

THE ACRES QUARTERLY

Spring 2015 | Vol. 54 - No. 1



ACRES
LANDTRUST

Acquisition Update
Following Swainson's Thrushes
The Journey of
a Baby Great Horned Owl
18th Annual Spring Birdathon
Ralph Gates Nature Preserve
Back Page



Photo by Jason Kissel

Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

We receive a lot of positive comments about each issue of the *Quarterly*. At the office we each have our favorite (occasionally not-so-favorite) issue. People enjoy the *Quarterly* for various reasons such as a particular article, a photo, or the overall design.

The one theme I've noticed about the *Quarterly's* appeal can be summed up in the phrase "it keeps me connected." Occasionally, people mean the *Quarterly* keeps them connected to ACRES the organization. However, most of the time, people explain that the *Quarterly* helps them maintain an even deeper connection.

The *Quarterly* keeps some members connected to friends or family who during their lifetime invested in ACRES. ACRES' members are able to continue the efforts of their loved ones (just as they continue farming Grandpa's fields or making Grandma's grape jelly). Deep connections are made when you place your own shoulder into the work of those who came before.

The *Quarterly* connects some members to nature. Due to physical or other limitations, many cannot interact with nature as often as they'd like. While the *Quarterly* is no substitute for a nature experience, it does deliver us into the natural world, sparking feelings of discovery, immensity, and the tension between complexity and simplicity that nature uniquely provides.

The *Quarterly* connects people to each other in a very broad, collective sense. Each issue of the *Quarterly* is made possible because people willingly ensure something good continues. No one is obligated, taxed, forced, or coerced into donating to ACRES. People donate because they want to make a positive impact, and they trust ACRES to help them do it. Knowing that others share your desire to do good forms a connection between you and people you may not have met. It's reassuring to know that good still exists and is recognized and supported by others.

"The *Quarterly* keeps me connected." I'd love to know what that means to you. Please give me a call, email, or write a letter if you are willing to share the connection the *Quarterly* offers you.

Sincerely,

 Jason Kissel

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

Cover photo: Blue Cohosh, Little Cedar Creek
Wildlife Sanctuary, Allen County by Shane Perfect

WELCOME 26newmembers!

Jon Allmandinger
Lynn Bobay
Ian and Travis Brumm
gift from Dave Brumm and Kim McDonald
Katrina Custer
Peter Dominowsky
Ronald Foster
gift from Larry Gilpin
Stephen Gardt
Tony Green
Robert Hake
Headwaters Ministry, Inc.
Joel Hogle
Hope Huber
Suzanne Lawson
Kenneth Meyer
Bruce Oliver
Ricky Orr
Janet Robinson
Vernon Saggars
gift from Mary Dygert

Janet Schafer
Shane and Angela Turner
Lori Vanderford
Chris Walker
gift from Richard and Noreen Walker
Aaron and Judy Wand
gift from Jim and Connie Richie
Drew and Samantha Welborn

life members

Dave and Tracy Fox



BE PART OF OUR GROWTH.

Scan this QR code with your
smart phone to join today!

tributes

Angie O'Neill
from Alice Kopfer
John and Jackie Horn
from Alderfer Bergen & Co

H.R. Hathaway, MD
from Wendy Eissey
Joe Conrad
from Cindy Molargik

memorials

Matthew Shumaker
from Suzanne Dunn
Evelyn Dygert
from Tim and Kati Dygert, Irene Fesler,
Jim and Kay Fleck, Ross and Marilyn
Gibbons, Paul and Marla McAfee, Sara
Renne Murphy, Vernon and Diane Saggars,
Daniel and Barbara Schifeling, William Tower
and Engrid Vaughan
Eugene Winicker
from Michael and Laura Dauscher
Matthew Shumaker
from Suzanne Dunn
Helen Bussell
from Don and Linda Stebing
Betty Stebing
from Don and Linda Stebing

Samuel Thompson, MD
from Bill and Bonnie Bernard, Thomas
and Phyllis Blee, Virginia Ertelt, Fort Wayne
Medical Society Foundation, Ann Hackett,
Albert Harker, Robert and Janet Joyce, Don
and Kathy Jones, Eleanor King, Margaret
Lyng, Judy Martony, Janet Morse, John and
Jill Nichols, Dan and Angie O'Neill, Rob and
Bonnie Palevich, Dr. and Mrs. James Reid,
Jean Reifenberg, Larry and Pat Rothenhofer,
Jim and Betty Speed, Jim and Nedra Sutter,
Jane Thompson, Dr. and Mrs. J. Phillip
Tyndall, Joe and Wendy Westrick,
William Wharton and Michael Zambetti
Rod Liechty
from Rodney and Sandra Lehman, Roxanne
Leichy and the Family of Lana Schwartz

Since your last *Quarterly*, we closed on four new properties, three in DeKalb County and one in LaGrange County.



