

THE ACRES QUARTERLY

Spring 2017 | Vol. 56 - No. 1



ACRES
LANDTRUST

*New Cedar Creek Corridor Preserve
Home in the Heartland
2015-16 in a Nutshell
Bird Blitz: Count Yourself In
2017 Save These Dates*

From the Executive Director

Dear Members,

Land can produce a seemingly unlimited diversity of plants. Consider a small garden plot. On the same piece of land, sweet corn, green beans, tomatoes, turnips, peppers, radishes, eggplant, and a host of other vegetables or flowers can be grown. Whatever the gardener's whims, the land accommodates.

What seems to me even more amazing is what happens when human whims don't control the land, when people allow nature to decide what grows where. Compared to nature, humans tend to be unimaginative. When we control what grows on land, we often plant one or only a handful of species. By comparison, 300 – 500 different plants commonly thrive in an ACRES nature preserve. Nor does Nature share our desire for uniform design. We tend to grow our plants evenly spaced and in orderly rows. Nature fills our preserves with intermingled plants that appear to be randomly spaced.

When a patch of land is allowed to exist as a nature preserve, natural—not human—processes and conditions select vegetation type (forest, wetland, grassland) and individual species. Boundaries are fluid. Species are interspersed and vary greatly in abundance. The system is also dynamic: as light or water levels change over time, plant communities move.

Nature preserves provide places where nature calls the shots. Of course, people still play a role. We make a choice by preserving land, but within the nature preserve, our choice is largely to remove human choice. In our preserves, we choose not to choose. Our primary choice is to let life unfold largely undisturbed—naturally.

I'm glad land is so versatile. I enjoy its products daily—food, lumber, places to live, commute, and work on. I'm also glad that among these other land uses, ACRES exists to provide places where land can simply be what it wants to be. To many, nature preserves represent "what was" or "what should be"—what the land was meant to produce. Thank you for giving land the ability to determine its own best use. Human restraint can produce unexpected and rewarding results.

Sincerely,

 Jason

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

P.S. I explore this concept further at www.acreslandtrust.org/blogroll through the example of how Kokiwanee went from an agricultural field in the 1940s to today's preserve with over 450 documented plant species.

Cover photo of Virginia bluebells at Kokiwanee by Jarrod Spicer.
Discover what's blooming on a walk through Kokiwanee 2 pm, Sunday, April 30, with Dave Hicks who inventoried the wildflowers of this place. See page 13 for details.



ACRES Land Trust preserves, protects and manages 104 properties totaling 6,157 acres.

You can explore more than 70 miles of trails through forever-protected nature preserves, dawn to dusk, thanks to your member support.



1802 Chapman Road
PO Box 665
Huntertown, IN 46748-0665
260.637.ACRE (2273)
email: acres@acreslandtrust.org

acreslandtrust.org



WELCOME

63newmembers!

Thomas Ahr	Tai and Melissa Gunter from Zack and Vonnie Netzley	Kim Poffenberger
April Allen	Matthew Haddix	David Presdorf
Jeffrey Alexander	Andrew Haddock and family from Jim and Helen Haddock	Sue Randa
Renee Alligood, Kevin Allen and Garrett Allen from a neighbor	Matthew Haddock and family from Jim and Helen Haddock	Kara and Mike Ravenscroft
Michael Andrews	Chris Hartt	Weston Rettinger from Tom and Susan Hight
Jeremy and Rachel Agler from Tom and Mary Jo Bland	Alex Hemingway	Doug Rice
Anna Baer	Alexis Henschen and Beth Dock from Chris Hartt	Barbara Schilling
Pam and Doug Barcalow from Angie O'Neill	Rich and Linda Hite	Susan and Steve Schneider
Jerry and Tina Brinegar from Tim and Barb Orman	Colin Hobbs	Rene Ramos and Lisa Seiler
Margi Brooks from Angie O'Neill	Kurt and Kathy Humbrecht	Greta Sirois
Steve and Pat Brubaker	David and Patricia Janizek	David and Nancy Sites
Bob Burris	Jeremy and Amanda Johnson	Michael Sorg
James and Janet Canino	Jeff Klinefelter from Tom and Susan Hight	Rosemary Stein and Michael Saylor
Alan and Debra Clayton	Chris Lanning	Janet Swick
Jamie Cochran-Smith and Andrew Smith	Stephanie Linehan	David Tracey
Steve Conover	Lawrence Ludberg	Scott Truitt from Al and Sue Diefenbach
Tom Crowe	Jim and Karen Martin	Marc Vona from Chelsea and Ben Rittenhouse
Catherine Dunmire	Nick and Tara Meyers Family from Tom and Mary Jo Bland	Larry and Barbara Wolf
Ken and Lisa Esquivel Long	Justin Norris	
Melanie (Haddock) Fortman and family from Jim and Helen Haddock	Doug and Marilyn Nyffeler	
	Jim and Christine Olney	
	Stephen Parry	

