

THE ACRES QUARTERLY

Fall 2021 | Vol. 60 - No. 3



ACRES
LANDTRUST

Snapshot of Science on the Preserves

Capturing Changing Seasons

Retiring Trails in LaGrange County

Take a Fall Road Trip with ACRES

Member Spotlight – Stephanie Bailey

From the Executive Director

Dear Members,

This summer I spent about a month riding my bicycle 1,900 miles from the Mexican border in Texas to the Canadian border in North Dakota. It's the second long ride I've taken—the first being from California to Florida in 2011.

I'm not an avid bicyclist. In a typical year, I ride fewer than 50 miles. But these long trips have great appeal to me. They help me exercise a core value—investing in things that require considerable effort over time and yield lasting results. I'm motivated by long-term rewards much more than short-term ones.

That's what drew me to ACRES and has kept me motivated to support ACRES the past 15 years. There is tremendous value in preserving land today. And even greater value in preserving land forever. It takes past effort, effort today and sustained effort over an unbroken string of tomorrows, to achieve our goal of forever-protected land.

We cannot achieve forever today. Conversely, forever-protection of land cannot occur absent today's effort. As ACRES members, we can revel in today's benefits (short-term rewards), and we can also dream about the benefits our efforts will help achieve in hundreds of years (long-term rewards).

As an organization, we have a long goal in front of us. It's a goal we didn't start, and it's a goal we can't finish. However, it's a goal that requires our efforts now. We must not only do our part, but also inspire younger people to do their part, so the effort continues.

I'm inspired most by our long-term goals. But I also delight in the tremendous rewards shared every day by the places we protect. Whether your primary motivation is short-term or long-term, your support of ACRES can satisfy! Thank you for protecting land today, and forever.

Jason

Jason Kissel
jkissel@acreslandtrust.org
260-637-2273 ext. 102

Cover photo by Shane Perfect: A Wood Frog sits in a puddle with colorful leaves at Vandolah Nature Preserve in Allen County. During your next preserve visit, listen carefully for the frog's short, raspy, quack-like call, often described as sounding like a flock of ducks.



WELCOME 81newmembers!

Laci & Eric Adkins
Tina & James Alford
Erica Anderson-Senter
Jacinda Ashby
Cal & Schyler Bearman
from Gil & Cheri Bearman
Clay & Andrea Bearman
from Gil & Cheri Bearman
Terry & Connie Bechman
from David Presdorf
Dean & Reba Beery
Marie Bielawski
Lisa & Jon Blanchard
Brett Brown
Damon Brown
David L. Brown
Rick & Kathy Brown
Don Buerk
Diane Buffenbarger
Brett Burch
Julie Burkholder & Eric Zehner
Dane & Sarah Buuck
Joseph & Alexis Caprino
Janis Clare
from Patrick Gillan at The Antrim Group
Gwen & Eddie Clayton
Cheryl Conrad & Tom LeGarie
Libby & Dan Crouse
Amy Denham
Kimi & Kris Eckman
Kirk & Ines Etheridge
from Steve & Pam Etheridge

Brianna & Nathan Foltz
Jeffrey & Yolanda France
Mallory Fries
Barbara Gehrett
from Kathryn Ewing
Gary Grossman
Thomas Groves
Carla Gum
Susan Huth-Beckley & Nol Beckley
Mindy & Joel Jagger
Joseph & Stephanie Keefer
Dan & Amy Kerr
from Roger Newnum
Rita Kissner
Maggie Knapke
Judy Koehlinger
Laura Larsen
from Patrick Gillan at The Antrim Group
Kelley Remington
from Anne Eddy
Jerry & Marsha Lawson
Dianne Leatherman
Andrew Lehman
Linda Lipp
Richard & Melody Luttrell
Luke Martin & Lindsey Halliburton
Connie & Arthur McIntosh
Sandy Mitting
Karen Nesius Roeger & Mike Roeger
Samuel & Elizabeth Neuchwanger
Cheryl & Fredric Nix

Mike Oberlin
William Ott
Linda Picklesimer
Melvin E. Rennaker
Ben Robbins
Jason & Michelle Rowland
Julie Samek
Peter Searles & Emily Yu
Andrew Shirmeyer & Family
from John & Anne Eddy
Aggie & Chick Sweeney
Bailey Temple
Becky & Steve Waymire
Mark Weber
Lynn & Carlene Weirick
from Marc & Janice Daniel
Thom & Susan Werner
Lane Westerfield
Kelly & Kyle Wheat
David & Gloria Williams
Elizabeth Hope Wilson
Laura Wiseman
Meghan Wiseman
from Suzie McDonald
Mark & Jackie Wohlford
Brent & Cara Woodruff
from Gil & Cheri Bearman
Emily & Nick Wrona
Sadie Yeoman
Margaret Zumwalt

