

THE ACRES QUARTERLY

Fall 2015 | Vol. 54 - No. 3



ACRES
LANDTRUST

*Bicentennial Nature Trust Award
A Spirited Journey
Following Swainson's Thrushes
Fund Development
Guiding ACRES' Docent Program
Partnerships Persist*

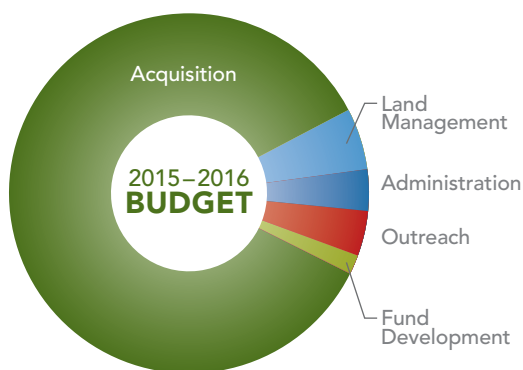
Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

My parents taught me that money should not be valued for its own sake but rather as a tool to invest in things of *real* value. Within that framework, I view bank account balances as a form of potential energy—a resource poised and capable of becoming real value.

ACRES is working through the process of creating value statements. We've operated for 55 years under the assumption that ACRES values land, people, and long-term thinking. But is that all? Why does ACRES value each of these? Does one take priority over the others? When we say we value land, we also mean everything on, in, under and over it—so we also value animals, plants, microbes, soil, fungus, air, water...

Now you begin to see the dilemma. When ACRES receives "potential energy" in the form of money, what is the best way to convert that money into real value? Our budget provides a clear glimpse into the organization's yet un-stated values:



LAND – It's clear from the budget that ACRES values preserving and protecting land. 90% of ACRES' money is invested in the acquisition and management of nature preserves.

PEOPLE – The Outreach budget is invested in connecting people to land, and represents 4% of the total budget.

LONG-TERM THINKING – Administrative and Fund Development expenses (6%) ensure the organization exists now and into the future.

If you are an ACRES member, you've decided to convert your money into the real values that are important to you and that ACRES can help you accomplish. You are ACRES. I am ACRES. Every member is ACRES. When we pool our potential energy, amazing things happen. So far 5,700 acres of land are protected forever. You did that — because of your values.

Thank you, mom and dad, for teaching me (and continuing to demonstrate) where real value is found. Thank you, ACRES members, for recognizing and investing in the real values for which ACRES exists. Just like you, my parents invest in ACRES. They share your values. I share your values. This is why ACRES feels like a family. We share core values.

I ask that you help us express on paper the values for which ACRES exists — the values that guided us in 1960 and the same values that will guide us in perpetuity. Please spend some time and thought crafting value statements, then send them my way. Together we invest in real value. It's time we formally define what that means to us.

Sincerely,

 Jason Kissel

jkissel@acreslandtrust.org
260-637-2273 ext. 2

Cover Photo: Hathaway Preserve at Ross Run demonstrates the value of converting *potential energy*—your financial investment—into land preservation. Thanks to the support of many, the geologically unique Wabash County preserve has been protected since 2007; ACRES members will ensure this and all ACRES preserves thrive, undisturbed—indefinitely.

Photo by Jay Solomon.

WELCOME

28newmembers!

Argast Family
Jeff Bloom
gift from Kathryn Bloom
David and Chris Chafin
Loraine Collins
Kim Dwyer
gift from Mike Biesiada and Jeanine Herold
Jim and Chris Fairfield
Neil Farley
Bill Fenoglio
Carol Gaham
Amanda Goldfuss
John Gospodarek
Bill and Mary Goudy
Sam Hadley
Maggie Hartman

Mark and Elaine Kronberg
gift from Carl and Ruth Deimling
Stan Levine
Gene and Shirley Lind
Ryan and Lydia Morris
gift from Jody and Dale Warner
Lynn Reed
gift from Mike Biesiada and Jeanine Herold
Jack and Joan Richardson
John and Shirley Souder
Barb Umber
Mark Vaughan
gift from Doris Vaughan
Mike Wallin
Tyler and Samantha Yoder
gift from Mark and Mona Berghoff

life members

John and Linda Mowry
Barbara Nohinek and Christopher ZeeCheng

new corporate members

Orbis Environmental Consulting



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tributes

Dave Brumm
from Richard and Linda Hite

Steve and Shannon Bermes
from Tim Gerardot

memorials

Robert and Harriet Dailey
from Kathleen Fuller

Richard Kessens
from Batdorf Family, Duff and Barbara Chaney,
CMS Roofing, Inc., Scott Fath Family, Darryl
Fromm, Gene and Val Evans, Don and
Kathy Havlock, Judge and Mrs. Dan Heath,
Phillip and Patricia Miller, Marie Partridge,
Dick Smith's daughters Linda Ryan, Mona
and Brenda, PBS Company, Inc., Phoenix
Associates, Darrell and Sue Will, Richard
and Vicki Woehner

