

THE ACRES QUARTERLY

Summer 2016 | Vol. 55 - No. 2



ACRES
LANDTRUST

*Michael Black Preserves Family Land
Into the Woods Together
Color Me Bright, Color Me Orange
Cedar Creek: View From the Canopy
Summer Programs and Events*



From the Editor

Dear Friends,

"Every community, every watershed needs people who feel responsible for that place, who know its human and natural history, who speak resolutely on behalf of it" affirms Indiana author Scott Russell Sanders. As an ACRES supporter, you probably instinctively understand this responsibility. Another way of understanding is by reading stories of people's relationship to the land, the kinds of stories you will find in this issue of the *Quarterly*.

Michael Black's story goes beyond his family's legacy. His donation contributes to a preservation corridor, thus increasing biodiversity by expanding habitat.

Tom Dustin's observations compress 40 years of wildlife viewing from the home he and Jane built high over Cedar Creek. His comments (first published in the summer 1998 *Quarterly*) originally accompanied scientific documentation on land the Dustins later donated to ACRES; their home became ACRES' office. I know Tom and Jane would rejoice in today's returning wildlife, a return hastened, in part, by ACRES' work in the Cedar Creek watershed. Wildlife habitat and biodiversity will continue to increase with future ACRES land acquisitions.

Our two other stories are of plants and wildlife. Naturalist Fred Wooley opens our eyes to the changing colors of wildflowers in spring, summer, and fall. As you walk with Teresa Vasquez in four ACRES preserves, seeing through grown-up eyes and also through the eyes of her young son, nature takes an unexpected turn. She and her family question, notice, and witness, thus suggesting the unlimited possibilities for discovery when we walk into the woods.

Four unique perspectives, yet all "speaking resolutely on behalf of" the land. We hope these stories inspire you to get out on the trails this summer and explore the preserves, these lands that unite us all. I know I will. And if you can't get out, go in, and read the works of writers, like Scott Russell Sanders, who also feel responsibility and affection for place.

Sincerely,

Carol

Carol Roberts

Cover photo by Shane Perfect. Shane recalls capturing this lily pad and damselfly, ancient pollination partners, almost ten years ago on the Detering Nature Preserve, where the trail ends at Round Lake. In this moment as he patiently waited for the damselfly to navigate and hover, Shane discovered his interest in exploring small scale landscapes.



ACRES Land Trust preserves, protects and manages 98 properties totaling 5,924 acres.

You can explore more than 70 miles of trails through more than 50 forever-protected nature preserves, dawn to dusk, thanks to member support.



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

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The *Quarterly* will become a members-only benefit this fall. You will still find a condensed version of the *Quarterly* in libraries and local shops. And you will continue to find ACRES news and events in our email newsletter, on Facebook, Instagram, and on our website.

Love the *Quarterly's* visual and written exploration of natural areas? Join others who celebrate the protection of land. ACRES memberships are reasonably priced and tremendously valuable. **JOIN TODAY!**

memorials

Marcella Ellenwood

Fort Wayne Photographers Club

Clyde Ford, Jr.

from Julianne Myers

Rowene and Walter Helmke

from John and Barb Kowalczyk

Von Hudson

from Kathleen Baker, Bob and Patty Holt,
Mike and Jerry Hudson, Norm and Jeanenne
Lothamer and Family, Elizabeth Pilnock, Marie
Pilnock, Dr. James Roberts, Victor and Loretta
Timmerman, Lettie Haver, Mark and Sarah
Hudson, Pegg and Mike Kennedy

Jim Kelsey

from Angie O'Neill

Richard Kessens

from John Powell

Steve Koch

from Ronald and Susan Augsperger, Debra
and Gary Francies, Randy and Mary Goeglein,
Judith Hoffman, Corinne Hurni, Steven Kees
and Sue-I Ma, Darlene Koch, Thomas and
Sandra Koch, Neal Niezer, Jane Sauers,
Timothy and Lauri Turnbull, Marcia Tuttle,
Julie and Daniel Wagner, Janet Whonsetler



Michael Black preserves family land

By Lettie Haver with Heather DeLorenzo and Casey Jones

Mills-Black Nature Preserve protects 11 acres, extending a significant preservation corridor in Allen County.