in memory of

Jim Buffenbarger
from Mallory Fries

Lee, Ferd, John & William Hand
from Hand Family Foundation

Dr. William Hathaway
from Mark & Wendy Eissey

Frances Headings
from Lori Hudson, Rachel McNett

Ethel Klopfenstein
from Ruth Ann Briggs, Steve & Susan Harroff

Alice Ropchan
from David Ropchan

in honor of

Mary Anna Feitler
from DeKalb County Democrats

Carla Gum
from Candace Hales

Harve Hathaway
from Mark & Wendy Eissey

Gary Pickett
from Suzanne Dunn

Maureen Voors
from Cathy Voors



ACRES Land Trust owns and protects natural and working lands, inspiring people to value, appreciate and support these places for the benefit of all, today and forever. Today we protect and manage more than 7,200 acres in northeast Indiana and portions of southern Michigan and northwest Ohio. In addition to helping care for and restore our local land, your support also offers trail systems where you and others can explore thriving natural places, from dawn to dusk, at no charge. Thank you!

1802 Chapman Road, PO Box 665 | Huntertown, IN 46748-0665
260-637-ACRE (2273) | email: acres@acreslandtrust.org

acreslandtrust.org



ON THE PRESERVES

Snapshot of Science on the Preserves



Arrowhead spiketail by Matt Weldon

The ACRES preserves you support provide researchers and citizen scientists with opportunities to study the natural world around us. By allowing scientists to work on ACRES properties, we gain knowledge from their findings that makes us better-informed stewards of the land.

Read on to learn more about some of the science happening throughout our service area.

RECORDING BAT CALLS

Students of Dr. Scott Bergeson, assistant professor of biology at Purdue University Fort Wayne, are studying bat activity in and around Fort Wayne. Graduate student Galen Burrell is deploying acoustic detectors along forest edges to record bats' ultrasonic calls. "The ACRES sites I am using are excellent sites to deploy detectors since they have a good deal of forested area, and each site borders a slightly different habitat," he said.



A researcher handles a bat that had been netted.

Because bat calls differ among species, Burrell can use the recordings to measure levels of activity and species diversity at the sites. "By doing so, we can identify the habitat features that support healthy bat communities in a highly urbanized/agricultural landscape," Burrell said.

While his results are still preliminary, one point of interest is data collected from the Mackel Nature Preserve where Burrell has recorded calls from a diverse set of bat species. A large number of calls were attributed to little brown bats (*Myotis lucifugus*).

Burrell explained: "Little brown bats are considered endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature, so finding an area where they are active in Fort Wayne is exciting. Further conservation of the Mackel area could be benefiting a species of bat that needs our help!"

STAR-NOSED MOLES

Bergeson's students are also looking to confirm the presence of star-nosed moles at Lonidaw and Detering preserves. The star-nosed mole is a semi-aquatic (swims underwater) and semi-fossorial or "swimming through the ground" mammal that is typically found in the eastern

United States, explained Bergeson. Their range seems to be expanding westward and northeast Indiana is on the far western edge.

"While there have been anecdotal sightings of this species, no one has properly documented their presence in the area for several decades. We are hoping to find some populations of the species around northeast Indiana to document their range expansion and to set up some future studies on the species at their western frontier," he said.

STREAM TEMPERATURE

The Indiana Department of Environmental Management's (IDEM) Office of Water Quality is conducting stream sampling at Dygert Nature Preserve as part of a larger project to evaluate water quality for cool water streams.

Scientists from the office's Watershed Assessment and Planning Branch monitor and assess rivers and streams all over Indiana. IDEM uses this information to protect rivers and streams and identify problem areas.



A temperature logger deployed in Blue Babe Branch at Dygert Nature Preserve

Section Chief Stacey Sobat said streams with cooler summer temperatures support fewer and more specialized types of aquatic life than streams with warmer summer temperatures. "Cool water streams may be improperly evaluated using IDEM's current warm water methods and may be erroneously classified as impaired," she said.

In May, two temperature loggers were deployed at the site. These loggers will measure water temperature every 30 minutes. The project also includes analyzing water chemistry and collecting data on fish and macroinvertebrates.

PLANT RESPONSES TO ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES



Emma Boehm, a doctoral student with a focus in evolution, ecology and behavior at Indiana University, is examining how native plant populations respond to rapid environmental changes like climate change and general environmental variation. "This includes studying an interesting phenomenon called phenotypic plasticity, an ability to quickly change traits without changing the underlying genes," she said.

"A great example of this in plants is stem length. If you've ever put a house plant in a shady part of your house, especially seedlings, you might notice that it gets a taller stem to help it find light. But put this same plant in a sunny spot or start it there, and that stem growth stops at a point since it doesn't need to look for light anymore."

Understanding plants' ability to adapt and survive an extreme or novel environmental change can help inform conservation practices.

For her research, Boehm collected seeds across places where blue-eyed Mary occurs, including two ACRES sites. She will evaluate how these plants respond to novel stress.

"In some states and spots in Canada, blue-eyed Mary is already an endangered or threatened species, so I'm hoping my work can help keep it from getting to that point in other places," she said.

