



Friends of the Limberlost

P.O. Box 571, Geneva, IN 46740

www.Limberlost.weebly.com

Facebook: *Friends of the Limberlost*

Phone: 260-849-0308

FOL ANNUAL MEETING

**Saturday, Sept. 26, at the
Loblolly Marsh Pavilion
from 4 pm to 7 pm**

As a not-for-profit 501(c)3 organization, it's time for us to focus on our annual meeting. It will be very different from our usual format.

- You don't have to stay the whole time
- You don't need to be there at 4 pm
- It's more like an Open House from 4 pm to 7 pm

Following the lead of other safe social gatherings that have taken place during the COVID 19 pandemic, the annual meeting will take place outdoors and require social distancing and mask-wearing.

- If you plan to attend, please RSVP by sending an email to randvplehman@comcast.net or call Randy at 260-849-0308 to register.
- In order to ensure that the event space is not crowded please tell us the approximate time you would like to arrive. Randy will confirm whether or not that time will allow for a safe visit.

To those of you who have never been to our pavilion, here is the address of the nearby Loblolly Marsh Nature Preserve parking lot: 8323 N 250 W BRYANT, IN 47326. Just travel 3.5 miles west of Bryant, Indiana on Hwy 18 and then go 1/2 mile north on County Road 250 W, and you'll see the Loblolly Marsh parking lot.

You can park at the Loblolly Marsh parking lot, and walk up to the pavilion (a distance of about 1/8 mile), but you can also drive up to the pavilion so you don't have to walk as far. Just follow the signs you'll see at the parking lot, and they will direct you to the pavilion driveway entrance further north from the parking lot about 1/8 of a mile on CR 250W.

The pavilion does have restrooms and electricity. Typically 20 to 40 members show up for our annual meetings. We estimate that it will take 30 to 45 minutes for most of you to enjoy what we have to offer at the annual meeting.



Friends of the Limberlost own the Loblolly Pavilion

If you, your family, or even some of your friends would like to join us on Saturday, September 26, take a look at the next page to review a list of activities and other things you can do if you attend. We hope you'll be satisfied that our meeting format is safe and feel comfortable enough to attend. We look forward to seeing you at the Pavilion on Saturday, Sept. 26.

STATUS UPDATE WITH THE STATE MUSEUM

As many of you know, last year at this time we announced that our relationship with the Indiana State Museum (ISM) had changed significantly. Basically the Museum no longer wants the Friends of the Limberlost to support the historic site in the way we had for the past 25 years. Since this time last year, there has been very little change in the museum's position, although you will see in this newsletter that we are once again advertising site events. Today we offer very limited volunteer and financial support to Limberlost State Historic Site. We continue to be in a state of transition with ISM.

FRIENDS OF THE LIMBERLOST ANNUAL MEETING

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 4 PM to 7 PM

(Registration Deadline September 22)

LOCATION: THE LOBLOLLY MARSH PAVILION IN JAY COUNTY

Parking Lot address: 8323 N 250 W, Bryant, IN 47326

Travel 3.5 miles west of Bryant on Hwy 18 and then 1/2 mile north on County Road 250 W

THIS EVENT IS FREE & OPEN TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE FRIENDS

You should arrive between 4 pm and 6:30 pm

To help us plan ahead, when you register you should let us know approximately the time you plan to arrive & how many people you are bringing

Please RSVP by Wednesday, September 23. Just email: randvplehman@comcast.net

Or register by calling or texting: 260-849-0308 to reserve your place

- *All members of the Friends of the Limberlost* are invited to attend and are welcome to bring a friend or family members
 - There is no charge or cost to you for anything provided at the annual meeting.
 - Guests will get pre-packaged snacks, water, a soft drink, & a complimentary gift.
 - Enjoy a nature hike with naturalist, Curt Burnette. His 30 minute hikes start at 4:30, 5:30, and 6:30
 - Taylor Lehman, the Nature Preserve Regional Ecologist, has put together a PowerPoint presentation reviewing accomplishments made since the 2019 annual meeting and highlighting ongoing and future plans. This presentation can be viewed anytime at the pavilion.
 - FOL highlights from the year will also be presented as a PowerPoint and can also be viewed anytime.
 - You might win one of three books by Ken Brunswick that will be given away at the annual meeting.
 - Sit down and enjoy the natural scenery at the Pavilion. Board members will be available to answer any questions you may have about FOL, its accomplishments, future goals, and the organization's status with the Indiana State Museum.
 - Walk the tree trail that has numerous trees identified.
- At the annual meeting, members will need to vote on the following items (ballot provided):
- Approval of the minutes from last year's annual meeting
 - Election of the Board of Directors
 - Members will be asked to vote on any business usually conducted at the annual meeting or vote on any matters brought to the attention of the board of directors that require a vote by the membership.
 - At 7 PM, there will be a short Limberlost Swamp Remembered Committee meeting and a shortened FOL board meeting which directly follows the committee meeting. You are welcome to stay for these meetings, but you don't have to.

