

THE PLANT PRESS

Staying Current with the North Chapter of the
Indiana Native Plant and Wildflower Society



Indiana Native Plant
& Wildflower Society

April, 2013

Photo Friday: The Beaches of the Indiana Dunes

Mar 15 2013 James Dau_ originally published by GREAT LAKES ECHO

<http://greatlakesecho.org/2013/03/15/photo-friday-the-beaches-of-the-indiana-dunes/>

Although Kathleen Stachowski now resides in Montana, the Great Lakes, and Lake Michigan in particular, will always hold a special place in her heart. Born and raised in Michigan City, Ind. near Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore, Stachowski's life has always been tied to the dunes and the lake.

Her childhood was filled with family trips to the lake and the dunes, seeing it then as a place of both wonder and solace.

"The dunes had a truly wild feel in those days and not many people went there," she recalled. "When big storms with the north wind would arrive, my folks would bundle us into the car and we'd head to the municipal lakefront and park where the waves could wash over the car. What a thrill that was! It ended in short order once dad realized that sand was scouring the car's finish. A particularly fond memory is lying in bed on hot, summer nights listening to the fog horn sound...a reminder that the lake and the lighthouse were ever-present. All through high school and since, I've spent many hours, in company and alone, walking out on the pier to the lighthouse and sitting on its strong foundation. Yes, there's a huge metaphor in there."

The dunes acted as a place of refuge and comfort, as well.



"The day my dad died, I single-mindedly headed for the comfort of the dunes, where a young, whitetail buck with velvet antlers appeared on the sand to observe me," she said. "I'd never seen a deer out on the sand before that. Yes, it was a sign for sure, and a gift from the dunes."

Stachowski moved away from Indiana in 1994 to teach, while also becoming involved in animal rights advocacy. Lake Michigan and the

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Calendar of Events

April 14	Spurgeon Woods Hike see page 4
April 20	Heron Rookery Hike see page 5
April 22	The Plant Press Deadline

Indiana Dunes never left her. Today she continues to return to the dunes and lakeshore, often working to clean up litter that poses a threat to beach wildlife.

“As an activist for animals, I know the suffering and death caused when animals and birds ingest plastic and balloons and become tangled in ribbon and fishing line; picking up the worst of it is a small offering to the place and the birds who’ve given me so much,” she said. “I credit my early exposure to the lakefront and dunes for my ongoing love of wild places, including the public lands and wilderness activism I’ve had many opportunities to engage in.” © 2013, Great Lakes Echo, Michigan State University Knight Center for Environmental Journalism. Republish under [these guidelines](#). To submit an image to Great Lakes Echo Photo Friday, send photo, caption and your name to greatlakesecho@gmail.com.



A Season of Wealth Submitted by Jim Carpenter cutterofwood@hotmail.com

As I peruse the notes I made over the last five weeks of collecting and cooking Maple tree sap, I think of how fast it all seemed to have gone. I also think of how sorry I am that it is all over for me for this year. Last Tuesday, which was the 19th of March, I pulled all 24 taps from my trees, and gathered up all of the tubing and buckets that went with them. The buds on the soft Maple trees I tapped were starting to swell, which would effectively turn the sugar in the sap back to starch. Plus, my wife said she thought my season was about ready to be over.

Looking over my journal of sorts, I estimate I boiled down 150 gallons of sap to make a little over two gallons of pure Maple Syrup. I did this in about 10 separate batches. Each batch took from one to two full days to cook down. Most of this time it cooked on an old wood stove out in my little sugar shack, which until recently, housed the laying hens we kept for many years. After steaming off about 95% of the water, I would finish the boiling process on the gas stove in our kitchen. At this point I would basically stand over the quickly thickening liquid to make sure it would not cook too long and scorch. I am glad to say there was no repeat of last year’s little scorching incident!

Nature and I got along pretty well this year with just a few minor incidents. The very first batch I cooked, I let go just a few minutes too long. After I poured it into a wide mouth quart jar and let it cool, it pretty much turned into sugar. I could have easily added some water and heated it back into syrup again, but my wife thought we could just as well use it up on cereal and sweeten our tea with it. In the batches that followed, I got pretty good in telling when it was just the right consistency to pull it off the fire.

Another problem/challenge I had was when my sap-collecting-ATV was out of commission for about four days in the middle of the season. I had to take my S-10 truck to collect the sap. This meant parking on the road with the flashers on and hiking back and forth through the woods multiple times to carry buckets of sap to my truck. Fortunately, I only had to do this on three or four occasions.

Another problem that I could not completely overcome was in the filtering process. I tried cheesecloth, cotton fabric, paper towel, and even a coffee filter. The “big boys” use a felt material for their final filtering, and many also use flannel cloth. My problem seemed to be that when it got to the syrup stage at 66% sugar, it was too thick to filter through any kind of fabric. What I ended up doing was to filter it through a paper towel before it got too thick and then I just cooked it some more. After I put my finished product into jars, I would let it set for a day, and all the sugar sand (niter) would settle to the bottom of the jar. I would then pour off the 95% of the syrup above the sand and ditch the rest. I understand many backyard maple syrup makers do the same thing.

I probably spent an additional \$100 on equipment this year, which would make the syrup I produced a bit pricey. However, this additional equipment will be used for many years. Actually, one of the most important things I realized partway through this season was to split my firewood into very small pieces. This should have been a no-brainer for me as it is only logical that six to eight smaller diameter pieces of wood will burn much hotter than two to three larger pieces. This helped to speed up the evaporation process.

I found the time I spent making my own maple syrup to be quite rewarding. Although it was very time-consuming and would not have been near as easy if I were not retired; the real satisfaction for me came in taking something that is hidden away in nature, and through effort and knowledge, produce such a lovely result as pure homegrown maple syrup. I am thinking God allows for us to make maple syrup this time of year as a good way to provide a break from winter doldrums. If you have a few maple trees and any inclination at all, I highly recommend giving backyard maple syrup-making a try!

Too Little Time, Too Many Good Things to Let Go; this will hold tid-bits, teasers, links to check out later if you wish.

A new friend to the editor, from Illinois and well-met at Mount Baldy and other trails at the National Lakeshore just published her first nature blog which can be found here: <http://www.examiner.com/article/understanding-the-principles-of-eco-tourism> —Congrats to Cindy

I have reprinted articles from this organization before, but got permission so late—that I had no time to put any in our *Plant Press*. Their blogs and newsletters are almost as nice, and sure give an interesting perspective on a similar fight on a different geographical front. Great articles from the UK and problems with American Skunk Cabbage and other invasives can be found here: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/129905693/Wood-Wise-Invasive-Species-Spring-2013>



Samaras of white ash (*Fraxinus americana*). © Steven J. Baskauf, <http://bioimages.vanderbilt.edu/>

Fruit Salad Part III

Submitted by Scott Namestnik
Scott.Namestnik@cardno.com

Your Daily Dose Of Botany

In the March issue of this column in *The Plant Press*, we looked at

the different types of dehiscent dry fruit. This month, we'll look at the other type of dry fruit, indehiscent dry fruit. As you may recall from last month, indehiscent dry fruit are dry fruit that remain intact with the seeds inside the fruit after the fruit has been shed by the plant.

