



Friends of the Limberlost

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SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, IS THE ANNUAL MEETING FOR FRIENDS OF THE LIMBERLOST.

IF YOU ARE A MEMBER, YOU ARE INVITED, BUT YOU MUST RSVP TO RANDY LEHMAN VIA EMAIL BY SEPT. 24, OR MESSAGE US ON THE FRIENDS FACEBOOK PAGE TO LET US KNOW YOU ARE COMING.

DOORS OPEN AT 5 PM AT THE LIMBERLOST STATE HISTORIC SITE VISITOR CENTER. DINNER PROVIDED BY THE FRIENDS BEGINS AT 5:30 & THE BUSINESS MEETING FOLLOWS WHEN DINNER HAS ENDED. LEARN MORE ABOUT YOUR MEAL OPTIONS, AND THE AGENDA FOR THE ANNUAL MEETING BELOW.

ANNUAL MEETING FOR FRIENDS OF THE LIMBERLOST

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 5:00-7:30PM

AT THE LIMBERLOST STATE HISTORIC SITE VISITOR CENTER, GENEVA, IN

All members are invited or anyone interested in becoming a member is welcome!

If you plan to attend, please RSVP by Friday, September 20.

RSVP for the annual meeting by contacting Randy Lehman, email: randyplehman@comcast.net or call 260-849-0308. You can also RSVP by sending a private message through the "Friends of the Limberlost" Facebook page.

A light dinner starts at 5:30 PM at the Limberlost Visitor Center. Dinner is being provided by Alpine Rose of Berne, IN. When you RSVP, please choose ONE of the following three sandwiches for yourself, and also choose ONE for anyone who is coming with you:

1. Chicken Caesar Wrap 2. Chicken Salad Croissant 3. Ham & Swiss Sandwich

- The Business Meeting includes:
 - ▶ Approval of the previous annual meeting minutes (9-23-2023)
 - ▶ The election of FOL board members
 - ▶ An abbreviated Limberlost Swamp Remembered meeting and FOL Board meeting will take place.
 - ▶ The Treasurer will review 2023 revenue & expenses
 - ▶ We will look at what the future holds for Friends of the Limberlost
- Please make reservations ASAP. When capacity is reached, we stop taking reservations. There is no charge for attending, but donations can be made at the dinner to help pay expenses.

We do have a special program planned after the business meeting concludes. Alan Daugherty, from Bluffton, IN, will present a PowerPoint program about "Edward Bruce Williamson". A contemporary and lifetime friend to Charles C. Deam, Indiana's state forester, who credited "EB" for his own life's work. EB was a lifetime resident of Bluffton but known to others around the world who shared his particular interests.

Read more about EB and Alan Daugherty's program in this newsletter.



New Program Developer Hired at Limberlost State Historic Site

My name is Lauren Cameron, and I have been the Program Developer for the Gene Stratton-Porter State Historic Site in Rome City for the past four years. Before my time at the museum, I worked as a seasonal naturalist at Pokagon State Park with Nicky Ball! I have a Bachelor's degree from IU in Anthropology, with a focus in Bioanthropology.

I got married this past June and my family consists of a little girl, a dog, and a cat. My favorite ways to unwind are watching 80's and 90's classic movies, cooking and deep-diving into historical rabbit holes.

If you have any questions or suggestions regarding programs coming up, feel free to shoot me an email at Lcameron@indianamuseum.org. Or call 260-368-7428

To pre-register or for more info about the events on this page go to www.indianamuseum.org/limberlost

Autumn Loblolly Wildflower Safari

Saturday, October 5, from 10 am to Noon

Join a Limberlost naturalist for a fall addition of our spring wildflower hike. We will take a leisurely stroll along the Loblolly trails to discover what autumn wildflowers and plants are growing and learn how man and animal have put these plants to use. Also find out which plants have been introduced and which are native—and which might be harmful or even deadly. Many plants and flowers different from the spring wildflower hike will be observed and discussed.

- Cost: \$3.75 for members of the Indiana State Museum, Non-members: \$5.00
- Child: \$2.25 for members of the Indiana State Museum, Non-Members: \$3.75

All ages welcome. Meet at the Loblolly Marsh Nature Preserve parking lot located at 8180N 250W, Bryant, IN 47326. This hike is subject to cancellation in the event of adverse weather conditions. The hike is limited to a maximum of 24 adults and children (typical attendance is 12 to 15 people). Pre-registration is appreciated, but not required.