Art and Betty Seddon
from Leroy and Marlene Rutz

Rickey Spallone
from Voice Services Operators at Parkview
Randallia, Casi Bromelmeier and Michael
Walsh, Ronald Double, Gregory Longtine

Samuel Thompson, MD
from Mark and Cindy Renshaw

Bob and Janet Weber
from Susan Griggs

John D. Stearns
from Atchison Creek neighbors Lori and Chris
Greek, MaryLou and Doug Pence, Melissa and
John Rife, Dan and Maria Schertler, and Judy
and Mike Scholle

Adele Westman
from ALFe Heat Treating Corporate Office
Employees, Hilary Andersen and Sam Day-
Woodruff, Mary Chrastil, Ecomm Systems,
Fine Arts Club, Patricia Garrison, Lettie Haver,
Jane Hite, Jim and Beth Johnston, Joyce Joy,
David Lahman, Lindy and Norma Lybarger,
Claude and Cathie Markstahler, Dave and
Joyce Mills, Robin Morrow, North Manchester
Historical Society, Don and Barb Parrish, Brian
and Jody Pattison, Carolyn Reed, Marilyn
Robbins, Shirley Williams, and Frances Wright

LAND PROTECTION update



Photo courtesy Ellie Bogue, News-Sentinel

Increasing protection of the Cedar Creek Corridor: project earns \$1 million in matching support

Drumroll, please! The waters of Cedar Creek have exerted a mighty pull on the Bicentennial Nature Trust (BNT). BNT has awarded ACRES \$1 million in matching support to acquire land within the Cedar Creek Corridor! The twenty mile stretch of the awarded Cedar Creek Corridor project area starts in Auburn, Indiana, and ends at the terminus of the creek into the St. Joseph River.

The Bicentennial Nature Trust was created to honor Indiana's 200th anniversary in 2016 by preserving and protecting important conservation and recreation areas throughout the state. Multiple organizations statewide applied for BNT matching funds to acquire land, including state parks, city and county park systems, and nonprofits like ACRES. While the Bicentennial Nature Trust has for the past several years supported ACRES on numerous properties, the award limit typically has been \$300,000 per project. BNT raised its limit for significant, landscape-based conservation efforts in Indiana. Only five such awards were granted statewide.



At ACRES' annual dinner November 14, ACRES' members are invited to hike along Cedar Creek, learn about its origin as a tunnel valley system and about the Native Americans who lived on its banks.

*See your **Quarterly** member-only event insert for Annual Dinner details.*

Photo by Claire Cook

The BNT had excellent reasons for choosing the Cedar Creek Corridor for this award:

- Cedar Creek is one of only three rivers in the state to be designated an *Indiana Scenic River* under the 1973 *State of Indiana Natural, Scenic, and Recreational Rivers Act*. ACRES helped the waterway earn this designation in 1976.
- The Cedar Creek Corridor is the largest forested corridor in the region. Riparian (riverbank) and upland forests dominate the area, along with wetlands and gravel hill prairies.
- Vegetation in the Corridor includes the beautiful yellow lady's slipper orchid, gray beardtongue, tall meadow rue, golden Alexanders, and the only populations of Indian paintbrush and yellow puccoon documented in Allen County.
- Wildlife found in the Corridor includes bobcats, turkey, mink, multiple freshwater fish species, river otters, Pileated Woodpeckers, Bald Eagles, Great Blue Herons (including an active great blue heronry with over 75 nests), plus Green Herons and Yellow-crowned Night Herons
- Cedar Creek Geology: Cedar Creek occupies a tunnel valley—a deep, gorge-like canyon cut by meltwater flowing under pressure beneath the glacier. The tunnel valley is trenced into the Huntertown aquifer system, the primary groundwater source within the corridor.
- Recreation in the Corridor includes canoeing, kayaking, fishing, and hiking along ten miles of trails on closed loop systems within individual properties. As ACRES protects more land, linking trail systems will create a unique backcountry hiking experience.

