



Naturally Speaki

Spring 2005

Newsletter for the Friends of the LaPorte County Parks

Administrative Office

Red Mill County Park
0185 S. Holmesville Rd.
LaPorte, IN 46350
(219) 325-8315
(219) 873-7014 ext. 223
Fax (219) 325-8317
E-Mail lcponline@csinet.net
www.laportecountyparks.org

Naturalist Office

Luhr County Park
3178 S. 150 West
LaPorte, IN 46350
(219) 324-5855
E-Mail natureniki@csinet.net
rangerbob@csinet.net
www.laportecountyparks.org
(TTY/TDD/VOICE)

Luhr Park Maintenance

Facility

(219) 326-0524
E-Mail luhr@csinet.net
redmill@csinet.net

Creek Ridge County Park

7943 W. 400 North
Michigan City, IN 46360

Bluhm County Park

3855 S. 1100 West
Westville, IN 46391

Foundation Properties (undeveloped)

Kankakee Property
Kankakee Township

Sebert Property
Springfield Township

George R. Menkes
Nature Preserve
Galena Township

“Night Life”

Submitted by: Niki Schmutte

I am not one to stay up late and I am not a wild night person. When my clock strikes 10:30 p.m. I am usually on my way to a good night's sleep, that is, if I am in my own bed. Lots of things come to life at night. There are even some flowers that are moonlight bloomers.

Night-blooming flowers are usually white to yellowish in color and are very fragrant. These flowers rely on their smells to attract night-flying moths. The moths then pollinate the plants.

Moonflower (*Ipomoea alba*) is one of the flowers that comes to life at night. It has a pure white scented flower that is 6" wide. It begins to open in the evening and fades in the morning.

Four O'clocks are named for its habit of blooming after 4:00 p.m. These flowers grow and flower almost anywhere in the U.S. They look wonderful in large containers and have an outstanding fragrance when open.

Other moonlight bloomers are evening primrose (*Oenothera biennis*), evening-scented stock (*matthiola Longipetala*), flowering tobacco (*Nicotiana*), and thorn apple (*Datura*).

Become part of the night life and plant some moonlight bloomers. You can plant the seeds in the ground or in pots. Just make sure you plant them in a place where you can enjoy their sweet scents.



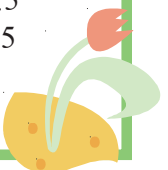
Moonflower



Flowering Tobacco

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The mission of the LaPorte County Parks and Recreation Board and Department is to preserve, protect and manage natural, cultural and recreational resources within a diverse and balanced park system. We will provide educational opportunities through facilities and programs for all citizens of LaPorte County to further their awareness and enjoyment of those resources.

LaPorte County Parks Staff

Tim Morgan - Superintendent
 Joan Davis - Administrative Assistant
 "Nature" Niki Schmutte - Chief Naturalist
 "Ranger" Bob Bulger - Naturalist
 Roger Grove - Maintenance Supervisor
 Boyd Lomow - Maintenance Foreman
 Tim Gropp - Maintenance Technician

Seasonal Staff / Part-time

"Perennial" Peggy Smith -
 Naturalist Assistant/ Office
 Jim Simon - Naturalist Assistant
 Jill Pressler- Naturalist Assistant
 Sharon Bonner - Office /
 Naturalist Assistant
 Barbara Janeczko - Maintenance
 Pat Chenoweth - Maintenance
 Tom Minich- Maintenance
 Ken Haylin - Gate Keeper
 Thomas Hathoot - Gate Keeper
 Jim Janeczko- Gate Keeper

Park Board

David Thompson - President
 Scott Foster - Vice President
 Kate Ardissono
 Mark Francesconi
 Tracy Biggs
 Matthew Przybylinski
 Bob Lamb

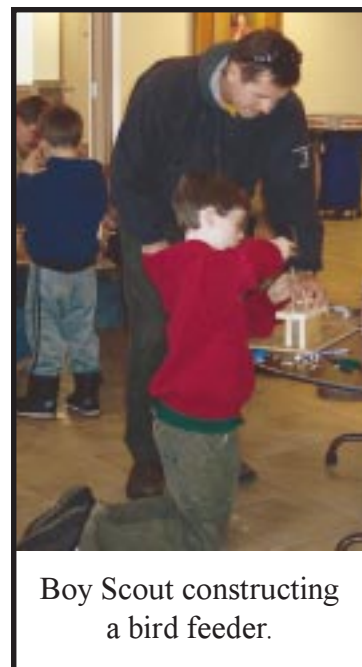
The mission of the LaPorte County Park Foundation Inc. - to provide the LaPorte County Park Department with public support, to expand and enhance opportunities for park development, programs and preservation, both now and in the future, for all to enjoy.