FOL BOARD OF DIRECTORS—the bylaws state that there can be a total of 13 directors. Currently there are 12 directors. At the end of 2020, there could be as many as 4 open positions on the Board of Directors

- The current President and Vice-President, Willy DeSmet and Terri Gorney, have reached their 9-year term limit (3 consecutive 3-yr. terms), so they both will be leaving the board at the end of 2020.
- Connie Smuts has decided not to run for another 3-year term, so her board position will be vacated at the end of 2020.
- LaDonna Habegger has been nominated by the board of directors to fill one of the open positions. If elected she will be appointed to a 3-yr term starting 1/1/2021 and ending 12/31/2023
- Bill Hubbard has also been nominated by the board of directors to fill one of the open positions. If elected he will be appointed to a 3-yr term starting 1/1/2021 and ending 12/31/2023—See article about Bill on page 7

A Literary Visit from Gene Stratton-Porter



Limberlost State Historic Site

5pm Saturday, September 12, 2020

Historian Glory-June Greiff, a professional narrator and performer, takes us back in time as naturalist, novelist, and photographer Gene Stratton-Porter, whose environmentalist writings speak volumes to us today.

Speaking from the front porch of her old home, Mrs. Porter will reminisce about her life as she performs readings from her poetry and essays.

Recommended for ages 12-adult interested in history, nature, and literature.

This activity is made possible with support by the Indiana Arts Commission and the Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites.

**This event is free
and open to the
public**



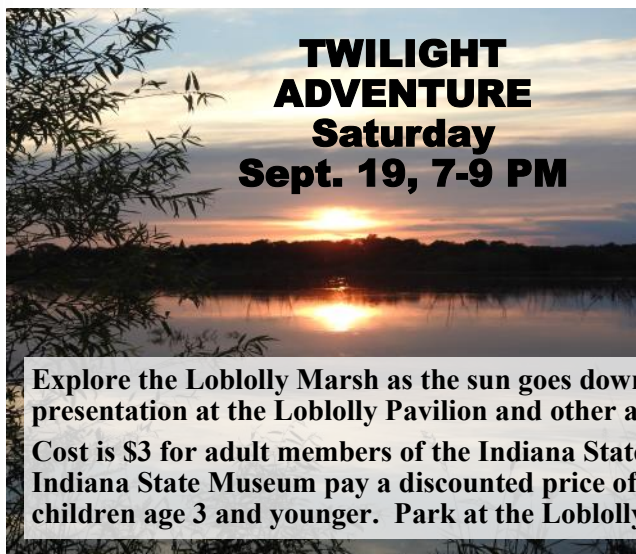
AUTUMN LOBLOLLY WILDFLOWER SAFARI Saturday, Sept. 12, 10AM—Noon

Join Limberlost naturalist, Curt Burnette, for a fall wildflower hike through parts of the Loblolly Marsh. Learn how man and animal have put these plants to use. Find out which plants are native and which have been introduced—and some may even be harmful or deadly. As you can see from the picture taken last year of the praying mantis, the hike is not just about flowers!

Cost is \$3.75 for members of the Indiana State Museum. Non-members pay \$5.00/person. There is no pre-registration required. The Safari starts at the Loblolly Marsh parking lot which is located 3.5 miles west of Bryant on Hwy 18 and then 1/2 mile north on County Road 250 W. (Address: 8323 N 250 W Bryant, IN 47326)



TWILIGHT ADVENTURE Saturday Sept. 19, 7-9 PM



Explore the Loblolly Marsh as the sun goes down. Take a hike with naturalist, Curt Burnette. Enjoy an animal presentation at the Loblolly Pavilion and other activities. All ages are welcome. This is a family-friendly event.

Cost is \$3 for adult members of the Indiana State Museum. Non-member adults pay \$4. Youth members of the Indiana State Museum pay a discounted price of \$2.25. Non-member youth pay \$3. This event is free to children age 3 and younger. Park at the Loblolly Marsh parking lot: 8323 N 250 W Bryant, IN 47326.

Seasons change, comforts found....by Fred Wooley

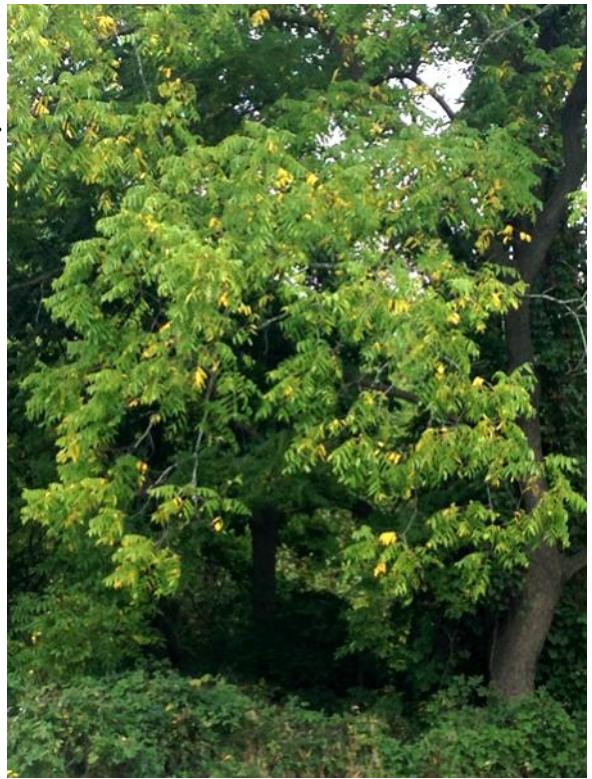
The fall of 2020 will certainly be different. The normal things of the season will be not so normal: the beginning of school, football, fall festivals; it's all different this fall.