Four generations of Michael Black's family have worked the land at the corner of Ernst and Aboite Road, five miles east of Roanoke. Because Michael didn't want to see more of his family's land predictably divided, he donated eleven acres of this land to ACRES, for good, establishing his family's legacy as part of a significant preservation story.

Today, the Mills-Black Nature Preserve stands sentinel from an 80-foot elevation over the wide Little River valley in Allen County's Lafayette Township.

Michael says the family farmstead founded by his great grandfather, Robert Mills, originally extended north to the Little River. As each generation inherited land, portions of the farm were separated. In 2004, Art Hammer left 24.3 acres adjacent to Mills land to ACRES as the Little Wabash River Nature Preserve. As Michael considered preservation, he knew his family's land was in good company.

Michael remembers his grandparents grew corn and soybeans in the low farmland. "They terrace-farmed up here, kept cows, pigs, too. I once got chased by the old sow!"

The path was kept clear of brush by the animals walking from the barn into the small field. Once Michael's grandparents stopped farming, his father mowed the 3-acre hay field to keep invasive scrub brush from taking over. Michael has mowed this land too, using his grandfather's 1939 hand crank-start Farmall tractor.

"This will be a fun preserve to restore," says Casey Jones, director of land management. "Since it's been mowed, it's almost like starting from scratch. We'll first control the invading autumn olive (a non-native invasive species that crowds out native plants and reduces biodiversity), and then look at the soil type. You can see it wants to be forest. So, will we want to plant trees?" Casey's preserve management plan will evaluate both reforestation and extending trails up to the summit of Mills-Black.

Michael points along the edge of the forest: "My dad and uncle planted those evergreens about 30 or 40 years ago, so they're reaching the end of their lives." But not so for this portion of the Mills-Black land! As a nature preserve, its lifecycle is only beginning. Once restored, it will improve and live on undisturbed for generations.

What is a preservation corridor and why does it matter to you?

Mills-Black Nature Preserve is located in an emerging preservation corridor – within twenty miles of protected land and natural area totaling more than 9,000 acres:

- ACRES' 61.5 acre Fogwell Forest, 19 acre Cypress Meadow, 24 acre Peace Farm, 40 acre Anna Brand Hammer Reserve, 97 acre Pehkokia Woods, and 45 acre Tel-Hy
- ACRES and Little River Wetland Project's jointly owned 53 acre Little River Landing
- Little River Wetland Project's 716 acre Eagle Marsh, 25 acre Buttonbush Bottoms, and 255 acre Arrowhead Preserves
- Allen County Parks' 605 acre Fox Island, of which 270 acres are a nature preserve
- Indiana Department of Natural Resources' 7,347 acre J.E. Roush Lake Fish and Wildlife Area

Your investment in preservation goes further when resources focus on protecting property of either existing, or potentially high, natural resource value. ACRES typically calculates this value based first on a property's size. ACRES acquires properties of at least 25 acres and prioritizes acquisitions of any size connecting to established preserves.

Expanding preserves and creating preservation corridors allows small, unstable microcosms to grow into a large, stable ecological community. This stability better supports biodiversity and resists invasive species. The result is an overall healthier system where animals move freely and native plant species establish dominance.

You, too, benefit from more natural space. Trails through large, open natural spaces offer you deeper immersion into unbroken habitat and greater connectedness with our natural world. In the long-term, preservation corridors help communities achieve these goals.



INTO THE WOODS TOGETHER: *Wondering the trails with family*

By Teresa Vasquez
Photos by Jarrod Spicer

HANGING ROCK

After an hour's drive, a juice box and a Z-bar, my five year-old son Miles, my partner Tim, and I arrive in Lagro, Indiana, at Hanging Rock National Natural Landmark, one of ACRES' smallest and most vertically dramatic properties (five acres, 0.3 mi. trail). We walk around the Rock undercut by the Wabash River, its coral-turned-dolomite structure standing solid. We discuss glaciers, warm seas, how different layers of sediment represent the Rock's 420 million years. Remembering this past summer's flooding, Miles finds water lines on trees, undergrowth, the Rock itself.

