soil Conservation Service in 1945, Glenn and Winifred moved to Fort Wayne.

In 1936, Glenn had married Winifred Anderson who was born in 1904 on a farm near Lima, Ohio, to parents Frank and Bertha Anderson. She graduated from Heidelberg College with a BA degree, then attended Columbia University in the summers and earned a masters in education. She taught middle and high school English, Latin, and French. In Fort Wayne, she taught at Northside and Snider High Schools, retiring in 1966.

The Poes raised their family in Fort Wayne's Lakeside area. They were active at Forest Park Methodist Church.

In 1969, Glenn retired from being Allen County's District Soil Conservationist and the Poes moved to a home off Crawford Road. In later years, Winifred was active in the Cedar Creek Women's Club.

Glenn died in 1975 and Winifred in 1997. They are buried together in Lindenwood Cemetery. Thank you, and cheers to Glenn and Winifred Poe for sharing their special retreat with all of us.

SPECIAL thanks

All Birdathon donators

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Walking In The Rain

by Bob Frantz, August 1990

This evening I wandered some of our woodland trails as gentle raindrops filtered through the trees making a comforting sound, not unlike a soft breeze. I walked near the Big Swamp and watched myriads of little splashes as the drops ruffled its surface. I paused and tried with my eyes to penetrate this jungle-like area of Wildwood. I wondered what might be hiding just beyond my view. Perhaps wood ducks or green herons or mallards or muskrats, or maybe even a great blue heron seeking an unlucky frog or small snake with which to feed its young.