Changes in nature though, these are still constant, still familiar, and still bring great comfort. The same changes that Gene saw in the wilds of Limberlost, we still see today, possibly noted more now than ever, in a world when normal routines are so disrupted. People have turned more to nature where open spaces, fresh air, and fewer people provide a respite from a raging virus. We find a touch of something familiar, things that provide comfort. During a time when so much is unpredictable, we step outside into scenes we've been in before and know they are still here, or will soon arrive, as always. Such is fall, a favorite season for many.

I love all seasons and it seems my favorite is always the one just coming up. I love the seasons between the seasons, when we see hints of what is to come and eagerly anticipate the change. In early fall, grass still grows, garden flowers pop new blossoms, cicadas still buzz in treetops and flies do the same in porch windows. We start to note, though, signs of fall around us. We tire of heat and humidity and welcome cooler days of autumn. We are ready to put up swim toys and put away garden equipment. At the closet, tee-shirts in, sweaters and hoodies out. Enter fall.

We first see some changes in mid-late August. From our back deck, I see the first tint of yellow in the big walnut tree. Weeks ago, walnut leaves were all dark green, but in the season between the seasons, there is a tinge of yellow and a handful of leaves sport the characteristic all bright yellow of early October leaves. Ahhh.... Fall is coming.

By mid-September, walnut leaves are 30-40 percent yellow. Gene's prairie and wetland native plants take on late-summer yellows and then the deep blues and purples of asters and ironweeds. Bergamot, beards tongues, and butterfly milkweeds are maturing to dark seed heads and plump pods.



Along forest edges, Virginia Creeper is an early indicator of this season between the seasons. Its five-leaflet leaves turn a deep purple to fire-red as they stretch up and over any surface. I enjoy looking along roadsides and into woodlands for leafless, often dead, snags where Virginia Creeper looks like flames shooting up bare tree trunks.

We note heightened activity at the hummingbird and oriole feeders with continued chatter of orioles, now first-year birds visiting, and the seemingly raised excitement of hummers. Feisty hummingbirds buzz and fight for lone drinks at the feeders. There is plenty for all, but they seem to not tolerate another on nearby perch.



We like to think this increased activity is a fueling up for the anticipated migration. Some birding enthusiasts are quick to pull hummingbird feeders, thinking the birds won't migrate when they need to. Birds know when to leave. We leave our feeders out until the walnut leaves are totally down and we start that season of winter anticipation.

Members of the blackbird family also seem to know we are on the cusp of this next season. Early September days we note huge flocks of mixed blackbirds – grackles, cowbirds, starlings, and red-wings. Flocks pass over, sometimes stretching nearly from horizon to horizon. They sometimes land in several

treetops and tighten into a large, loud, and raucous mass of dark feathers. The sound is loud enough to warrant a skyward glance and then all at once, they fall totally silent. It's a mystery to me how they all get the same signal at the same time and cut the chatter to total silence. Then, in an instant, they all take flight in a huge burst of black. The flocks disappear as quickly as they come, leaving behind leaves and trees beginning to change, in the transition season.

From your car, kitchen window, out in the yard, or out on one of the trails of Limberlost, take in the many changes. Find some comfort, share with others in a safe fashion, and ask, "What's your favorite season?"

***Fred Wooley is a naturalist, writer, and land preservation/restoration enthusiast. He lives on part of an old farm overlooking an extensive fen in northern Steuben County. He can be reached at fwooley@frontier.com.

UPDATE ON THE ROYER PURCHASE—10.42 acres at the Loblolly Marsh

Most of the Royer property now belongs to the Friends of the Limberlost. Congratulations to all the donors who helped make this purchase possible, and thanks to Ken Brunswick who worked many hours on this project closing the deal with the Royer family. 52 donors have contributed \$20,504.84 so far for this land acquisition project. Some donors wanted to remain anonymous, so the Board doesn't want to disclose amounts given by particular donors, but donations ranged from \$15 to \$5,000. The response to this fundraiser was very gratifying. It was very energizing for the Friends to see the contributions come in from all over Indiana and as far away as North Dakota, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Texas.



The other surprising thing that developed out of all this was the purchase of several acres of the Royer property by a person who very much appreciates the restoration that's been going on at the Loblolly Marsh and wanted to help Ken with the Royer purchase. He promises that the acreage he purchased will be included in the restoration plan of the Royer property, and his acreage will not be farmed or developed. Also, a clause will be inserted in his deed making it clear that the Friends of the Limberlost will eventually own this acreage.

All this financial help mentioned above saved the Friends a lot of money on the Royer purchase. In the end the Friends had to withdraw from their bank account only 28% of the total cost of the purchase—we were expecting to have to pay a much higher percentage. This leaves the Limberlost Swamp Remembered committee of the Friends of the Limberlost in a much better position to help DNR-Nature Preserves with the next Limberlost land purchase.