A recent photo of 8ft. tall flowering Prairie Dock adjacent to the trail at the Loblolly Marsh

Wine'd Down: Friday night, October 25, from 5 pm to 8 pm

Stop by the Limberlost Historic Site's visitor center and *un-wine'd* with us while you sip local wines, listen to soft music and learn painting techniques from an area artist. All painting supplies will be loaned to you for the event, but if you'd like to bring your own materials, feel free. No experience is required to sign up! This is a 21+ event, no children allowed. Alcohol will be offered at this event, and there will be non-alcoholic drinks available for those who do not wish to drink. Alcohol will be served until 7pm.

- Pre-registration is appreciated. Registration deadline: October 22nd
- Cost for members of the Indiana State Museum: \$22.50
- Cost for non-members: \$30.00

Indiana's Underground Railroad: The Grand Central Station

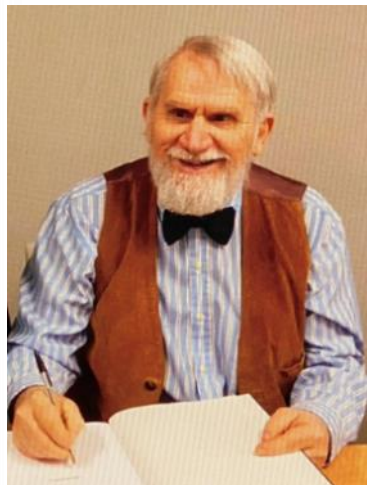
Friday night, November 8, from 5-6:30 pm



Levi Coffin was a humble man from a humble Quaker upbringing in North Carolina, who came to be known as the President of the Underground Railroad. Our guest speaker for the night will be the Indiana State Museum's Central Regional Director, and local Underground Railroad expert, Joanna Hahn. Join us for an evening of stories and reflection as we learn about the amazing man and the even more amazing woman who stood beside him, along with their operation which aided roughly 2,000 Freedom Seekers on their journey.

- Pre-registration is appreciated.
- Registration deadline is November 5th
- Due to the nature of the topics covered, please use discretion when purchasing tickets for a younger audience member. Recommended ages 10+
- Light snacks and beverages offered during the event.
- Cost: General admission

About our annual meeting speaker, Alan Daugherty



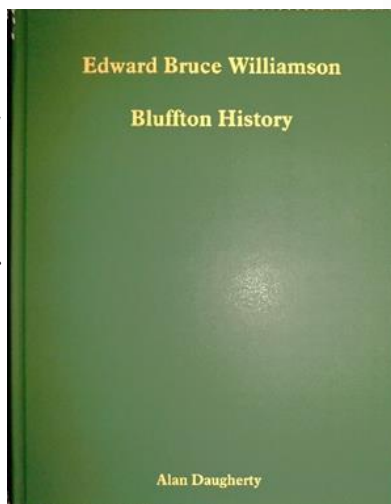
Although a retired teacher, Alan is currently in his 19th year of writing about nature for the Bluffton News-Banner newspaper. He writes a weekly column he calls, *Angelkeep Journals*.

As a retirement hobby, he began researching local history topics and turned his research into books. He's well into his second dozen of those books. His biography of Edward Bruce Williamson – Bluffton History received patron financing for printing costs. *You will be able to purchase this book about Edward Williamson at the Friends annual meeting for a minimum donation of \$35.*

