

Friends of the Limberlost

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INSIDE

Page 2

Creatures of the Night & Tour
Rainbow Bottom

Page 3

Duo Sequenza
Flute & Guitar

Page 4

Afternoon Tea with
Teddy Roosevelt

Page 5

A Daughter of the
Land Centennial

Page 6

Gene Stratton-Porter and the
Spanish Flu

THE LIMBERLOST SWAMPER

Page 7

Ben Hess Has Left
the Building

Page 8

Results of the
Christmas Bird Count

Page 9

Grabbed by a Crab

Page 10

Say's Firefly
Our State Insect

Page 11

Join the Friends !
It does make a difference

TAKE FLIGHT ! WILDLIFE EDUCATION

Mark Booth, Indianapolis Wildlife Educator

Presents:

BIRDS OF PREY AND PEOPLE

Saturday, March 24, 2-3pm
at the Limberlost Visitor Center

Hawks, owls, falcons, and their kin have long held our imagination. See what it's like to be hawk eyed or falcon fast. Meet these magnificent predators up close. Hear the stories of our shared history.



Program is Free

Donations are appreciated

This free educational program featuring live raptors is partially sponsored by Valentine Feed & Supply. Located at 1165 US Highway 27 North, Portland, IN 47371 phone 260-726-FEED. Check out their website:



LIMBERLOST GOLDEN EASTER EGG HUNT

Saturday, March 31, egg hunt begins "eggsactly" at 11am
Cost \$2.00/child. Ages 12 & under welcome

The grounds of the Limberlost are divided into three search areas for three different age groups, so all children have a good opportunity to find lots of eggs. Children won't go away disappointed! Find a golden egg & win a special prize.

•*Before the hunt...*enjoy the Petting Zoo provided by Roll Farms; check out Professor Curt's egg display case and his "Joke Board"; say 'hello' to the Easter Bunny.

•*After the hunt...*attend Professor Curt's "Egg Class" and graduate as an official "Limberlost Egghead". Also, participate in yard games and win more candy.

**WE SINCERELY THANK THE
FOLLOWING SPONSORS FOR
DONATING CASH AND PRIZES**
(please thank them by shopping locally)

**Crossroads Pantry in Geneva
Berne CVS Pharmacy
Dreams on Wings in Geneva
Friends of the Limberlost**



ENJOY APRIL AND THE GREAT OUTDOORS AT LIMBERLOST

Join us for a night-time program at the Loblolly Marsh or hike Rainbow Bottom

CREATURES OF THE NIGHT, Friday Night, April 20 Starts at 8:30 pm at the Loblolly Marsh Pavilion

Cost: \$4/adult, \$3/child (sorry, no toddlers, please)

Discover what creatures lurk around the marsh in the darkness

- Participate in our critter ID game—*bring your flashlights*—and search for the *glowing eyes*.
- Hear night sounds by using *bionic ears*. Identify frog calls. See better in the dark with *night vision*.
- Enjoy nighttime dip-netting for aquatic creatures living in the water of the marsh.
- Using a digital microscope, Curt will project aquatic creatures on the big screen at the pavilion.
- Dare to discover what is hidden in the Mystery Boxes.
- Finish off the evening with a campfire and toasted marshmallows

You'll be greeted at the Loblolly Marsh Parking Lot by volunteers who will direct you to the Pavilion. How do you get to the Loblolly Marsh parking lot? Travel 3 miles west of Bryant, IN (Jay County) on State Highway 18. then turn north on County Road 250W. The parking lot is about 1/2 mile up CR 250 W.

GPS address: 8323N 250W, Bryant, IN 47326. Some hiking in the dark is required, so bring a flashlight and wear appropriate clothing and shoes.



GUIDED TOUR OF RAINBOW BOTTOM

Saturday, April 28, 9 am to Noon

Cost \$4/person



Tour begins at the Limberlost Visitor Center

Follow Curt Burnette, Limberlost Naturalist, as he leads a hike through Rainbow Bottom, a portion of 270 acres of Wabash River bottomland owned by the Friends of the Limberlost. Learn about the history and ecology of the area, how Gene Stratton-Porter used it as the setting for two of her novels, plus observe wildlife and giant sycamore trees (see photos). This a great opportunity to see a more secluded part of the Limberlost.



The guided tour of Rainbow Bottom is no less than a two mile hike. *Participants should dress appropriately and not wear open-toed shoes.* This hike will take place rain or shine, although storms that include lightning or significant flooding of the Wabash River can cause this hike to be cancelled. When in doubt, it's a good idea to call Limberlost State Historic Site to confirm that this hike will take place (260-368-7428). Mark your calendar. Curt has planned an informative and entertaining outing. Hope you can join us on April 28 !