This is a tremendous accomplishment considering that it was back in the fall of 1996 when Ken Brunswick working with DNR Land Acquisition and the DNR Division of Museums and Historic Sites acquired 141.5 acres from Fiechter. It was the first purchase of the Limberlost Swamp Remembered project with the goal of bringing back portions of the Limberlost Swamp. Now 24 years later, the total land protected in the Limberlost Conservation Area is 1,743 acres. We're having a positive impact on the environment in Indiana and the world!

THREE FALL NATURE HIKES AT THE LIMBERLOST WETLANDS

Cost is \$3.75 for adult members of the Indiana State Museum and \$3 for youth members.

Adult non-members pay \$5.00 and youth non-members pay \$4.00

All of these guided hikes are led by Limberlost naturalist, Curt Burnette

All guided hikes start at the Limberlost State Historic Site Visitor Center for orientation

GUIDED TOUR OF RAINBOW BOTTOM►

Saturday, October 3, orientation starts at 9 AM and the hike ends at Noon. Curt will lead a hike through Rainbow Bend Park and Rainbow Bottom to learn about the history and ecology of the area, how Gene Stratton-Porter used it as a setting for two of her novels, plus observe local wildlife and see giant sycamore trees.



◄GUIDED TOUR OF THE LIMBERLOST SWAMP NATURE PRESERVE—Saturday, October 10, orientation starts at 9 AM and the hike ends at Noon. Curt will lead a hike along the Deacon's Trail in the Limberlost Swamp Nature Preserve. Discover the native flora and fauna of the largest Limberlost Conservation Area Nature

Preserve and learn how Gene Stratton-Porter used this area in both her world-famous novels such as *Freckles*, and in her nature books such as *Moths of the Limberlost*. Also learn about the destruction of the swamp and its restoration.

GUIDED TOUR OF MUSIC OF THE WILD NATURE PRESERVE►

Saturday, October 17, Orientation starts at 9 AM and the hike ends at Noon. Curt will lead a hike through the Music of the Wild Nature Preserve and the Bird Sanctuary. During the hike, participants will learn about the plants and animals living in these preserves and the ecology of this area and the Limberlost Creek which flows through it. Hikers will also learn about the history of the site and how Gene Stratton-Porter wrote about this area in her nature book *Music of the Wild*.



◄ MARSH AFTER DARK

Saturday, November 7, starts at 7 PM—ends at 9 PM. This event takes place at the Loblolly Pavilion at the Loblolly Marsh Nature Preserve. Drive 3.5 miles west of Bryant on Hwy 18 and then 1/2 mile north on County Road 250 W. (8323 N 250 W Bryant, IN 47326).

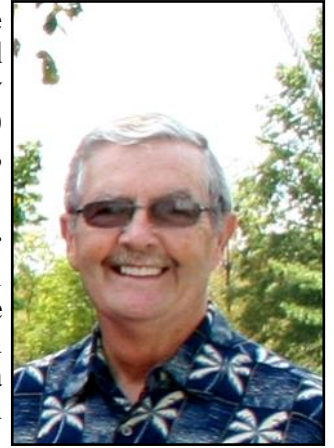
Enjoy a wildlife presentation before exploring the Marsh at night. Show off your talents in the *Firelight Theater Variety Show* while everyone enjoys the campfires at the pavilion. Cost is \$3 for adult members of the Indiana State Museum. Non-member adults pay \$4. Youth members of the Indiana State Museum pay a discounted price of \$2.25. Non-member youth pay \$3. This event is free to children age 3 and younger.



TRIBUTE TO BILL HUBBARD who retired on August 19—by Randy Lehman

When I was the Limberlost Site Manager (from July 1999 to July 2016) I had the good fortune to hire Bill Hubbard as a part-time naturalist, program developer, and tour guide in 2007. Bill was a perfect fit for Limberlost. He was a retired biology teacher (he worked at Adams Central High School for 32 years from 1972 to 2004) and he'd been an active volunteer for the Friends of the Limberlost for several years, serving on the Friends board of directors for a couple of years.

Bill was such a great guy to work with. So many people who walked in the visitor center already knew Bill because he either was their teacher or he taught someone in the family. He knew the natural sciences and loved teaching about nature, and we really needed that kind of expertise as Limberlost State Historic Site transitioned from being primarily a historic site about Indiana author, Gene Stratton-Porter, to a natural history site that offered nature hikes and nature programs at the restored Limberlost wetlands.



When asked what he liked best about working at Limberlost, Bill said, “The most enjoyable times were working with large number of students and the varied programs we provided. Also, it was amazing to meet so many different people who came to tour the site. And, of course, the comradery with the staff and FOL over the years was great”.

As naturalists like to say, Bill took to his responsibilities at Limberlost like a duck takes to water! He was ever so kind and helpful to every visitor. He was always looking for ways to improve the visitor experience. When we offered nature education programs on site and in the local schools, he performed wonderfully as Limber Jim, the namesake for the Limberlost Swamp. In fact it was Bill's area school contacts that made it possible for Limberlost to develop its nature-based outreach programs beginning with Adams Central and South Adams.