There are several types of indehiscent dry fruit; the most common type is the **achene**. Achenes have a single seed that is connected to the locule, or fruit cavity, at only one point. The point at which the seed connects to the locule is the stalk of the ovule, which is called the funiculus. The ovaries of buttercups (*Ranunculus* spp.) characteristically develop into achenes at maturity. If an achene becomes bladder-like or corky at maturity, it is known as a **utricle**.

Ash (*Fraxinus* spp.) and elm (*Ulmus* spp.) have fruit that are essentially achenes with papery wings attached. In ash this wing is attached on just one side of the seed, whereas in elm the papery wing surrounds the seed. Regardless of its location, the purpose of the wing is to aid in wind dispersal of the fruit. Also regardless of the wing location, this type of indehiscent dry fruit is known as a **samara**.

When an indehiscent dry fruit splits into two or more one-seeded parts, called mericarps, the fruit is considered a **schizocarp**. Carrots (*Daucus carota* ssp. *sativus*) and other members of the family Apiaceae have fruit that meet this description. The fruit of maples (*Acer* spp.) are an interesting case in that they are samaras that split into two parts at maturity. Many people like to call these fruit whirlybirds or helicopters, but I say we should inform them that they are actually considered samaroid schizocarps!



Nut (acorn) of northern red oak (*Quercus rubra*). © Steven J. Baskauf, <http://bioimages.vanderbilt.edu/>

In the composites (Asteraceae), the fruit is an achene-like structure that develops from an inferior ovary. In this case, the fruit is often known as a **cypsela**, but some botanists still consider this an achene.

Grasses (Poaceae) also have indehiscent dry fruits, but the seed coat of the single seed is attached to the fruit wall. In this case, the fruit is known as a **caryopsis**, or a **grain**.

The type of fruit that most people probably picture when they hear "indehiscent, dry fruit" is a **nut**. Nuts originate from compound ovaries and have stony fruit walls or outer shells. An oak (*Quercus* spp.) acorn is a classic example of a nut; the seed is located inside of the acorn.

You can see that there is a lot of variety when you talk about indehiscent dry fruits. Many of these are quite small, and examination and identification is aided by a hand lens. Others are quite large and conspicuous. Regardless, because they don't break apart to disperse seeds at maturity, fruit in this group can often be observed nearly year-round.



Indiana Native Plant & Wildflower Society

Spurgeon Woodland Reserve

Ligonier Sunday April 14th

Guided Hike at ACRES Edna W. Spurgeon Woodland Reserve Jointly sponsored by ACRES Land Trust and INPAWS North Chapter 9478 N. 600W, Ligonier, IN 46767 Latitude: 41 ° 29' 19"N, Longitude: 85 ° 32' 19"W <http://www.acreslandtrust.org/>

When: 3-5 p.m. ET (2-4 p.m. CT) Sunday, April 14, 2013

Where: Meet at Spurgeon Woodland Reserve parking lot, directions below. The Edna W. Spurgeon Woodland Reserve was ACRES Land Trust's first property, acquired in 1961. It is a mesic upland forest on kames left by glaciers and cut by glacial meltwater, with a large vernal pond. Beech, sugar maple, and tulip poplar are the dominant trees. In normal spring weather, wildflowers likely to be in bloom in mid-April are spring beauty, Dutchman's breeches, squirrel corn, bloodroot, Hepatica, trout lily, bishop's cap, wood poppy, bellwort, three trillium species, several violets and more.

Directions: From the stoplight in Topeka, go approximately 3.5 miles south on Main St., which becomes LaGrange CR 600W, then Noble CR 600W; after crossing CR 1000W, look for the Spurgeon sign to the east. From Ligonier, go east 2.5 miles to 600W; turn north & go 2.25 miles north to the parking lot to the east.

Leaders: John J. Smith (ACRES volunteer and INPAWS North chapter field trip chair) and Tony Fleming (professional geologist and ACRES volunteer steward for Spurgeon Woodland Preserve)

Hike: The 1.25 mile trail begins in a second growth woods and soon loops through the old growth forest. The trail is moderately hilly. We will go at a slow pace so as to drink-in the fine wildflower display.

Reply requested if convenient: You are cordially invited to join us; if you plan to do so, please contact John J. Smith at johnjs@goshen.edu or at 574-533-9496 by April 13, if possible. Feel free to invite others. We will hike rain or shine, unless there are severe thunderstorms.

Upcoming Field Trips: INPAWS North has scheduled 9 more trips in 2013; the next one will begin at 2 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time, April 20 at Heron Rookery, an Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore property, south of Michigan City.



Photos provided by John J. Smith

Spring is coming! And with it, a multitude of festivals, gardening expos, and the like. In order to spread the word of our great organization, we are in need of individuals to staff our display at a variety of events this year. Upcoming events include: Earth Day on April 21st in Bristol and Spring Marketplace on May 4th in Elkhart. If you would like to participate in either of these events, have some events that you suggest we attend, or want to be on the list for future events, feel free to contact our outreach chairperson Lindsay Grossmann at earthlindz@gmail.com.

A Northwest INPAWS Chapter Hike for Wildflower Enthusiasts and Indiana Dunes National Park Visitors

Park Facility	Trail Name	Lat/Long	Street Address/Road intersections
Heron Rookery	River Trail	041.37.37N 086.57.07W	1320 N. County Road 600 E. Michigan City IN 46360

Sat 4/20 1pm Central Standard Time Heron Rookery (2 pm ET)

Porter Co. Leader: Tacy Fletcher RSVP's are NOT necessary—call 219-395-8914 for location help or park specifics

DO NOT USE GOOGLMAPS, but mapquest and GPS units give a correct set of turn-by-turn directions

Driving Directions:

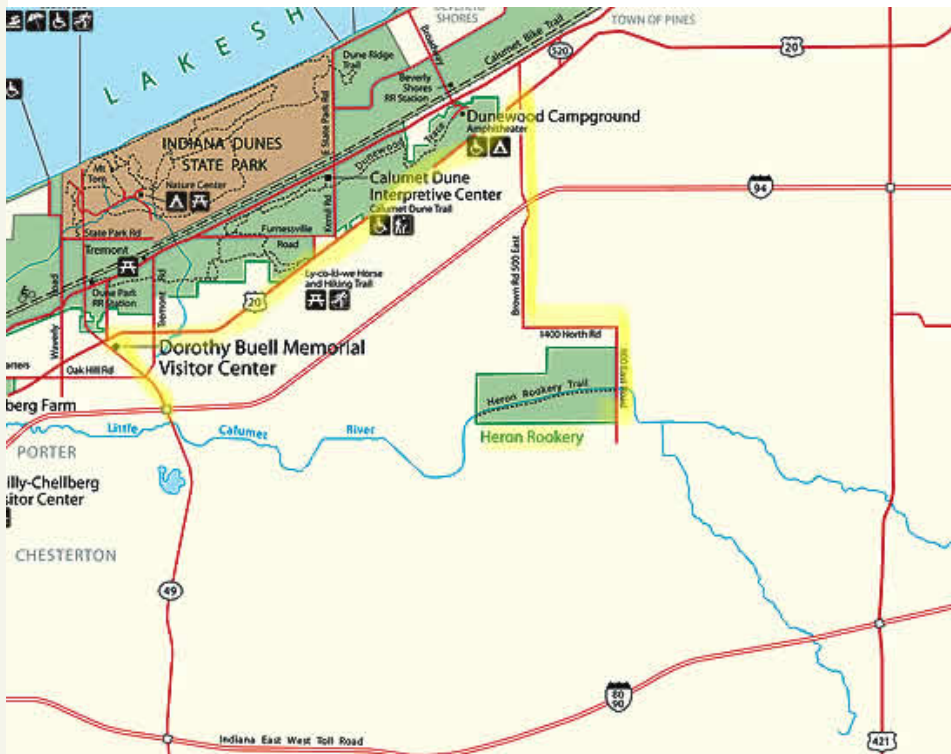
Starting at U.S. 94/80 and Indiana 49, go north 1 mile on Indiana 49

1. Take the U.S. 20 east ramp (right) and go east on U.S. 20 5 3/10 miles
 2. Turn right (south) on County Road 500 E/Brown Road and go 2 1/2 miles (road ends)
 3. Turn left (east) on County Road 1400 N and go 1 mile (road ends)
- Turn right (south) on County Road 600 E and go about 1/2 miles (cross bridge), turn right into parking area.

View spring wild flowers from late March until early June; bird viewing during the spring and fall migration; fish and watch fish swim in the Little Calumet River; no restroom facilities nor running water; the Rookery is a short drive to Chesterton where lunch can be purchased.

For an optional stewardship workday, arrive at 9 am CT to pull garlic mustard with the rangers. Loner gloves, and bags will be provided.

Graphics, information, directions belong to the NPS and can be seen in its original form here: <http://www.nps.gov/indu/planyourvisit/heron-rookery.htm>



Sunday, May 5

2-4 pm Eastern Daylight Time

1-3 pm Central Daylight Time

**Bendix
Woods
Nature
Preserve, St.
Joseph
County,
Indiana.**

**This is a joint
field trip
between
INPAWS (state)
and INPAWS –
North Chapter.**



Leaders: Scott

Namestnik, Senior
Project Scientist and

Botanist, Cardno JFNew and Deb Marr, Associate Professor of Ecology, Indiana University – South Bend.

Trail Conditions: Some small hills on well-established trail. Pace will be slow with frequent stops to discuss the plants we see and allow time for photographs of the flora.

What To See: The spring wildflower display at Bendix Woods Nature Preserve has been described as one of the finest native floral displays in the state. Our hike will traverse old-growth beech-maple forest, within which we should see ephemeral gems including wild ginger, purple spring cress, blue cohosh, squirrel corn, Dutchman's breeches, yellow trout lily, false mermaid, wild geranium, blue phlox, large-flowered trillium, red trillium, Canada violet, and the locally rare crinkleroot, in addition to several ferns and a diversity of mesic upland forest sedges.

Directions: Bendix Woods County Park is on the east side of Timothy Road, south of US 20, near New Carlisle, Indiana. From 31, take the US 20/31 bypass to the LaPorte/SR 2 exit, and continue west for approximately 9 miles. Turn left (south) on Timothy Road. The Park entrance will be on your left. From the west, go east on SR 2, approximately 2 miles east of the LaPorte County line. Turn right (south) on Timothy Road to the park entrance on your left. We will meet at the Hardwoods Picnic Area parking lot inside the park.

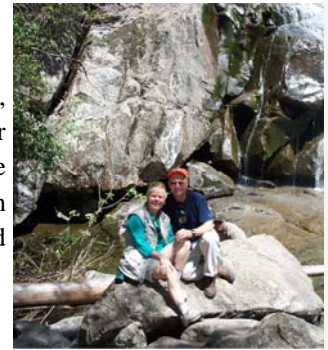


There is a county park vehicle fee of \$4.00 for out-of-county cars and \$3.00 for St. Joseph County vehicles. A map of the park can be found at <http://www.sjcparks.org/maps/pdfmaps/bwtrmap.pdf>.

Questions? Contact Scott Namestnik at scott.namestnik@cardno.com or (574) 229-8748. An RSVP to John Smith at johnjs@goshen.edu or (574) 533-9496 is requested by May 2. We will hike rain or shine.

Meet INPAWS NC' Vice-President - Cookie Ferguson

“Cookie” Ferguson is a retired middle school teacher living in La Porte, IN, with her husband, Steve. She always has enjoyed the out-of-doors and all it has to offer. She is a great supporter of the Explore Program for IN State Parks and is a 2011 graduate of the IMN class. Now she spends volunteer time at the IN Dunes State Park helping the school groups gain an appreciation of nature so they too will help to preserve it in the future. She is a birder and enjoys traveling to find the diversity that nature offers.



Sustainability and Growing Mushrooms

Submitted by Kat Snyder katsnyder86@yahoo.com

I am most certainly a mushroom lover at heart. For years my mother and I would order what we called “Fungus Pizza” from our local pizza joints: a 3 topping pizza with Mushrooms, Mushrooms, and Mushrooms, ordered specifically that way so the pizza would be generously slathered with them. As I’ve gotten older, I have learned to appreciate the variety of flavors that can be experienced by enjoying different mushroom varieties, different methods of cooking, and even finding fresh wild mushrooms. Especially, finding fresh wild mushrooms. There is nothing like spotting a mushroom, nestled in amongst the forest ground-cover, and taking your treasure home to prepare it as a feast. It feels so natural and terrestrial; like tasting earth.

Try though I may, however, I have been unsuccessful in finding such a treasure in many years. I buy fresh mushrooms in the store of course. They are a staple in my house, but I wondered if it would be possible to grow mushrooms with relative ease and went researching.

Back to the Roots® is a company in California that grows gourmet mushrooms using recycled grounds from Peet’s Coffee and Tea®. Their mission statement is, “To make food personal again through the passionate development of tools that educate and inspire, one family at a time.” They have made an easy DIY indoor mushroom growing kit where mushrooms grow out of the side of a cardboard container and yield up to 1.5 pounds of pearl oysters. The simple and totally renewable process takes coffee grown from the dirt which is roasted in the USA and then enjoyed as a cup of coffee, they gather the coffee ground waste that was once heading to a landfill, mix the grounds and mushroom spawn and package it all into a box kit. You then mist twice a day with water, mushrooms grow and are eaten, and the soil from the mushroom kit can be put back in the ground.