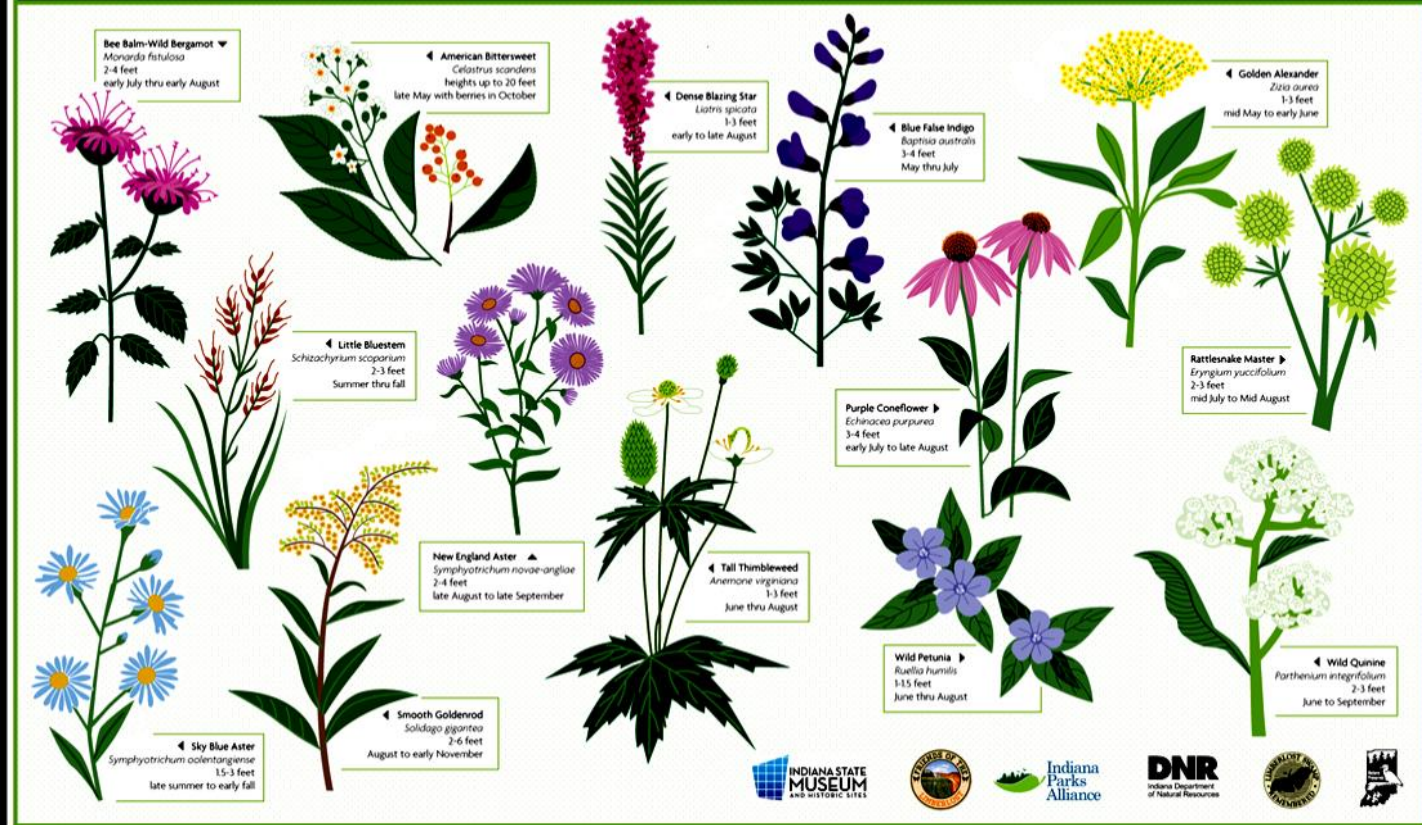
Alan takes no proceeds from the sale of this illustrated Limited Edition hardcover book. All money from the sales of the book go directly to *Loving Shepherd Ministries' USA* and other world adoption programs.

The book is the result of two years of Alan's research and writing. It is the only biography of EB Williamson, who was known on six continents for the work he did in two separate areas of scientific study. EB spent nearly all of his life as a Bluffton resident. Besides being one of the leading experts on dragonflies, and an expert hybridizer of irises, he became a bank leader in his community, just like his father.

EB adopted three daughters. Mary, who followed in her father's footsteps, became renowned for her own iris hybrids, then as a teacher in Adams County. EB's nature "buddy" was Charles C. Deam, Indiana's state forester who credited EB for his own life's work.



WILDFLOWER GUIDE TO THE LIMBERLOST



This new 11" X 17" native wildflower poster, made specifically for this area, mounted on stiff paper-board, illustrated by Lucie Rice and Design, Carmel, IN, features 14 native wildflowers seen in the Limberlost Conservation Area. Now for sale in the Limberlost gift shop for \$20. Purchase a Friends membership, & it costs \$10. A \$400 grant from "Indiana Park Alliance" paid half the cost of these posters. Great gift item!



19th ANNUAL FUNDRAISING RESULTS: \$4,607.71

If we are counting correctly, this was the 19th year in a row that Creek Run has conducted a fundraiser for Friends of the Limberlost. Like all the other annual fundraising efforts, the results this year are impressive, and we especially want to thank Abigail (Abby) Michael of Creek Run for all the work she put into organizing this

effort. Without her commitment to this annual event, it would not happen.

Creek Run is an environmental engineering company with offices in Montpelier and Laporte, IN. They are a full service consulting firm that provides environmental and engineering services throughout the Midwest. Every year Creek Run conducts a fundraiser for Friends of the Limberlost.

donations support Limberlost wetland restoration projects, which today total 1800 acres in Jay County and Adams County in Indiana. Besides benefiting the environment, these wetland properties include miles of hiking trails open to the public. The annual donations raised by Creek Run go to Limberlost Swamp Remembered (LSR), a standing committee of Friends of the Limberlost.