With family issues made more acute by Covid-19, Bill had to make a difficult choice, and after working in various jobs for 70 years, he obviously felt it was a good time to retire from Limberlost. He's told us that he is looking forward to spending more time with his family, and he's always loved to travel and hopes to do more of that. Many of you know that Bill is a professional photographer, and he plans to spend more time taking photographs (that will be a good thing for future newsletters and the Friends Facebook page). He's even told Curt that he will be available to “volunteer” at Limberlost once the pandemic is under control, and to show you just how much the Limberlost means to Bill, he's told me that he is interested in serving again on the Friends of the Limberlost Board of Directors.

I'll finish off this tribute to Bill by saying he made my job so much more enjoyable and he helped improve Limberlost State Historic site in so many ways. No matter what kind of organization you are involved in, it's the people you work with who make it a success or a failure, and Bill never disappointed.

Here's a few words from the man himself, “I want to thank all the site managers, program developers, co-workers, volunteers, and the FOL Board for making these 13 plus years so enjoyable. I want to give a special thanks to Curt for his hard work and dedication during some times that have presented a multitude of challenges. I recently came across the following quote by Robin Wall Kimmerer in her book “Gathering Moss...” that I think is a good guide for this time in my life: “...change is only the lure of imagined possibilities, not the agent of impending losses.”



Milkweed Supports a Community of Surprising Insects by Willy De Smet

Milkweeds are not as common as they used to be along roadsides and the edges of farm fields. They have been described as noxious weeds by many and that classification has made them a target for herbicides and the mower. You probably already know that milkweed is critical to the life cycle of the monarch butterfly. Because of sharply decreasing numbers of monarch butterflies, milkweeds have attracted some positive attention in recent years. Fortunately there have been campaigns to improve the status of milkweed in this respect. Efforts have been made to encourage the planting of milkweeds, and the raising and monitoring of Monarch populations.

The importance of milkweed goes way beyond Monarchs, though. They are a very important piece in the natural food chain and harbor an amazing community of insects. Milkweed has many stories to tell, and here are a few that may surprise you.



Common Milkweed
Asclepias syriaca



Photo of Monarch Caterpillar
by Willy DeSmet

The flowers of milkweed are visited by a variety of pollinators, but only a few insects make it their exclusive home and dinner. That is not an accident, milkweed has some strong chemical protection. The white sap looks like milk (hence Milk-weed) but it is sticky with latex. The leaves and stems contain chemicals (cardenolides) that are toxic to humans and many other animals. But there are a few animals that thrive on Milkweed.

Indeed, the caterpillar of the **Monarch Butterfly** (*Danaus plexippus*) eats nothing else but milkweed. Without milkweed the monarch caterpillar cannot complete its life cycle. The caterpillar stores these toxic chemicals in its body and the adult butterfly sports the orange and black color scheme to let predators know they taste bad and make you sick. The red/orange and black coloring acts as a warning of the animal's toxicity (so-called "aposematic coloring").



Photo of
Tussock Moth
caterpillar by
Curt Burnette

Another caterpillar you'll see on Milkweed looks like a piece of carpet or pieces of yarn. It has beautiful tufts of black, white and orange hairs. To avoid getting covered in sticky latex, the young **Milkweed Tussock Moth** caterpillars, *Euchaetes egle*, eat around the veins. When they get bigger (later instars) they cut the vein close to the stem, and then eat further away on the leaf, where the flow of sticky sap will then be much less. You will often see a bunch of them together and they are voracious. They can completely defoliate a plant in a couple of days, leaving nothing but the stem and ribs.

It is rather ironic to think that the milkweed's chemical protection in this case works to the detriment of the milkweed: the caterpillars are so well protected from predators by the milkweed's chemicals, that they devour the milkweed practically unchallenged.



Photo of
defoliated
milkweed
by
Curt Burnette

The Milkweed Tussock Moth caterpillar overwinters in a cocoon that looks like a ball of felt. Hairs from the caterpillar are part of this felt. Contrary to the colorful caterpillar, the adult Milkweed Tussock Moth (aka Milkweed Tiger Moth) is a drab, bland, “mousy” gray. Most moths fly during the night, though some are day fliers. The Milkweed Tussock Moth is a night flier and so moth-eating bats are on its radar. Or actually the moth is on the bats’ sonar. The moth however can emit some specific ultrasonic clicks, and because of its milkweed diet as a caterpillar, if a bat tries to eat one of these moths it will soon learn that anything that clicks like this tastes really bad. Other species of Tiger Moths can make sounds that jam the bat’s sonar, but that is a story for another time.



Photo of Tussock Moth cocoon by Willy De Smet



Photo by Teresa Fravel Cox
Large Milkweed Bug nymphs

The **Large Milkweed Bug** (*Oncopeltus fasciatus*) continues the orange and black theme. They are true bugs and look a bit like the Boxelder Bugs (*Boisea trivittata*) that often show up in alarmingly large numbers around doors and windows in late Fall. The “baby” Milkweed Bugs (nymphs) could remind you of aphids. You will find this bug mostly on the seed pods because they feed mostly on the seeds. The seeds seem to be especially nutritious to them; the bugs grow faster and have more offspring than when they are restricted to eating only other parts of the milkweed. If the pods are open or cracked then they feed on the seeds directly. If the pod is still closed, they pierce the pod with their straw-like mouth parts (called rostrum), inject digestive juices and suck up the liquid.