We read aloud the plaque describing a Miami woman whose suitors battled for her hand at the Rock's summit. When her true love plunged to death in the river below, the princess threw herself in too. *"That's silly,"* declares Miles, *"why didn't she just tell him?"* The clear logic of a child makes way for innumerable lessons in Mother Nature's honesty and the contrivances of human beings.



"The clear logic of a child makes way for innumerable lessons in Mother Nature's honesty and the contrivances of human beings."

KOKIWANEE

A little further down nearby roads, we arrive at Kokiwanee Preserve and take the Mossy Heights Trail to the right, a big loop around the property. With a small child, we should have chosen the trail straight ahead to more quickly reach Kokiwanee's dramatic sights: breath-taking views of the Salamonie River from a high bluff; watching and listening to three waterfalls. We carry Miles piggyback when his inexperienced little legs tire.

Tim holds up a sheet of bark, shed like skin at the foot of a barren, scorched trunk. *"Miles, where do you think this came from?"* Once Miles matches exposed tree to bark, we discuss ways lightning strikes affect trees, or whether the tree was victim of emerald ash borers.

We talk of snails and get to see one. By the marsh edge, we see puffballs and experience their smoky hidden surprise. Even when Miles and I learn the "smoke" is made of the fungi's reproductive spores, we agree that puffballs are more cool than gross.



Photo by Jarrod Spicer

VANDOLAH

Stepping out of the car into early spring mud, we are met by fragrant pine needles shushing in light wind, and on the ground—pine cones! Tim motions toward a cone rivaling in size any I've seen in the Midwest. From the display case we learn the Vandolah area was a small 19th-century community gathering place with a mill and post office. We think aloud with Miles about tracks we might see: the cloven hooves of deer, the spread of rabbit, skunk, raccoon and possum toes. Miles is energized. We have a focal point to return to throughout our day. *"Lead the way, Miles!"* And he does.

Once we climb and descend under pine canopy, we encounter deer tracks. *"Where do they lead, Miles?"* asks Tim as Miles moves back and forth, looking up, down, doubtful. Tim helps out: *"Well...deer surely don't lead down the trail? Animals tend to travel across, not down trails..."* We all chuckle—of course they don't! But these are precisely things we rarely learn outside of personal encounters with nature. We also encounter ephemeral landmarks created by fallen trees, many suspended precariously on other trees burdened by or balancing the casualty's weight.

Tim spots a sheet of bark so big he has to stretch out his arms to hold it. *"What tree did this come off, Miles?"* Without missing a beat, Miles points a short distance away: *"This one!"* He's getting the hang of it.

Crossing a little wooden footbridge over a marshy area, we see gray fur fluffing out in bright, warm sun. *"This was a rabbit who became lunch. Probably a hawk got it."*

Miles and I have questions: *"Where's the rest of it? Where did it go?"* We discuss how raptors may drag prey to a private location to grab choice parts for themselves and their young. Tim affirms, *"The fur's there only because of a fight. Healthy animals don't give up their lives willingly."*

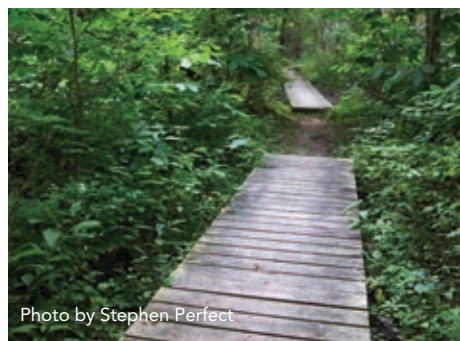


Photo by Stephen Perfect

FOX FIRE WOODS



To get to Fox Fire just outside Leo, we venture onto less traveled roads to a small ACRES marker and gate, then walk ¼ mile parallel to the fence line until entering the woods.