JAMES P. COVELL NATURE PRESERVE, DeKalb County, 96.0 acres

Jim Covell first contacted ACRES in June 1999 about protection options for his property just south of Auburn. During the next 12 years, Jim and ACRES developed a good relationship. Jim wanted to preserve his land as a nature preserve but died in 2011 before fulfilling his vision. His brother, Jack, was adamant about fulfilling Jim's vision. This nature preserve protects 2,700 feet along the west bank of Cedar Creek, just 6 miles upstream of the portion of Cedar Creek classified as one of Indiana's three designated Scenic Rivers. The preserve contains approximately 40 acres in agriculture production, 33 acres of emerging upland forest, and 23 acres of mature forested floodplain.

Thanks to the Bicentennial Nature Trust, Jack and Joyce Covell, and many individual donors, ACRES is getting close to securing the funding needed to complete this fund drive.

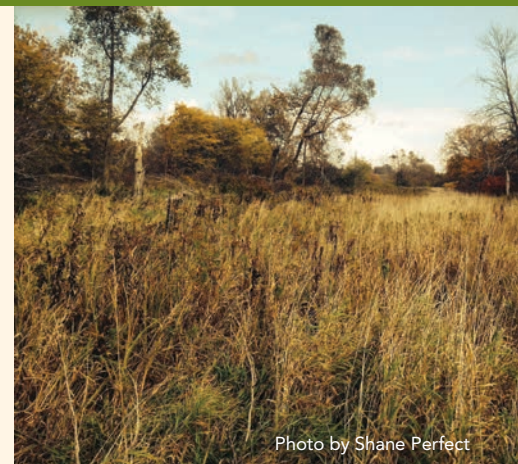
HEINZERLING FAMILY FIVE POINTS NATURE PRESERVE, DeKalb County, 115.8 acres

In 2000, Gretel Smith began talking with ACRES about protecting portions of land that have been in her family since the 1920's. Thanks to Bicentennial Nature Trust funding and the extreme generosity of the five brothers and sisters—Gretel, Johanna, Katrina, Derek and Franz—and a generous anonymous donor couple, we were able to completely fund this acquisition. Black Creek, which flows into Little Cedar Creek and then Cedar Creek, runs through the Heinzerling Preserve. The Preserve also contains a small wetland complex, an agriculture field, and an intermediate forested wetlands and oxbow system. An old interurban rail line and school house once existed on the property.



RABER TRACT, LaGrange County, 32.3 acres

This property was a gifted transfer from the Indiana Chapter of The Nature Conservancy. TNC originally worked with Levi and Irene Raber in 1993 to preserve their land adjacent to the Oliver, Olin, and Martin Lakes complex. (ACRES and the Indiana Department of Natural Resources have several adjacent nature preserve holdings in this complex.) As conservation partners, ACRES and TNC believe this collaboration on the Raber tract is a good strategy as we continue to preserve land within an ACRES' portfolio area. This tract of land has rolling forested topography and a wetland system that provides valuable water filtration of adjacent runoff before it flows into Martin Lake. Thank you to the Indiana Chapter of The Nature Conservancy who helped make this transfer possible.



KARL SLIGER PROPERTY, DeKalb County, 18.5 acres

ACRES had the privilege of first meeting Karl Sliger in May 2007 and hiking his property with him. At that time, Karl was thinking about gifting his property to ACRES



but wasn't quite ready to do so. We kept in contact over the years and received a call earlier this year that Karl had bequeathed his property to ACRES. This property, located about 5 miles southeast of Auburn, was purchased by Karl in 1968 and is comprised of 11.5 acres of woods that Karl selectively harvested timber over the past 40 years, and a 7-acre field previously enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program.