tributes

H.R. Hathaway from Wendy and Mark Eissey	Angie and Dan O'Neill from Alice Kopfer, Anonymous
Ted and Tedra Hemingway from Sue Randa, Dave Winebrenner	Bill Kilgore from Ev Kilgore

memorials

Robert Brooks from Barb and John Kowalczyk, Martha Kowalczyk, Hannah and Hans Uslar	Ted Hemingway from Barbara Boerger, Margit Codispoli, James and Georgeann Johnson Coffey, Tom and Pat Dendingen, Andrew and Margaret Dirksen, Emily Drayna, William and Sarah Hathaway, Eric and Mary Helfrich, Deborah Kaiser, James Knipe, Elizabeth Kokosinski, Louise Larsen, Doug and Barbara Morrow, Ed and Cynthia Powers, Rita and Tom Rokbus, Keith and Linda Schrimshaw, John and Sue Spears, David Tracey, Angela and Shane Turner, Dave Winebrenner, Jerry and Sharon Zonker
Ted Heemstra from Brad and Judith Truax	
Ruth Kern from Noel and Patricia Holmgren, Shirley Needham and Bill Kern	
Matthew Shumaker from Suzanne Dunn	
James, Tory and Chris Smith from Sharon Pool-Smith	
Eugene Winicker from Laura Dauscher	

PROTECTING LAND

Cedar Creek corridor gains newly protected land:

Joan Garman honors husband, donates 84 acres of forest, wetlands and farm ground

By Jeri Kornegay

Photos by Thomas Sprunger

Terry Garman always knew the 84 acres of vibrant woods, wetland and farmland his parents, Ray and Dorothy Garman, had originally purchased in the Cedar Creek corridor in 1945 was special and worth preserving.

Through the years, he made careful farming and land decisions, mindful that his property was a rarity bucking the development boom along the creek's scenic corridor. Terry Garman turned to conservation farming methods and advice to preserve nature and his parents' legacy.

In 1995, Terry retired as a physical education teacher from Highland Terrace Elementary School in New Haven, having served both Fort Wayne Community and East Allen County Schools for 33 years. Terry Garman died in September 2013 after coping with Parkinson's disease for 18 years. He was 71.

In December 2016, Joan Garman continued his conservation ethic by donating their land to ACRES in memory of her late husband's vision and to honor his family's years of hard work and history on the land.

"The Dorothy and Ray Garman Nature Preserve provides examples of many of the natural systems that stretch through the Cedar Creek corridor," says a grateful Jason Kissel. "It's our privilege, thanks to our members, to promise to protect this place forever."

LEARNING, LOVING THE LAND

"I just feel right about this decision," says Joan. They eloped to Hicksville in 1978 after Terry's proposal promise to buy her a horse if she'd marry him—an offer she couldn't refuse.

"When I moved here, I thought I'd died and gone to heaven. I didn't know 'beans from apple butter' about farming, but we did everything together. If Terry was out on the tractor, I was riding on the fender."

In 1989, the Garmans built their A-frame home, planting a former hayfield with trees and flowers: daffodil bulbs, hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of them, perennials and annuals, too. "You can never have too many flowers!," says Joan.

The Garmans were a poster couple of enthusiasm and energy for a Parkview Physicians Group wellness program, says cardiologist Mark O'Shaughnessy, an avid ACRES board member. The couple remained active, Joan powering the wheelchair long into the challenges of Terry's rapidly progressing Parkinson's.

Today, Joan is semi-retired, having worked as a speech therapist for 28 years. Following Terry's diagnosis at the age of 35, she retired early so they could spend time and work the farm together, until he could no longer operate the tractor. Today she is a part-time activity assistant for The Cedars retirement community, returning to the land for sustenance each day.