I love the idea of the sustainability and recycling aspect of this product. Unfortunately, I have the ability of killing cacti and fear for the life of such a delicate fungus in my house. I am excited about the possibility of this project though, and look forward to mushroom season once again. Perhaps the hunt is as enjoyable as the find.



www.mychocolatetherapy.com/2012/12/truffled fontina and mushroom pizza.html



http://store.backtotheroots.com/product_p/mushroom-kit.htm



blog.gessato.com/2013/02/27/back-to-the-roots-mushroom-growing-kit/back-to-the-roots-by-alejar



Put Spring in Your Step with INPAWS Submitted by Wendy Ford wwford@comcast.net

For details of regional chapter events and activities, visit our website and the INPAWS blog at www.inpaws.org. Chat with fellow members on our [Facebook](#) page.

Coming Events

April 13, Hike Schrader-Weaver Preserve, Fayette County, led by Brent Smith, Earlham College professor of biology.

May 5, Hike Bendix Woods Nature Preserve, St. Joseph County, led by Scott Namestnik, Cardno JFNew botanist, and Deb Marr, Indiana University South Bend professor of ecologist.

North Chapter hikes are described in their excellent newsletter, The Plant Press. Visit the blog and click on the category Chapter News & Events to learn more.

Southwest Chapter has a hike and general meeting planned. Visit the blog and click on the category Chapter News & Events to learn more.

September 22, Biodiversity Garden Tour Save the date for this Sunday tour of fall landscapes that use native plants.

November 9, INPAWS Annual Conference. Save the date for our day-long immersion in nature and native plants.

Announcements

Last Chance! If you've been putting off renewing your INPAWS membership for 2013, here's a friendly nudge. After April 1 you'll cease receiving mailings such as INPAWS Journal and hike reminders. If you've misplaced your renewal notice, find the application on our website by clicking on Join INPAWS.

Show Your Pride, Wear Our Logo Order handsome shirts, jackets, hats, etc., bearing the INPAWS logo in your choice of white or blue stitching to go on dark or light fabrics, respectively. For details, visit the website and click on About Us > Neat Stuff. For ordering instructions, follow the "Details" link under the heading Logo Wear in the righthand column.

What'll It Be: SWAT or TLC? Tom Hohman is organizing Central Chapter's Invasives SWAT Team and caregivers for native plant gardens at the Indiana State Museum. Look for details on the blog and email Tom at atpastpres@inpaws.org to sign up. Dan and Sophia Anderson seek volunteers for the Watanabe Gardens, also at the ISM.

About something published last month... Submitted to the Editor by Nick Harby nickharby@yahoo.com

Ellen mentioned the best time to collect garlic mustard is when it's just starting to bolt, that's very true, and the tender top where the flower buds form is the best to pick. Here's a picture of garlic mustard at just this time: <http://lafayettereport.blogspot.com/2012/03/garlic-mustard-best-to-eat-right-now.html>

THURSDAY, MARCH 29, 2012

Garlic mustard best to eat right now



A view looking down at the top of a garlic mustard plant (*Alliaria petiolata*). Notice the flower buds and their resemblance to its domesticated cousin, broccoli. Garlic mustard is even better to eat than broccoli because it's free! This stage is the best time to eat it, pick the tender broccoli-like tops and upper leaves. Take care that nobody's sprayed it with herbicide.

This plant was growing in West Lafayette (before I picked it and ate it). March 28, 2012.

[Link to *Alliaria petiolata*:](#)

POSTED BY NICK AT 9:42 AM

Stewardship Days 2013 at Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore

Program: Stewardship Day - Attacking the Invasive GM

Date: April 20

Time: 9:00 am – 12:00 pm CT

Location: Meet at the Heron Rookery east parking lot

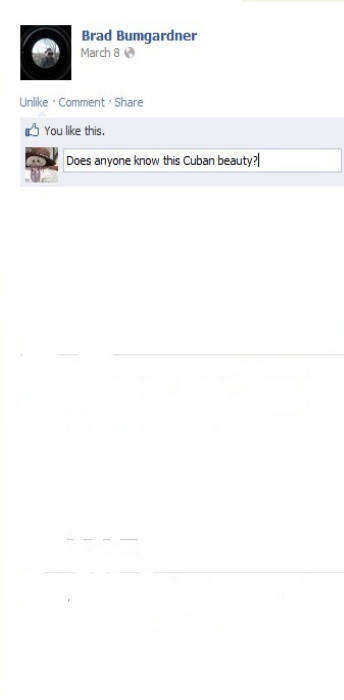
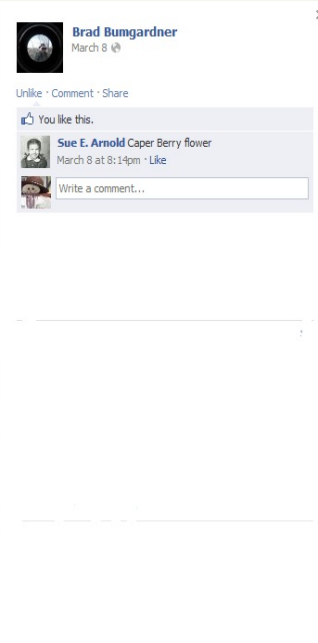
Description: The lakeshore is under attack by more than 50 invasive plants. Under the guidance of the Resource managers, please volunteer to help of save the great biodiversity of area. Wear comfortable clothes; work gloves and equipment will be provided. Page 5 of this newsletter provides more details about location.



Calumet Outdoors Presents the Calumet Naturalist Series:

Session Two will focus on trees, shrubs, and forbes that would typically be encountered in open woods. The series resumes on Saturday April 27th at Bailey Homestead, Chesterton at 9 am CT. Contact Steve at north@inpaws.org

Plant enthusiasts can be found just about anywhere, including Facebook pages of friends! These plants are native to Cuba. Travel abroad to view plants not native to Indiana. If we follow the outdoor ethic, of taking only memories, leaving only footprints, then we are all happy!