Photo by Curt Burnette; Red Milkweed Beetle above and Large Milkweed Bug below

The adults can sometimes be seen feeding on the nectar of the flowers, even on flowers of plants other than milkweeds. They lay their eggs in or on the seed pods. They store the toxins (cardenolides) in special compartments and when the bug feels threatened they release those chemicals. The Large Milkweed Bug does not survive really cold winters, so most of them head south for the winter.

While the Large Milkweed Bug can’t survive cold winters, the **Red Milkweed Beetle**, *Tetraopes tetrophthalmus*, can. They overwinter in the roots. The eggs are laid on or in the stem close to the ground around mid-summer. Early instars feed on the roots, the adults feed on the leaves. They open a vein close to the stem and then feed further away, where the flow of sticky sap is reduced. Often you’ll see that holes have been chewed at the tips of the leaves. They also store the toxins and sport the warning colors; red/orange and black. They prefer Common Milkweed, but can be found on Swamp Milkweed as well. Milkweed Beetles can make a shrill noise when threatened. They belong to the family of Longhorn Beetles.

Photo of Swamp Milkweed Beetle
by Willy De Smet



And then there is the **Swamp Milkweed Leaf Beetle**, *Labidomera clivicollis*. Although they have a preference for Swamp Milkweed, they can be found on other milkweeds as well. Both larvae and adults feed by cutting a vein on the milkweed leaf and sucking up the juice. They usually are not present in large numbers and cause minimal damage to the milkweeds. The adults overwinter in the leaf litter. The larva look a bit like a snail.

Swamp Milkweed Leaf Beetle larva
Photo by Bill Hubbard



Breaking with the red and black theme is this **Yellow Milkweed Aphid**, *Aphis neri*. Another name for them is **Oleander Aphid** and they can also be found on oleander in more southern states.



Yellow Aphid
Photo by
Bill Hubbard

They are not native; they likely originated in the Mediterranean where they live on oleander.

The females don't lay eggs, they give birth to nymphs. They don't even need a male; (in fact, there don't seem to be any males in the wild!) they just make a clone of themselves. And not just one, many (about 80 in their 25 day life span, on average!) They multiply fast. The fifth instar then molts into the adult, without going through the pupa stage. Most of the adults don't have wings either, but if it gets too crowded or the host plant is starting to decline, winged adults will be produced so they can fly off and find a new "home."

They suck plant juice for a living and can stunt the growth of the milkweed if their numbers are really high. They do seem to reduce the viability of the milkweed seed as well, and Monarchs tend to avoid laying eggs on leaves infested with these aphids. Be aware though that you'll also be killing monarchs (including eggs, which are hard to see) if you use chemicals to control the aphids. Unlike most other aphids, Oleander Aphids are never "farmed" by ants.

There is an arms race going on in nature. Some species develops a defense against its predators, and one (or more) of them finds a way to defeat that defense. They may use that in turn as a defense against their own predators, but likely one of its predators will then find a way to defeat that defense in turn. No defense is perfect. The Monarch caterpillar may have an advantage over other caterpillars in that the milkweed chemicals protect it from birds for instance, but some wasps put their eggs in or on the caterpillar. The caterpillar then becomes food as well as a chemically protected home for the wasp larvae.

It seems that in nature, no matter how good one organism's defense may be, there's always some other organism that has evolved a way to get around the protection.



“THANK YOU” to CREEK RUN ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING

PO Box 114
1 Creek Run Drive
Montpelier IN 47359

At the Friends of the Limberlost August 17, 2020, board meeting, Board member and Creek Run CEO, R. Jason Lenz, reported that their fundraiser this year raised a total of \$4,092.00 for the Friends of the Limberlost. Considering that this fundraiser took place during the Covid 19 pandemic, which caused their on-site activities to be cancelled, this is an outstanding amount for Creek Run to donate to Limberlost Swamp Remembered,

a committee of the Friends of the Limberlost that is focused on the restoration of the Limberlost wetlands. When discussing what worked and what needs improvement for future fundraisers, Jason pointed out that their raffle was very successful year, and they are looking at focusing more on this way to raise money next year. They need higher-end items for the online auction. Whatever they decide to do next year, FOL is grateful for all they have done. In the 9 years they have been raising funds for the LSR committee, they have raised a total of \$40,682.00.