ACRES' only presence in DeKalb County for 54 years had been the northern portion of the Barrett Oak Hill Nature Preserve. Now ACRES protects four properties in DeKalb County. Thank you again to Jim Covell, Jack and Joyce Covell, the Heinzerling family, Karl Sliger, and the DeKalb County community for all their support.

ACRES' Strategic Plan has an aggressive goal of 7,500 acres preserved by the end of 2017. With your help, that goal is now within reach. Thank you!

Following Swainson's Thrushes

by Casey Jones

In this spring issue we continue following the Olive-backed Swainson's Thrush (*Catharus ustulatus ustulatus*), hereafter referred to as swainson's, as it migrates back through ACRES' service area.

Before you grab your 'nocs and go rushing out into an ACRES' nature preserve, know that swainson's will not be migrating through our area until the end of this spring. In the meantime, let this article guide you to specific habitats where you will likely find this bird.

Cornell's Lab of Ornithology eBird¹ website lists these ACRES nature preserves as hot spots: Asherwood Environmental Science Center, Bicentennial Woods, Blue Cast Springs, Tel-Hy, Wildwood and Wing Haven. Using data submitted from these sites to determine the best time and place to find a swainson's, I find that only Blue Cast and Wildwood have reported observations of swainson's. So, we can further narrow this article's scope to microhabitats where the thrush might be found in these two preserves.

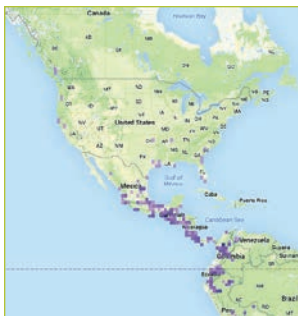


FIGURE 1. Historical frequency of Swainson's Thrushes in March.

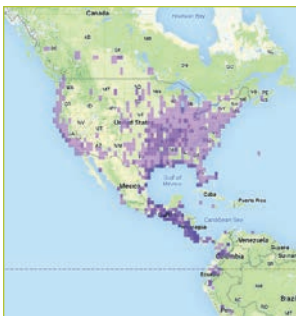


FIGURE 2. Historical frequency of Swainson's Thrushes in April.

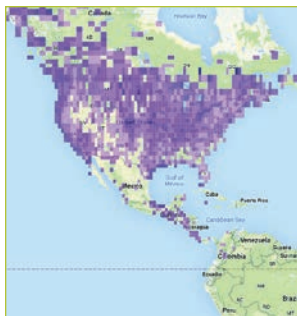


FIGURE 3. Historical frequency of Swainson's Thrushes in May.

Blue Cast Springs has a great number of submissions (90 species and 26 lists) from a couple ACRES' members who have posted their observations to eBird — thank you! So just where at Blue Cast Springs might we expect to find swainson's?

Much like other thrushes in the (*Catharus*) genus, swainson's are usually solitary, typically found in the understory, and frequently found along the damp edges of small openings within woodlands. One location at Blue Cast Springs that fits the bill for this microhabitat is the open grassy area east of the parking lot (you can find preserve maps on our website and purchase them at ACRES' office). While swainson's might not be inclined to perch in the large trees scattered in this area, look to the edges to see if you can find some flittering about as they sally from low branches to the ground, foraging on insects.

As the first *Quarterly* article on swainson's noted, swainson's have been seen in the front yard at Wildwood. Swainson's and other ground-dwelling (*Catharus*) species also have been observed in several other openings at the edges of Wildwood's wetlands and old fields.

This spring, the best time to look for swainson's is between late April and mid-May. I presume this time period presents the best window of opportunity for viewing because of the thrushes' preference for damp areas and the likelihood of seasonal standing water with lower temperatures and less evapotranspiration. Figures 1, 2 and 3 show, by month, the frequency of observations for all Swainson's Thrushes (olive-backed and russet-backed) throughout North America, according to eBird observations (1900–2014)¹. Figure 4 shows the relative frequency per month within the 17-county ACRES service area in Indiana.