HAVEN FOR FARMING AND WILDLIFE

Butterflies, Wood Thrushes, Pileated woodpeckers, Wood Ducks, bluebirds and bees swoop through the wetlands among the native buttonbush and berry bushes. Joan attracts and raises monarch butterflies, sharing chrysalises and caterpillars with children of all ages. The property is rife with milkweed, mainstay to monarchs.

About 62 acres gently roll in agricultural fields. In 2010, four busloads of Indiana farmers toured the property with the Natural Resources Conservation Services

to witness first-hand the land nurtured with Garman purpose and love. It was a proud moment for Terry Garman.

ACRES will conduct a thorough inventory of the land's wildlife and botany this spring.

CEDAR CREEK ECOSYSTEM

The Garman property is just north of Metea County Park, just down the road from another ACRES preserve in the Cedar Creek corridor, the 30-acre Orion Woods.

Committed to protecting the ecosystem of the Cedar Creek corridor forever, ACRES preserves stretch from the new Garman Preserve acquisition northwest about 9 miles to Barrett Oak Hill Nature Preserve, then past the Heinzerling Family Five Points Farm Nature Preserve in Garrett to the James P. Covell Nature Preserve south of Auburn—a total of 833 acres.

Development interest on this property was very high due to its scenic nature and location. Joan Garman, determined to enable ACRES to preserve her husband's legacy forever, places a higher value on the land than the generous offers she repeatedly received from developers.

The Dorothy and Ray Garman Nature Preserve is closed as a life estate and working farm.

"When I moved here, I thought I'd died and gone to heaven. I didn't know 'beans from apple butter' about farming, but we did everything together."



HOME in the HEARTLAND: Inhabiting your place with local artists and writers Bonnie Fortune, Brett Bloom and family

By Teresa Vasquez

In 2015, Brett Bloom and his wife, Bonnie Fortune, began posting Instagram photos of their family's ACRES hikes. These fun, frequent images and notes reveal deep connections to place and deep thinking about land use. To better understand their perspectives, writer Teresa Vasquez and her son Miles (6) recently explored Vandolah Nature Preserve with Bonnie, Brett, and their daughters Ada (5) and Evie (2).

Early December, 2016, Bonnie Fortune and her husband, Brett Bloom, and their daughters, Ada and Evie, plan to meet my son Miles and me to hike Vandolah Nature Preserve. When Miles and I are arriving at Vandolah later than we had wanted to, I text Brett and he writes back, "Cool. We are here and picking up trash. See you soon."

Brett (originally from Fort Wayne) and Bonnie (originally from Nashville, Tennessee) are artists and writers who greatly value connection with nature, ecology and community. They've been living about a year in rural Auburn, after returning from Denmark.

During the five years Bonnie and Brett's family resided in Copenhagen, Denmark, Brett taught at a fine art academy. In 2014, his collaborative Half Letter Press produced *An Edge Effect: Art & Ecology in the Nordic Landscape*, edited by Bonnie.

When asked to compare Danish and Hoosier approaches to the land, Bonnie cited some stark differences: "The majority of Danes are indigenous to their land... culture, language, food, etc. come from the land and sea. Most Hoosiers are not native, not indigenous to this place. **Love of Indiana is very strong for many people** (Brett's family has been here six generations), **but this can't replace thousands of years of intact relationships to where one is from—to the land.**"

How do we meaningfully connect with local wilderness when we don't have indigenous, multigenerational, [and multi-faceted] ties to the land?

"In Denmark there is a conscious effort to limit sprawl...and to integrate giant green spaces into the planning of regions that also contain major cities," Bonnie explained. "We miss walking and biking and taking public transportation everywhere in Denmark. That is why we love ACRES. It has been such a haven for us. Some ACRES sites are so satisfying in terms of the raw natural encounters one can have."

"We hold the need to be in these places deep in our DNA. The search is for the connections that emanate from this place, that inspire love of place, give transcendental awe at the complexities of life," said Brett.

"Part of healing ourselves will be to heal our landscapes. We are always looking for wild places. Instilling a love of nature is an important value to teach our two girls."