Foundation Board

Jim Jessup, President
 John Pflum, Secretary
 Leon Dargis, Treasurer
 Doug Buell
 Bill Hedge
 Ed Merrion
 Tom Thode
 Sherry Waters

Boy Scout Winterfest at Red Mill

175 Boy Scouts and their families participated in the second annual Winterfest activities at Red Mill Park. Participants made bird feeders, constructed an igloo, learned about animal tracks and made prints with ink pads, went on nature hikes led by a naturalist, made pancakes, and did several snow related activities. Fun was had by all that attended including the Park Naturalist Staff.



Boy Scout constructing a bird feeder.

Craft Corner-----

Invent A Flower

There are lots of interesting flowers in nature. Try to create your own.

What You'll Need: Parts of flowers and plants (either real or in photographs), scissors, craft glue, poster board or cardboard.

Can you guess just how big the world's biggest flowers are? Well, They're called rafflesia and they can be as much as three feet wide and weigh as much as 15 pounds. You've probably never seen one, since they only grow in the rain forests of Indonesia. Other unusual flowers include the bee flower, which looks so much like a bee that real bees get confused. And there's actually a flower called the carrion flower ("carrion" means dead flesh) that looks and smells like dead meat.

What wild kind of flowers can you come up with? Find out by inventing a flower. Gather parts of different flowers and plants: leaves, stems, flowers, seeds, etc. Or, cut out plant and flower parts from pictures in old magazines. Glue parts together on a piece of cardboard or poster board to make crazy new flowers.



Picture of a Rafflesia

Earth Day Dance

Daddy / Daughter



April 16th
 Red Mill County Park
 Pat Smith Hall
 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
 \$8.00 per couple, \$2.00 for
 each additional daughter.

Get all dressed up and come out to Red Mill County Park to enjoy an evening of dancing. Pictures will be taken of all couples to take home. Each couple gets to make an Earth Day frame for their photo. Refreshments will be served. Fill out the form and mail it in with payment.

 Name/mae

 Address

 Phone

 Name of ae

 Names of additional Daughters

Amount Paid _____

Mail form and fee before April 13 to:
LaPorte County Parks
Earth Day Dance
0185 S. Holmesville Rd.
LaPorte, IN 46350

Teachers Groups



Scout Leaders

Free Environmental Education Programs are offered to groups throughout the year. The programs last one hour or longer depending on the group size and age. Programs can be scheduled at Creek Ridge Park, Luhr Park, Bluhm Park or Red Mill Park. Call the Nature Center at 324-5855 for information or to make reservations.

Free Trapper Ed

April 9th
 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
 Red Mill County Park
 No fee, but pre-registrations is required. Lunch will be provided.
 Call (219) 369-9302 or (219)785-2972 to register.

Morel Mushroom Hunt

April 30th
 Luhr County Park
 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

May 7th
 Red Mill County Park
 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

May 14th
 Bluhm County Park
 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.



Participants will learn to identify morel mushrooms and go on a hike through the park in search of them. Be prepared to walk off the trail and possibly taste some cooked mushrooms.



Beginning Birding

March 26th
 10:00a.m. - 2:00p.m.
 Red Mill County Park
 The Audubon Society will be doing a Birding Basics program. The program includes hikes, slides, discussions, and lunch.

Bluhm No Leash Dog Facility Clean Up and Craft Fun

April 9th
 Bluhm County Park
 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 am
 Bring your gloves and dog to help give the area a good spring-cleaning. The Parks Department and Small Animal Shelter will provide refreshments for you and your pets. Participants will also make a doggie picture frame.

Free Hunter Education

April 11, 12, 14
 6:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.
 Red Mill County Park
 Pat Smith Hall
 This course is co-sponsored by the LaPorte County Parks. Pre- Registration is required. **You must attend all three nights to graduate.**
 For information or to register call: (219) 873-7014 ext. 223 or (219) 325-8315



Perennial Peggy's Potpourri

April 3rd
 Luhr Park Nature Center
 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.
 Join Perennial Peggy in making Hanging Decorated Garden Glove. This program is geared to an adult audience and has a \$2.00 fee. *Participants need to bring a variety of preserved greens and small silk or parchment roses.* Pre-registration is required. Call 325-8315 to register.