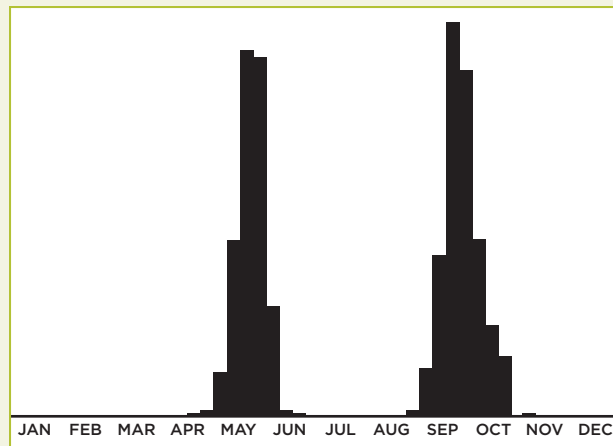


FIGURE 4. Relative frequency of Swainson's Thrush observations by month within the 17-county ACRES' service area in Indiana.

WORKS CITED

¹ eBird Basic Dataset. Version: EBD_relAug-2014. Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Ithaca, New York. Aug 2014.

In the summer *Quarterly*, we'll follow swainson's as they begin to settle down on their northern breeding grounds for the summer.

Have you been following a particular animal or plant species throughout the year? Send your observations to acres@acreslandtrust.org to be considered as an author for our "*Through the Seasons*" article.

THE JOURNEY OF A BABY GREAT HORNED OWL

by Heather DeLorenzo

Photo by Fred Wooley

Imagine a miniature ball of fluff with soft downy feathers and wide, curious eyes, stumbling around flightless its first few months of life. Few creatures can be considered cuter than baby owls (owlets) that resemble stuffed plush toys rather than the wild, fierce, future predators they actually are.

The Great Horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus*) is one of many owls that inhabit forests in and around ACRES' nature preserves. This species is one of the earliest nesting birds in North America, often laying eggs weeks or even months before other raptorial birds in the area. Nesting for the Great Horned Owl begins in January or February, with eggs beginning to hatch in February or March. The average clutch size is 2 to 3 eggs, with a maximum of 6 eggs per nesting season.

As hatching time nears, young owls peep and move about inside the eggs, anxiously awaiting their grand entrance into the world. Once hatched, like all birds, the owlets undergo three distinct phases of development: hatchling, nestling, and fledgling. Many changes facilitate the journey from cute baby to majestic adult Great Horned Owl.

HATCHLING: Newly emerged hatchlings are blind (closed eyes) and weak, unable to stand on wobbly legs or feed themselves. Although hatchlings are covered in a thin coat of insulating whitish-gray down, the female

Photo by Dave Fox

parent continuously remains on the nest for the first couple of weeks, providing warmth via her brood patch, a sparsely feathered belly area with a relatively high density of blood vessels.

Meanwhile, the male parent closely guards the nest and delivers food to his monogamous mate and the hatchlings. Hatchlings clumsily try to hold themselves up and attract attention with a raspy feeding chirp. The female tears retrieved meat into small pieces, carefully placing it into the hatchlings' hungry mouths. Young that are not fed collapse into the nest, immobile until they muster strength to try again.

NESTLING: By the third week, young nestlings can somewhat feed themselves, swallowing whole prey brought to the nest, such as mice and songbirds. If live prey is brought to the nest, nestlings tend to be confused and cautious since they have not yet learned how to kill it. As nestlings mature, their predatory behavior develops. Their natal grayish-white down is rapidly replaced with brownish, cinnamon-colored juvenile feathers; their round facial disk develops, and tufted "horns" begin to grow. Nestlings become increasingly interested in the world beyond the nest's warmth and safety, venturing to the side, stretching, testing wings, becoming more curious about flight.

FLEDGLING: Fledging—learning to fly, is a difficult and often dangerous stage of development for young owls because their flight is still unstable, making them vulnerable to enemies and prone to accidents. Fledging begins at about six weeks when the young begin climbing on branches near the nest. By the seventh or eighth week, fledglings take their first clumsy flight, usually accompanied by a slightly controlled crash-landing on the nearest convenient surface.

Young Great Horned Owls continue to practice their awkward and frantic flight until they are competent fliers (fully fledged) and ready to take on the world—usually by ten to twelve weeks of age. Their characteristics include horn-like tufts of feathers, sharp talons, vast outspread wings, and a piercing yellow-eyed stare. Their deep hooting in the night can raise the hair on the back of your neck. At that moment it's hard to imagine these ferocious predators of rabbits, squirrels, mice and skunk were once cute clumsy little balls of fluff.