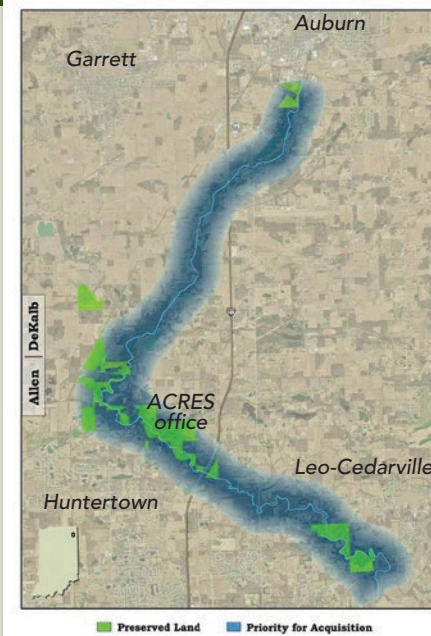
The extension of *Fort Wayne Trail's* Pufferbelly Trail will connect the Corridor to downtown Fort Wayne, Auburn, and eventually, Angola. Partner organizations are also evaluating the potential for canoe and kayak trails through the Corridor.

By providing the required 1:1 match, ACRES will preserve at least \$2,000,000 of additional land within the corridor in celebration of Indiana's Bicentennial in 2016. Together, we will achieve this match through fundraising and the appraised value of discounted or donated land within the corridor.

Thank you, BNT and all the people who will make this possible, for ensuring that more of this significant natural landscape—this unique ecosystem—will be preserved—forever.

The Cedar Creek Corridor provides habitat for a variety of wildlife, including Bald Eagles. Photo by Rhoda Gerig.

Cedar Creek Project Area



ACRES and other land conservation partners have already preserved 1,359 acres of the Cedar Creek Corridor as shown in green. With BNT, community support and land donors, ACRES will preserve at least \$2 million of additional land within the corridor.



A SPIRITED JOURNEY:

HIKING NATURE'S TRAILS

by Lettie Haver with Jeri Kornegay
photos by Lettie Haver

*“When I hike, I want to be able to say,
‘This was gorgeous.’ That’s ACRES.”*

– Mike Saylor

“He left me for dead in the rain. On the Appalachian Trail. I’m not kidding. There’s a video.” That’s how Dave Ray introduces his hiking buddy, Mike Saylor. The two Ohio pastors recently visited ACRES’ office to check out Helen Swenson’s hand-drawn map of Wing Haven, to see the office, and to meet the staff who care for the land they love to hike. And talk about their hiking experiences.

Dave and Mike explain that for them, ACRES preserves provide weekday sabbaticals, personal retreats and group hikes. For overnight backpacking trips, they sometimes get away to the Appalachian Trail or the Knobstone, Clifton Gorge, or Hocking Hills. In between, ACRES satisfies their urge to get outside. “When we discover a new preserve, we get so excited,” says Mike, pastor of Redeemer Lutheran Church of Convoy, Ohio.” Beechwood was our

first preserve. We were heading to Pokagon (State Park) and by accident literally stumbled on the parking area for Beechwood” (ACRES’ 90-acre Beechwood Preserve is adjacent to Pokagon).

“My favorite part about Beechwood is that you’re hiking along the trail and you come to this pond and there’s this bench—the perfect spot to just sit and chill out,” adds Dave, pastor of Jennings Road Church of Christ in Van Wert, Ohio.

Mike and Dave’s Pokagon hikes also led them to 255-acre Wing Haven, 4½ miles north of Angola, Indiana.

“When I hike, I want to be able to say, ‘This was gorgeous.’ That’s ACRES. When you go to Wing Haven, there’s a sense of serenity,” says Mike. “You get a sense that this is a significant spot, there’s a living history, a sense of something bigger than you’re normally used to. The emphasis is on nature. That’s it for hikers.”

Together, and sometimes with groups, the pastors are intentionally stringing together outdoor experiences. They enjoy traveling to their preserve destinations—that sense of journey, then stopping for lunch in small-town diners to support the local economy, getting a real taste for the area (in more ways than one).

For Dave, the best hiking experience is solo. “I need to be alone. It’s Romans 1:20. I am closer to God’s invisible qualities in the woods. Much more easily than I can be in church on Sunday morning.”

“As a pastor, I’m on a different level with guys from my church. In the woods, I’m on equal footing.”

For, Mike, it’s theological, communal, a way to develop friendships. “I’ll lay out a day hike of three or four ACRES preserves. It’s a way to connect with people.”

“Hiking puts us in a different atmosphere,” he explains. “As a pastor, I’m on a different level with guys from my church. In the woods, I’m on equal footing. We’re just friends out there. We can relate in a whole other way, and that carries over off the trail.”



Mike Saylor and Dave Ray hike ACRES preserves as a weekday sabbatical, personal retreat and with groups in between stints on the Appalachian Trail.

That conversation, that connection, is a journey in itself.