May 15th
 Luhr Park Nature Center
 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.
 Join Perennial Peggy in making a Decorated Garden Hose Wreath. This program is geared to an adult audience. *Participants need to bring 12 1/2 feet of garden hose (at time of registration, please indicate if you have garden hose or if you NEED garden hose), greenery / flowers to decorate 16" wreath and ribbon for large bow..* Pre-registration is required. Call 325-8315 to register.

Adopt-A-Trail

LaPorte County Parks had nearly 10 miles of trails before the introduction of Red Mill County Park. Red Mill will add many more miles of trails. The Parks Department takes a lot of pride in the quality of these trails. Thousands of visitors each year venture through woods, wetlands, and over water on park trails. Trails range from paved to wood-chipped and are used for biking to hiking.

An Adopt-A-Trail program has been created within the LaPorte County Parks Volunteer Program.

Individuals, groups, and families can adopt a trail at any of the LaPorte County Parks. Adopt-A-Trail (AAT) parents and families can volunteer their time to help take care of a trail of their choice. Duties include hiking the trail twice a month and cleaning up litter or debris from the trail. AAT volunteers will also help notify park staff of problems that need to be attended to in order to maintain safe trails.

LaPorte County Parks Department is looking for dedicated groups

or individuals who will adopt one of the many trails in the parks. AAT volunteers are important in the continuing efforts to offer high quality trails to visitors of the LaPorte County Parks. For more information on how you can become an Adopt-A-Trail Parent, contact Ranger Bob Bulger at Luhr County Park Nature Center (219) 324-5855 or (219) 873-7014 ext 599.



Snakes in Site

Luhr County Park Nature Center
May 21st
11:00 am to 12:00 pm.

The guest speakers from Hoosier Reptiles will discuss many types of snakes from this area and afar and have some live ones for you to see. Participants will also get a chance to touch a non-poisonous snake. The LaPorte County Library's Book Mobile will also be at present with some great nature books.

Kids Fishing Fun Day



Free Program

June 11th

9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Luhr County Park

All Ages

Children must be accompanied by an adult. A limited amount of bait and poles will be available during the program. Photos will be taken of the first three fish caught in certain age groups.

Co-Sponsored by the Northwest Indiana Steelheaders.



Conservation Challenge

The Conservation Challenge is an opportunity for visitors of parks located in LaPorte County to get recognition for their support and love of nature. For more information on how to participate in the Conservation Challenge, contact Luhr County Park Nature Center (219) 324-5855 or (219) 873-7014 ext 599 or go to our Conservation Challenge website at www.laportecountyparks.org/challenge.html to get info on the program and print out the Conservation Challenge Checkpoints list.



Bike Safety and Door Bike Ride

June 4th at Kesling Park
8:00 Registration for Door Bike Ride
9:00 a.m. Door Bike Ride begins
9:30 a.m. Bike Rodeo Begins

4th Annual Spring Ride and Kids' Bike Safety Rodeo. Children learn safe and legal bike riding through riding activities. Children must bring their own working bike and safety equipment, including helmet. Prizes will be given to all participants.

Riverwatch

June 25th
Creek Ridge County Park
(meet by Trail Creek trail sign)
9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Come learn about which creatures live in the County Parks' waterways. Participants will be using nets to explore, so be prepared to get wet.



Summer Programs

(see enclosed brochure or visit our web page at www.laportecountyparks.org, print off the web registration form and receive a \$2.00 discount off the total) The Parks Department is offering a wide variety of Summer Programs this year. This includes our popular Parent / Child Discovery Days, Wednesday Wonders, and Tuesday Treasures programs. All programs include arts and crafts, games, a snack, and hands-on activities. Call (219) 324-5855, (219) 325-8315 or (219) 873-7014 ext. 223 for more information.