SPRING BRINGS SOMETHING NEW TO THE LIMBERLOST



“SOUTH SHORE SUITE” Audience Interactive Concert Experience

**at the Limberlost Visitor Center
Sunday, April 8, at 2 pm**

Free admission

Enjoy a concert featuring “Duo Sequenza”, the world-renowned duo of Debra Silva on flute and Paul Bowman on the classical guitar. This is an interactive experience for audiences of all ages.

This all-new musical adventure is free to the public as an Arts in the Parks & Indiana State Historic Sites event thanks to the financial support of the Indiana Arts Commission, the Indiana Dept. of Natural Resources, and the Indiana State Museum & State Historic Sites.



Duo Sequenza was founded in 1988 by Valparaiso resident Debra Silvert and

Chesterton native Paul Bowman. In the first 5 years of their collaboration they performed throughout the U.S. and in 11 Asian and European countries. The Duo went their separate ways while Silvert home-schooled her four children, and Bowman continued a solo career in Europe. In 2015, they returned to the concert stage together. Silvert, hailed as “a gem of a flutist” and Bowman, “among the best guitarists in the world” are committed to developing new audiences for today’s classical music while promoting the work of living composers.

Composed in honor of Indiana’s Bicentennial, “South Shore Suite” by maestro, Jorge Muñiz, is a series of short pieces portraying a journey across Northwest Indiana on the South Shore Line. Each piece serves as a “musical postcard” set amidst the region’s unique geography and evoking the colorful legends of historical personalities. Included are Princess Mishawaka, Lake Michigan, Mount Baldy, Diana of the Dunes, and John Dillinger’s Run. A musical prologue (South Bend) and Epilogue (Chicago) represent the terminal points of our nation’s last surviving commuter railroad.



**INDIANA STATE
MUSEUM**
AND HISTORIC SITES

Maestro Muñiz, Associate Professor of Music at IUSB and winner of the First Grand Prize of the European Young Composers Competition, as well as several other international awards, composed “South Shore Suite” for Duo Sequenza, who premiered it in January 2017 at the Memorial Opera House in Valparaiso, IN. The interactive concert planned for Limberlost grew out of the continued collaboration of Muñiz, Silvert, and Bowman with the goal of developing a larger, more diverse audience for fine art music, believing that chamber music, especially that written for flute and guitar, is uniquely engaging to new listeners.



As Debra Silvert puts it, “We didn’t plan for ‘South Shore Suite’ to become the basis of an interactive Concert experience, but the work finished up to be so perfectly suited for such a project. Classical music suffers from an image of being elitist, stuffy, and boring when it’s really anything but! We are so excited to be presenting a program at Limberlost that has potential to create brand-new contemporary classical music fans!” Check out the website www.duosequenza.com

AFTERNOON TEA WITH TEDDY ROOSEVELT, APRIL 28, 2 pm

RESERVATION IS REQUIRED

WHERE: The Limberlost Visitor Center Classroom

COST: \$20/person

Friends Members \$15/person

The Friends of the Limberlost are excited to present Theodore Roosevelt, the 26th President of the United States. The President will be joining us for tea and hors d'oeuvres at Limberlost State Historic Site. We are certain that he will also enlighten us on many topics.

There is an undocumented story from one of Gene Stratton-Porter's biographers stating that Gene once visited with Roosevelt, perhaps at Sagamore Hill, his home located on the North Shore of Long Island, New York.

President Roosevelt served as President from 1901-1909, and during his time in office, he was able to establish many new national parks, forests, and monuments, intending to help preserve and to celebrate America's natural heritage. It is probably

his impressive record as a conservationist that would have endeared him to Mrs. Porter. He was the President of the United States during eight of the 24 years that Mrs. Porter lived in Geneva.

Teddy Roosevelt is being portrayed by Gib Young from Huntington, Indiana. He was born and raised in Lafayette, attended Jefferson High School, Purdue University and graduated from Bethel College in Mishawaka.

Gib has been a lifelong admirer of Theodore Roosevelt. (He is a member of the Theodore Roosevelt Association). Mr. Roosevelt's personality, intellect, and zest for life were an irresistible call to Gib. But it wasn't until about ten years ago that a local teacher convinced Mr. Young to come to a fifth grade class as the 26th President. The "challenge" and fun of that small event led to an acceleration of study of TR's history and a development of period clothing and spectacles.