LSR supports Limberlost wetland restoration projects and works closely with the Indiana Dept. of Natural Resources Division of Nature Preserve to bring back portions of the Limberlost Swamp made famous by Indiana author and naturalist, Gene Stratton-Porter. LSR purchases flood-prone land from willing sellers and helps pay expenses to return land to its original condition—back to wetlands.

\$4,607.71 is the approximate total for the 2024 Creek Run Fundraiser. Fees for the online auction have been estimated so this total could still be adjusted up or down a little bit, but since our next newsletter won't come out until the Spring of 2025, we felt it was important to report this donation as soon as we could.

EXCITING NEWS: WE JUST PURCHASED 10 ACRES FOR THE LOBLOLLY MARSH

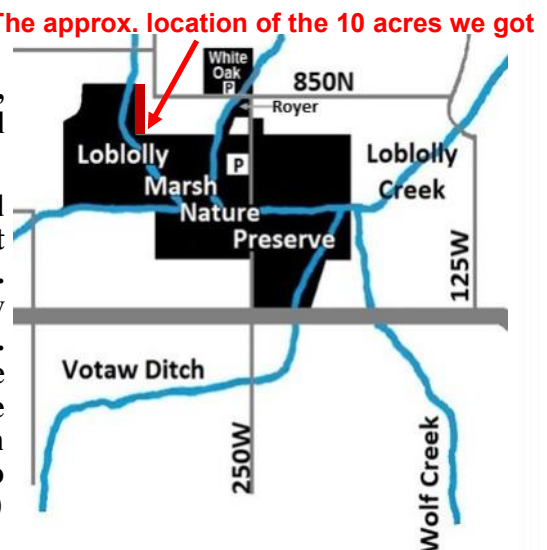
Our previous fundraiser for a land purchase was back in 2020, when we raised enough funds to purchase the Royer/Rezits property—10.42 acres of land. Since that time land prices have been increasing, and adding more acreage to the Limberlost Conservation Area has been a financial challenge. However, with help from our many supporters, the Friends of the Limberlost can succeed. For example, we are very excited to announce our recent purchase of another 10 acres of flood-prone land, also adjacent to the Loblolly Marsh in Jay County.

To purchase this 10 acres, several FOL Board members attended an on-site auction on July 20, where approximately 60 acres was going to be auctioned off in six parcels. The auction ended several hours later with the Friends being the highest bidder on one of the two parcels that we wanted. This was our 3rd attempt to buy land at an auction in 2023 and 2024, and this was our first successful auction purchase.

This auction was organized differently than the ones we previously attended. You could bid on each parcel separately or in combination with each other all at the same time! The room where the auction was held was packed with Amish & hunters. When it was all said and done, the Friends were the highest bidder on 10 acres of flood-prone land. At the closing, which just took place on September 11, The Friends paid almost 10 times more than we paid for the 10-acre Royer property in 2020. We weren't surprised by how high we had to go to be the highest bidder. We remembered how much land had sold for in the previous land auctions that we attended. In this auction there were other bidders, who really wanted the same parcel we were bidding on, but they all dropped out before we did.

If you have made donations to the Limberlost Swamp Remembered Committee in the past couple of years, we thank you again, because it was your donations that made this recent purchase possible. Obviously, the money we spent on this auction has significantly reduced the balance of the Limberlost Swamp Remembered account. Our goal now is to rebuild the LSR account balance with more donations, both large and small, and build up the LSR account where it needs to be for us to compete successfully in the next land auction which could be in late 2024 or early 2025. Make checks payable to Friends of the Limberlost, and send to P.O. Box 571, Geneva, IN 46740

Thanks again for your continuing support!



In her book, **MUSIC OF THE WILD**, Gene Stratton-Porter shows she understood the need for conservation and the consequences of not conserving our natural resources. She quoted Thoreau who wrote about the destruction of forests as saying, “Thank Heaven, they can not cut down the clouds!”

Gene responds to Thoreau’s comment stating, “*Aye, but they can! That is a miserable fact, and soon it will become our discomfort and loss. Clouds are beds of vapor arising from damp places and floating in the air until they meet other vapor masses, that mingle with them, and the weight becomes so great the whole falls in drops of rain. If men in their greed cut forests that preserve and distill moisture, clear fields, take the shelter of trees from creeks and rivers until they evaporate, and drain the water from swamps so that they can be cleared and cultivated,— they prevent vapor from rising, and if it does not rise it can not fall. Pity of pities it is; but man can change and is changing the forces of nature. I never told a sadder truth, but it is true that man can "cut down the clouds." In utter disregard or ignorance of what he will do to himself, his children, and his country he persists in doing it wherever he can see a few cents in the sacrifice.*” —pages 184-185 in Ken’s reprint of Music of the Wild.