Bonnie shared some of Denmark's innovative approaches to children's experiences in nature. **"Denmark places a priority on frisk luft [fresh air]...In "outgoing Kindergarten,"** city kids take



a charter van every day out to the woods where they are cared for outside all day in all weather."

About 2/3 of the way down the Vandolah trail, we have a hearty laugh at Evie's ease outdoors: riding in her carrier on her mother's back, Evie has closed her eyes, relaxing into a backwards arc. As we loop back through the ravine, Ada and Miles finally connect on the trail at the foot of a tree whose trunk is growing almost parallel to the ground.

Bloom and Fortune will be creating a "Deep Map" (similar to those in Bloom's book *Petro-subjectivity: Deindustrializing Our Sense of Self*) of multiple aspects of ACRES lands. The map will include flora, fauna, geography, geology, historical data, ownership, usage, and visitor data, all pertinent to ACRES' planning and stewardship. Brett explained: "We are helping visualize all the different reasons people engage ACRES, the various things that happen when land is preserved."

EXPLORING THE PRESERVES

No place like home:

What wildlife returns to spring woodlands and wetlands?

Art Hammer Wetlands

by Fred Wooley

As days lengthen and air warms, wildlife react to internal clocks triggering seasonal changes in their behavior. Most animals not migrating to warmer climates stay active in our ACRES preserves. Raccoons, squirrels, skunks, deer, fox, rabbits, weasels (the list is long!) hole up or hunker down on only brutal winter days.

Early spring thaws nudge snoozing woodchucks and jumping mice from subterranean burrows, and in near-calendar/clockwork timing, amphibians and reptiles reappear above ground.

After a few 50-degree days, spring peeper frogs stir from muddy marsh bottoms and pop to the surface, their piercing “peep!... peep!... peeps!” punctuating the air. They are soon joined by slightly larger (but still tip-of-the-index-finger-size) chorus frogs sounding like fingernails pulled across stiff plastic combs. You can’t miss this welcome sign of spring on the preserves.

As soon as the chorus frog serenade has risen and fallen, slightly larger (end-of-thumb-size) wood frogs begin calling from more wooded wetlands. Perhaps my favorites, wood frogs sound like a gathering of ... persistently quacking ducks. Their callings are as ephemeral as surrounding wildflowers, sounding as the ground warms, fading into the background as fast as they appeared.

Like frogs, salamanders crawl from muddy winter slumbers to make their way to vernal ponds to mate and lay eggs before returning to surrounding woods. Although salamanders are not vocal, keen observers will spot balls of gelatinous egg masses attached to twigs submerged in small spring wooded pools (vernal ponds).

You’ll find these pools in ACRES preserves such as Dustin in Allen County, Art Hammer Wetlands in Noble County, Wildwood in Kosciusko County, Fawn River in LaGrange County, Beechwood in Steuben County, Mary Thornton in Wabash County.

Pull into the preserve on a warm day to immediately smell spring: the richness of damp earth and decaying organic matter released from the cold, and to hear spring birds above, distant frogs below. (“Distant”? Sneaking up on noisy, male frogs brings instant silence. So you smile, staring into water and mud, hoping patience will finally produce a glimpse of the serenaders.)

Between the vernal ponds, seek signs of disturbed leaves and debris around stumps and fallen logs where larger animals are emerging. I once stumbled upon a mud-covered box turtle whose trail of upturned leaves led to a cavity beneath a rotting tree stump. It dawned on me the turtle had just emerged from hibernation, and I was lucky to see its first steps into the new year!

These first days of spring, the sight of any turtle is exciting. Think about it. Sometime in autumn, water turtles take a last gulp of fresh air before retreating to muddy bottoms of small pools and



wetlands where they nestle for months. Absorbing oxygen only through water brought into their cloacae/anal vent, their body processes slow to near death. As days lengthen, they stir from the mud, paddle to the surface, break into sunshine to inhale their first breath of fresh air in months...ahhh...!

Perhaps we can all relate to entering springtime woods and wetlands after a long winter. It’s good to be home again.

You can follow the return of wildlife to the preserves from the trails—and from videos on our blog. Visit often for the latest wild homecomings: acreslandtrust.org/blogroll



Photo by Jerry McCoy

Center Spread by Jarrid Spicer photographed at Beechwood Nature Preserve. Beechwood boasts a mix of natural systems: forest, rolling meadows and this fen. Of course, spring wildlife and wildflowers are as varied as the habitat that you help to protect. Will you venture out to enjoy the results of your support?