Photo by Dave Fox





programs & EVENTS

MAPLE SYRUP MAKING AND PANCAKES

Join us for warm pancakes, sausage and fresh-made syrup. Guided tours of the sugar bush included.

Saturday, March 14, 9 am – 1 pm

Presented by: Bill Harmsen and Jason Kissel

No reservations required.

\$5/person (children under 5 free)

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



Photo by Heather Baker

ORIENTEERING

Saturday, April 4, 2 – 4 pm

Presented by: Casey Jones

Learn how to navigate with only a compass. Instruction will be given on how to use a compass to measure distance by pacing, then teams will be sent out to locate objects discretely placed throughout the nature preserve. Recommended for ages 11 and up, but younger siblings may join a group. This event will take place off the beaten trail system, so wear appropriate clothing (long sleeves and pants) and footwear (no flip flops) and don't forget to bring bug spray!

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

26TH ANNUAL ADOPT-A-TREE FESTIVAL

Saturday, April 18, 10 am – 3 pm

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 black cherry, red oak, flowering dogwood or white pine. Entertainment will be fiddle and dulcimer music and caricature drawings.

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



Photo by Shane Perfect

PLANNED GIVING 101

Saturday, April 18, 10 – 11 am

See page 15 for details.

WHERE: ACRES office, Allen County
1802 Chapman Road, Huntertown, IN 46748

MOTHER'S DAY HIKE

Sunday, May 10, 3 pm

Presented by: The Kissel Family

Treat Mom to a wildflower-filled walk in the woods — or just come on your own (you know you'll make your mamma proud by getting exercise and being in nature). In addition to wildflowers, we'll focus on all the plant and animal moms we encounter along the way.

WHERE: Hathaway, Wabash County
1866 E. Baumbauer Road, Wabash, IN 46992

ACRES' nature preserves host a growing number of events. You can read the full list of activities on ACRES' website. So, check often at www.acreslandtrust.org/events
Events held rain or shine.

INDIANA DIVISION OF NATURE PRESERVES FIELD DAY

Saturday, May 16, 10 am – 12 pm

Presented by: Rich Dunbar, IDNR Regional Ecologist, and Shane Perfect

Join Rich and Shane on a guided hike to enjoy and learn more about the beautiful kettle lakes, marshes, oak-hickory forests and rolling meadows. Sandhill crane, Marsh Wren, Red-tailed Hawk, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Wood Thrush and Blue-winged Warblers might be observed. Of the three spring-fed lakes at the preserve, two are appropriately named Gentian and Little Gentian for the vibrant blue wildflower, the fringed gentian, which grows along the shore.

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

WILDFLOWER HIKES

Sunday, April 12, 2 – 4 pm

Presented by: ACRES

WHERE: Tom and Jane Dustin Nature Preserve, Allen County
1802 Chapman Road, Huntertown, IN 46748

Saturday, April 25, 2 – 4 pm

Presented by: ACRES

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

Saturday, April 25, 3 pm

Presented by: Tony Fleming and the Northern Chapter of INPAWS
Geology and wildflower hike. This 3 mile hike includes many long, steep grades. Limit 15 participants. Register by contacting Tony at lonswantony@cs.com.

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

Saturday, May 2, 3 pm

Presented by: John J. Smith

WHERE: Lonidaw, Noble County
987 N. Allen Chapel Road, Kendallville, IN 46755

Sunday, May 3, 1:30 pm

Presented by: Dr. Dave Hicks and

Tippecanoe Audubon Society

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

Saturday, May 9, 2 – 4 pm

Presented by: ACRES

WHERE: Vandolah Nature Preserve, Allen County
16151 Tother Road, Leo, IN 46765

Sunday, May 24, 2 – 4 pm

Presented by: ACRES

WHERE: Blue Cast Springs, Allen County
21412 Bluecast Road, Woodburn, IN 46797

Please check acreslandtrust.org for more hikes.



Keep up with ACRES on Facebook. Our page is hopping! See event reminders, member-submitted photos, videos and more at www.facebook.com/ACRES.LT

Did you know that since its inception in 1960, ACRES has relied on volunteers? In fact, for the first 32 years of ACRES' existence, volunteers solely ran the organization. Volunteers continue to be a valuable resource to the organization today.