Music of the Wild is a nature preserve, part of the Limberlost Conservation Area, located south of Geneva, in Jay County not far from the Adams Co. and Jay Co. line. It is an area described in Part II of Gene Stratton Porter’s book by the same name, published in September 1910. The book was recently reprinted and updated by Ken Brunswick.



Music of the Wild Preserve has a parking lot adjacent to US Hwy 27. The parking lot is easily accessed from the highway. It features a split rail fence (aka: snake fence) lined with local flora, and there’s a helpful wildflower plant ID poster in the Kiosk. This wildflower poster can be purchased at the Limberlost State Historic Site gift shop for \$20, and proceeds benefit Friends of the Limberlost.

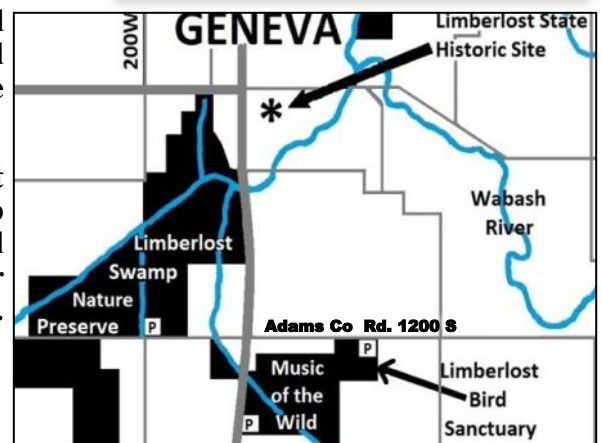
Limberlost Creek borders one side of this parking lot. Unfortunately, until the Friends can put a bridge across Limberlost Creek, it is not easy to access the area GSP refers to as Music of the Wild. Wading across Limberlost Creek, although possible when water levels are low, is not recommended. The best way to hike through the area mentioned in Gene’s book, Music of the Wild, is to drive to the Bird Sanctuary parking lot about a mile from the Music of the Wild parking lot. The Bird Sanctuary parking lot has trails that take you into the marsh area mentioned in Gene’s book.

If you’d rather not go it alone, you can still hire the Limberlost Naturalist, Curt Burnette, to take you on a guided hike of the two preserves known as Music of the Wild and the Bird Sanctuary. Call 260-368-7428 or stop at the Limberlost Visitor Center for more information about the Rent-a-Naturalist program. There’s so many interesting things to point out at both these preserves, that hiring Curt for a guided hike makes sense. You can contact Curt by email: cburnette@indianamuseum.org



This is the 6th nature book by Gene Stratton-Porter that Ken has reprinted. All six include Gene’s original text and her photographs, and include Ken’s current updates. Ken has worked for over 30 years studying and restoring the Limberlost— first as a volunteer, then as the 1st East-Central Regional Ecologist for the Indiana DNR Division of Nature Preserves. Now retired, he keeps studying and writing about the Limberlost. Included in this reprint is a foreword written by John Bacone, retired director of DNR’s Division of Nature Preserves, (1977-2019) who oversaw the Division at the time Ken was bringing back the Limberlost.

Music of the Wild is for sale at the Limberlost gift shop for \$26.95.



ARE SANDHILL CRANES NESTING IN THE LIMBERLOST CONSERVATION AREA (LCA)?

by Randy Lehman

For several years now, people hiking at the Loblolly Marsh in late spring or early summer have seen pairs of sandhills flying by, or have heard sandhills calling in the distance, making that very distinctive and recognizable call that sandhills are known for. Nature photographers, hikers, and others have seen adult sandhill cranes with immature sandhills at other LCA preserves in June and July (see pics below). As far as I know, no one has actually seen a sandhill nesting site at the Loblolly Marsh or elsewhere in the LCA. No one has told us that they have seen an adult sandhill raising a “colt”, as very young sandhills are called. However, to see immature sandhills with adults in July at the Limberlost Swamp Preserve, is pretty good evidence that sandhills are nesting somewhere in the LCA, or nesting somewhere near the LCA. No nesting site has been “confirmed” in the 1800 acres of the LCA, but it’s very likely they are nesting somewhere in this general area.

Juvenile Sandhills are gray and rusty brown, without the pale cheek or red crown (see photos below). Sandhill Cranes forage for grains and invertebrates in prairies, grasslands, and marshes. Both pictures below were taken by Troy Straub, Sunday morning, July 21, 2024, a little before 9:00 am in a soybean field just west of Limberlost Swamp on the north side of the road.



For comparison, “Goose Pond” has had one or two nesting pairs in recent years. So, perhaps it won’t be long before we actually see a nesting site in the Limberlost.