“We can’t get to the Appalachian Trail or even the Knobstone every day. There are only so many state parks around for a guy that grew up in the hills of Ohio—and ACRES is much more conducive to the solo hiker” says Dave, who knows that not all hiking is stress-free. He took to group hiking after suffering a heart attack. “There’s the time I fell. It was raining and we were on a canyon cliff. I’m standing on the narrow shelf around the mountain, taking video of the view. Mike’s hiking out to the edge of this plateau, and suddenly I slip.” Mike turns around and yells something inaudible. I shout back, “I’m okay!”

“No!” comes Mike’s reply, “Where are the keys to your car?”



Mike and Dave discover Flat Rock Creek Nature Preserve in Paulding Ohio.

Following Swainson's Thrushes

by Casey P. Jones

My final entry for *Through the Seasons* summarizes previous entries and highlights an online database where you can document your bird observations at ACRES' nature preserves.

I hope this seasonal series has increased understanding of the Swainson's thrush from the two subspecies' evolutionary divergence to the etymological origins of the Swainson's namesake. We uncovered a good time frame for the Swainson's migration through our area and documented where they have been and could be found. Your 2015 Spring Quarterly reviews the narrow window when you might glimpse the thrush: May and September–October.

Most importantly, this article brought an endearing letter from a young ACRES member, Anna, who shared her appreciation and her enthusiasm for learning about birds. *Thank you, Anna!*

Dear Casey P. Jones,

I really like your Swainson Thrush article s. I wish they were longer! Every time a quarterly comes, I look for the article. I think I might have seen one on our deck, but I'm not sure. It might have just been the same color of a Swainson. I wish I could read a different article about them every day!

From,
Anna

Following and documenting migratory birds through the seasons is a useful tool for studying our environment. Since many bird species rely on a particular landscape and food source in our region as they migrate

through or to the ACRES' service area, they serve as an indicator species: their populations' health often reflects the health of their habitat and food source.

Citizen scientists (that's you!) can help document bird species at ACRES' nature preserves through Cornell's Lab of Ornithology eBird website: ebird.org. Grab your 2015 Spring Quarterly again to see how I mined data from that website. At a quick glance, I found six ACRES' nature preserves with "hotspot" species lists established: Asherwood, Bicentennial Woods, Blue Cast Springs, Tel-Hy, Wildwood, Wing Haven.

Since many of these preserves have fewer than 100 species listed, I'm issuing a call to action: *Can you help add all of ACRES properties to ebird.org? Will you share species data from your most frequently visited nature preserve(s)?*

I often find brief, noteworthy-species counts in the sign-in boxes (someone at Culp is a very keen birder!). I encourage you to use this wonderful technology to compile all your observations into one ongoing species list that current and future ACRES' members, staff, and birders everywhere can use to monitor the overall health of our natural areas.

Thank you for following Swainson's Thrushes through the seasons.

Indiana Land Protection Alliance: Your impact grows through shared values.

The ACRES family is a warm, inviting group of people who share a vision for protecting natural areas. Did you know that our family extends beyond our own reach, throughout the state—and even across our country and globe?

The Indiana Land Protection Alliance (ILPA), supported by the Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust, is a collaborative group of land conservation organizations working in Indiana. ILPA representatives include ACRES Land Trust, Central Indiana Land Trust, Indiana DNR, Land Trust Alliance, Little River Wetlands Project, The Nature Conservancy, NICHES, Red-tail Land Conservancy, Sycamore Land Trust, and many more similar organizations.

ILPA's purpose is to share ideas and best practices that strengthen each organization's capacity to fulfill their missions, to coordinate land protection efforts, and to promote awareness of land trusts.

Although we are all in business to protect natural areas, we have varied ways of accomplishing our shared goal. Some organizations have a large staff; many are managed by volunteers only. Some groups have sophisticated systems and processes in place for acquisition, land management, volunteers and fundraising; some take a simpler approach.

As ACRES' director of fund development, I recently had the opportunity to participate in a panel discussion about the fundraising practices of land trusts across the state. My counterparts and I shared stories and information on topics such as donor stewardship, endowments, and planned giving. Attendees had the opportunity to ask questions and share their own anecdotes about what works for their organization. We all gained a wealth of knowledge and inspiration to take home and share with our staff and volunteers.

What really stood out for me: Regardless of how an organization goes about protecting land, the common thread for Indiana Land Protection Alliance members is that our own members' and supporters' efforts in protecting natural areas are both extended and reinforced through this wider network of like-minded people.

You are making an impact, not only here in our own service area, but far beyond as well.



Heather Barth celebrated her 40th by honoring land conservation near and far on the Alpine Ridge Trail at 11,796 feet protected by Rocky Mountain National Park.