Boehm chose Asherwood and Dygert in part because they had large, natural populations

STUDYING NATURAL COMMUNITIES

Dr. Jordan M. Marshall, associate professor of biology at Purdue University Fort Wayne, has two student projects underway at the 84-acre Garman Nature Preserve. Undergraduate student McKayln Conn is working on dendrochronology of the forest, measuring tree rings to understand disturbance and release events in the trees. Graduate student Joanna Stebing is surveying plants in the forest and around the fields. Her data will help us understand what seeds are available to colonize the field following the upcoming reforestation planting.

of blue-eyed Mary. She found ACRES not only willing but also interested in finding out more.

"Out of all the research sites I've worked with, ACRES was one of the best and was even willing to share coordinates of where the populations were—which saved me a ton of hiking time!" Boehm said.

"If I had to use one word to describe ACRES properties, it would be diversity."

— Mark Weldon, ACRES member

CITIZEN SCIENTISTS

Brothers Mark and Matt Weldon are using photography to document dragonfly species at sites around the state, including ACRES preserves.

ACRES member Mark Weldon worked at the Fort Wayne Children's Zoo from 1972 to 2016, when he retired. "For as long as I can remember, I have been interested in animals, plants and the natural world," he said.

Mark's interest in dragonflies pairs well with his brother Matt's passion for photographing them. "We found out that many species of dragonflies are quite rare in Indiana, and we were finding some of them, so we started to contribute the information of where we found them to the heritage database maintained by the Indiana Department of Nature Preserves. They keep records on all rare plant and animal species for the state of Indiana."

They also report sightings to a national database called Odonata Central, a citizen science website dedicated to dragonflies and damselflies. In 2020, the Weldon brothers documented sightings of two rare dragonfly



Gray petaltail dragonfly by Matt Weldon

species. At Vandolah Nature Preserve, Mark spotted an arrowhead spiketail, a species that had never been recorded in Allen County. Matt found gray petaltail dragonflies at Kokiwanee.

"ACRES protects many sites in northeast Indiana, and many of these properties have some form of water on them, which dragonflies need to reproduce. We suspected that these properties would harbor many species of dragonflies, some that would be rare, and we have not been disappointed. If I had to use one word to describe ACRES properties, it would be diversity," Mark said.

RUSTY PATCHED BUMBLE BEES

Environmental consulting firm Environmental Solutions & Innovations, Inc. was awarded a grant from Great Lakes Restoration Initiative to study the federally endangered rusty patched bumble bee (*Bombus affinis*).

Entomologist Dr. Robert Jean's team is performing surveys and habitat assessments for bumble bees in Lake, St. Joseph, and Steuben counties. Samples are also being performed at national wildlife refuges in Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin and New York. The goal is to determine the status of bumble bee communities throughout the bee's historic range and to determine if the species occurs in any of these areas.

So far, the team has found at least two bumble bee species of conservation concern. These include American bumble bee (*B. pensylvanicus*) and golden northern bumble bee (*B. fervidus*). Jean said, "We have lots of sampling still to do, and we are very excited to see what else we find."

TESTING RESEARCH METHODS

Elle Di Girolamo, a graduate student studying biology at Purdue University Fort Wayne, is conducting research at Garman Nature Preserve in Allen County to determine if environmental DNA (eDNA) is an effective way to detect the presence of American mink.

Each week, she camera trapped the site for five days, then collected water samples from the creek on the fifth day. She plans to extract mink DNA from the samples and compare the results with the photos captured by the camera trap.



Eleanor Di Girolamo captured these deer in Cedar Creek on her camera trap.

"Our goal is to see whether eDNA is an effective way to survey for American mink and its potential to replace other traditional survey methods (such as visual, scat and mink raft surveys)," she said.

Di Girolamo had not yet started to extract DNA from the samples at the time this article was written. She had captured one potential photo of a mink on the camera trap as well as deer, wood ducks, Canada geese, raccoons, a great blue heron and hooded mergansers.

STUDYING WING HAVEN

Ecologist Dr. Samuel Drerup, a professor at Trine University, is running two projects at Wing Haven Preserve in Steuben County. "The proximity to the university and the varied habitats at Wing Haven make an ideal location to teach community ecology," Drerup said.

His students are participating in a 200-year tree survey where they are identifying and measuring trees in the preserve. The second project is a water quality survey of Gentian Lake looking at metal and algal concentrations.

"This gives students hands-on experience conducting field research in ecology," he said.

The first year was spent establishing protocols and methods, but Drerup hopes to have a more detailed story to tell soon.



Four Seasons at the Confluence—Winter



Four Seasons at the Confluence—Spring

CAPTURING CHANGING SEASONS

Local artist Gwen Gutwein has gifted ACRES with four oil paintings depicting the changing seasons at Mackel Nature Preserve in Allen County's Cedar Creek Corridor. The paintings capture the confluence of Little Cedar Creek into Cedar Creek in the distance. Gutwein, an ACRES member, created these works over the past year.