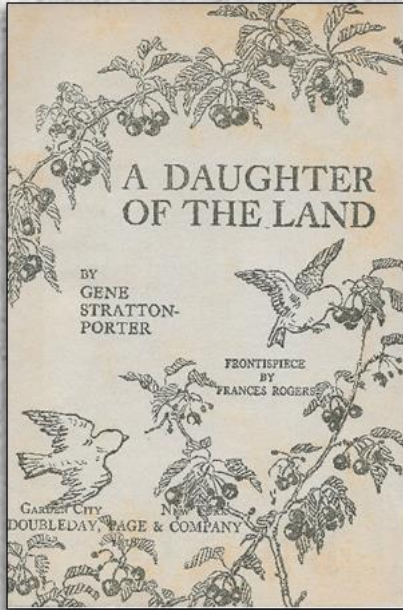
A fortuitous meeting six years ago with Mr. Fritz Klein, the foremost Abraham Lincoln interpreter today, convinced Gib to become a professional interpreter himself. According to Klein, Gib has been able to develop the voice and movements of Theodore Roosevelt to a high degree.

For the last few years he has developed his impression of Theodore Roosevelt and has appeared from New York state to Shreveport to Marquette to Seattle as TR. He has had the pleasure of appearing at Mr. Rushmore, the White House, Devil's Tower National Monument, and Lake Erie's National Wildlife Reserve in the role of the 26th President. He has appeared as TR for Daimler-Chrysler, the Indianapolis Hob-Nob, The National Wildlife Service, The English Speaking Union Chapter in Shreveport, Louisiana, Fort Casper in Casper Wyoming, and the Strasburg Rail Road and the Navy Club of Bremerton, Washington, to name just a few venues. Mr. Young has also appeared before scores of historical societies, school assemblies, and libraries.

Highlights of his professional career are: working with the finest presidential interpreters in the United States; Mr. Fritz Klein (Abraham Lincoln), Mr. Dean Malissa (George Washington), Mr. Bill Barker (Thomas Jefferson), and Mr. David Schuler (John Adams). Performing as Mr. Roosevelt has allowed Gib to dine with captains of aircraft carriers, to drive a steam locomotive through the Amish country of Pennsylvania, and to meet the most wonderful and enthusiastic children.

Make your reservation today, seating is limited, call 260-368-7428, or email bandt@aol.com Your reservation is not complete until your payment is received.

A DAUGHTER OF THE LAND—a book review by Randy Lehman



This year marks the centennial of Gene Stratton Porter's, *A Daughter of the Land*, first published August 17, 1918. *A Daughter of the Land* is Gene's 8th novel and takes place in northeastern Indiana.

Kate Bates, the main character in the book, is a strong-willed and determined 18 year-old, who has grown up in a farm family, the youngest child of 7 sons and 9 daughters! When the story opens Kate is on a mission to become a *modern* woman. She wants to be considered equal to her brothers, which means having economic equality and an equal opportunity to pursue her own dreams. Unlike her sisters, she doesn't have a strong desire to get married or to have children right away. She wants a career of her own. More than anything, she wants to run a 200-acre farm, but she can't, according to her family, because she is a "woman".

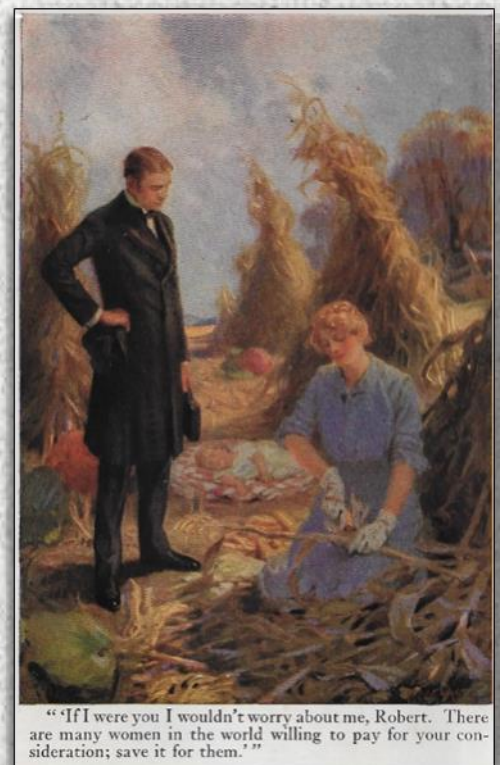
When I first read this book 15 years ago, I found the story to be rather melodramatic, but I had to agree with a 1918 book review that dared "any unprejudiced person" to read the book to the end without feeling an "enthusiasm for the story". Gene Stratton-Porter always tells a good story.

This one features the entire Bates family, but the plot revolves around Kate's attempts to "make something of herself" despite having to deal with an overbearing father and one personal crisis after another. Most readers will notice that despite her ability to analyze and solve problems for everyone else, Kate seems always to make bad decisions whenever her own fate is involved, or perhaps bad luck & trouble just seem to follow her wherever she goes.