You never know what you might come across when you wander around this area. From left to right:

1. View of sunset on an Amish farm near the Ceylon Covered Bridge
2. A black walnut on the blacktop
3. A tree on an Adams County road trying to look like something different. What do you see?
4. A Sora Rail next to the road in the Limberlost Swamp Wetland Nature Preserve

All photos taken by Randy Lehman in 2020

Back to School in Nature's Classroom with Gene Stratton-Porter

By Adrienne Provenzano, Songstress of the Limberlost



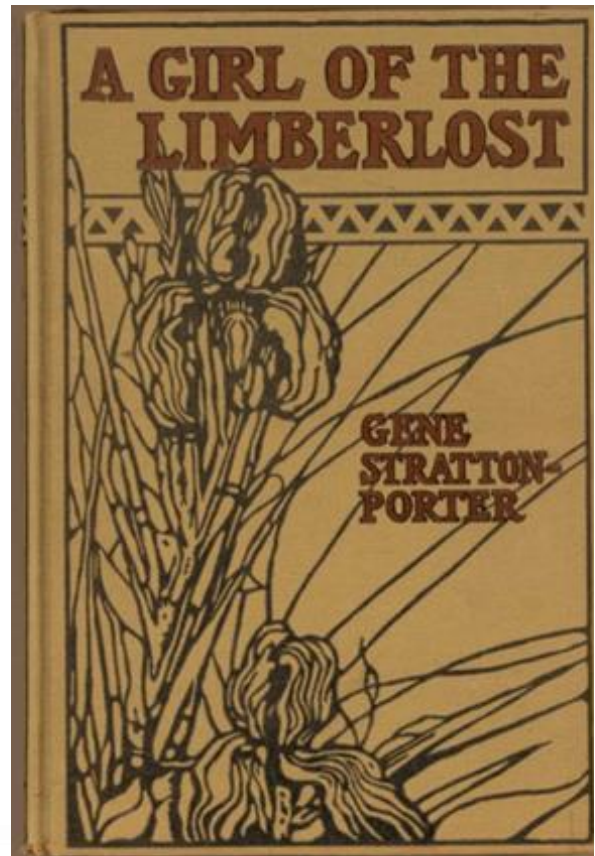
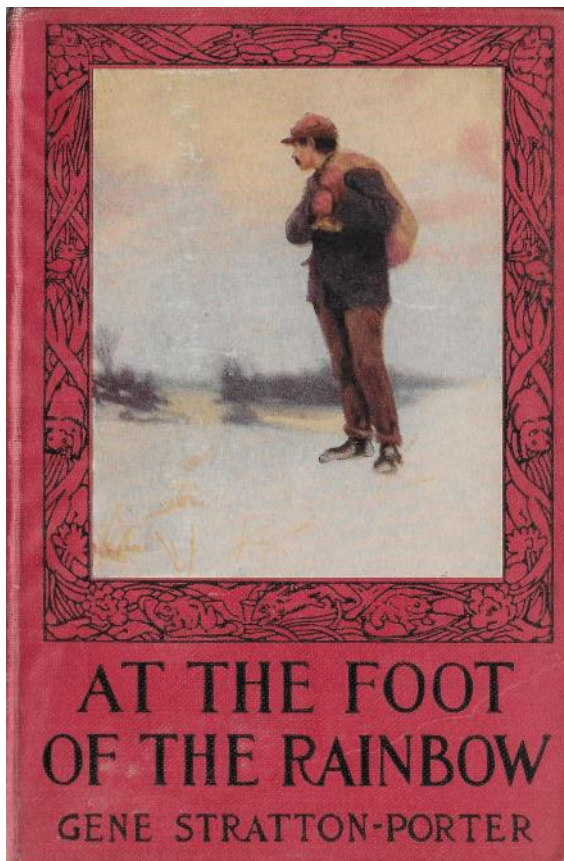
Gene Stratton-Porter's melodramatic book At the Foot of the Rainbow was first published in 1907. In the 1916 reprint, there is an introductory section entitled "Gene Stratton-Porter: A Little Story of Her Life and Work." In this section, adapted from a sketch of her life

provided by the author, she describes "I have done three times the work on my books of fiction that I see other writers putting into a novel, in order to make all natural history allusions accurate and to write them in such fashion that they will meet with the commendation of high schools, colleges, and universities using what I write as text books, and for the homes that place them in their libraries. I am perfectly

willing to let time and the hearts of the people set my work in its ultimate place."

The unnamed editor of this autobiographical sketch added various commentary about Stratton-Porter's experiences and accomplishments, and noted: "During the past ten years thousands of people have sent the author word that through her books they have been led afield and to their first realization of the beauties of nature. Her mail brings an average of ten such letters a day, mostly from students, teachers, and professional people of our largest cities. It can probably be said in all truth of her nature books and nature novels, that in the past ten years they have sent more people afield than all the scientific writings of the same period. That is a big statement, but it is very likely pretty close to the truth."

For this memorable Hoosier woman, nature's classroom was her preferred education site. Her early years growing up immersed in the natural world and developing focused observation skills calls to mind the experiences of contemporary women scientists like primatologist Jane Goodall and botanist Robin Wall Kimmerer.



After Gene Stratton-Porter left high school without graduating, she continued to be a lifelong learner. Books still fill the shelves in her historic Indiana homes, and she mentions favorite fiction and non-fiction authors in her works. While she never took on a formal teaching position, she made Elnora, her Girl of the Limberlost, the high school graduate and teacher she might have imagined herself becoming. In the summer after her graduation, Elnora receives a letter from the President of Onabasha Schools stating: "At the weekly meeting of the Onabasha School Board last night, it was decided to add the position of Lecturer on Natural History to our corps of city teachers. It will be the duty of this person to spend two hours a week in each of the grade schools exhibiting and explaining specimens of the most prominent objects in nature: animals, birds, insects, flowers, vines, shrubs, bushes, and trees." He goes on to state "I think you will find the work delightful and much easier than the routine grind of the other teachers." She was to receive a salary of \$750 for the year, plus \$200 for classroom expenses. Keep in mind, A Girl of the Limberlost was first published in 1909!