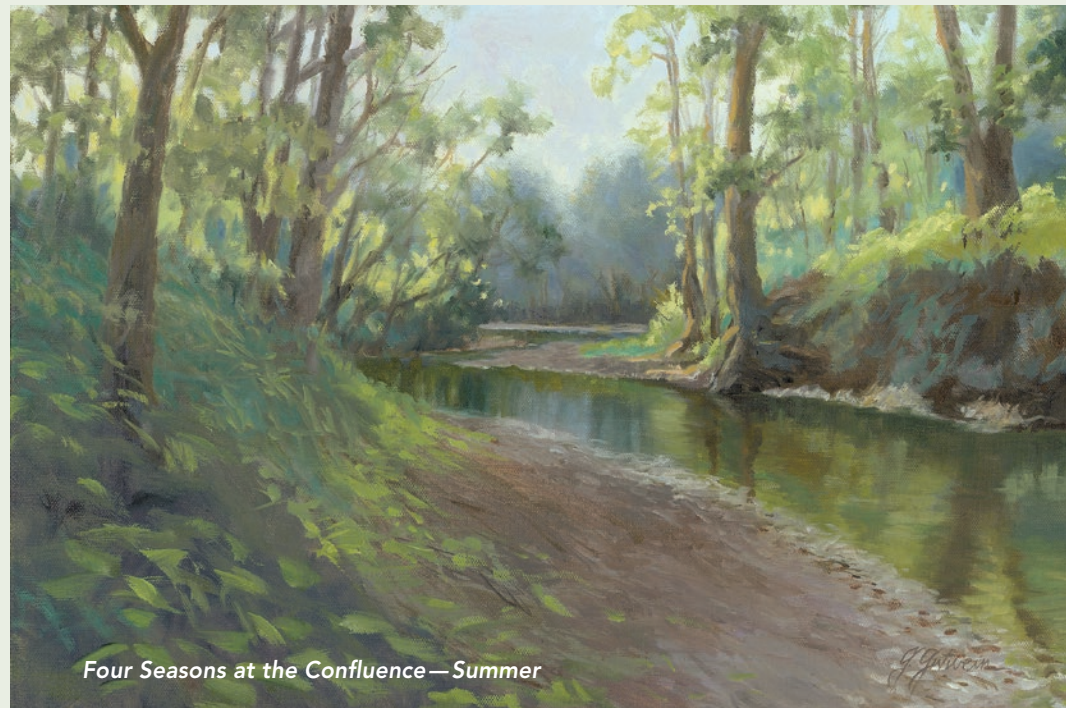
"ACRES is such an important part of my life, our community and our state," she said. "I want to honor ACRES for the many gifts I have received from your devotion to our natural and beautiful land. I am a regular visitor of ACRES sites and appreciate the trails I have roamed over many years."

Gutwein was astounded at the difference in the water level throughout the seasons.

"The results of the flowing water on the banks of the creek and the debris the water left behind were such an interesting component. I hadn't anticipated the amazing differences captured in my many painting sketches and photographs taken throughout the year," she said.

Mackel Nature Preserve, located in the largest forested corridor in Allen County, protects 34 acres of streams, wildflowers and a floodplain forest. Enjoy Gutwein's paintings titled "Four Seasons at the Confluence" on this page and turn to page 10 to see her fall painting.

Thank you, Gwen, for capturing the beauty of this forever-protected place and sharing your talent with ACRES!



Four Seasons at the Confluence—Summer

Artwork on pages 10–11 by Gwen Gutwein: In this oil painting titled "Four Seasons at the Confluence—Fall," Little Cedar Creek flows into Cedar Creek at Mackel Nature Preserve in Allen County's Cedar Creek Corridor.



FALL HIKES & events

ACRES events are held rain or shine. Preserve maps available online at [acreslandtrust.org/preserves](https://www.acreslandtrust.org/preserves)



BENEFIT CONCERT

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 6:30 pm

ALLEN COUNTY | Tom & Jane Dustin Nature Preserve, Dustin Barn
1992 Chapman Road, Huntertown, IN 46748

Join us for an evening of fun and fundraising with local band Soltre in the Dustin Barn! BYO lawn chairs and beverages and enjoy this folksy four-person string band. Take a hike or a hayride to the new maintenance barn, tour the renovated office, and see plans for improvements yet to be completed. Free-will donations are encouraged. Your support brings us closer to our goal for ACRES' capital campaign.

SEED COLLECTION WORKDAYS

Help us harvest native seeds alongside fellow volunteers. The seeds will be used for upcoming restoration projects on other ACRES preserves. No prior experience necessary. Workdays will begin with a short introduction to grass identification and harvesting techniques. All equipment will be provided. Long pants and closed-toed shoes recommended.



SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2-4:30 pm

HUNTINGTON COUNTY | Pehkokia Woods
1570 Flaxmill Road, Huntington, IN 46750

Frolic among the flower...seed heads! Join us to collect seeds from native flowering plants in the fields in Pehkokia Woods.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2-4:30 pm

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

Gather native grass seeds with us at the established Wing Haven prairies.