Center Spread: "When you go to Wing Haven, there's a sense of serenity... that this is a significant spot." Ohio pastor and avid hiker, Mike Saylor collects his thoughts on ACRES and the value of "Hiking Nature's Trails" near and far on page 6. Photo of Wing Haven in fall mist by Shane Perfect.



GRAND OPENING! SPRING LAKE WOODS AND BOG

Sunday, September 13, 2 pm

ALLEN COUNTY | Spring Lake Woods and Bog
12905 Lake Everett Drive, Fort Wayne, IN 46818

Celebrate the much-anticipated opening of the 107-acre Spring Lake Woods and Bog! Come out for cake and stay for a hike!

This property protects a portion of the shoreline of Lake Everett, Allen County's only natural lake. Featuring areas of upland forests and wetlands, this preserve is home to the four-toed salamander, skunk cabbage, and (nearly 6-foot tall!) cinnamon fern.

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."



PROJECT LEARNING TREE

An Award-Winning Environmental Education Workshop
Saturday, September 26, 8:30–3 pm

ALLEN COUNTY | Tom and Jane Dustin Nature Preserve
1802 Chapman Road, Huntertown, IN 46748

Project Learning Tree inspires students, teachers and volunteers to gain an awareness and knowledge of the world around them and their place in it by using the forest as a *"window to the world."* Material for teachers and other educators, parents and community leaders working with youth from preschool through grade 12. Dress appropriately as part of the workshop will be outside. Please bring your own lunch. *Presented by Mary Ibe and Nancy Eagle.*

Fee for the manual is \$22. Pay at the event. RSVP by September 19: 260-637-2273 or acres@acreslandtrust.org

INDIANA DIVISION OF NATURE PRESERVES FIELD DAY

Saturday, October 10, 10 am – noon

ALLEN COUNTY | Tom and Jane Dustin Nature Preserve
1802 Chapman Road, Huntertown, IN 46748

The ACRES office, originally the home of Tom and Jane Dustin, two of ACRES' founding members, is located on this preserve. Eminent conservationists, Tom and Jane helped pass many of Indiana's most significant pieces of conservation statutes, including the Nature Preserves Act and the Natural and Scenic Rivers Act. The preserve adjoins the Robert C. and Rosella C. Johnson and Whitehurst Nature Preserves. Trails wind through high quality upland, ravine, floodplain forest, and steep bluffs along the north bank of Cedar Creek.

Presented by Ben Hess, IDNR Regional Ecologist and Casey Jones

RSVP to Ben Hess by October 9th at 260-368-7594 or bhess@dnr.in.gov



WALK/JOG/RUN

Thursday, October 15, 5–6 pm

ALLEN COUNTY | Tom and Jane Dustin Nature Preserve Barn
1802 Chapman Road, Huntertown, IN 46748

Entrance to the barn is east of the main entrance to the ACRES office

Pick your own pace as you travel through the Dustin nature preserve. Three groups will leave the Dustin barn—one taking a casual walk through the property, one jogging at a moderate pace, and one motivated group taking a high intensity run up and down the ravine paths of the preserve.

Presented by a volunteer docent guide, Jason Kissel and Mark O'Shaughnessy.

GRANDPARENT HIKES

Saturday, October 17, 10 am

ALLEN COUNTY | Bicentennial Woods
340 E. Shoaff Road, Huntertown, IN 46748

Sunday, October 18, 2 pm

STEBEN COUNTY | Wing Haven
180 W. 400 N, Angola, IN 46703

Share the trail with the children in your life. With activities to engage youngsters, you're bound to experience the preserve anew. If there is one thing Bill loves, it is connecting kids to nature.

Presented by Bill Smith and his grandchildren.



FOREST STORIES

Saturday, October 24, 1 pm

WABASH COUNTY | Mary Thornton Nature Preserve
1541 E. 300 N, Wabash, IN 46992

Join us for story time in the woods. We will share nature stories along a half mile trail through the colorful fall woods, taking time to explore the plants and animals around us. This program is geared towards families with preschool aged children, but all are welcome.

Presented by the Kissel family.



21ST ANNUAL CHRISTMAS SING-ALONG

Sunday, December 6, 2–3 pm

STEBEN COUNTY | Wing Haven
180 W. 400 N, Angola, IN 46703

Gather around a wood-burning stove for an old-fashioned sing-along. Enjoy festive refreshments and celebrate the holiday season at the Wing Haven Studio. *Presented by ACRES friends Art Eberhardt, Jim Shearer, Jeanine Samuelson and Steve Eyrich.*



GEMINIDS METEOR SHOWER

Saturday, December 12, 8:30 pm

WABASH COUNTY | Hathaway Preserve at Ross Run
1866 E. Baumbauer Road, Wabash, IN 46992

Enjoy a crisp winter night watching the meteor shower in the dark skies of rural Wabash County. Bring a blanket or chair to gaze into the sky from—coffee and hot chocolate will be provided. If it happens to be cloudy, we'll look a little closer to the ground and explore the night life of this amazing preserve.