SHARE THE TRAILS HIKES

Saturday, March 4, 10 am

STEBEN COUNTY | Ropchan Wildlife Refuge
4990 N. SR 827, Fremont, IN 46737

Explore varied landscapes: forest, wetland and once-cultivated field in succession.

Saturday, April 1, 10 am

ALLEN COUNTY | Blue Cast Springs
21412 Bluecast Road, Woodburn, IN 46797

Enjoy wildflowers along a flat hike to bluffs over the Maumee River.

Saturday, May 6, 10 am

NOBLE COUNTY | Lonidaw
987 N. Allen Chapel Road, Kendallville, IN 46755
Trillium blanket Lonidaw in the spring!



PRESERVE WORKDAYS

Saturday, March 4, 10 am

WABASH COUNTY | Asherwood
7496 W. SR 124, Wabash, IN 46992

Clear trails and help collect sap for maple syrup making.
Hosted by Jason Kissel.

Saturday, April 29, 10 am

NOBLE COUNTY | Detering Nature Preserve
1421 Kammerer Road, Kendallville, IN 46755

Help remove the non-native invasive Tree of Heaven and clean up trails.

Saturday, May 20, 10 am

KOSCIUSKO COUNTY | Wayne Township Property
Just west of Eastlake Skating Center, 3010 Frontage Road, Warsaw, IN 46580
Plant little bluestem plugs restoring this unique remnant prairie.
Hosted by Casey Jones.

TAI CHI FOR MEMBERS

Saturday, March 4, 2 pm

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

Tai chi calms the mind and helps build balance. What better place to relax and move like clouds and water? Practice seated or standing; all are welcome. Instructor Pamela Steinbach studied with tai chi Master T.T. Liang and has taught in Fort Wayne since 1986. Space is limited. *RSVP to outreach@acreslandtrust.org or 260-637-2273.*

MAPLE SYRUP MAKING & PANCAKE BREAKFAST

Saturday, March 11, 9 am - noon

WABASH COUNTY | Asherwood Environmental Center
7496 W. SR 124, Wabash, IN 46992

Join us for all-you-can-eat pancakes, sausage, and freshly made maple syrup plus a guided tour of the syrup making process. *Presented by Bill Harmsen and Jason Kissel.*
No reservation required. \$5 / person, children under 5 free.



Photo by John Raub

GEOMETREE

Saturday, April 15, 10 am

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

Learn several ways to measure a tree's height and diameter—using specialized tools and simple geometry. *Presented by the Kissel Family.*

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS: CALLING ALL TURKEYS—FOR MEMBERS

Saturday, April 22, 5:50 - 8:50 am or 5 - 8:30 pm

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

See wildlife up close! Evan Hill, land management specialist, will attempt to call in turkeys. Be on time and wear earth tones or camouflage to prevent scaring off the wildlife. Though you will be hidden in a blind, turkeys have excellent eyesight. Bring your camera and your sense of adventure! Space is limited. *RSVP to either the morning or evening program at outreach@acreslandtrust.org or 260-637-2273.*

28TH ANNUAL ADOPT-A-TREE FESTIVAL

Saturday, April 22, 10 am - 3 pm

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

Celebrate protected land! Activities for all ages: build a birdhouse, and take home a tree. *Presented by ACRES friends Art Eberhardt and Jim Shearer.*

"POTS AND POTLUCK" FOR MEMBERS

Thursday, April 27, 6 pm

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

Break bread and celebrate spring with fellow members! We will provide the entrée; last names A-L please bring a side dish, and M-Z a dessert. Discuss readings from many writers. Take home a native plant or tree. *Hosted by Theresa Ransbottom.*
Space is limited. RSVP to outreach@acreslandtrust.org or 260-637-2273.