One of the bad decision that seems most surprising, is Kate's reaction to the wealthy self-made millionaire, John Jardine, described as a decent man, who is totally smitten with her. Although she is at first attracted to John, she finds out that he cannot write well—he's a bad speller, and he has little understanding of correct grammar, so Kate rejects him. Most readers, including myself, find Kate's reaction a little harsh; after all, she is a teacher, and he's certainly not a slacker. Can't she teach him how to be a more educated person?

When I read the book a second time in preparation for this article, I came away with a more sympathetic understanding of Kate's decision-making process—she had her reasons, which I had glossed over previously, and her decision to reject John's offer of matrimony made more sense to me this time.

Reading this book may cause you to reflect on the decisions you have made in your own life. Like Kate, most of us have probably made bad decisions along the way due to the inexperience of youth, or we've done something that we are not particularly proud of doing. I know some of my mistakes can be traced back to mistakes in judgement because I was too proud to ask for advice or seek help. I can also certainly relate to the fear of failure Kate felt the day she decided to step away from the life that was planned for her, when she decided, as she put it, to "take the wings of morning".



"If I were you I wouldn't worry about me, Robert. There are many women in the world willing to pay for your consideration; save it for them."

At Limberlost, we will focus on *A Daughter of the Land* throughout the year. The gift shop will be selling a hardback copy of this book at a discounted price of only \$9.34 (with sales tax included it is \$10). You can also download this book from Amazon for just 99¢. We can also ship this book to you no matter your location, just add \$5, and send a check to the Friends of the Limberlost. We also intend to give away free copies of the book as prizes during the many events that Limberlost will host in 2018. If we can work it out, I would also like to get together with others for a book discussion. If interested, call the Limberlost and leave your contact information, or email me at randvplehman@comcast.net and we'll try to arrange a time that works for as many as possible.

Gene Stratton-Porter and the Spanish Flu

by Adrienne Provenzano

This year's flu virus, otherwise known as influenza, has been a challenging one. As of February 23, according to the CDC, 219 deaths in Indiana have been attributed to the disease, and thousands of deaths nationwide are linked with either influenza or pneumonia, often related illnesses. Loss of life both young and old has been regularly reported in local, regional, and national news. As in past years, those receiving flu vaccines were still susceptible to infection. Whether you had a flu shot or not, you may have dealt with this illness, or probably know someone who did.

In the 21st century, contemporary medicine does greatly minimize the extent and impact of the flu, but not eliminate it entirely. One hundred years ago, without the medical advances now taken for granted, as well as our basic understanding of good hygiene practices, influenza wreaked havoc across the world.



Between 1918 and 1920, the so-called “Spanish Flu” led to millions of deaths. Estimates range from 50 to 100 million lost their lives because of the illness. In Indiana according to my research there were about

150,000 cases, with 10,000 deaths. For Gene Stratton-Porter, the Spanish Flu seems to have contributed to her decision to leave her native Indiana for California, known as the Golden State.

The flu spread during the time of World War I (1914 - 1918). Many returning soldiers infected with the flu brought the disease to the homeland. To minimize the impact of news about the disease on war efforts, reports of the epidemic were suppressed in countries such as the United States, Germany, and France. Because Spain was neutral in the war, the effect of the disease



in that country was reported more widely there than elsewhere and thus, it was believed to be having a greater impact in Spain. Later studies would determine that was not the case, and theories vary still as to specific details as to when and where the worldwide pandemic began.

1918 was a productive and challenging year for Gene Stratton-Porter. Then living most of the year at her home on Sylvan Lake in northern Indiana, she finished a new novel, *A Daughter of the Land*. She continued to transplant many varieties of native and non-native plants to her ever expanding flower gardens on this beloved property, which she had named Wildflower Woods. Fatigued as the year went on, and in need of rest, in the fall she chose to spend a month at the Clifton Springs Sanitarium and Clinic in upstate New York, letting the sulfur springs restore her energies. She returned with vigor and worked with her property manager, Frank Wallace, continuing her gardening and to creating several of the unique architectural features of this property which can be seen even today – the gateposts with carved owls at the entrance to Wildflower Woods and a stone wall along Sylvan Lake which surrounds and protects a natural spring. At some time in late 1918 or early 1919, she contracted influenza.

In her biography of Gene Stratton-Porter entitled *Nature's Storyteller*, Barbara Olenyik Morrow writes the following: “The flu pandemic lasted from March 1918 to June 1920, leaving millions dead. Stratton-Porter herself was stricken: ‘I ended by breaking down with the Flu with no nurse and doctor forty miles away.’ But she was fortunate enough to recover, and by the spring of 1919 she was pushing to finish a new nature book.”