"You gradually come to understand what you're doing is for the generations to come, it's not for yourself. It's forever."

— Dave Brumm
Volunteer Dustin caretaker

Photo by Shane Perfect

According to a 2013 study by the Independent Sector, a leadership network for nonprofits, the value of a volunteer hour in Indiana is \$21.56. More than 100 ACRES' volunteers worked approximately 900 hours in 2014, which means \$19,404 in service was given to ACRES for activities such as:

- Researching
- Writing
- Revising the *Quarterly*
- Preparing the *Quarterly* for mailing
- Delivering the *Quarterly* to distribution spots across our service area
- Monitoring and stewarding our properties
- Helping out at the Blue Jean Gala and other special events

Our 18 Board members are all volunteers. Two people volunteer their time as Recording Secretary and Membership Secretary. One person serves as caretaker of the Dustin home, ACRES' headquarters.

A retired teacher, our volunteer Dustin caretaker, Dave Brumm, shares, "I got out there and I was doing much more physical labor than I ever did and getting much more enjoyment out of it," he said. "I was coming home dead tired—and feeling great." And we know countless others volunteer their time at ACRES' properties without ever telling us.

In addition to directly helping carry out ACRES' mission, these volunteers and their level of volunteerism makes a statement to those from whom we seek funding. ACRES' volunteers demonstrate the commitment that the community at-large has to ACRES. ACRES' volunteers show funders that their financial support goes even further because ACRES isn't paying out-of-pocket for individuals to perform this work.

Dave says the sweat equity he invests in ACRES has had a life-changing effect on him personally, "You gradually come to understand what you're doing is for the generations to come, it's not for yourself. It's forever. How often do you get to do something like that?"

Volunteers have always been—and continue to be—crucial to ACRES' success. To those who give their time, talent, and heart to ACRES—**THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU DO!**

by Heather Barth

LEAVING A CONSERVATION LEGACY

We make no secret that preserving natural areas—the mission of ACRES—is forever.

Have you considered how you might contribute to that concept? Are you interested in leaving a legacy of land conservation that will last far beyond your years? Planned giving is a way to achieve exactly that.

Planned giving allows you to leave money and/or assets to a nonprofit organization at the time of your passing, or a way to invest money allowing you to receive benefits during your lifetime and then donate the remaining funds to a nonprofit. There is a long list of the gifts that can be made through planned giving, with a variety of benefits for each one. Here are some of the ways you can provide a future gift to ACRES:

- Estate Plans
- Bequests
- Retirement Plans
- Life Insurance Policies
- Charitable Gift Annuities
- Real Estate

These gifts ensure ACRES continues to preserve natural areas for future generations. One current member who has made plans for a gift to ACRES says: "The property I live on has been in my family from the original land grant. Since my husband and I do not have children to leave our property to, we decided to give it to an organization that will protect its natural state. My grandparents were very close to the land, and they taught me the importance of conservation and preservation. I am happy to be able to honor them in this way."



Photo by Faith Van Gilder

Please join us for a free information session about planned giving, presented by David Van Gilder, esquire, Partner of Van Gilder & Trzynka. To reserve your spot, call 260-637-2273 by Wednesday, April 15th.

PLANNED GIVING 101

Saturday, April 18, 10 – 11 am
ACRES office

1802 Chapman Road, Huntertown, IN 46748

My grandparents were very close to the land, and they taught me the importance of conservation and preservation. I am happy to be able to honor them in this way."

– Current ACRES member

The information in this article is not intended as legal or tax advice. Please consult your professional legal or tax advisors prior to making any planned gift.

18TH ANNUAL SPRING BIRDATHON, WHERE BIRDS OF A FEATHER COUNT TOGETHER.

With the coming of spring, birds return to nest, raise their young, and fatten up again. What better time for Fred Wooley and the ACRES Avocets to conduct their annual bird count?

This year's Birdathon will take place May 16 when Fred and his team will comb several counties to tally the number of different bird species spotted. Last year's participants donated a record amount of contributions, so let's see if we can match—or even beat—this record! Your part is simple: either pledge per bird species identified or make a flat contribution. Either way, every dollar counts. Challenge Fred and his team to find your favorite bird or give them a special "challenge-bird" to find. Fill out the enclosed form and return it to ACRES by May 11, or register your pledge online at www.acreslandtrust.org/birdathon. All proceeds benefit Wing Haven.