Please Help us Grow Submitted by Steve Sass north@inpaws.org

We hope that you've enjoyed this edition of *The Plant Press*. The future of the North Chapter of INPAWS relies on you, and your support. If you believe in the direction that we are taking, you can help us in the following ways:

- Join INPAWS - It is of foremost importance that we grow and maintain a strong membership base within our chapter. If you have not yet joined, a formal INPAWS membership application can be found by following this link: http://www.inpaws.org/wp-content/uploads/NewMember_Renewal_Application2.pdf.
- Invite others - Our field trips are open to everyone who wishes to join us. If you know of someone who has an appreciation of nature and a thirst for knowledge, please feel free to invite them to come along. After last month's field trip, we received a note from a participant who said "INPAWS is friendly to newcomers." We hope that everyone always feels this way when attending our hikes and programs.
- Pass on this newsletter - You are welcome to distribute copies of our newsletter *The Plant Press* . Submissions go to our editor: Tacy Fletcher tacyflet@iun.edu
- Become involved - As we grow, there will be an increasing need for people who are willing to help us lead hikes, present programs, join committees, participate in workdays and assume leadership roles within the chapter.

An Unhappy Situation for a Native Plant Gardener Submitted by the Editor tacyflet@iun.edu

It seems that sharing The Plant Press as I've requested all of you North Chapter members to do, has resulted in a timely notification of a neighbor in trouble. I wish to alert you, our readers, and to encourage the continued spreading of the native plant news, which has resulted in Wendy Ford reading last month's article by one of our proofreaders and regular submitters—Susan Castner—and forwarding it on in the hopes we could somehow help. Hopefully you will agree with the plight of Gloria, the way Susan and I did when we were first contacted directly by her. We have been allowed to reprint an article regarding her fight with her homeowners association which does not even have restrictive covenants on the books, but have blocked her professionally-designed native plantings. At the end of the article I have allowed Gloria rebuttal room which grants her the ability to set straight a few accidental misrepresentations in the article *Unnatural Habitat*...enjoy!

Unnatural Habitat: The saga of Gloria Cassady Submitted by jamesglowe@gmail.com <http://www.indianalivinggreen.com/unnatural-habitat-the-saga-of-gloria-cassady/>

It seems the grass needs to be green in Westfield, Indiana, where "Keeping up with the Joneses" requires a conventional approach to the landscape. Green lawn often trumps green living, despite the environmental and monetary burden [see sidebar]. Lurking under the blades of grass is a riptide of consequence that not only carries the voiceless concerns of the ecosystem, but also the plight of Gloria J. Cassady.

In 2011, Cassady sat among 1,200 patrons in the Clowes Memorial Hall at Butler University to hear the words of conservationist author Dr. Douglas Tallamy. Professor and Chair of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at Delaware University, Tallamy penned the 2009 title *Bringing Nature Home*, an informative text regarding ecologically sustainable landscapes in suburban environments. [see below for more on Tallamy]

"I saw Doug when he spoke at Butler," Cassady recalls. "He was so eloquent and so persuasive. I picked up the book and thought, there are so many things in the world that I can't affect, maybe I can do something with my little corner of it."

Cassady had done so earlier in her life. Native to Winchester, Indiana, she left the state following college at Ball State University to pursue the arts in California. While in San Diego, she transformed her property into a self-proclaimed haven. "I was only 15 minutes from downtown but I had almost an acre," she says. "My little cottage tripled in value in ten years. My yard was a destination, and people appreciated it. I really expected the same here."

Returning after a thirty-year hiatus, she purchased a home in Westfield in a subdivision called Beacon Pointe. Following her encounter with Dr. Tallamy, Cassady began drafting plans on the transformation of her half acre plot in Westfield from traditional landscaping styles to one incorporating native plants and progressive themes. "I'm just happy when I see more of nature," she says. "I knew what I wanted conceptually. I knew that I wanted density, contrast in shapes and textures and visual interest."

To hear her speak of her intentions, the plan seemed more akin to a meditation garden than simply an eco-friendly twist on the norm. "When I would look out my windows I would see green," she says. "Transition gardens with lilies... Top dressed with bark chips. I would have trees, shrubs...a path that would be like a dry river stream with stepping stones in it. I would have a place to have tea in the morning. It would be inviting to everyone. My inspiration was to be surrounded by green and to contribute positively to the environment."

But instead of a sustainable landscape, Cassady's plan created community scrutiny, citations, legislative amendments — and a lawsuit with the homeowner's association.

Social ire

As Cassady initiated her yard's transformation on May 7, Beacon Pointe HOA president Mark Jordan demanded a moratorium. "[Mark] came charging down, demanding I stop and not plant even a single solitary flower until I submitted a detailed landscape plan for my entire property and ask for his architecture design committee's approval," Cassady recalls. "I said that there's nothing in the HOA docs that require this, I read them before I bought the property. I asked if he could tell me a precedent."

According to Cassady, Mr. Jordan replied that there was no precedent, and that the HOA documents were "vague."

Editor's note: Beacon Pointe HOA refused to comment for this article due to pending litigation against Cassady.

Cassady explains, "My understanding of the law is that if I chose to use their form and submit, asking their permission, I'm giving them rights that their own HOA documents do not give them, and am setting new precedents for the entire community. That's inappropriate. My reasoning is that when someone is bullying you, you don't hand them a bigger club."

"The day after that, I went over to the vice president Chris William's house and he told me to hire a lawyer and to not get him involved," she continues. "I thought that was curious. I wrote an email to the president and copied the whole board on it. I basically just said that anytime I can be a part of the dialogue, I'd be happy to share the details with anyone who wants to see them, but I'm not asking for permission."

Undaunted, Cassady reached out to the city's planning commission for approval and a formal place to begin. It appears as though her reputation had preceded her. Conversations with bordering neighbors and Beacon Pointe HOA regarding her plan seemingly had stirred the pot, as the city began receiving complaints prior to the initiation of her plans.

"I called the city and asked who I should talk to about plans to improve biodiversity," she says. Kevin Todd is a senior planner for the city of Westfield on the technical advisory committee. According to Ms. Cassady, he was initially receptive to the ideas outlined in her plans. "I asked Kevin if he saw any problems with [my ideas], he said no, that sounds great," she recalls.

Mr. Todd scheduled a time to meet with Cassady the following day, asking for permission to photograph her property and get a better idea of her intentions.

Upon arrival at her home, however, optimism had apparently faded. "When he got here, he was kind of vague, talking more about the complaints," Cassady recalls. According to her, Mr. Todd mentioned neighbors by name, declaring that he was hesitant of her project out of fear of losing his job.

Editor's note: Mr. Todd did not reply when asked for comment on this story.

In her search to improve her plot's biodiversity, Cassady had become aware of section 14 of Westfield's "Tall Weed Ordinance 12-



20.” Initially drafted as a provision to prohibit properties from becoming overgrown, the Tall Weed Ordinance stipulated that all “weed or rank vegetation” growths in any residential property only reach an average maximum height of 12 inches.

Section 14 of the ordinance claims that any property that meets the approval of the Director of Community Development may qualify as a Natural Habitat, or in other words, an area exempt of typical vegetation jurisdiction for the means of accomplishing greater ecological goals.