Later that year, the Hoosier author and naturalist seemed ready for a change of climate, and relocated to California, renting a home at first, then buying one, and eventually a couple of homes were built to her specifications in that state. Several of her relatives lived in Los Angeles and wintering in Indiana had lost its appeal. The call of ocean breezes and the flora and fauna of the City of Angels and its surrounds were to become her final home. With a whole new ecosystem to explore and enjoy, and an active social life, this particular “girl of the Limberlost” was ready for new adventures as matriarch, author, poet, and movie producer.

Despite the enormous number of deaths and the horrible impact it had in many countries, the flu epidemic of 1918 seems today just an interesting footnote in the history of the world.



THE LIMBERLOST SWAMPER

Published Quarterly by Limberlost Swamp Remembered Committee

"The Limberlost Swamp Remembered Project was started by Ken Brunswick in 1992. Today, Ken is the chairperson of Limberlost Swamp Remembered, a committee of the Friends of the Limberlost."



BEN HESS ACCEPTS POSITION WITH CITY OF FT. WAYNE



I have recently accepted a new position with the City of Fort Wayne and my last day with Nature Preserves was Friday January 19th. This move was a difficult decision. I was not intentionally looking for a new career path. At this point in life, I think it's a better fit for my growing family and will allow me to be closer to home.

This new position is about developing and implementing the city's desire to create a strong green infrastructure within the local community. I had helped years ago with developing their rain garden program and now with their current initiatives and future projects, the city needed someone to assist Landscape Architects and Engineers on native plant selection and implement the proper maintenance of these green spaces throughout the city. The city plans to add more rain gardens, bioswales, and other landscape projects that use native plants.

I've had a great time working with DNR Nature Preserve, the Limberlost State Historic Site staff, and the Friends of the Limberlost, and I will greatly miss the work I was doing improving the restoration of the Limberlost Swamp, and I will greatly miss the people involved. One of the best parts of working at the Limberlost was observing how each person has their own unique experience while at the Limberlost Swamp. That positive impact is what drives our staff to work as hard as they do. The stories and personal experiences are what makes the monstrous amount of work more attainable, and for me-enjoyable. The Nature Preserve and Historic Site staff have a great and dedicated support group in the Friends of the Limberlost and their Limberlost Swamp Remembered Committee.

I do want to thank my former staff Al Schott, Fred Affolder, and Heather Zengler, as well as past staff Lorraine Shier and Amber Davis. Their dedication to the restoration of the Limberlost and "acceptance" of the larger role that East-Central Nature Preserves plays in managing nature preserves in a 14 county area, has all contributed to the success of many ongoing restoration projects. They have persevered and continue to get more management done in less time over a larger area.

This is not a clock-in/clock-out job for them, we regularly communicate out of normal work hours on work related issues. They have a personal attachment to this work and what this restoration has created for the local community. Their work ethic and dedication is not common place. Hopefully, I've put in place materials, schedules, and restoration plans to ensure that projects continue with as few issues as possible.

It has been a pleasure to work alongside all of you, and I look forward to the chance to work with you again in some form when time allows (*I'm the VP of Facilities for Georgetown Little League where my boys play, so I'll be very busy keeping 4 baseball fields ready for play and coaching as many teams as my wife will allow*).

Again thank you for your support, experiences, and friendship!

BENJAMIN W. HESS

East Central Ecologist

Division of Nature Preserves

Editor's note: The Indiana Division of Nature Preserves is seeking applicants for Ben's vacated position: *Ecologist 2 - East Central Region - Division of Nature Preserves*.

When this newsletter went to print, the job was posted until 3/1/18 on the Indiana State Personnel Department's website: www.in.gov/spd.

If DNR Nature Preserves doesn't find a suitable candidate, they will probably re-post the position. So if you are interested in the position, keep checking the website.

RESULTS OF THE CHRISTMAS
BIRD COUNT (CBC)

On Monday, Jan. 1, Limberlost State Historic Site hosted the CBC. This was the 118th National Audubon Christmas Bird Count. In Adams County volunteers have been participating in this survey for many years. This was Limberlost's 5th year to host the event. Terri Gorney, on the board of directors of both the Stockbridge Audubon Society and the Friends of the Limberlost, organized the Limberlost CBC and reported the results of our survey to the National Audubon Society. See the results below.

Due to the time of year, volunteers sometimes have to brave snow, wind, & rain, to take part in the Christmas Bird Count. The Limberlost Visitor Center was open to birders helping with this count. The CBC has provided the National Audubon Society with decades of bird data. Audubon scientists will tell you about remarkable studies that result from using 118 years of bird count data. The other nice thing that the CBC does for participants (the expert and the amateur, the young and the old) is to create a community of people who bond together on one day to do something special for bird life everywhere.

We had 27 counters and 48 species. You can tell by the totals that every list submitted by each counter was very important to the total bird count for the day! Some species we only had 1, 2 or 3. For a day that started out at 9 below zero, and topped out at 5 degrees above zero, the totals are very good.