As always, your contribution is tax deductible as allowed by law. Please call Heather Barth at (260) 637-2273 with questions.



Junco by Jon Ingleman



Lettie Haver joins ACRES as Outreach Manager

Hi! I am thrilled to join the dedicated ACRES family!

When introduced to ACRES in 2008, my first reaction was sheer awe—awe at meeting people dedicated to preserving land, at realizing how much I had missed being on the land, and at discovering that, in fact, being with people who love the land—for any reason and for no reason—felt like coming home.

As our Outreach Manager, I will be sharing your stories to connect more people with ACRES. Your honest reflections express the heart of our work for all of our supporters—members, donors, hikers, admirers. We're a membership-based organization—meaning we all play a part in our growth.

We preserve land with you and for you—and for future generations.

I grew up in an old farmhouse in rural DeKalb County surrounded by corn and wheat fields and a meadow. My family devoted countless hours to hiking, exploring, and just being in nature. As a mother of two little girls, I am grateful to be able to share with them the joy of discovering our protected lands. Wide open natural spaces help connect us to our human spirit. They awaken and reset us and are vital to our wellbeing.

I bring ACRES experience in connecting emerging leaders to nonprofits and engaging the region's nonprofit professionals, board members and foundation staff. Most recently, I led outreach for the Paul Clarke Nonprofit Resource Center of the Allen County Public Library.

I am eager to hear your ACRES stories. Our bold, beautiful goals to protect more land for preservation give you a great opportunity to participate simply by sharing your joy for our work. So reach out to me if you have an ACRES tale to tell or pictures to share. lhaver@acreslandtrust.org and follow us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/ACRES.LT



GARRETT MUSEUM OF ART

Art for ACRES

Will take place at the Garrett Museum of Art July 17 through August 16, 2015, with an Artists' Reception July 17, 6 – 8 pm. All 2D and 3D art will be accepted including traditional mediums as well as photography and digital manipulation. The entry fee is \$25 for up to three pieces with cash awards totaling \$400. A percentage of the sales will benefit ACRES. As you visit the preserves, gather ideas, snap photos and create. For more information, visit the Garrett Museum of Art at www.garrettmuseumofart.org.

We've changed our address!

No, we haven't moved, we've added a PO Box. When sending mail to ACRES, address it to ACRES, PO Box 665, Huntertown, IN 46748. Thank you.

RALPH GATES NATURE PRESERVE

by Terri Gorney

Ralph Gates was known as Indiana's conservationist governor. During his one term as governor from 1945-9, he led an effort to acquire Shades State Park, Chain O'Lakes Park, and the Willow Slough Fish and Wildlife Area.

It is very fitting that in 1977 the Ralph Gates Nature Preserve on Crooked Lake was established by his daughter, Patricia, and her husband, Phil McNagny, as a living memorial to him. He loved this area and must have been touched by this gesture. Ralph and his wife owned a summer cottage on Crooked Lake across from what is now an ACRES' preserve given by the family as a gift to ACRES. Long time ACRES' executive director, Carolyn McNagny, was a granddaughter of Governor Gates.

The Ralph Gates Nature Preserve is one of ACRES' smallest—little more than an acre, but what an acre! This scenic wooded point on the Crooked Lake shoreline contains a hardwood-forested ravine. Trees on the property include large beech, maple, ironwood, green ash and shagbark hickory. Great blue heron, green heron, wood ducks, scarlet tanagers and kingfishers are frequent visitors.

At the time ACRES acquired the land, founding board member Bob Weber said that "the McNagny gift is beautiful frosting on the cake, fittingly named to honor Governor Ralph Gates, and the gift symbolizes the determination of his family to see all of the remaining natural shoreline of Crooked Lake preserved." Crooked Lake is one of the cleanest and deepest in Indiana. To the west of the Gates Preserve is the Indiana University Biological Station; to the east is the Crooked Lake Nature Preserve owned by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources. ACRES helped the DNR acquire the 145 acre Crooked Lake Nature Preserve, now a State Dedicated Preserve.

Ralph Gates was born in 1893 to Benton and Alice Cole Fesler Gates. A proud native of Columbia City, he graduated from Columbia City High School in 1911,

earned both Bachelor of Arts and law degrees from the University of Michigan, and served as a Navy Lieutenant in WWI. After the war, Gates returned home to practice law. He married Helene Edwards in 1919. They instilled in their two children, Robert and Patricia, their love of education, civic duty, and nature.