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION LUNCH

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 3, 12 - 1:30 pm

ALLEN COUNTY | Tom & Jane Dustin Nature Preserve,
Dustin Barn, 1992 Chapman Road, Huntertown, IN 46748

Volunteers, let ACRES staff serve you for a change! In gratitude for your service, share lunch, get to know other volunteers, and learn how your combined contributions make ACRES run. Your time and talent protect land. We want to thank you! RSVP to Reena Ramos by September 22 by emailing rramos@acreslandtrust.org or calling 260-637-2273 ext. 109.



WALKS AND WINE

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2 pm

ADAMS COUNTY | Munro Nature Preserve
3957 W. 1100 S., Geneva, IN 46740

Bundle up and take a stroll at Munro Nature Preserve to learn about the site's historic schoolhouse and other unique aspects of the preserve. Join us afterwards for a "treat yourself" stop at The Tippy Glass Winery. This preserve's trails will be retired in December 2021. *Space is limited. RSVP to outreach@acreslandtrust.org or call 260-637-2273 by October 8. Presented by Chris Fairfield*

FULL MOON HIKE FOR MEMBERS

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 7:30-9 pm

WABASH COUNTY | Hathaway Preserve at Ross Run
1866 E. Baumbauer Road, Wabash, IN 46792

Take to the trails under a full moon and enjoy the illuminated hills and waterfalls. If it's cloudy, plan to bring a flashlight. *Space is limited. RSVP to outreach@acreslandtrust.org or call 260-637-2273 by October 18.*

POPP OPEN HOUSE FOR MEMBERS

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 23, 1-4 pm

ALLEN COUNTY | Emanuel M. Popp Nature Preserve
12129 Tonkel Road, Fort Wayne, IN 46845

Join us for campfire hot dogs, refreshments and hiking in this mature forest open only once a year for ACRES members. *Presented by Larry Biggerstaff, Popp caretaker*



CEDAR CREEK CORRIDOR SERIES

Explore the wonders of the Cedar Creek Corridor and surrounding area in a three-part series. Guest hike leaders will share their local knowledge during casual hikes through the forever-protected Cedar Creek preserves.

HISTORY: THE CULTURE OF THE AREA

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 10 am

ALLEN COUNTY | Tom & Jane Dustin Nature Preserve
1992 Chapman Road, Huntertown IN 46748

Learn about the local history of Miami people in the region. Presented by Tribal Historic Preservation Officer Diane Hunter. Learn more at miamination.com. *Space is limited. RSVP to outreach@acreslandtrust.org or call 260-637-2273 by November 4.*



GEOLOGY: THE FORMATION OF THE CORRIDOR

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 10 am

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

Deep ravines and high cliffs are distinguishing features of the Corridor. Learn about the formation of this terrain and other unique geological aspects. *Presented by Tony Fleming. Space is limited. RSVP to outreach@acreslandtrust.org or call 260-637-2273 by November 11.*

ECOLOGY: PLANTS AND ANIMALS OF THE CORRIDOR

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 10 am

ALLEN COUNTY | Little Cedar Creek Nature Preserve; Address available upon RSVP

Eagles, otters and bobcats inhabit the Corridor, along with many uncommon plants. Discover what plants and animals call this place home and why they continue to thrive along the ravines. Presented by Land Management Director Evan Hill. *Space is limited. RSVP to outreach@acreslandtrust.org or call 260-637-2273 by November 18.*

NATIONAL TAKE A HIKE DAY

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 17

Multiple times and locations

Celebrate hiking with us as you explore the trails of forever-protected places.

10 am MIAMI COUNTY | Seven Pillars Nature Preserve
3667 Mississinewa Road, Peru, IN 46970

2 pm NOBLE COUNTY | Lonidaw
987 N. Allen Chapel Road, Kendallville, IN 46755

4 pm ALLEN COUNTY | Fogwell Forest
9630 Whippoorwill Drive, Fort Wayne, IN 46809

Social distancing (keeping at least 6 feet of distance between individuals at all times) will be implemented at all events. Please stay home if you feel ill or have been recently exposed to someone with COVID-19. Masks are required at all indoor events.

To check the status of an event please call 260-637-2273, email outreach@acreslandtrust.org or visit [acreslandtrust.org/events](https://www.acreslandtrust.org/events)

Watch for more events online: [acreslandtrust.org](https://www.acreslandtrust.org).

Retiring Trails in LaGrange County

Stark Nature Preserve

G. Richard and Mary H. Culp Nature Preserve

By Chris Fairfield

This article is part of a series highlighting preserves where ACRES will retire trails as part of our comprehensive plan to update visitor amenities at nature preserves. For a complete list of retiring trails and public access updates, visit acreslandtrust.org/raisingourstandards.

ACRES Land Trust owns and protects natural and working lands, inspiring people to value, appreciate and support these places, for the benefit of all—today and forever.