Seeing the value of Section 14 to accomplish her goals, Cassady pressed Mr. Todd for further information regarding converting her property into an ecological habitat. Despite his hesitation of further aggravation among neighbors, Mr. Todd proposed that Cassady submit an application to Community Director and City Council member Matt Skelton.

Cassady applied for the permit as suggested by Mr. Todd. While out of the state in mid June, she was informed via email that her request had been approved by Director of Community Development and City Council member Matt Skelton and signed by Mr. Todd.

However, with progress having halted due to HOA intervention, by her return weeks later, her yard had become unkempt. Her grassy areas had achieved a height of roughly three feet tall, helping to solidify the opinions of those opposed to her attempts.

Westfield steps in

Days later, she received a citation via certified mail due to the state of her property. “I had told the HOA and the city that I had plans to be out of town,” she says. “I wrote Kevin and said that I didn’t want anything to happen in my absence.” According to correspondence received by Ms. Cassady’s realtor who helped her purchase her home, during her absence the city sent an inspector to her property to check for violations against the tall weed ordinance. “I got a terse email from Kevin saying that he had issued a citation for what they said was Canada Thistle.” [The citation was eventually dropped.]



As the citation was issued, pressure began to rise. Within days of the citation being sent, Matt Skelton, Director of Community Development and the original issuer of Ms. Cassady’s Natural Habitat permit, proposed drastic changes to the Tall Weed Ordinance. On June 25, Westfield’s city council met to discuss the amendment of section 14 of the ordinance, removing the ability for natural habitats to exist in properties built after 1977.

Cassady’s home in Beacon Pointe was constructed in 1989. Missing the cutoff date to be grandfathered into the ordinance, Cassady’s property would now be unable to qualify for her previously issued permit.

On the same day that the ordinance change was first proposed by Mr. Skelton, Beacon Pointe HOA formally filed a lawsuit against Cassady, attempting to legally force her into compliance with neighborhood standards regarding landscape.

Editor’s note: Matt Skelton deferred comment on this story to Westfield’s Office of Communications, but those communications directed the writer to another contact who never responded to his queries.

Following the initial council meeting, council member Steve Hoover formed a committee to look into the ecological ramifications of the proposed changes. The group was hopeful of creating a more informed vote through interaction with local experts.

Two weeks later, with no public forum, the city council called the Section 14 amendment to a vote. The ballot came so quickly on the heels of the amendment’s proposal that Mr. Hoover’s team didn’t have the opportunity to gather any further information. Mr. Hoover asked that the council delay the vote, and according to Cassady, who was in attendance, said “I see no urgency in this matter, and we haven’t met yet. I really think that our committee ... might want to make additional changes.” The council proceeded despite Mr. Hoover’s appeal.

The proposed changes passed, with Mr. Hoover voting in favor of the amendment. The only nay vote came from Councilman Robert Stokes, voting against the motion for the sake of wanting more information regarding the proposal’s impact.

Available for interview, Mr. Stokes submitted that Cassady’s circumstance was in fact the force behind the change in legislation. “Her situation definitely pushed it to the point where we needed to do something,” he says. He believes, however, that the new change in the ordinance was not due to nepotism towards other Beacon Pointe residents, but rather due to the extreme circumstance of Ms. Cassady’s property. “It’s good to have the ecology aspect in mind, that’s a good thing,” he says. “But she also has to take into account that she lives in a platted subdivision. Her plan looks great. Progress just wasn’t there. That’s how we got to where we are.” Despite his dissenting vote, Mr. Stokes believes that additional input from local ecological groups wouldn’t have changed the vote’s outcome.

John South, engineer and district manager for Hamilton County Soil and Water Conservation was in attendance at the first meeting introducing the amendment. He believes that the amendment leaves too much room for interpretation. “The concerns that I have against the ordinance specifically...is the wording,” he says. “Unfortunately by the definition I suppose ‘grass’ can be a rank vegetation because it grows vigorously. The problem is that a lot of our native vegetation commonly grows taller than 12” but is very beneficial. The definitions leave a lot of area for interpretation.”

South also feels as though the process occurred uncommonly fast. “It did happen fairly quickly,” he says. “I was surprised that they could and would revise an ordinance without any kind of a public hearing. I thought that was a little unusual. This one probably occurred quicker than most.”

The passing of the Natural Habitat amendment removes the legal safeguard for Cassady’s plan, putting her conflict directly with the HOA.

She claims her progress was stalled not due to a fault in her plan, but rather to impediments by the lawsuit of the HOA and the city of Westfield. “My yard is in its current condition because I’m not able to plant anything,” she says. “No one is more daunted than me. My number one priority is I have to respond to this bogus litigation against me. That overshadows everything. I have this shadow looming over me. I’m 65, retired and living on Social Security. I’ve invested everything in this property.”

Due to the ecological nature of the lawsuit and Ms. Cassady’s personal circumstance, she says that a local law firm has been willing to take on her case for limited cost. As of this fall, she was optimistic about the direction that legal talks were proceeding. “I had a meeting with Mark and [his] attorneys yesterday,” she said via email. “My attorney petitioned for another 30-day extension of time to work out, as our first draft was not ‘agreement exemplifying and assuring equitable treatment.’ So nothing’s signed yet, and the devil may be in the details, but they are verbally agreeing to pull the litigation and to schedule an informative meeting about ecosystem and beneficial landscape practices inviting all Beacon Pointe residents, and to allow my improvements to move forward as availability (plants / contractors / etc.) permits.”

Sitting in the sun in her backyard, Gloria Cassady is still determined. “Here now, hearing the birds, I’m energized by it. I haven’t changed, much to many

people's dismay. I don't have time to plant a tree at a time. Our environment can't stand for people to plant a tree at a time. I didn't go into this thinking this will be an example, I was thinking that this was something that would nurture my spirit and nurture the environment, and other people would appreciate it."

She turns and looks out at the yard that has yet to become her dream. "If you keep putting good out in the world," she says, "something good has to come back to you eventually."

So... why do lawns suck?

- Americans buy 70 million pounds of chemical fertilizers every year (EPA)
- Americans spend around \$6.4 billion on lawns every year (Lawn Institute)
- Turf grass takes up nearly 32 million acres of the U.S., making it the nation's largest irrigated crop
- 50 to 70 percent of residential water is used for landscaping
- 10,000 gallons of water is spent on average each summer on 1,000 square feet of lawn
- Equipment for lawn maintenance burns fossil fuels and costs add up
- Grass grows best and becomes the most durable when many varieties are grown together
- Natural habitats help water retention
- Natural habitats keep nutrients in the soil instead of eroding
- If you aren't using pesticides, earthworms can help keep soil healthy
- Well-maintained, natural landscapes act as carbon sinks



More on Doug Tallamy

Dr. Doug Tallamy believes progressive plans like Gloria Cassady's can have profound influence on suburban areas. "Humans have developed landscapes for their own use that are very poor habitats for anything else. I'm trying to suggest that it doesn't have to be that way," he says. "We can actually have landscapes that are useful for us, are beautiful for us, but are also functional for other things."