Presented by the Kissel family.

ACRES hosts a growing number of events. Read the full list online:

www.acreslandtrust.org/events

Sign up for our monthly event newsletter at www.acreslandtrust.org/updates



9 Questions from Carol Roberts

Guiding ACRES' Docent Program, Pam George Discovers Where The Wild Things Are

photos by Heather Barth

Maurice Sendak's award-winning children's book brought to life *Where the Wild Things Are*. As a docent, how do you define "wild things" for walkers/hikers?

Sendak's "wild things" were hidden deeply in a child's imagination and represented some of the dark sides of life. But thinking about or actually being in the presence of wild things has a peaceful soothing effect on me. The colors, sounds and scents of the wild are exhilarating. They instill in me a feeling of order, purpose and wonder. If I can instill that sense in others, it's been a successful day!

Why is it important to make nature accessible to people?

Since we have tightly scheduled lives, it's nice to know ACRES offers over 5,700 acres for us to explore and enjoy any time between dawn and dusk.

I've heard you talk about helping hikers develop a personal connection to natural subjects such as frogs, trilliums, woodpeckers and trees. How do you do this?

I share my own fascination, excitement and knowledge when a special plant, animal or geological feature is spotted along the trail. I hope my feeling is contagious enough to inspire others to care about preservation. I try to recreate in the hiker's mind an image of both the geological/natural and human/historical significance of the land. Then the area becomes more than just trees and trails—it comes alive with secrets to share.

Last April you patiently explained to me that what I assumed I was hearing in the Dustin wetlands were not only spring peepers but also western chorus frogs and tree frogs. How did you learn to tell the difference?

We first start to recognize differences in sounds, shapes and smells by relating them (perhaps unconsciously) to experiences we had when we were very young. I first recognized the sound of katydids in the fall while studying late at night beside open windows. The katydids' soothing cadence made doing my homework acceptable.



Pam, a lifelong educator, taught elementary students, supported teachers as a principal, teaches future teachers at IPFW, volunteers for several area nature organizations, co-coordinates the master naturalist program and serves as an ACRES board member. Photo by Sue Peters.

Once you have one piece of information to hook on to, you've made an emotional connection that propels you to just keep learning and adding additional information, year after year. When you reach out to teach others, you gain new insights and add to your own accumulated knowledge, especially in your passion areas. I've been fortunate to play the role of teacher for many years with both children and adults.

I had the honor of teaching the Frog Watch program through the Fort Wayne Children's Zoo and the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. To become a certified "frog watcher," you need to recognize all eleven frog and toad calls for this area! At first I needed to review the calls every year to recognize them in order to do weekly monitoring or teach a new class of citizen scientists. But soon all the calls were recognizable and a permanent part of my knowledge base. This could happen to you too. You'd learn to recognize them the same as you recognize the tone of your cell phone ringing.

Why is it important for people to recognize frog and toad calls?

Amphibians are an indicator species for our earth's environmental ills. They spend part of their lives in water as tadpoles and continue to breathe through their skins as adults. Both conditions make them very sensitive to all kinds of pollutants. Monitoring their presence in an area helps scientists keep track of a community's environmental health.



What is your vision for ACRES' docent program?

That we'll be able to grow so we'll have enough veteran docents to keep our preserves bustling with hikers every week. The more people experience the preserves' beauty and tranquility—the more they interact with nature, the more willingly they'll support ACRES' preservation goals.

Any advice for wannabe naturalists out there?

If you have a deep interest in nature and find it exhilarating to share your passions, take the first step and join others with a similar love of nature. You'll learn answers to new questions and have rewarding experiences while performing a valuable service for the environment.

Who or what has been the biggest influence on your current volunteer work as a naturalist?

I've been fascinated by the biological and natural sciences since the days I spent on my grandparents' farm helping my grandmother clean chickens. My formal entry into the world of interpretation started when I joined the Fox Island Alliance and started attending all their training programs led by a very gifted volunteer naturalist named Vera Dulin. The more I learned, the more I wanted to share with my fifth-grade students. We even scheduled end-of-the-year overnights at Fox Island to immerse ourselves completely in nature.

What one thing should every hiker always bring on an ACRES' hike?

Your sense of wonder and curiosity!

If you wish to share your enthusiasm for the great outdoors with others, contact our volunteer manager Tina Puitz (tpuitz@acreslandtrust.org) about upcoming trail guide training opportunities and look for a training opportunity in the Winter Quarterly.