“...for the benefit of all...” This part of the ACRES Mission Statement aptly describes the intentional relationship that is born when ACRES acquires a property. The “all” includes not only all the people who visit and care for the land. It also includes all the native trees, plants, landscapes, waters and animals who live and migrate there. Two examples of this dedicated connection are in LaGrange County where both ACRES properties serve as natural oases surrounded by scenes of urban progress.

Jack Stark Preserve, a 41-acre preserve acquired in 2004, forms a thriving biological buffer between the industrialized State Road 120 and the Pigeon River. The property includes the riverbank, forested wet swales, bottomland swells and an oxbow where large trees and groves of buttonbush thrive. The initial boardwalk invites the visitor into the canopied floodplain. The preserve—home to many species of trees and herbaceous plants—is a breeding ground for wood ducks. According to allaboutbirds.org, the ducks are cavity nesters, perch in trees, and are comfortable flying through woods.

Jack L. Stark, who served on the ACRES Board of Directors from 2003 to 2008, purchased the property in 2001. In 2004, he sold the land to ACRES to preserve in perpetuity.

These properties will be open for public visitation until December 31, 2021. After this date the trails will be retired, but the habitat and environmental benefits will continue to be supported by ACRES and its members.

G. Richard and Mary H. Culp Nature Preserve, a 20-acre preserve acquired in 2002, features a forested habitat with two isolated wetland areas and gradual elevation change. The canopied land has a beautiful burst of wildflower color in the warmer months. The preserve provides breeding ground, shelter and sustenance to pollinators, thus actively supporting the local farming community.

Dr. Culp was born in Goshen, served in the Civilian Public Service, taught in Mennonite high schools, served as a certified family physician for 30 years and authored many books. Dr. and Mary Culp purchased the land in 1976 and transferred it into its forever care with ACRES with the expressed intent that it become a blessing to the community. ACRES is honoring their intention with its constant commitment to protecting the land.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Stephanie Bailey

By Bridgett Hernandez

The location of ACRES Land Trust's office in the Tom & Jane Dustin Nature Preserve means every window offers an amazing view: bald eagles soaring over Cedar Creek, wildlife moseying by, changing seasons on full display.

Because my office window puts me at eye level with our native garden, I have a front row seat to what's blooming, from wild geranium and columbine in late spring, to milkweed and coneflower at the height of summer.

Since much of my work as ACRES Communications Manager involves looking at a computer screen, it brings me joy to look up and see bumblebees, butterflies and hummingbirds flitting around the garden. For this beautiful view, I have volunteers like Stephanie Bailey to thank.

I recently sat down with Bailey, a Master Gardener, to chat about her volunteer experience. She and other volunteers have been helping ACRES reestablish the native garden after the recent construction improving office accessibility, including a new sidewalk and handicap parking.

Bailey first learned about ACRES while exploring the trails at Bicentennial Woods with her five boys, now ages 15–24. Having grown up on a farm in the prairie state of Kansas, she found wonder in northeast Indiana's wooded landscapes.



“I just loved finding ACRES. It was like a treasure,” Bailey said. “To me, the forests up here are magical.”

In 2014, when ACRES issued a call for volunteers to create a native garden at the ACRES office, Bailey volunteered to take on the project.

The first step was clearing former beds. Bailey and other volunteer gardeners used newspaper to cover the ground to prevent weeds from

coming up. Martha Ferguson, owner of Riverview Native Nursery, helped Bailey pick out 15 kinds of native plants for the ACRES garden. Ferguson explained that native plants provide not only visual interest but also shelter and food for pollinators and other wildlife. Native plants' root systems increase the soil's capacity to store water, thus reducing runoff and preventing erosion and flooding.

And natives require less maintenance. “The only time we've ever watered was when they were first getting established, but once they're established, it's just pulling out weeds,” Bailey explained.

Among Bailey's native garden favorites are blue lobelia and false blue indigo. After the flowers die out each winter, their return each spring always surprises and delights her: “They go from nothing to beautiful and big, really quickly. It's just amazing to me how that happens. It's like a miracle every spring,” she said.

Bailey also said she's grateful for the opportunity to learn and experiment in the garden. “With native plants, you can start out with an original plan, but the plants will do different things you don't necessarily anticipate,” she said. “Life in general is like that. You [think you] have control over some things, but not really.”

This year, volunteers will have spent 30 hours caring for the garden beds and planning their expansion. We're excited to see the “new” garden take shape!



Thank you, Stephanie Bailey, and native garden volunteers Kris Connerly, Nancy Conrad, Laura Colpitts, Charles Enea, Diane Jones, and ACRES Office Manager Natasha Manor for your hard work, including braving the heat and mosquitoes this past growing season!

TAKE A FALL ROAD TRIP WITH ACRES

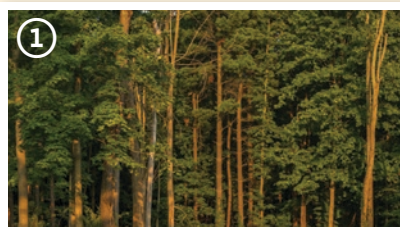
Thanks to member and volunteer support, ACRES offers many places to explore throughout our region. Each preserve is unique, featuring diverse landscapes. If you're looking for some new-to-you trails, why not make a day of it?