The same 3 sandhills fly up and away from Miller’s pond (part of the Limberlost Swamp Nature Preserve). This great picture was taken by Suzanne Atkinson, Indiana Audubon Society member. Notice the juvenile in the center with no red on the head.



The IAS had a Limberlost Conservation Area field trip on Saturday, Sept. 7, and 17 members showed up for the hike. We all saw the three Sandhills feeding in the mostly dried out west end of Millers Pond, and we all saw them fly way when they didn’t like all of us watching them.

It was a beautiful day for the first annual Plein Air event at Limberlost State Historic Site

Perfect weather on Saturday, August 17, greeted seven artists who came to Geneva from as far away as Auburn, Indiana, and Wapakoneta, Ohio, to participate in the **first annual** Limberlost Plein Air event. The most popular medium used was watercolor paint; however, there were also two acrylic paintings and one pencil drawing. The most popular subject was the Limberlost Cabin, but one artist chose the trail at the Ceylon Covered Bridge, and another painted a scene at Rainbow Bend. This 1st Limberlost Plein Air event was held on the same day that Gene Stratton Porter's 161st birthday was celebrated at Limberlost State Historic Site, and it was the same day as the town of Geneva's "End of Summer" festival.

Friends of the Limberlost Board members, Melissa Fey, and Jackie Caffee, hosted the Plein Air event. They welcomed artists and other visitors at the registration table. In addition to making sure artists were happily situated at the location they chose to set up, Melissa and Jackie passed out snacks and later delivered lunches to the artists. The "lunch option" was mentioned by the artists as one of the most appreciated features of our Plein Air event. The artists took short breaks but spent most of their time painting one or more pieces from 9 am to 3 pm. Their completed paintings were displayed at the Limberlost Visitor Center for public viewing and sale.

We would like to recognize and thank the following artists for their participation in this first Plein Air event at Limberlost. Their talent and hard work was on display: Don Skinner/Bluffton, Sylvia Marbach /Ft Wayne, Nancy Morrissey-Leitz/Bluffton, Michelle Walker/ Wapakoneta OH, Ruth Williams/Noblesville, Tara Schrock/Auburn, and Lori Miller/Portland.



**"Along the Wabash" by Tara Schrock
Auburn, IN**



**"The Limberlost Cabin" by Lori Miller,
Portland, IN**



**"Limberlost Cabin—Dream Girl's
Porch" by Don Skinner, Bluffton, IN**

Also, a special thanks to Limberlost S.H.S. Manager, Shaun Payne, for allowing this event to be held on Limberlost Cabin grounds and agreeing to let the artists display their paintings inside the visitor center. We had positive feedback from the participating artists, and we plan to repeat this event next year. As an author, photographer, naturalist, and one of the first artists to appreciate the natural beauty of the Limberlost, we think this event represents the essence of what Gene Stratton Porter was about.

The Plein Air event gives us another way to highlight the ongoing restoration of 1800 acres of the Limberlost Swamp in southern Adams County and northern Jay County. If you are an artist, who did not come to our 1st Limberlost Plein Air event, and you would like to participate in this event next year, email Melissa Fey to get on the contact list for next year.

mjflinnngrove@gmail.com or linngrove@live.com

The Woman Who Wouldn't Cut Down Clouds by Sherrida (Sherri) Woodley*

This poem appeared August 2, 2024 on jmwblog.wordpress.com (reprinted here with permission of the author)

Wild worship takes time. Bereft of form, a collection of fears bound in waiting, a swamp demands courage.

Magnifying terror, begging forgiveness, a child might find the right road in. But what convinces her to enter?

Gene is the last of a dozen children. There have been losses, her mother among them.

They leave her with traces of earth between her toes and an ear for birds and moths living just beyond the tidy fence of civilization. Consumed in reverence.

This swamp, the Limberlost, is waiting for an invader. Few creatures will cross the murky divide between eons of rain and mist, vapor of swamp gas sometimes invading the family cabin.

She remains a child sitting on the edge of one of the oldest waterways in the heart of North America. Barely noticeable.

Everything lives here. And nothing. Her childhood is slowly defined by notes of one bird—a lark. Gene's preoccupation, her little-girl fantasy attached to flight.

She waits on the cabin porch longing to enter the swamp, but it is only the lark who listens, wooing her from among clouds dissolving, spreading downward across hundreds of years.

From this constant thrum, this refusal to withdraw from wild conversation, Gene draws long thin lines—part art, part cursive between what she observes and what may likely be observing her.

This is the beginnings of language, bewildering, sometimes undecipherable.

The swamp calls in whispers, grunts, wails, even a mud-stricken chorus of bottom feeders that will never threaten her. Until now only the Limberlost has spoken.