Professor Tallamy likes to use birds as his prime example of facilitating nature in suburban environments. "Everybody likes birds," he says. "There are 32 million people in the US that feed the birds every winter. 96% of birds when they're rearing their young are feeding them insects. Those insects that they're feeding them are being made by plants. The plants that are best at making them are [native]. If you bring plants from Asia, and 79% of our ornamentals are from Asia, they're very poor at supporting food. The themes in my book are consistent across the whole planet."

Those interested in bringing nature to their own backyards, they should start by planting trees. "Woody plants are more productive in terms of the number of insects that they support than say perennials and annuals," he says. "Those are still important, but for example the most valuable plant that we have... are Oaks. We've shown that they support 534 species of caterpillars, so that's 534 species of bird food. Which plant you're going to put in there is going to determine how full you're filling your bird feeder. That's how I look at it."

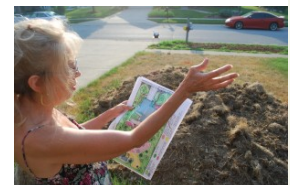
Despite his passion for infusing sustainable practices into everyday environments, Tallamy understands the social dangers associated with making such changes. "I don't think we're ever going to achieve what I want to achieve by going forcibly going against what's considered socially acceptable," he says. "Because then you've got people who are going to fight change. I want people to recognize the benefits that this type of landscaping is bringing them. I want it to be done carefully, I want it to be done in a way that everyone in the neighborhood drives by and says, 'I want that.' We're making progress, I think landscape designers have to play a bigger role in trying to achieve the goal of more...native plants in your landscape without making it look like you've just moved out and forgot to mow the lawn. People are just going to rebel against that and it just sets the whole movement back."

More information on Dr. Tallamy and his book, *Bringing Nature Home*, can be found online at <http://www.plantanative.org/>

—End of Article Written by James Lowe—

While searching for another photo of Gloria, the editor found another article about Gloria's plight. I did not have time to request permission to reprint it here, but one can follow the link and view the comments pro and con regarding it. Also Gloria's corrections to James Lowe's article begins immediately on the next page.

<http://currentinwestfield.com/2012/in-the-weeds/>



Corrections to ILG Article Submitted by Gloria Cassady gloriagg87@yahoo.com

[Unnatural Habitat: The saga of Gloria Cassady | Indiana Living Green](http://www.indianalivinggreen.com/...habitat-the-saga-of-gloria-cassady) www.indianalivinggreen.com/...habitat-the-saga-of-gloria-cassady

Corrections/ clarifications include:

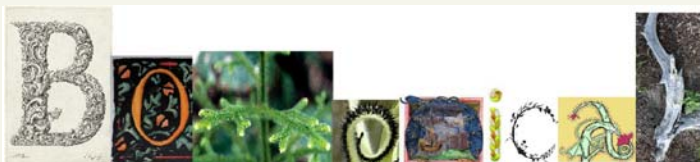
- 1.) Cassady was not out of town for weeks returning in June. She was out of town only 11 days (May 16 -27) and her property didn't become unkempt or grass grow to 3 feet in that time.
- 2.) Had BPHOA President not interfered with Cassady's workers on May 7, 2012, she would have completed planting the strip between the sidewalk and street before she went out of town and the new plantings would have been properly maintained during her absence. Without continuing HOA interference upon her return, contractors would have completed plantings in the rest of her yard (replacing grass with trees and shrubs and flowers and groomed paths) in June.
- 3.) The unkempt appearance in July and August was direct result of HOA interruption blocking all plantings (which compounded and extended the messy stage inherent in any improvement project). Absent HOA interference, Cassady's plantings would have begun May 7, 2012 and been completed in June - with no maintenance issues.
- 4.) Re Westfield's Tall Weeds Ordinance - Westfield City Councilperson Cindy Spoljarek said since Cassady's letter from Westfield saying Cassady's wildlife habitat is permitted was issued before any Tall Grass Ordinance changes were proposed, this meant Cassady's habitat designation with it's exemption would be grandfathered in regardless of later Ordinance changes. Cassady believes her. This has not been disproven;
- 5.) Cassady's is a qualified landscape and planning professional [B.S. in Environmental Design with Landscape Architecture major and minors in Urban and Regional Studies, and Natural Resources) with work experience including architectural design, planning and project management for major midwestern city planning and economic development department, environmental consultant in California, etc.

Save the Dunes and Partners form Indiana Coastal Land Conservation Alliance

Save the Dunes, Shirley Heinze Land Trust, The Nature Conservancy, and the National Park Service have announced the founding of the new Indiana Coastal Land Conservation Alliance (ICLCA) earlier this year. The alliance seeks to represent land trusts, other non-profit organizations, and government agencies whose missions are to protect, preserve, and restore the natural ecosystems of the Lake Michigan watershed area of Northwest Indiana. This is an exciting opportunity to enhance strategic action to protect the land and natural resources of Northwest Indiana. To learn more, visit our website: Save the Dunes and partners [form Indiana Coastal Land Conservation Alliance](http://www.savedunes.org/news/?uid=7c15e7cb73f5). <http://www.savedunes.org/news/?uid=7c15e7cb73f5>

Indiana Dunes State Park invites birders and wildflower enthusiasts to collaborate in upcoming outings. On Saturday April 13th at 9:30 am Central Standard Time come and meet some yearly returning friends who have dropped by or sprung up to say hello! Grab your binoculars and hand lens and meet Brad at the Nature Center.

Or before meeting Tacy at the Heron Rookery on Saturday April 20th (Earth Day) at 1 pm (CT) you can join Brad for the **Wood Ducks & Marigolds** hike at 10 am CT which convenes at the campground gate for an hour or so hike. Gate fees at the Dunes State Park are in effect and are charged per car, not per individual, so why not carpool to the west portion of the North Chapter to do both hikes on the same day!



Got the Cohosh Blues? Submitted by Charlotte Gyllenhaal, cgyllenhaal@gmail.com, and Michael Huft, mhuft@att.net

Blue cohosh, *Caulophyllum thalictroides*, is a woodland wildflower that blooms at the same time as other early spring wildflowers in the forests of the eastern and midwestern US. Blue cohosh obtained its name from the blue-purple color of its smooth, rather odd-looking stems and its blue, toxic berries. There are three “cohosh” species in the eastern forest flora – blue cohosh, white cohosh (*Actaea pachypoda*) and black cohosh (*Cimicifuga racemosa*, but sometimes also called *Actaea racemosa*). They received their names not because they are botanically related – blue cohosh is in the barberry family (Berberidaceae) while white cohosh and black cohosh are in the buttercup family (Ranunculaceae) – but rather from the Native American tribes who used them as medicinals. Blue cohosh and black cohosh in particular are used as labor stimulants, often in a preparation that includes both herbs; white cohosh was more often used for colds and coughs, but it’s also recorded as being a labor stimulant by one tribe.