In the second part of our road trip series, we encourage you to get out and take in the best this season has to offer: crisp air, blue skies, colorful foliage and generally drier trails! For our fall road trip itinerary, we're sharing recommendations in Wabash and Miami counties. We hope you'll enjoy exploring ACRES preserves, learning about local landmarks and discovering some fun stops along the way.

Start at Asherwood

Located southwest of Wabash, Asherwood's wooded trails are a great place for a fall hike. Enjoy the fall foliage as you hike among deep ravines that divide beech/maple and oak/hickory forests on narrow ridge tops. The 160-acre property features 2.6 miles of trails, including paved trails, wide and flat earthen trails and narrow, winding trails climbing steep grades.

ACRES protects several acres of sugar bush, a forest stand of maple trees that can be tapped for syrup, at this preserve. Here, you can see the historic sugar shack that is still used at the end of winter to make fresh syrup.



Next Stop: Seven Pillars of the Mississinewa Landmark

Take the scenic route. From Asherwood, travel south, taking the scenic Mississinewa Dam Road for a view of the 3,180-acre lake which provides flood reduction and recreational opportunities for the region.

Your next stop is Seven Pillars of the Mississinewa Landmark in Peru, Indiana. A pull-off is located near 3985 E. Mississinewa Road that affords a view of the 25-foot high limestone pillars on the north side of the river. The formation is sacred to the Miami Nation of Indians of the State of Indiana, whose members continue to gather at the site.



Next Stop: Seven Pillars Nature Preserve

Next, drive just .4 miles west to visit Seven Pillars Nature Preserve at 3667 Mississinewa Road. The 148-acre preserve features 1.8 miles of trails through woods and open meadow.



Nearby Points of Interest

Here are a couple fun stops to make while you're in the area:

Doud Orchards

8971 N. State Road 19

Denver, IN 46926

Hours: Vary seasonally—call or check online Doudsorchards.com

One of the oldest orchards in Indiana, Doud Orchard has been growing apples and other produce since 1894. A vintage barn storefront offers produce, cider and other goodies.

Roann Covered Bridge

6000 Roann Lukens Lake Road

Roann, IN 46974

Originally built in 1877, the restored Roann Covered Bridge spans 288 feet over the Eel River. Its walls and roof were built to protect oak deck timbers against rot.

Thank you for your hard work, summer interns!



From left to right: Connor Havens, Bailey Temple, Iris Norton and Josh Good

Connor Havens land management intern

Connor Havens is studying environmental science and biology at Manchester University. After being stuck in a dorm all year, Havens said he has appreciated the opportunity to learn and work outdoors alongside experienced stewardship staff. This work included assisting with invasive species management and supporting the maintenance of ACRES trails.

Bailey Temple land management intern

Bailey Temple is studying natural resources and environmental science at Purdue University. Her interest in habitat restoration work drew her to gain field experience with the ACRES land management team.

Iris Norton land management intern

This summer, ACRES land management team welcomed intern Iris Norton back for a second year. "I had some great experiences and learning opportunities last summer interning with ACRES, and I wanted to keep learning and caring for the land around me this summer, too," said Norton, who is studying agriculture and horticulture at Texas State University.

Josh Good land management intern

Josh Good is a senior studying criminal justice and environmental and sustainability studies at Indiana University with the goal of becoming a conservation officer. An interest in conserving natural resources drew Good to gain field experience with ACRES. "I've learned how to identify different plant species and develop the strategies to promote native species and regulate invasive species," Good said.



Joelle Buller advancement intern

Intern Joelle Buller is majoring in sustainable development with a business management minor at Taylor University. "I wanted to intern with ACRES because I saw it as a great opportunity to learn from people who have shared values and appreciation towards land and are making a tangible positive impact in communities and the future of Indiana's natural landscape," Buller said. Over the summer, she learned how ACRES operates and interacts with communities in our service area.

Many thanks to the Olive B. Cole Foundation and Manchester University for supporting ACRES summer land management program.

"Welcome Our New Stewardship Assistants!"

A warm welcome to Jenna Bair and Gavin King, the newest members of the ACRES team! Jenna and Gavin recently joined the staff as stewardship assistants.

As members of the land management team, they will support the protection of over 7,200 acres of land across ACRES service area. Their roles will include invasive species control, ecological restoration and trail maintenance.



JENNA BAIR

Jenna grew up in Churubusco, Indiana, and comes to ACRES from IDNR Division of Nature Preserves. Her love of the outdoors started as a kid. Together with her family, she enjoyed camping, hiking, paddling and rafting.

"Most of our vacations were in the outdoors."