ACRES offers a series of wildflower hikes in the spring, thanks to volunteer docent guides like Pam, shown here guiding hikers through Vandolah Nature Preserve in Allen County.

SOME PARTNERSHIPS PERSIST MILLIONS OF YEARS

by Pam George

In the fall, helicopter sugar maple seeds brush your face as they spiral downward towards leaf-covered ground. *“Sticktight”* beggars cling to your clothes as you explore an ACRES preserve near you. These seeds are the result of a partnership that has remained intact without a legal contract for millions of years...a partnership between plants and their pollinators.

Most flowers need outside help to achieve pollination. At the same time, pollinators like insects, birds and bats need flowers for food. This reciprocal partnership has resulted in a wide variety of pollinator adaptations and plant attractant strategies.

POLLINATORS

Most insect groups have evolved unique body structures to harvest a flower's nectar. An insect's collecting nectar and, inadvertently, pollen, is similar to fitting a key into a lock. While some insects (such as honeybees) can extract nectar from a wide range of flowers, others are specialists with specific needs.

Insect species' mouth parts vary, some adapted for only one particular plant structure. For example, butterflies use a long, thin feeding tube (proboscis) to suck nectar by capillary action from small, tubular flowers. Because many species of fly pollinators have short, round mouth parts that act like sponges, they prefer wide-open flowers. Other pollinators such as moths seek a flower



Photos by Shane Perfect

such as evening primrose that opens at night when moths are most active due to their keenly adapted night vision.

One very specialized partnership between pollinator and plant directly determines the plants' blooming schedule. The delicate Dutchman's breeches wildflower opens in early spring. The emergence of its bright white blossoms (resembling rows of tiny pants hung upside down to dry) coincides with the emergence of overwintering queen bumble bees.



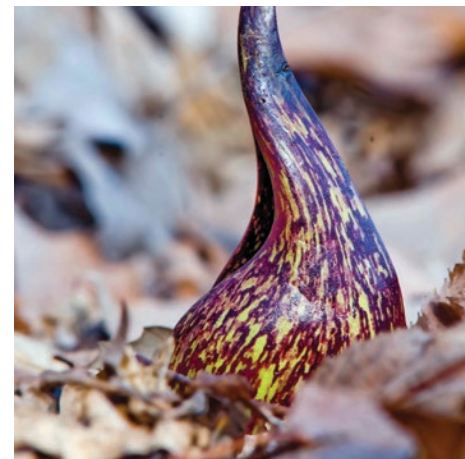
Fall's helicopter sugar maple seeds, acorns, and hickory tree nuts are the result of a partnership between plants and their pollinators.

As the queen bees emerge from hibernation, they bump along the ground in woodlands searching for appropriate nesting sites in abandoned holes, leaf piles or other dry locations. Low-growing Dutchman's breeches' blossoms provide a perfect nectar-rich and protein-rich perfect source for a queen bee's newly constructed nest site. And the queen bumble bees have the right tongue size, length and strength to pry open the upside-down petals on these unusually-shaped wildflowers.

PLANTS

Plants have a number of creative ways to attract pollinators. Plant species that rely on insects for pollination emit a full range of fragrances, from the sweet smell of yellow sweet clover in the fall to the carrion smell of skunk cabbage in early spring. Many flowers use nectar guides or "landing patterns" to direct insect pollinators to nectar sites.

Most commonly, flowers intensify their attractiveness by displaying bright, showy colors. Since most pollinators fly, a flower's colors must attract them from a distance. Thus the brighter the flower, the more likely it will be visited. Shades of red signal a high concentration of nectar.



Some plant species, like skunk cabbage, emit a foul fragrance to attract a pollinator partner.

Adaptations responsible for the glorious colors we associate with fall are byproducts of selective coloration. To decrease competition and provide pollinators with a constant food supply, plants have evolved differing flowering times during their growing season. As the seasons change, different species of insects are busy seeking nectar.

Insect color preferences determine which flowers are blooming during each season (or is it the other way around?!).

Want to compare plants' color adaptation and the subtle change in colors in a spring and fall landscape?

- 1) This fall before visiting an ACRES' preserve, get paint chips/swatches in deep color ranges of blooming flowers, such as deep purple, golden yellow, and sharp red.
- 2) In the preserve, match the paint chips with the blooms and write dates, preserve name/location on each chip.
- 3) Next spring, get a second set of paint chips/swatches that best match spring-blooming flowers, such as soft pink, light purple and mellow yellow.
- 4) Again, mark each color match with date and location.
- 5) Finally, lay the two sets of color patches beside each other. Subtle and dramatic—shade differences for each color family are not accidental. Without these differences, we wouldn't be able to look forward to spring's soft colors or fall's rich, deep colors. Go out and enjoy nature's colorful palette!