With an easy, half-mile trail, this is another small preserve, yet one of the most vibrant and remarkable. Under cover of oak, shagbark hickory, birch and beech, we spot raccoon and deer scat and tracks, and what we think is Foxfire fungus, its bioluminescence glowing in downed vegetation darkness.

Near the trail's midpoint, six long feathers striped brown and white: A turkey was here! Did it get away? We imagine scenarios, then disperse in the vicinity, each pondering personal reveries combined with the forest's real life around us.

Tim, in the lead, calls out *"Ah!"*, his voice startled yet pleased as he motions me to approach. As an arc emerges into my field of view, I slowly realize it is ribs, still bloody inside the chest cavity of a very large deer. Tim lifts the furry face by immense antlers. My eyes widen as they register: there are no deer eyes. There is so much absence. Outstretched hind legs, still fur-covered, make it seem the creature has grown a foot in death. After consultation, we agree to invite Miles: *"Miles, would you like to see a deer that died?"*

A resounding *"YES!"* is followed by a sprint to where we stand with this once-inhabited

being. When Tim holds up the head, Miles gasps, his eyes widen, he shudders, then begins to cry quietly. I come slowly, gently to his side. *"You know, the part that made the deer eat, play and move isn't there anymore. It doesn't need that body anymore, so it's left here. It's becoming food for other animals. When the rest of its fur and bones break down, it will still continue to feed the forest."*

Rounding back on the trail towards the gate, we encounter evidence of long-ago settlement: a rusted fire bucket and watering can, a tree that tried to swallow antique barbed wire. Creaking and groaning pull our gaze upward to an immense nearly uprooted tree rocking precariously, leaning on its neighbors.

As we leave, more questions: How did the deer die? What might have eaten its flesh? Speculations about alternate scenarios make a quick ride home. In the following days, I gauge whether Miles' enthusiasm turns fearful. It does not. (On the contrary, he tells friends at school, at the babysitter's, even at karate!)

I want to return to Fox Fire Woods in all seasons. For our family, Fox Fire features nature in a compact and vibrant forest that includes some of the most fundamental joys and mysteries of life and death.

Center Spread photo by Jay Solomon, Ropchan Wildlife Refuge
"Colors come and go; strong silent greens; serenely lingering." ~e.e. cummings



SHARE THE TRAILS

ACRES volunteers want to share the trails of their favorite preserves with you! Enjoy these casual walks through the woods, sharing your own love of nature along the way.



Photo by Reena Ramos

NATIONAL TRAILS DAY

Saturday, June 4, 10 am – noon

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

Explore the trails of this 254.8-acre preserve that protects one of the Seven Sisters Lakes, a glacially carved kettle hole lake system, rolling meadows and surrounding upland forest.

THREE RIVERS FESTIVAL OPEN HOUSE AND HIKE

Wednesday, July 13, 10 am – 3 pm

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

Celebrate the Three Rivers Festival from the Cedar Creek Corridor's 80-foot tunnel valley! See the ACRES office and meet staff. Refreshments and guided hikes.

50TH ANNIVERSARY HIKE: CELEBRATE LLOYD W. BENDER MEMORIAL FOREST

Thursday, August 18, 7 pm

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

This state-dedicated nature preserve protects upland and wetland forest, an area of forested floodplain of the Elkhart River and a brushy section of sedge meadow.

You can honor this unique property by making a gift to the ACRES Endowment at the Noble County Community Foundation.

Noble County Community Foundation
c/o ACRES Endowment
1599 Lincolnway S
Ligonier, IN 46767

PROJECT LEARNING TREE

Tuesday, July 12, 8:30 am – 2:30 pm

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

Project Learning Tree is an award-winning environmental education program designed for teachers and other educators, parents, and community leaders working with youth from preschool through grade 12. Please bring a sack lunch and dress to be outdoors. Cost is \$22 for the Project Learning Tree manual. Educators who attend will earn 6 Professional Growth Points.

Presented by Nancy Eagle and Mary Ibe. RSVP by July 1 to ibe.science@gmail.com.