In high school, Jenna learned that she had a knack for identifying trees when she joined FFA and began participating in forestry and wildlife. The experience influenced her chosen course of study at the University of Saint Francis where she earned her bachelor's degree in environmental science with a minor in biology.

She has a passion for land restoration and loves to see natural areas thrive. Seeing native diversity return after an area is cleared of invasive species makes her work rewarding.

"It's exciting when you clear out an area and get rid of those invasives, and native plants pop up. It was in the seedbank and it's coming back."



GAVIN KING

Gavin brings a wealth of experience from his work with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, including roles at Ouabache State Park and Upper Wabash Interpretive Services.

Gavin is from Markle, Indiana. Early experiences in nature shaped his appreciation for land and his desire to protect it.

"I was really fortunate growing up. A lot of my memories are out in the woods. Our family used to cut firewood to heat our house. During the warmer seasons, many vacations were spent traveling to different parks in Indiana and outside the state."

As an avid free diver, scuba diver, hunter and fisherman, Gavin is passionate about responsible stewardship. He wants future generations to have the same opportunities to enjoy these experiences in the outdoors.

"When treated correctly, natural resources can be replenished, but if we don't treat them right, they could be gone forever."

SPECIAL thanks

ACRES Board of Directors & Committee Members
ACRES staff outing hosts in Defiance County, Ohio:
Micki Dunakin, Rita Kissner, Mayor Mike McCann and Dr. Jan Younger
Archive projects: Chris Fairfield, Mary Anna Feitler, Diane Jones, Carol Spallone
Asherwood maple syrup event volunteers
Stephanie Bailey, interview for Quarterly article
Dave Brumm, donated light bulbs and assisted with office move-in and maintenance
Charles Enea, donated microwave and refrigerator for new Hammer Barn
Garlic mustard workday volunteers
Ford Hudson, donated coffee and trash bags
Trevor Campbell, Earth Day Art Show
Alex Harkins, video interview
Ken Jehle, performance at the Wing Haven Spring Celebration
Jeri Kornegay and Lyn Winchell, donated insect repellent, paper towels, beverage container and tea
Native garden workday volunteers: Stephanie Bailey, Kris Connerly, Nancy Conrad, Charles Enea, Diane Jones
Bill Nash, donated specialty paper, tools and equipment for land management
New Member Open House volunteers: John Caffray, Joe Conrad, Tedra Hemingway, Mark Maffey, Dawn Ritchie

Office support volunteers: Laura Colpitts, Louise Pomeroy
Harry Oelschlager, donated bottled water
Ann Phillips, donated tools and equipment for land management
Plant sale event volunteers: Stephanie Bailey, Joe Conrad, Nancy Conrad
Theresa Ransbottom, book discussion leader
Spring Quarterly assembly & distribution volunteers:
Dave Brumm, Mary Campbell, Laura Colpitts, Nancy & Joe Conrad, Norm Cox, Barb & Terri Gorney, Jim Haddock, Tedra Hemingway, Mark Maffey, Shane Perfect, Judy Schroff, Ginny Simerman, April Steury
Kirk Swaidner, donated materials and constructed a walkway at Kokiwanee
Joanna Stebing and Tessa Aby, video interview
Terry Tucker, snow plowing services
Julie Wall, office mural and design assistance
Karen Wesdorp, video interview
Wildflower hike leaders: Dr. David Hicks, Tony Fleming, John Jay Smith
Volunteer preserve stewards, caretakers and trail monitors

wish list

Order from ACRES Amazon Wish List: Under "Find a List or Registry," search for "ACRES Land Trust" or request a link at acres@acreslandtrust.org.

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Mosquito repellent
Office Depot gift cards
Paper towels
Snacks for events (individually wrapped)
Trash bags (33 gallon or larger)
USB flash drive
Used iPhones for field work (needs to support at least iOS 13 updates: iPhone SE, 6, 7, 8, X and or 11)
White copy paper (letter size)

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As a child, I loved hearing my grandparents talk about “the turning of the year.” I understood this “turning” as the autumn wind turning leaves red and blowing them off the great maple in our front yard. In the fields behind our house I wandered through goldenrod, sumac, and milkweed, accompanied by bees and butterflies, and the singing of crickets and katydids. Because my mother loved wildflowers and wild creatures, I learned their names, and what to look for in each season, though I had no sense of the significance of what I was learning.

Now I’m listening for the calls of gabbling geese, and the barred owls’ questions echoing through cold starry nights. And I hope to hear again the scratching, raspy cries of Sandhill Cranes flying high above, following the curve of Cedar Creek toward their winter grounds. Between two and five years of age, cranes select their mates, then remain paired for decades. At summer’s end, parents and their young depart the nest territory and join flocks at a staging area—Jasper-Pulaski Fish & Wildlife Area in Indiana—in preparation for southerly migration.

In our world of diminishing contacts with nature, remember your own memories of the year “turning,” and make new memories. Walk in an ACRES preserve where you can know autumn in your eyes and ears and nose and entire being.

— Carol Roberts, Quarterly editor



acreslandtrust.org