As the character Philip Ammon, a Chicago lawyer who discover the wonders of the Limberlost with Elnora's guidance, explains: "They say she created the necessity for the position, and every one seems to feel that it is a necessity. Now, if she succeeds, and she will, all of the other city schools will have such departments, and the first thing you know she will have made the whole world just a little better."

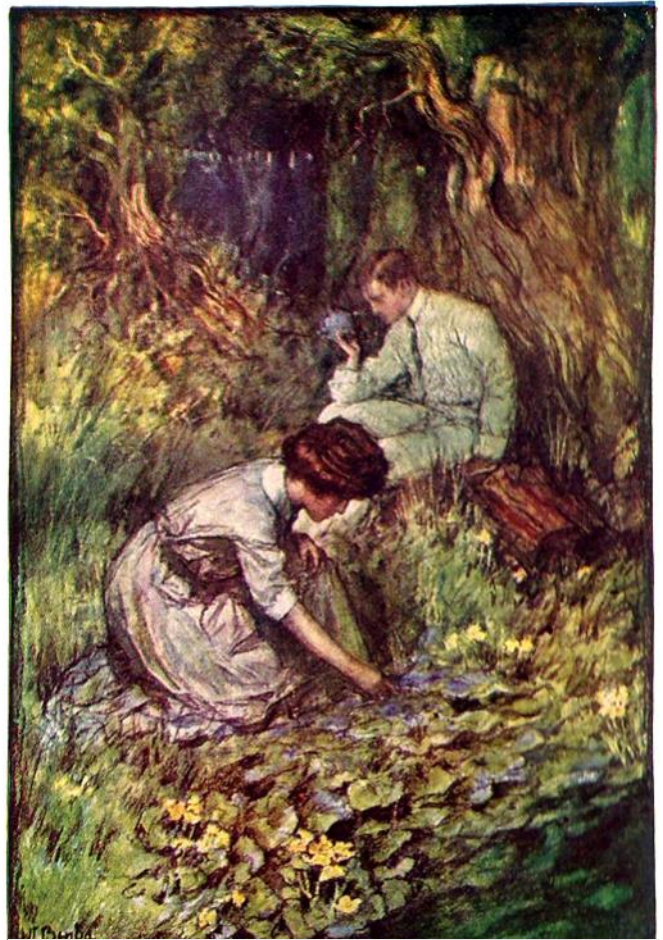
Elnora looks forward with anticipation to teaching "how the goldfinch builds its nest, and how the bees make honey." She plans for "flower boxes made for each of the rooms and filled with wild things."

Says the Limberlost heroine, "I think the idea is to begin with fall things in the fall, keeping to the season throughout the year."

"What are fall things?" ask Mrs. Comstock, Elnora's mother.

"Oh, fringed gentians, asters, ironwort, every fall flower, leaves from every tree and vine, what makes

them change colour, abandoned bird nests, winter quarters of caterpillars and insects, what becomes of the butterflies and grasshoppers – just myriads of stuff."



"Elnora knelt and slipping her fingers through the leaves and grasses to the roots, gathered a few violets and gave them to Philip"

Gene Stratton-Porter met with criticism from various editors when she first tried to publish her stories filled with descriptions of the natural settings she knew and loved. She stayed true to her convictions that such sights and sounds were essential to her writings and that readers would appreciate such content. In time, she brought millions of "city folk" and others into nature's classroom through her words, and many readers became outdoor enthusiasts as a result.

FRIENDS OF THE LIMBERLOST—NEW & RENEWAL MEMBERSHIP FORM

The Friends of the Limberlost, a 501(c)3 not-for-profit corporation, supports the Indiana Department of Natural Resources Division of Nature Preserves. They manage the restored wetlands in the Limberlost Territories. They have an office located at the Limberlost State Historic Site in Geneva, IN. Your membership dues and donations support the many projects bringing back parts of the Limberlost Swamp—made famous by author, Gene Stratton-Porter, in her novels and nature studies.

Your annual membership dues and any extra amount you donate will be used primarily on Limberlost Swamp restoration and visitor enhancement projects. Other expenses include newsletter costs, postage, office supplies & pavilion maintenance. There are no payroll expenses. Friends of the Limberlost is an all volunteer organization.

Your annual dues and donation includes a subscription to the newsletter, and 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 call Randy Lehman at (260)849-0308, or email randyplehman@comcast.net.

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**.

Please Check the Box that best matches the type of membership you want.

☐ 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 the newsletter mailed to you via the U.S. Postal Service. We are happy to mail you a “paper copy” of the newsletter if that is what you prefer—just check the box. By getting the digital version of the newsletter via email, it saves us money on postage, it also saves us time, and the “e-newsletter” is in color!

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED (Additional donation appreciated): \$ _____

COMMENTS: _____