ART FOR ACRES

Artists' Reception Friday, July 15, 7 – 9 pm
Show to follow.

GARRETT MUSEUM OF ART
100 S Randolph St, Garrett, IN 46738

Proceeds benefit ACRES



BIKE & HIKE

Saturday, July 23, 9 am – evening

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

Bike to and hike all five Wabash County preserves! Enjoy a leisurely-paced 52-mile trek on paved, country roads with flat to moderate terrain. Rest stops included, along with a midday stop in downtown Wabash for lunch at your choice of restaurants. Tour ends with a cookout at Mary Thornton Nature Preserve.

Presented by the Kissel family. RSVP by July 16 to jkissel@acreslandtrust.org



Photo by Melissa Renner

PLEIN AIR PAINTING

Saturday, July 23, 6 pm

KOSCIUSKO COUNTY | Wayne Township Prairie, Warsaw
RSVP for address

We'll paint a prairie teeming with color in the late summer including towering prairie dock flowers and tall grasses. Paints and materials provided; you need only bring your artistic expression.

Limit 6. RSVP by July 20 to cjones@acreslandtrust.org

15TH ANNUAL WING HAVEN CANOE TRIP—MEMBERS ONLY

Saturday, August 6, 2 – 5 pm

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

Relax as you explore Seven Sisters Lakes with Nate as he leads an interpretive program, then enjoy a light meal and social time with other ACRES members. Bring your own canoe or kayak—we'll provide the meal.

Hosted by Wing Haven caretaker, Shane Perfect. Presented by Nate Simons. RSVP to Heather Barth by July 29 at 260-637-2273, ext. 5 or hbarth@acreslandtrust.org

CREEK STOMP VIII

Saturday, August 13, 2 pm

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

It's that time again—time to get up close and personal with leeches, pinching crayfish and biting mosquitoes, fossils, waterfalls, cliffs, minnows, salamanders, and—if we are lucky—a snake or two. You'll get wet, dirty, and inspired.

Presented by the Kissel family



EXPLORING THE PRESERVES



Butterfly weed lives up to its name. This orange bloom not only attracts your eye, it also grabs the attention of the great spangled fritillary.

COLOR ME BRIGHT, COLOR ME ORANGE

Article and photos by Fred Wooley

Every growing season, changes take place in the wildflower world. Although we may not always consciously think about these changes, we may be noting them in our subconscious. They are as subtle as the changes in daylight when spring grows into summer: they happen slowly, daily, and then suddenly—the wildflowers “pop.”

As summer sets in, the canopy thickens, shade darkens the forest floor, and the wildflower show moves to open marshes and meadows. A few beauties continue to bloom on wooded hillsides and deep ravines, for the most part, wildflowers are on display in the open. A prairie in summer sees spring's once small green emerging leaves grow into bright flowers that attract equally bright butterflies.

The fact that flower colors are different in summer first struck me long ago when I presented wildflower slideshows. (Do some of you remember Kodachrome slides?

I loved their color—still beats digital photo color, I think.) The best slides were of wildflowers, early spring woodland ephemerals in white, light pink, creamy yellow, pale blue, lavender pastels.

With longer days and bright sunshine in open fields and prairies, wildflowers change. Summer's colors are bolder, more robust: deep blues and purples, bright sunshiny yellows, some maroons and reds, and very few—but very bright, oranges.

There's something special about orange wildflowers: there aren't many of them!

My standby *Peterson's Field Guide to Wildflowers of Northeastern and North-central America* is 420 pages. How many are devoted to orange wildflowers? Two pages—that's it, one covering only orange lilies.

You'll encounter common daylilies along roadsides but need to find a damp, wet meadow or open woodland, preferably along a stream, to spot the much rarer Michigan lily. You might spot it mid to late summer in Bicentennial Woods. Perhaps you'll be the first to see it on other ACRES preserves. And while you're in those wet shady areas, watch for the yellow-orange spotted jewelweed (touch-me-not) whose tubular flowers may bring a visiting hummingbird.