WILDFLOWER HIKE FOR MEMBERS

Sunday, April 30, 2 pm

WABASH COUNTY | Kokiwanee
5825 E. 50 S, Lagro, IN 46941

Discover waterfalls, and a diversity of wildflowers on land cultivated as recently as the 1940s. *Hosted by Dave Hicks. RSVP to outreach@acreslandtrust.org or 260-637-2273.*



WILDFLOWER & GEOLOGY HIKE FOR MEMBERS

Saturday, May 6, 3 - 5 pm

NOBLE COUNTY | Edna W. Spurgeon Woodland Reserve
9478 N. 600 W, Ligonier, IN 46767

Learn how this preserve's rolling hills were created and discover 15-25 species of wildflowers. *Hosted by John J. Smith and Tony Fleming.*
RSVP to outreach@acreslandtrust.org or 260-637-2273.



FISCAL YEAR 2015 – 2016 IN A NUTSHELL

You and your fellow members and supporters have advanced our mission in many ways:

1,100 NEW FOLLOWERS

began following ACRES' story and sharing photos from the trails on Facebook and Instagram.

MORE THAN 1,000 NEW AND RETURNING PARTICIPANTS AND MEMBERS ALIKE SHARED IN 40 EVENTS & PRESENTATIONS:

guided hikes, arts, literature & wellness programs, volunteer workdays and training, private presentations and hikes, and an exclusive member-only hike on a closed property.

1,257 MEMBERS

took responsibility for protecting land.

MORE THAN 150 VOLUNTEERS LENT A HAND

on the land, on the trails, in the community and at the office for a total of nearly 2,500 hours, an estimated value of \$56,725 in labor.

YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS' AVERAGE* GIFT WAS \$308.91.

Our largest gift from an individual was \$64,000 and the smallest was \$1.00. Contributions from families, individuals, local businesses and foundations totalled \$1,963,445 in support.

**Excluding land donations, memberships and in-kind support.*

YOUR INVESTMENT: FINANCIAL REPORT (July 2015 – June 2016)

NET WORTH

Value of Nature Preserves	\$17,180,619
Bank Accounts	\$1,020,588*
Equipment	\$89,675
Investments & Endowment	\$3,648,387
TOTAL	\$21,939,969

**\$500,000 is restricted as a self-loaning account for new acquisitions.*

REVENUE / EXPENDITURE STATEMENT

Revenues	\$1,963,445
Expenditures	\$765,936**
Net Revenue	\$1,197,509

***By accounting standards, cost to purchase land is considered a 'transfer of an asset' and cannot be shown here as an expenditure.*

Your collective action led to protecting the land you love:

- Protecting our first working tree farm, Claxton Woods in DeKalb County.
- Opening Spring Lake Woods and Bog nature preserve in Allen County.
- Planting more than 50,000 native hardwood trees, reforesting more than 80 acres.
- Providing and maintaining more than 70 miles of trails through natural areas, 66% of which, or 48.2 miles, are maintained by volunteers.
- Offering countless families, friends and solo hikers natural places to explore, run, meditate, take photos, watch birds, romp, make memories and celebrate land.
- Protecting 248 new acres of working land and natural area, permanently for a grand total of 5,590.34 acres owned and permanently protected.



Joe and Nancy Conrad (left) share a laugh with Mark Maffey (right) during our members-only hike in Claxton Woods.

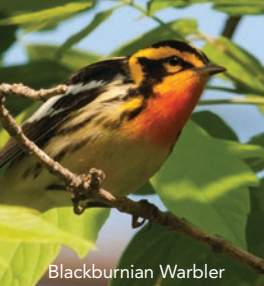


Member Tom Hartz meets Jim Claxton (left) while Martha (Claxton) Coffing chats with Bill Claxton, who permanently protected his tree farm with ACRES in 2015.

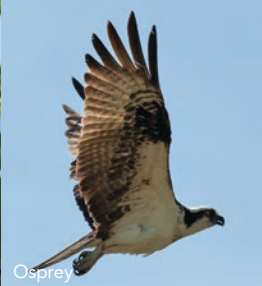
Your contributions also supported these and untold other results that can never be measured:

- Countless species lived and died by the laws of nature, undisturbed.
- Air, water and soil quality got a boost.
- Quality of life *for all lives* increased.