Greater white-fronted Goose	5	(11 were recorded last year)
Canada Goose	475	(1566 were recorded last year)
Mallard	34	(279 were recorded 2 years ago)
Horned lark	238	(last year we only had 1 recorded)
Tufted titmouse	3	(lowest number recorded in 5 years)
Brown creeper	1	(lowest number recorded in 5 years)
Lapland longspur	11	(high number)
Snow bunting	49	(high number)
American tree sparrow	281	(last year was 124)
Dark-eyed Junco	99	(high number)
Dark-eyed Junco	2	slate colored
White-crowned sparrow	48	(2 years ago we only had 1 recorded)
Northern cardinal	47	(last year we had 69 recorded)

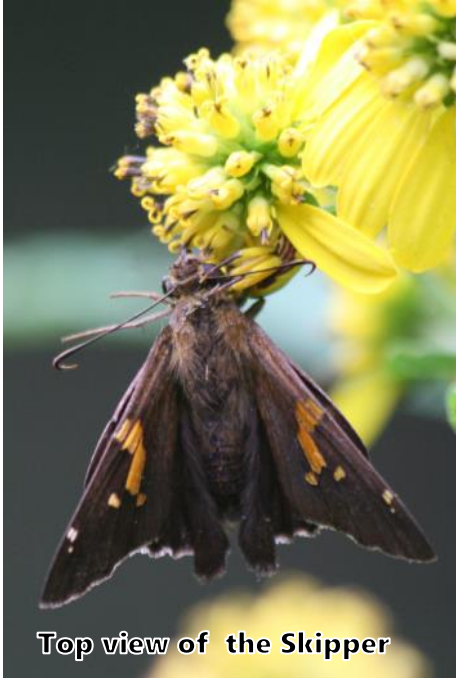
Wild Turkey	12	Eastern bluebird	11
Blue Heron	1	American Robin	3
Northern Harrier	5	Northern Mockingbird	2
Cooper's Hawk	3	Starlings	168
Bald Eagle	2	White-throated sparrow	5
Red-tailed Hawk	9	Song sparrow	20
Rough-legged hawk	2	Common Grackle	6
Rock Pigeon	16	House Finch	24
Mourning Doves	105	American goldfinch	76
Eastern Screech-owl	1	House sparrow	218
Short-eared owl	5		
Belted Kingfisher	1		
Red-headed woodpecker	10		
Red-bellied woodpecker	17		
Yellow-bellied sapsucker	1		
Downy woodpecker	23		
Hairy woodpecker	7		
Northern flicker	8		
Pileated woodpecker	2		
American kestrel	3		
Blue Jay	66		
American crow	15		
Carolina chickadee	16		
White-breasted nuthatch	13		
Carolina wren	2		



GRABBED BY A “CRAB”

Life and Death in my Backyard by Willy DeSmet

If you ever have tried to take pictures of butterflies while they are flying, you know it can be frustrating. It's a little easier when they have landed, but even then they don't always sit still. You may also have noticed that some species often sit with their wings folded up, making it hard to see (and photograph) the top side of those wings. While the underside of butterfly wings often has very nice colors and patterns, I like to get pictures of both the underside and the top of the wings if I can.



Top view of the Skipper

A few years ago I was taking pictures of butterflies in our yard and I already had several pictures of the Silver-spotted Skipper, *Epargyrus clarus*. But only with the wings folded, showing the underside of the wings. The Silver-spotted Skipper is not rare at all. In fact, it's one of the most common butterflies in our yard. But they usually sit with the wings closed and only briefly open their wings, giving us only a flash view of the top side.

So, I was excited when I saw this one with the wings open, on a Wingstem plant, *Verbesina alternifolia* (formerly *Actinomeris alternifolia*) in our backyard. I approached slowly, but as I was getting closer, I was somewhat surprised that the butterfly did not appear to move at all. Then it dawned on me that its position was rather unusual as well; hanging down from the flower like this.

As I was getting closer and it still was not moving, I thought it was probably dead. Walking around the plant to look at the skipper from a different angle, I realized why. A White-banded Crab Spider, *Misumenoides formosipes*, got it.

There was no spider web anywhere near, but not all spiders weave a web to catch their prey: some – like these Crab Spiders – wait in ambush, some chase their prey down, some build traps, and so on. This species of spider comes in yellow, white, pink, or tan. They can change color to match or better blend in with their environment, though it may take a couple of days. (Can you see the crab spider in these pictures?)



They sit on or under flowers and wait for butterflies, flies, or even wasps and bees to come to the flower. With their powerful legs they grab their prey and quickly inject a fast-acting venom from their fangs.