Along open grassy trails or fields, you may encounter deep orange hawkweed (devil's paintbrush), like an orange dandelion with

a much taller flower stalk. Neither native nor invasive, it gives rich color to slightly disturbed areas.

But nothing says brilliant orange like butterfly weeds. You can't help but look at these head turners. They also grab the attention of passing butterflies, hence the name. Look closer and you may be treated to an equally bright orange great spangled fritillary.

Butterfly weed can be found in many prairie-meadow preserves such as the Tom and Jane Dustin Nature Preserve. Pay a summer visit to color your day brightly and orange, and to check for equally beautiful orange butterflies. While the ACRES preserves with their orange flower delights will be there forever, the butterflies might be there for just a moment. You be there too!

EDITOR'S NOTE: Don't remember the Kodachrome slide colors that Fred thinks "still beat digital photo color"? If you're using retro filters on Instagram to alter your own photo colors, you're in essence agreeing with Fred. And if you know the name Kodachrome, it's probably because of vocalist-guitarist-composer Paul Simon's 1973 hit, "Mama Don't Take my Kodachrome Away," now a classic. (Google it now, listen—enjoy—woo-oo-hoo!)



The rare Michigan Lily is hard to find. You might spot it in Bicentennial Woods or perhaps other wet shady preserves.



Scarlet tanager by Dave Fox



Yellow lady's slipper orchid
by Kathryn Moore



Yellow-crowned Night-Heron
by Shane Perfect

CEDAR CREEK: VIEW FROM THE CANOPY

By Thomas E. Dustin (1923 - 2004)

Environmentalist, Writer, Activist, ACRES founder

Editor's note: Tom was my friend, neighbor, mentor in the natural world. I cared more about nature after seeing it more closely through his eyes. He fought passionately and persevered to protect the Indiana Dunes, Wyoming's Red Desert...his beloved Cedar Creek. While Tom's vision was far-reaching, he always paid attention to what was actually in front of him, grounding him and us in the reality of here and now.

To recall the variety of living things observed over more than 40 years in the Dustin woods and wetlands along Cedar Creek would take yet another lifetime; and we won't be afforded another span of that length.

The bird species would make a list a yard long. It includes all the common woodpeckers, as well as the pileated. We used to have a few redheaded woodpeckers around too, but I have not seen any of them around for at least 15 years. Some say it's because their favorite nesting places were in excavated holes in locust [tree] fence posts and these days the posts are all steel.

Some of our favorite birds were dozens of bobolinks and several coveys of quail which nested and gathered in our two northeastern fields. But the bobolinks no longer come visiting and I don't know why. We do all but post the fields with "for rent" signs.

Some say it's because of the destruction of habitat in Central and South America. The quails are another matter. They disappeared too, after the blizzard of the 1978 winter. They have to have a "critical mass" of population, I'm told, to keep each other warm during sub-zero spells. So we keep waiting for their return. It seems unreasonable they'd stay away this long.

I have looked DOWN on scarlet tanagers from the heights overlooking Cedar Creek, as they flitted about in the bottomland hardwood crowns. And we have a fair number of indigo buntings that are regularly seen – but though we have bluebird houses mounted here and there, we rarely see the birds themselves.

A night rarely passes over the decades when we don't hear the wonderful voices of the barred owls, who still inhabit this forested landscape in

good numbers – and the great horned owls too; but the barred are our personal favorites.

The great blue herons come occasionally too, though they nest a mile or so north along Cedar Creek in tall sycamores. By the direction they are flying, we can usually tell if they are going home for the day, or going "out on the town" for a meal.

I do miss the blue racer snakes that we used to have in considerable numbers. They were nesting reptiles. You'd see a four-footer along the woodland trail, and both it and you would stop dead in the tracks. Then suddenly, the blue racer – kind of a bitey snake in the first place – would rattle the end of his tail in the dry leaves, scaring the dickens out of you; then, in a flash, he'd dart away leaving you petrified.