After his term of governor, Ralph and Helene moved back to the same home at 116 N. Wayne Street in Columbia City. Ralph stayed close to his roots and remained active with community causes. Many organizations benefited from his talents. He was an active member of the Whitley County Historical Society and a passionate reader and Civil War buff who wrote for the society's newsletter, *"The Bulletin."* He belonged to the American Legion Post 98, Elks Lodge 1417, and was a Mason. He worshiped at the First Presbyterian Church in his hometown.

The Gates and McNagny families have made northeastern Indiana a better place to live. We celebrate that they are part of the ACRES' family.



Patricia McNagny and Ralph Gates
from the ACRES Archive

SPECIALthanks

Ed Roberts at Roberts Signs
signage on truck
Dick Blick Art Materials
donating art supplies for
Brush and Bottle event
B & J Rental (Columbia City)
donating chain-sharpening services
Gary Crosley
electrical service at the ACRES office
Ralph and Mary Campbell
donating birdseed and chain saw oil
Carol Roberts
editing the *Quarterly*
All our *Quarterly* distributors
Judy Schroff, Ralph and Mary Campbell,
Dave Brumm, Charles Enea
collating the *Quarterly*
Bill Smith
donating copy paper and pens
Sweetwater
discounting live audio gear
ESRI
discounting ArcGIS software

wish list

Postage stamps
Coffee pot with shut off timer
Set of new drinking glasses for the office
Teapot
Birdseed
Flash drives 1 GB and up



Dedicated to preserving natural areas since 1960, ACRES manages and protects 94 properties totaling 5,717 acres.



Like our page at
www.facebook.com/ACRES.LT



1802 Chapman Road
PO Box 665
Huntertown, IN 46748-9723
260.637.ACRES (2273)

email: acres@acreslandtrust.org

acreslandtrust.org

DIRECTORS: Steven Hammer, President; Carol Roberts, Vice President; Joe Conrad, Vice President; David Schnepf, Treasurer; Norm Cox, Secretary; Craig Bobay, John Clark, Pam George, Connie Haas-Zuber, James Haddock, Mary Ibe, Ashley Motia, David Nugent, Angie O'Neill, Mark O'Shaughnessy, Angie Quinn, Adam Turner, Michelle Briggs Wedaman.
Membership Secretary: Mary Anna Feitler; **Recording Secretary:** Sue Diefenbach.

STAFF: Jason Kissel, Executive Director; Shane Perfect, Director of Land Protection; Heather Barth, Director of Fund Development; Tina Puitz, Office Manager/Volunteer Coordinator; Casey Jones, Director of Land Management; Lettie Haver, Outreach Manager.

ACRES Quarterly: Published by ACRES, Inc., at 1802 Chapman Rd., PO Box 665, Huntertown, Indiana, for the interest of its members, friends, and others similarly dedicated to the preservation of natural areas. ACRES, Inc., is a non-profit, charitable corporation, incorporated under the laws of Indiana. Contributions are deductible for tax purposes.

MEMBERSHIP: Life Member, \$1,500; Sustaining, \$500; Corporate, \$500; Club/Organization, \$50; Family, \$40; Individual, \$25; Senior or Student, \$15. Dues payable annually.

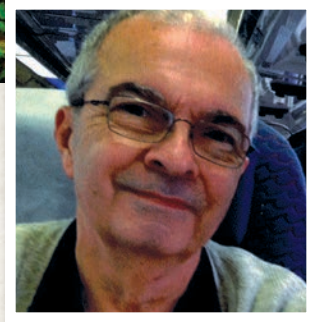


PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

ACRES Land Trust 19



Photo by Shane Perfect



He had just gotten out of the car in the preserve parking lot when there was so much movement in the trees nearby he was reminded of the movie “Jurassic Park.” Of course no dinosaur emerged but about a dozen white tail deer. For ACRES volunteer Al McSweeney, it was just another day in the forest:

“Once you walk into the woods, you never know what to expect,” he says. “There are places in the woods so dense you cannot see the nearby river, there are places so quiet you can hear leaves falling to the forest floor. It’s a whole different world.”