On the rare occasion that the poison is a bit slow to incapacitate the prey and it manages to take off, the spider will hang on until both fall to the ground just a short distance away and the feeding starts.

Unlike some other spiders, Crab Spiders do not chew their food. Enzymes in the venom turn the insides of the prey into liquid, which the Crab Spider then sucks out. Only the two holes where the fangs perforated the prey, will be visible when the spider is done.

Crab Spiders got their name from the long (pincer-like) front legs and their fast sideways movements. There are several other species of Crab Spiders (*Thomisidae*) in our part of the U.S. Some look a lot like the White-banded Crab Spider; while others are a different size (many are smaller), a different color (including brown and green), have different hunting grounds (cracks in tree bark for instance.) You can come across all kinds of interesting creatures when you set out to photograph butterflies.



Underside view of the Skipper





Say's Firefly, *Pyractomena angulata*

by Willy DeSmet

Four years ago students at Cumberland Elementary School in West Lafayette started a project to get Say's Firefly recognized as Indiana's official State Insect. Only four states in the U.S. have no official State Insect. Students at Sullivan Middle School joined the quest in 2016. They gathered support from teachers, politicians, and others. Friends of the Limberlost also wrote a letter of support. The students learned a lot about Thomas Say, about fireflies and how laws are made.

Say's Firefly is an excellent choice: most people are familiar with fireflies and like them; the species is native to Indiana (unlike the state flower, the peony, which is not a native plant) and Thomas Say has a strong connection to Indiana.

Thomas Say was born in Philadelphia June 27, 1787 to a Quaker family. He trained as an apothecary, but he spent most of his time as a naturalist: studying insects, molluscs and reptiles. He went on several scientific expeditions in the U.S. and did an enormous amount of work; discovering, describing and naming many insects, shells and lizards in the U.S. In recognition of his work, later scientists named many insects and even birds after him.

He married Lucy Way Sistare on January 4, 1827. She illustrated several of his books. He died in 1834 at age 47, probably from typhoid fever. He is buried in New Harmony, IN where he lived and worked the last 11 years of his life.

There are about 175 firefly species in the U.S. Fireflies are actually not flies, but beetles (*Coleoptera*). They have hard shields covering the wings when they are not flying. Say's firefly, *Pyractomena angulata*, is native to Indiana. Thomas Say identified it in 1824 near the Southern Indiana town of New Harmony.

Adults are about a quarter to half an inch long, they prefer wet forests and marshy areas, and fly from June to early July, when they look for a mate. Larvae feed on snails and slugs (gastropods), sometimes even under water.

In this species both the adult male and adult female glow. In some species of firefly only the male glows. Firefly larvae of all species glow, though not as bright as the adults. It's a warning to would-be predators that they are bad tasting/poisonous. Fireflies overwinter as larvae.

In his "state of the state" address this year, Governor Holcomb supported making the Say's Firefly the State Insect. Senate Bill 236, authored by Sen. Ron Alting, R-Lafayette, finally passed the Senate committee this year (it failed to even make it out of committee in previous years). The bill then passed unanimously in the State Senate, and on 2/21/18 passed out of committee in the House.

Photo by Judy Gallagher: Lightning Bug - *Pyractomena angulata*?, Leesylvania State Park, Woodbridge, Virginia.
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Lightning_Bug_-_Pyractomena_angulata%3F,Leesylvania_State_Park,_Woodbridge,_Virginia.jpg

On February 27, the House passed the bill with a vote 93 in favor, only 3 opposed. It now goes to the Governor for his signature, which he has promised to sign, saying, "I know this bill bugged some of my legislative friends, but the truth is it's a big deal to young students around the state who have reached out to us in support... The real beauty of this bill is the civic engagement it inspired in our youngest citizens. It's taught them a great deal about how our lawmaking process works—and that if they are engaged, they can make a real difference."

HIKE WITH THE SWAMPTROTTERS. MONTHLY HIKE TAKE PLACE AT THE LOBLOLLY MARSH

Free nature hikes take place this spring on the following Saturdays: March 10, April 14, and May 12. The hikes always begin at 10am at the Loblolly Marsh Nature Preserve parking lot—go 3.5 miles west of Bryant on Hwy 18, then turn north on 250W, and then go about 1/2 mile north to the parking lot. The hikes are organized by board member, Melissa Fey. For additional information please contact Melissa at linngrove@live.com. Usually these hikes attract about 5 to 10 people—all ages are welcome. The hikes last about 2 hours, but participants are welcome to stay longer or end their hikes sooner. It doesn't matter if this is your first hike or you're an experienced naturalist. The idea is to hike with like-minded individuals who enjoy the outdoors and who want to learn more about nature.