*Can you imagine the results of your support in another 200 years?
Can you envision what forever holds for these places in our care?
Thank you for investing in forever, today.*



Blackburnian Warbler



Osprey



Scarlet Tanager



American Kestrel



Eastern Meadowlark

Photos by Dave Fox

ACRES' FIRST BIRD BLITZ: COUNT YOURSELF IN! *Bird-A-Thon* comes home*

The ACRES Bird-A-Thon has been refreshed and is now the ACRES Bird Blitz! Exciting changes include:

- *YOU can now count birds, either as an individual or on a team, on ACRES preserves*
- *A celebratory wrap-up party will be held at the end of the count day*

SATURDAY, JUNE 3, 12 AM TO 6 PM

Final tally and after-party for bird counters begins at 6:30 pm

Land-lovers appreciate ACRES properties in unique and varied ways. Some hike while others take photos, create art, or simply take comfort knowing these special places exist.

Participating in the new ACRES Bird Blitz is one more way to experience your favorite preserve. You can count birds as an individual or put together a team of your friends and family. If counting isn't your thing, cheer on those counting by making a pledge per species identified.

BIRD COUNTERS

Join us for an after-party to celebrate your hard work! Report your final tallies, learn who spotted that elusive Green-tailed Towhee and enjoy a meal with your fellow ACRES supporters. Door prize drawing that night!

- *\$5 per person registration fee. \$25 for a team of 6*
- *Registration fee includes a t-shirt and meal*

BIRD BLITZ PLEDGERS

Join the fun. Your pledge protects land. You will be notified of our success and your pledge total after the event. Thank you!

**Why a Bird Blitz instead of a Bird-a-Thon?*

A Bird Blitz will engage as many of you as possible on the land you protect together. A bird-a-thon is a formal count with strict rules for who counts and where. Though more informal, a bird blitz helps to establish a snapshot of all species present in our region. With your help, we'll add to the counts on Cornell University's Lab of Ornithology at ebird.org.

TO PLEDGE OR REGISTER TO COUNT clip and mail the appropriate coupon below to: **ACRES Land Trust, Bird Blitz, PO Box 665, Huntertown, IN 46748.**

Or, submit your registration and pledge online at acreslandtrust.org/birdblitz

Please contact Heather Barth with questions. 260-637-2273, ext. 5 or hbarth@acreslandtrust.org

2017 BIRD BLITZ

Registration and payment due Friday, May 5

Team Captain (or solo counter)	Team Member Names and T-Shirt Size (Up To Six, Including Captain)
Name	1. (captain)
Address	2.
Phone	3.
E-mail	4.
Team Name:	5.
ACRES Preserve(s) you plan to count:	6.

2017 BIRD BLITZ PLEDGE CARD

☐ I would like to pledge \$_____ per species of bird identified

☐ I would like to make a flat donation of \$_____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ ZIP _____

Favorite Bird: _____

\$5 extra pledge if identified



SAVE THESE DATES!

Bird Blitz

Saturday, June 3. See pages 16–17 for details.

The Matchsellers Barn Concert

Thursday, June 8, 6–8 pm

Volunteer Appreciation Dinner

Thursday, June 15, 6–8 pm

Summer Barn Concert for Members Only

Thursday, June 22, 6–8 pm

Instead of a our Fall Barn Series, why not a summer night in the barn?

Annual Member Meeting & Picnic

Sunday, September 17, 1–4 pm

Art for ACRES Opening Reception

Friday, September, 22, 6–9pm at Artlink Contemporary Art Gallery. Show runs September 22–October 27.

HIKES & EVENTS *continued from page 18*

ALL AGES PRESERVE PLAY DAY

Sunday, May 7, 1–4 pm

ALLEN COUNTY | Tom and Jane Dustin Nature Preserve

Wanna play? Gather friends and family and come see the preserve in new light. Create a nature journal, co-create temporary natural art, and share the trails on a guided play hike for all ages. Bring the whole crew, leave your worries at home. We'll provide light refreshments and spectacular views from forever-protected land.

BOOK DISCUSSION

The Hidden Life of Trees by Peter Wohlleben

Monday, May 15, 6–7:30 pm

KOSCIUSKO COUNTY | Warsaw Community Public Library
310 East Main Street, Warsaw, Indiana 46580

Does Wohlleben's writing impact your view of the preserves? Learn what other folks take away and share your own experience with this international bestseller by a German forester.