How much work can you accomplish with four interns? Five times the amount you set out to do. Here's how our Land Management and Land Protection interns helped ACRES:

DUSTIN CHAFIN

Biology major, Manchester University
Capable of benchpressing the Director of Land Management. Helpful when moving tree limbs after June's windstorm. Participating in a Mourning Dove project with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources.

ALEX CLAUDY

Chemical Engineering major, Trine University
Able to convert between various liquid volume units of measure without using an app. Helpful when mixing chemicals for invasive species management. Also the only intern who doesn't rely on a smartphone to determine which way is north.

REENA RAMOS

Environmental Ecology major, Goshen College
Chauffeured the interns to Miami County on multiple occasions. Also experienced in event planning and helped with National Trails Day and our Open House and Hike.

MASON WILLS

Criminal Justice major, Ivy Tech
Aspires to be a conservation officer. Not afraid to lay down the law when neighbors encroach on and misuse our properties. Moved supplies throughout the region with his truck.



ABOVE: ACRES interns (top left, clockwise) Mason Wills, Reena Ramos, Dustin Chafin and Alex Claudy invested sweat-equity in the removal of 400 tires from a preserve in Miami County.

TOP RIGHT: Scientist Scott Namestnik and interns Dustin Chafin and Reena Ramos conduct a plant inventory at Spring Lake Woods and Bog. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Interns Dustin Chafin (left) and Mason Wills (right) built and installed boardwalk with board member and volunteer, Judge Craig Bobay (center), creating a trail system through Spring Lake Woods and Bog.



Specifically, the interns have:

- Assisted professional botanists with plant inventories
- Removed more than 400 tires from a Miami County nature preserve
- Installed visitor amenities (boardwalks, trail markers) at Spring Lake Woods and Bog
- Found boundaries and posted signs to secure and mark our properties
- Participated with professional forestry management crews to conduct invasive species management, sometimes as part of a conservation program offered and funded by the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)

Thanks to the Olive B. Cole Foundation for funding the internship wages and supplies. Thanks also to Jerry Sweeten, Associate Professor of Environmental Studies at Manchester University and the Lilly Endowment, for providing funding for interns. Grateful thanks and best wishes to our 2015 interns!

SPECIAL thanks

All our *Quarterly* distributors

All our preserve stewards

B&J Rentals

for donating bar and chain oil, chainsaw sharpening services and protective gear

Debbie Branfield, Nancy and Joe Conrad, Bill Kilgore, Chuck Lake, Debra Leinker, Ashley Motia, Toni Mowery, Reena Ramos and Russ Voorhees

hosting National Trails Day celebrations

Mary and Ralph Campbell, Katia Cook, Pam George, Ted and Tedra Hemingway, Julie Henricks, Angie O'Neill, Cynthia Powers, Judy Schroff and Kerry Sharpe

collating the summer *Quarterly*

Larry Eubank

donating USB flash drive

Leonard Gaff

donating finch seed

Heartland Restoration Services

discounting reed canary grass management at Marsh Wren

Ted and Tedra Hemingway

leading a hike for Big Brothers and Big Sisters

Jerry Hetrick, Maggie Hartman and Tera Dillon

helping with invasive plant removal at the office

John Keck, Dave Brumm and Ivy Tech

Construction Trades students

designing and installing new decking at the ACRES office

More Farm Store of Columbia City for a deep discount on new Stihl backpack sprayers

Maggie, Tara, and Dom assisting with invasive species management at Dustin and Kokiwanee

Stephanie, Isaac, Joshua, Nathan, Samuel, Bailey and Charles Enea

planting the landscape bed at the office

Carol Roberts

revising and editing the *Quarterly*

wish list

AA and AAA batteries

ACRES benches (plans provided)

Bird seed

Copier paper (24 pound)

"Forever" postage stamps

7' x 16' trailer for land management

More ACRES members



Dedicated to preserving natural areas since 1960, ACRES manages and protects 94 properties totaling 5,724 acres.



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Photo by Bill Christie

Years ago, before I developed difficulties in walking, I took a pilgrimage of sorts through the 50 ACRES preserves then open to the public. Now I relive walking those trails through the photos I took and my even richer memories.

I mostly walked alone, but sometimes with friends, sometimes with my grown children and wife. The birds of Wing Haven and the trees of Bicentennial Woods. Photos of windswept grass, a wood frog and a scarlet tanager with food for its young.

I still walk those paths in my mind—whether a steep challenge, ponds, prairies, streams or woods—treasuring the changes brought by time and growth. Like then, the moments of discovery remain something to cherish.

— *Ralph Campbell*



Ralph Campbell