Enchantment dismissed by humankind. Faithful only to its members who remain anonymous, except for Gene, a handful of oil men, tile layers draining the swamp.

Believing she needs hip-wading proof, she begins carrying an old camera with her. She lugs it further and further into the diminishing soak of eras without containment.

Tracks, blurs, entire sagas reveal themselves, some of them boot impressions. Men have moved into the Limberlost without Gene's permission. The camera is her third eye.

In an unexpected stumble, Gene drops a camera plate between inserted tiles. Nothing much, she thinks, until she considers the image is of a red-tailed hawk captured falling through a rupture in the sky.

Limberlost has recorded a new beginning, one tangled in the grim ambitions of agriculture and another century of human greed. No one will find the missing photograph, although it remains her most lasting legacy.

*Sherri Woodley is as enchanted with the Limberlost as many of us are, and her fascination goes back to one of her favorite childhood authors, Gene Stratton-Porter. Sherri read the novel, *The Harvester*, at about age 12, which still stands as one of the books that contributed most to her own novel writing (*Quick Fall of Light*).

As a young woman, Sherri became a private pilot while learning medical transcription. These two experiences enhanced her abilities to memorize and interpret specific jargon, all of which became the basis of her writing. *Quick Fall of Light*, a novel of speculative fiction, eventually grew out of a medical crisis (bird flu pandemic), while aviation plays a large part in solving a century-old extinction running throughout the story.

Today, she continues to write short stories, flash fiction and poetry published in a variety of journals, including *Sky Island Journal*, *Halfway Down the Stairs*, and *Last Stanza Poetry Journal*, while editing a recently completed hybrid memoir for publication. A survivor of breast cancer, she writes to acknowledge a life spent in pursuit of her passions, flying being most notable. She still flies, often in the company of birds, in her dreams.

The Woman Who Wouldn't Cut Down Clouds, a poem recently written by Woodley, shares with us the Limberlost's long hold on Gene Stratton-Porter.

Woodley has kept her ties with Friends of the Limberlost and the fellowship there. More than once she has written about the passenger pigeon in Gene's life (*Bird Watchers Digest*, 2014). She last visited the Limberlost in 2014. A lifetime later still finds her considering the well-loved words of one of her favorite writers: "My work keeps me in the woods so much I remain there for my religion also. Whenever I find these flowers I always pause for a little service of my own..." (183—*The Harvester*).

Consider Adding This Book to Your Autumn “To Read” List!

Review by Adrienne Provenzano

Earlier this year, I heard about a book written– and illustrated – by Amy Tan. She’s well known as a fiction writer of books such as The Joy Luck Club (also adapted into a film) and The Bonesetter’s Daughter. What I didn’t know is that she’s developed a passion for birding and nature journaling.

Like Gene Stratton-Porter, Tan enjoyed exploring the natural world as a child and observing wildlife. Unlike Stratton-Porter, Tan’s particular interest in studying birds came later in life. In her mid-60’s, she began taking classes in nature journaling, which eventually led to her new book, The Backyard Bird Chronicles.

The book includes excerpts from journals created by Tan between 2017 and 2022. As a novelist, character is important to her, and she’s observed the birds of her Sausalito, California backyard with an author’s insightful eye for detail.

Her illustrations – there are more than 100! – are thoughtful and full of curiosity, whimsy, and wonder. One is titled “Why and How do Anna’s Hummingbirds Make Those Clicking Sounds?” and another “Where’s Junco?” A brief essay accompanies each journal page, often filled with questions about the various birds that visit her yard. A list of the 61 species included appears at the end of the book. Some are likely familiar to birders of the Limberlost region, such as the American Goldfinch, Cooper’s Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, and Dark-eyed Junco. In an interview after the book was published, she updated that number to 66 species, including the Great Blue Heron – a staple of the Limberlost! I think Stratton-Porter would have especially appreciated Tan’s admiration for the Great Horned Owl.

In the book, Tan explains how she learned to draw birds through hikes and classes with John Muir Laws – an author, artist, naturalist, and educator. She learned from her instructor and other participants in the classes as well as through her own trial and error efforts, putting into practice what Laws refers to as “pencil miles.” As part of a list of resources in The Backyard Bird Chronicles, there’s a link to free drawing classes, as well as other information: <https://www.JohnMuirLaws.com>

In the section of the John Muir Laws website about nature journaling, he describes the value of that process. Friends of the Limberlost members, who are interested in beginning – or continuing – such a practice, may find these words inspiring.

“Keeping an illustrated, observational journal is a centuries-old method that has been reenvisioned and refined through the lens of our understanding of neuroscience, learning, and deliberate practice. A nature journal is a lens that focuses our attention and crystalizes our observations, thoughts, and experiences.