Blue cohosh has a long-standing reputation among midwives not only as a medication that can be taken to start an overdue labor or assist a weak uterus in childbirth, but also as an antispasmodic to relieve excessive uterine cramps during menstruation or relieve pain in childbirth. This dual action, typical of a number of herbs, is described as “tonic” activity, or an action that normalizes body functions. Tonic activity is also attributed to herbs like ginseng, which is thought to normalize overall body function (blue cohosh is sometimes called yellow ginseng or blue ginseng). The uterine stimulating and antispasmodic activities are attributed to different phytochemicals in the plant.

This array of activities makes blue cohosh sound like a very useful plant. But it has a darker side. For one thing, it has also been used to cause abortions because of its ability to stimulate uterine contractions. In fact, herbalists recommend that it be avoided during and up until the end of pregnancy for this reason. It contains a number of phytochemicals that could cause birth defects, and the plant extract has been shown to cause birth defects in lab animals, so it’s fortunate that it is traditionally avoided early in pregnancy. It can also cause effects similar to an overdose of nicotine, which was noted in a case of a young woman using it for an abortion. There are also reports of health problems in babies born after mothers used blue cohosh, though it is still uncertain whether blue cohosh is actually at fault in these cases.

Whether the case reports truly represent blue cohosh toxicity or are simply unfortunate coincidences, the potential for nicotine-like toxicity in blue cohosh makes it something to avoid. White cohosh is also something to be avoided, which you might deduce from one of its other names, baneberry (another name is doll’s eyes, from the fruits, which are white with a black spot). Although blue cohosh and white cohosh are in different families, there are actually some similarities in the way the plants look.



Actaea pachypoda flower close-up by Michael Huft

Both grow about a foot or two high, have smooth stems and have compound or doubly-compound leaves. Blue cohosh, however, has purplish stems and rounded leaflets with just a few large teeth. White cohosh, on the other hand, has a whitish tinge on the stem, and the leaflets have sharply-toothed margins. The flowers of blue cohosh are yellowish-green and are in rather loose, few-flowered clusters, whereas those of white cohosh are white and are in tighter clusters with several flowers. Though the actual fruits and flowers are quite different, but it was rather amusing to note the two species growing right across the trail from each other on one of our trips to the Indiana Dunes. Both are early spring wildflowers, though the white cohosh blooms a week or so later than the blue. Black cohosh, although



White Cohosh *Actaea pachypoda* Photo provided by Michael Huft



Blue Cohosh *Caulophyllum thalictroides* Photo provided by Michael Huft

related to white cohosh, has a very different look, and blooms much later in the summer. It is typically much taller than white cohosh, though the leaves are similar, and the small white flowers are arranged in very long wand-like inflorescences. It is not common in Indiana, being restricted to the southeastern counties, except for a few localities farther north in Allen and Tippecanoe counties. A related species, Appalachian bugbane, *Cimicifuga rubifolia* (sometimes called *Actaea rubifolia*), is a rare species of the mid-South that enters Indiana only in Posey County in the extreme southwest.

While blue cohosh is not the most scientifically validated herbal remedy, it is a lovely plant to encounter in the forest, and it can be grown at home if you have a moist and shady area. It may take a while to germinate, and it takes two years before the plant matures, but it has a unique presence. White cohosh, another very attractive plant, can also be cultivated in shady areas with rich soil. Do keep your kids and grandkids away from the berries of these two plants, though!

In the eastern US there is also a very close relative of white cohosh, or white baneberry, known as red baneberry (*Actaea rubra*).



Red Baneberry *Actaea rubra* in fruit Photo provided by Michael Huft

The only really obvious difference is the red fruit, in contrast to the white fruit of white cohosh, though there are subtle differences, such as the thickness of the flower stalks and other minor aspects of the small flowers.

Vegetatively, they are virtually indistinguishable. Actually, the matter is even worse -- the fruits of red baneberry are white on rare occasions, and those of white baneberry are rarely red. In Indiana, red baneberry is very rare, known from only a few localities in the northern two tiers of counties, while white baneberry is fairly common throughout the state.



Black Cohosh *Cimicifuga racemosa* <http://www.flickr.com/photos/blueridgekitties/5912765046/>

Richard Louv To Present The 2013 Reynold E. Carlson Lecture

The Eppley Institute for Parks and Public Lands and the Department of Recreation, Park, and Tourism Studies at Indiana University cordially invite you to the 2013 Reynold E. Carlson Lecture on April 12, from 1:00 to 3:00pm, featuring Mr. Richard Louv, journalist and author of eight books about the connections between family, nature, and community.

Mr. Louv's book *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder* (Algonquin Books) has been translated into 10 languages and published in 15 countries. It has stimulated an international conversation about the relationship between children and nature. Louv is co-founder and chairman emeritus of the [Children & Nature Network](http://www.childrenandnature.org/), <http://www.childrenandnature.org/> an organization helping to build the movement to connect today's children and future generations to the natural world. Louv coined the term Nature-Deficit Disorder®, which has become the defining phrase of this important issue.

The lecture is free and open to the public and will be held in the Whittenberger Auditorium at the Indiana Memorial Union on the campus of Indiana University - Bloomington.

In 2008, Mr. Louv was awarded the Audubon Medal, and has been a columnist and member of the editorial advisory board for *Parents* magazine. Most recently, on April 16, 2012, he gave the closing keynote at the first White House Summit on Environmental Education.



www.flickr.com/photos/thewildcenter/5755102011/

This will be the last really big issue of *The Plant Press* until the Fall when we can resume having large articles and photo essays. For the warm summer months when we are all so busy with graduations, garden-planning, increased work-loads, vacations, weddings, festivals, bird-watching, wildflower observing, and on and on and on, it seems apropos that our monthly editions taper down to brief descriptions of walks, and Native Plants goings-on. I would still encourage everyone who has interesting related articles to send them to me. I would like to encourage everyone who hears of stewardship opportunities, festivals, hikes, talks by botanic speakers, fund-raisers by worthy 501(c) 3's to post these on the Facebook page for INPAWS. Please feel free to share these summer opportunities directly on my own Facebook page and or Steve Sass's and we will promote these, as we deem them worthy, to our own extensive networks.

I personally encourage all postings to my own page to be positive, nature-related, goings-ons whether they come from a municipality, Nonprofit, or club and that does not promote one political ideology over another, and likewise does not disparage any group or class of people/beliefs.

Once again I wish to thank *The Plant Press*' proofreaders which this month are Kat Snyder, Steve Sass and others!

Photo copyrighted by WPI and under limited license <http://web.cs.wpi.edu/~ghamel/cimicifuga.jpg>