The wildflowers here are stupendous. My own favorite is a small clump of yellow lady's slipper orchids – four stems in a square about four inches on a side. They have produced two, or three, blossoms each spring for the past 20 years!!! That's right, the very same plants, for 20 years. This year, for the first time, there is a fifth plant about six feet away, and it produced a single blossom. It was not there last year, or any other time. They are part way down the slope of a promontory on a fairly well-drained site.

Among other birds that will be seen on the premises are the veery, wood thrush (who serenades me regularly), robins of course, and though not present this year or last (1997), the state-listed Yellow-crowned night heron nested just adjacent to our property line on the edge of a marsh/pond where a good growth of wild iris are also found [now ACRES' Robert C. and Rosella C. Johnson Nature Preserve].

One of the things that always fascinated us was the unexpected presence of muddy chimneys occasionally found on the uplands 70 feet or more above the stream below. We learned that this phenomenon is part of the life cycle of the crawfish. Their main habitat is Cedar Creek, but during part of their life, they crawl all the way up through the woods before digging their muddy chimney.

One of the items of grace as the summertime comes along are the clouds of lightning bugs. Part of their life cycle is laying eggs along the edge of Cedar Creek. When the larvae emerge, they inhabit the dark banks. The larvae are luminescent and, in their tens of thousands, they make the bank look like the New York City skyline from the New Jersey Palisades across the Hudson River.

We never knew that woodchucks could climb trees, until we saw one do so, and as nimbly as a cat. We occasionally see a fox, or at least his bushy tail disappearing. Deer? Yes, we have herds. Jane has seen a coyote; I have not, but they are known to live around here. Beavers have been known to inhabit Cedar Creek forest bottoms, though their presence has not recently been confirmed. Their past work, at least, is highly visible on adjoining Nature Preserve lands.

[Updates: Blue racers, Yellow-crowned Night Herons, Red-headed Woodpeckers are back. We see bluebirds apparently more frequently than Dustins. Orchids continue to thrive. Common today: Belted Kingfishers, Wood Ducks, Great Blue Herons, beaver-gnawed stumps, mussels filtering water in Cedar Creek riffles and shoals. New residents: turkeys, bobcats, Bald Eagles, river otters, mink. (Thank you, ACRES!!)]

EXPLORE INDIANA'S WILD PLACES

with Indiana Humanities



"What does an old-growth forest offer to the human heart and mind? Science is not set up to answer that question—but art may be." This observation, by acclaimed Hoosier author Scott Russell Sanders, is at the heart of Next Indiana Campfires.

Next Indiana Campfires is a unique way to connect nature, literature and Indiana's Bicentennial.

From the sandy dunes in the north to the rolling hills in the south, Indiana's landscapes have inspired generations of Hoosiers. The literature they've written and the state parks system they founded for the 1916 Centennial are legacies we enjoy today. *What will we leave for the future?*

You can attend one (or many!) outings in some of Indiana's most diverse and beautiful landscapes. During each outing, a humanities scholar will lead you through a unique Hoosier landscape, by foot, kayak or bike, pausing to read aloud the words of important Hoosier authors such as Gene Stratton-Porter, Scott Russell Sanders and Edwin Way Teale.

After the excursion, gather around a campfire for a meal and an Upland Brewing Co. beer to discuss connections between nature, literature and place. Find details and register online: indianahumanities.org/programs/campfires



SAVE THE DATE!

ANNUAL MEETING & PICNIC

Sunday, September 25

Look for more information in the upcoming months!



MEMBERS ONLY OCTOBER BARN SERIES

Thursdays, October 20 and 27

Celebrate your shared role in protecting our region's special places with good beer, good music, and good friends in the casually renovated Dustin Barn.

Made possible by the Edward D. and Ione Auer Foundation.
Hosted by Joe and Nancy Conrad.

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION DINNER

Thursday, June 16 (new date!), 6 pm

ALLEN COUNTY | Tom and Jane Dustin Nature Preserve Barn
Entrance to the barn is east of the main entrance to the ACRES office,
1802 Chapman Road, Huntertown, IN 46748

If you are an ACRES volunteer, please join us as we celebrate your efforts and show our appreciation of your time and talents. Dinner compliments of ACRES' staff.