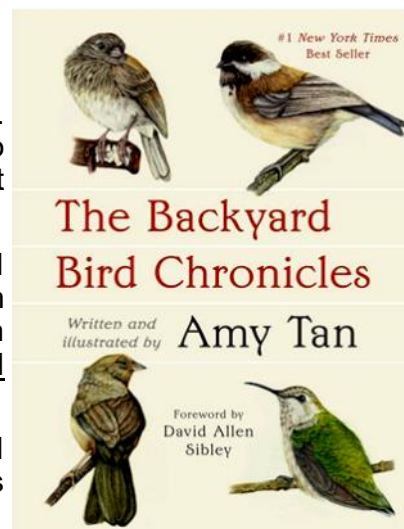
Nature Journaling is collecting and organizing your observations, questions, connections, and explanations on the pages of a notebook using words, pictures, and numbers. You do not need to be an artist or a naturalist to begin. These skills can be learned by anyone, and you can develop them with deliberate practice. The system is creative, rigorous, and playful, easy to begin and learn, and will grow and mature over a lifetime. Start now: you can do this, and the world is waiting.

Nature Journaling will enrich your experiences and develop observation, curiosity, gratitude, reverence, memory, and the skills of a naturalist. It helps you discover, think, remember, and integrate new information with your existing knowledge. Train your mind, and the world will offer you its secrets of wonder and beauty.”

I would add to what Laws has written, that observing nature and keeping track of one’s experiences can also be done in other ways, such as photography (an approach near and dear to Gene Stratton-Porter), audio and/or video recordings, creating songs, poems, stories, and artwork, and by collecting scientific measurements, such as temperature and other weather conditions.

Authors often include an acknowledgments page or two at the end of their work. Tan’s last statements in that section are as follows: “To all the birds in my backyard. If only you knew what I see in each of you. If only you knew how much I love you.” Like Stratton-Porter did in her own fiction and non-fiction works, Amy Tan shares her appreciation for the birds that continue to offer her a window into their world. The Backyard Bird Chronicles is a delight.

Adrienne Provenzano is a Friend of the Limberlost and Advanced Indiana Master Naturalist



**FRIENDS OF THE LIMBERLOST
NEW MEMBERSHIP & MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM**

Friends of the Limberlost is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit corporation. We support Limberlost State Historic Site, which is owned and operated by the Indiana State Museum. We also support the IDNR—Division of Nature Preserves which manages the restoration of wetlands in the Limberlost Swamp Conservation Area. Your membership dues and extra donations are vital to the many projects honoring the memory and legacy of Indiana author, naturalist, and nature photographer, Gene Stratton-Porter.

You decide how your annual dues will be spent. You choose one of the following:

- Choose the Limberlost Historic Site Friends who support projects and help pay expenses associated with the improvement or the betterment of Limberlost State Historic Site
- Choose Limberlost Swamp Remembered, a committee of the Friends of the Limberlost, which is primarily focused on Limberlost Swamp restoration projects
- Or you can support both missions of the Friends of the Limberlost

As a member you receive our quarterly newsletter. You get one free tour of the Limberlost Cabin, a 10% discount on Limberlost Gift Shop purchases, and you get a 15% discount if you purchase a membership in the Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites. As a member of the Friends of the Limberlost you help us preserve the legacy of Gene Stratton-Porter and help us restore the environment by bringing back the Limberlost Swamp.

If you have any questions about your membership, please call or text Randy Lehman, membership chairperson, at 260-849-0308 or email randvplehman@comcast.net

Please make checks payable to: FRIENDS OF THE LIMBERLOST. Mail both your check and completed membership form to: PO BOX 571, GENEVA IN 46740

STEP ONE

Select which mission of the Friends Group you want to support by checking a box to the right

☐ Limberlost Historic Site Friends—dues and any additional donations 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 restorations 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 type of Membership you want by checking a box below

☐ Older Adults—\$10

☐ Business—\$50 (Please enter the name of a contact-person below)

☐ Other Individuals—\$20

☐ Family—\$35

☐ Lifetime—\$1,000

NAME _____

MAILING ADDRESS _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

☐ Check the box if you want your newsletter mailed to you via the US Postal Service. We'd like to EMAIL the newsletter to you because it saves us money and time, and the e-newsletter is in color and has more pages. However, we are happy to mail you a "paper copy" of the newsletter, if that is what you prefer—just check the box. If you check the box and give us an email address, we will send you both versions of the newsletter.

AMOUNT ENCLOSED (additional donation appreciated!): \$ _____

ANY COMMENTS?