Dates To Remember

March

Spring Begins- 20th
 Good Friday (Nature Center Closed)- 25th
 Beginning Birding- Red Mill 26th
 Easter (Nature Center Closed)- 27th



April

Daylight Savings Begins-- 3rd
 Perennial Peggy's Potpourri- Luhr 3rd
 Trapper Ed- Red Mill 9th
 Dog Facility Clean Up- Bluhm 9th
 Hunter Ed.- Red Mill 11th, 12th, 14th
 Earth Day Dance -Red Mill 16th
 Administrative Professionals Day- 27th
 Special Friends Day- Luhr 29th
 Morel Hunt- Luhr 30th

May

Mothers Day- 8th
 SWCD Field Days - Luhr 2nd-6th
 Morel Hunt- Red Mill 7th
 Morel Hunt- Bluhm 14th
 Perennial Peggy's Potpourri- Luhr 15th
 Snakes In Site- Luhr 21st
 Memorial Day- 30th



June

Bike Safety and Door Ride- Kesling 4th
 Fishing Fun Day- Luhr 11th
 Fathers Day- 19th
 Summer Programs begin - 20th
 Summer Begins- 21st
 River Watch- Creek Ridge 25th
 Summer Programs begin - 20th



On The Wild Side

**2005 EEAI Conference
 Red Mill County Park
 October 7-9, 2005**



**Visit www.eeai.org
 for registration
 information.**

Important Dates in History

April 3, 1860 --First Pony Express service began.
 April 6, 1909 --Robert Peary reached what he claimed to be the North Pole.
 May 14, 1804 --Lewis and Clark began trip up Missouri River.
 May 30, 1498 --Christopher Columbus began his third voyage.
 June 30, 1906 --Federal Food and Drugs Act of the United States became law.

The LaPorte County Parks Department is looking for Naturally Speaking sponsors. This publication is mailed to 2000 individuals four times a year. It is also distributed at the County Parks and during park programs. This newsletter is done "in house," and the Parks Department is looking for sponsors to offset the costs. This could be a great way for your organization to advertise and help support the LaPorte County Parks!



Advertising packages are as follows:

One issue with one 1/8 page (business card) size ad is \$75.00.

One issue with one 1/4 page ad is \$125.00.

Four or more issues with one 1/8 page business card size ad are \$50.00 per issue, a savings of \$25.00 per issue.

Four or more issues with one 1/4 page ad are \$100.00 per issue, a savings of \$25.00 per issue.

Contact Niki Schmutte or Bob Bulger, at (219) 324-5855 or (219) 873-7014 Ext 599, if you are interested in an advertising package.

Donating Funds to the LaPorte County Parks

Nature gives us a variety of delights. There are two ways to give back to nature; through the Park Foundation or by becoming a Friend of the LaPorte County Parks. Money donated to the Park Foundation will be used for park improvements and land acquisitions. If you become a Friend of the Parks, your donation will go toward park programs and environmental education. We appreciate your support and want you to decide how your funds will help the LaPorte County Parks. Please put a mark next to the fund you want your donation to be directed to.

Name _____ Foundation or Friend

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

If donating to the Park Foundation: Please make checks payable to: LaPorte County Park Foundation

If becoming a Friend of the LaPorte County Parks: Make checks payable to: LaPorte County Parks

Enclosed is:

- _____ \$30.00 Individual
- _____ \$100.00 Organization
- _____ \$1,000.00 Benefactor
- _____ Other

Mail donations to:
 LaPorte County Parks
 0185 S. Holmesville Rd.
 LaPorte, Indiana 46350

Enclosed is:

- _____ \$5.00 Contributing
- _____ \$20.00 Supporting
- _____ \$50.00 Benefactor
- _____ Other

Luhr Park Nature Center Hours

Winter Hours
November - February
Saturday and Sunday
12:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Summer Hours
March - October
Wednesday - Sunday
12:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Regulations of the U.S. Department of Interior strictly prohibit unlawful discrimination in departmental programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, or disability. Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility; or who desires further information regarding Title VI or Public Law 101-336 Title II should Write:

LaPorte County Parks
Attn: Superintendent
0185 S. Holmesville Rd.
LaPorte, IN 46350

National Park Service
Attn.: Director Equal
Opportunity Program
P.O. Box 37127
Washington, D.C.
20013-7127

□ www.laportecountyparks.org □

Information for this Naturally Speaking was gathered from:
The Internet
World Book 1998 Encyclopedias
Nature Smart
Peterson Field Guides

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LaPorte, IN
46350
Permit No. 70

LaPorte County Parks
Administrative Offices
Red Mill County Park
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