FRIENDS OF THE LIMBERLOST

NEW MEMBERSHIP & MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

The Friends of the Limberlost, a 501(c)3 not-for-profit corporation, supports both Limberlost State Historic Site and the Indiana Division of Nature Preserves. Nature Preserves manages the restored wetlands in the Limberlost Territories. Your membership dues and extra donations are vital and support the many projects honoring the memory and legacy of Gene Stratton-Porter.

You decide how your annual dues will be spent. You direct your donation to one of the following:

- Limberlost State Historic Site to support projects & public programs at the site and at the restored wetlands.
- Limberlost Swamp Remembered, a committee of the Friends of the Limberlost, primarily focused on the Limberlost Swamp restoration projects.
- Or donate to both groups.

Your annual dues to Limberlost Historic Site Friends or Limberlost Swamp Remembered include admission to Limberlost State Historic Site, a subscription to the quarterly newsletter, and a 10% discount on purchases at the Limberlost Gift Shop. A description of additional membership benefits will be mailed to you with your membership card. Your contribution is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Please fill out the form below to renew your membership or to sign up as a new member. If you have any questions regarding your membership in the Friends Group, call Limberlost State Historic Site. (260)368-7428.

Please make checks payable to: **FRIENDS OF THE LIMBERLOST** and mail both your check and completed Membership form to **PO Box 571, Geneva, IN 46740**.

Step One:

Select your desired Friends membership.

Choose where you want your Donation to go.

☐ **Limberlost Historic Site Friends—dues and any additional donation you make supports Limberlost State Historic Site and associated events, projects, and programs**

☐ **Limberlost Swamp Remembered Friends—dues and any additional donation you make supports Limberlost wetland restoration projects managed by the Indiana Division of Nature Preserves**

☐ **Combination Limberlost Historic Site and Swamp Remembered Friends—dues and any additional donation are equally shared by both groups**

Step Two:

Choose the cost of the membership you want by checking the appropriate box below.

☐ **Senior Citizen/Limited Income—\$10**

☐ **Business—\$50 (please enter contact name below)**

☐ **Individual—\$20**

☐ **Family—\$35.00**

☐ **Lifetime—\$1,000**

NAME _____

MAILING ADDRESS _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

☐ Check the box if you want to get the newsletter mailed to you via the U.S. Postal Service. We'd like to email the newsletter to you because it saves us money on postage, and it also saves us time, and the "e-newsletter" is in color! However, we are happy to mail you a "paper copy" of the newsletter rather than the electronic version of the newsletter, if that is what you prefer—just check the box.

AMOUNT ENCLOSED (Additional donation appreciated): \$ _____



LIMBERLOST

State Historic Site hours:

Open Tues. through Saturday

9AM to 5PM

Last tour begins at 4:00 PM.

And beginning April 1

Open Sundays 1—5 PM

SEARCH FOR NEW LIMBERLOST SITE MANAGER CONTINUES

The SECOND attempt to gather a list of potential candidates for this position ended In FEBRUARY. That's when a state job posting expired for "Northeast Regional Manager, Limberlost State Historic Site, Geneva, IN." Beth Van Why, Chief Officer of Engagement, at ISMHS, and Curt Burnette, acting Limberlost Site Manager, will soon be reviewing this second batch of applicants, and hopefully find a suitable candidate who is excited about joining the ISMHS team and the staff at Limberlost. We know Curt has been "burning the candle at both ends" and all of us would really like to see this opening filled soon.

SPRING IS A GREAT TIME TO RENT—A—NATURALIST

Cost: \$30 for 90 minutes. You drive your own vehicle and follow the staff naturalist. Binoculars can be provided. These are personalized tours. The interests and physical abilities of the group, and the time of year determine areas visited and the details of each tour. A handicap trail is available at one of the locations. A choice of five different Limberlost nature preserves is available. The itinerary can be customized according to your interests. For more information or to make a reservation contact Curt Burnette, Naturalist, and Certified Interpretive Guide. Call the site 260-368-7428, or just email Curt today at cburnette@indianamuseum.org

Plan your Limberlost adventure today!

YOU DESERVE ALL THE PRAISE !

210 individuals, couples, families, and businesses are dues paying members of the Friends of the Limberlost.

Although no donation is too small, we'd like to thank a few members who have recently made generous contributions. The confidence that all of you have in the Friends of the Limberlost is greatly appreciated and never taken for granted.

**DOUG & KAORU STRATTON
BOB & MARCIA GILLETTE
LYNN & PATTI HABEGGER
FRED & JACKIE WOOLEY**

**ROGER & GRETCHEN
LAUTZENHEISER
ELLEN HOSTETTTLER
BARB STEDMAN**

**JANE CHEW
CONNIE & JACK RONALD
JUDY SCHROFF**