RSVP by June 10 to tpuitz@acreslandtrust.org or call 260-637-2273, ext 4.

Noble County Disposal
for discounted services

Dick Blick
for art supplies

Dave Brumm, Nancy Conrad, Joe Conrad
for helping package *The Quarterly*
for distribution

Dave Brumm, Laura Colpitts, Carol Gaham,
Julie Henricks, Richard Pacer, Cynthia Powers
for collating *The Quarterly*

Cameron and Erin Dustin
for donating Birdseed and Flash Drives

Noble Specialized Transport, Inc
for hauling debris

Jeri Kornegay
for coffee and snacks

Emma Barth
for collating a mailing

Manchester University Environmental club
and Family participants
for helping plant 200 trees at Wildwood

Blue Cast Springs Tree-planting volunteers:
Jessica Bojrab, Dave Brumm, Ralph and
Mary Campbell, Joe and Nancy Conrad,
Katia Cook, Megan Cooper, Dan and
Angie O'Neill, and David and Kellee Schnepf

Home and Garden Show volunteers:
Heather Barth, Neil Case, Ken Cater, Joe and
Nancy Conrad, Laura Colpitts, Katia Cook,
Dave Brumm, Charles Enea, Pam George,
Ted and Tedra Hemingway, Evan Hill, Kristina
Kindler, Warren Mead, Kim Miser, Toni
Mowery, Doug and Kathy Rogers, Bill Smith,
Ellsworth Smith, John and Joann Smith,
Rob Stone, Bob and Donna Streeter, Erna
Vanhelfteren, Michelle Briggs Wedaman,
Darrell and Susan Will, Susie Watson

The Cary Company
for deeply discounting intern supplies

wish list

AA batteries

Bird seed

Forever postage stamps

Polaris Brutus HD side-by-side utility vehicle

16' Double-axle trailer

Peanut M&Ms and trail mix

Folding sawhorses

Repel lemon eucalyptus bug spray

Thank you to ACRES Preserve Guide retailers: The Bird Seedery, Hyde Brothers Book Store, Kosciusko County Convention and Visitors Bureau, Limberlost State Historic Site, Maplewood Nature Center, Pokagon State Park Nature Center, Salamonie Reservoir Nature Center, Wabash County Historical Museum, and Wild Birds Unlimited.

BIRDATHON

Results will be printed in the Fall *Quarterly*. Many thanks for your contributing pledges! And many thanks to Fred Wooley and the Avocets for supporting a new, floating dock for Wing Haven.

This year's board of director nominees are all returning members:

Craig Bobay, Joe Conrad, Norm Cox, Mark O'Shaughnessy, David Van Gilder and Connie Haas Zuber.
ACRES members will vote on these candidates at the annual meeting.

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, Ashley Motia, David Nugent, Angie O'Neill, Mark O'Shaughnessy, Angie Quinn, Dawn Ritchie, David Van Gilder, Michelle Briggs Wedaman.
Membership Secretary: Mary Anna Feitler; **Recording Secretary:** Sue Diefenbach.

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

ACRES Quarterly: Carol Roberts, Editor; 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.



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ACRES Land Trust 19



Photo by Megan Cooper

As Indiana celebrates its Bicentennial, we have the opportunity to reflect on two hundred years of change. This spring, at Blue Cast Springs, ACRES volunteers planted trees within sight of a 214-year-old white oak. This white oak began its life in 1802 as part of a great forest, home to bear, cougar, bison, elk, and wolves. This forest covered 85% of the land that was to become Indiana.

In 1816, the land the white oak inhabited was officially named part of “Indiana,” a fact the tree was unaware of. The tree was also unaware of the many people who claimed to own it as the land was bought and sold for over 200 years. Nor is it now aware that in 2012, ACRES became its final “owner.”

While everything around it changes, this tree—and the land its roots burrow into—remain. Ring by ring, this tree documents its participation in forever. Member by member, and acre by acre, ACRES Land Trust does the same.

Laws change; people die; the land remains.

— ABRAHAM LINCOLN