FOREST BATHING FOR MEMBERS

Tuesday, May 23, 6 pm

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

Spring clean your senses! Join Christy Thomson, Indiana's only certified forest therapist, for fun, simple activities to refresh your connection to the natural world. Space is limited. *RSVP to outreach@acreslandtrust.org or 260-637-2273.*

WILDFLOWER & GEOLOGY HIKE FOR MEMBERS

Saturday, May 27, 3–5 pm

NOBLE COUNTY | Lloyd W. Bender Memorial Forest
1891 N. River Road W, Albion, IN 46701

Here, you'll find diverse habitats and wildflowers that you won't see in many other ACRES preserves. *Hosted by John J. Smith and Tony Fleming. RSVP to outreach@acreslandtrust.org or 260-637-2273.*

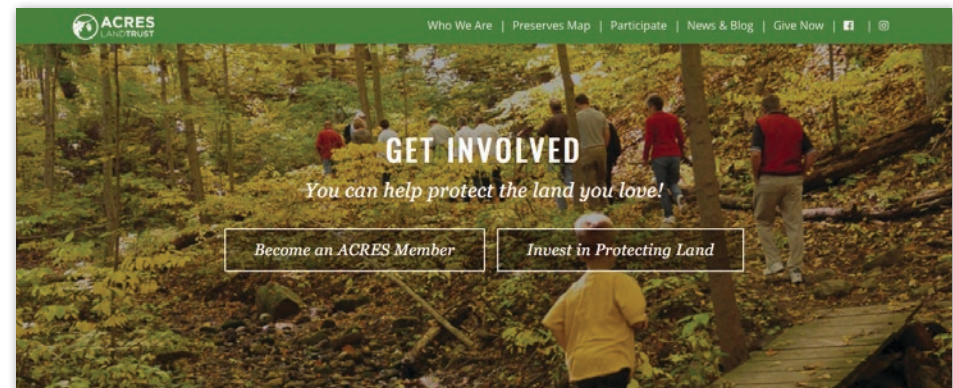
Our *Quarterly* distributors
Preserve Workday crews
Pam George, Chuck Lake, Carol Spallone
and Kirk Swaidner
leading Share the Trails hikes
Theresa Ransbottom
reading at our cookie exchange
Cheryl Piropato
auditing and supporting marketing
Dave Brumm, Laura Colpitts, Louise Pomeroy
helping to mail our year-end letter
Marti Berry, Ralph and Mary Campbell,
Laura Colpitts, Carol Gaham, Marjorie
Greene, Pam Morton, Angie O'Neill,
Judy Schroff
collating the *Winter Quarterly*
Dave Brumm
constructing a new barn stage and
providing supplies
Carson Boxberger
providing in-kind services
Thomas Sprunger
providing preserve photography
Jeri Kornegay
volunteering to write and providing coffee
for office
Carol Roberts
editing and revising the *Quarterly*



This what pride of place looks like! Thanks to Heather DeLorenzo for voluntarily cleaning up garbage at Hanging Rock while hiking. Do you help us pick up the preserves when you're exploring? Thank you!

wish list

Gift cards for refreshments
"Forever" postage stamps
Invitations to present ACRES to your group
Logo embroidery for staff apparel
Copy paper
Flash drives 1GB and up
Coffee



Have you visited our new website yet? See the latest and explore the preserves you help to protect: acreslandtrust.org

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



"We felt like explorers in a tropical, other world," said Reena Ramos, former land management intern and Goshen College student (right) of her experience in Spring Lake Woods and Bog with fellow intern Dustin Chafin, a Manchester University student (center).

Thanks to internship support from the Olive B. Cole Foundation, Reena and Dustin shadowed botanist Scott Namestnik (left), as he inventoried plants on a hot, humid late May day.

"It was really cool to see him work. And really hard to keep up. We were jumping over patches of muck, pushing through leaves, trying not to fall over." Deep in the bog, plant life is sensitive, ground is not solid enough for trails, and mosquitoes cannot be repelled. The bog smells like rotten eggs and is surrounded by poison sumac. Foot traffic is not welcome.

"Scott carried a notebook, would spot a seemingly hidden plant, jot down its scientific and common names, then move on in seconds. Hundreds of times, without hesitation."

"Dustin and I were in awe — and exhausted. The place is awesome and the work is amazing. It's incredible to be able to help ACRES identify the plants, to help protect these wild places and share the story with the members who protect them. I don't want to go back, but I'm so grateful for the experience. I love knowing it's there."

– Reena Ramos, ACRES member and former land management intern