



## HortusScope | What's Up in the Central Indiana

Gardening Community | Photo by Brenten Reust

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**Through January 3 Winterlights at Newfields** The magic returns for the fourth year! Experience the wonder of over a million and a half lights glittering on one-hundred-year-old trees in the historic garden. Old favorites return, including Landscape of Light dancing to the Nutcracker with the historic Lilly House as the backdrop. Don't get left in the dark! Tickets are limited this year and some nights and ticket times are already sold out. Members: Adults \$20 • Youth \$13 • Children 5 and Under Free • Access Pass \$2. Public: Adults \$25 • Youth \$17 • Children 5 and Under Free. Details at <https://discovernewfields.org/calendar/winterlights-2020>.

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**Saturday, January 30 Virtual Indiana Wildlife Conference** Hear from National Wildlife Federation's President and CEO Collin O'Mara on a path forward for wildlife conservation in 2021. We'll also hear from the new DNR Division of Fish and Wildlife Director, Amanda Wuestefeld, on the Grasslands for Gamebirds and Songbirds program. Join us for organizational updates, silent auction, conservation awards, and more. Fee \$25. 9:30 to 11:00 a.m. [Register](#)

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**Plant Natives! Homegrown National Park** “In the past, we have asked one thing of our gardens: that they be pretty. Now they have to support life, sequester carbon, feed pollinators and manage water.” So says Doug Tallamy, whose latest book, *Nature's Best Hope: A New Approach to Conservation that Starts in Your Yard*, outlines a grassroots approach to conservation that homeowners everywhere can participate in. Relying on the initiatives of private individuals, this approach is immune from the whims of government policy, and it's practical, effective, and easy. The book makes a marvelous gift for any gardener. Learn more at [HomegrownNationalPark.com](http://HomegrownNationalPark.com).

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**Recording Seasonal Changes Expanding Phenology Trails in Indiana** Indiana Phenology needs data to effectively anticipate, mitigate, and adapt to climate change. With our Environmental Science Challenge Grant approved, we are raising matching funds to create three new public observation sites and double our annual observations. Indiana Phenology is on a mission to document seasonal changes in plants and animals in every county in Indiana. By documenting observations, citizen scientists like you contribute to a nationwide database and expose the local impact of environmental change. Data collected can inform management decisions and legislative action. Visit <https://experiment.com/projects/seasonal-patterns-in-indiana-plants> to learn more.

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**Weather Observations Central Indiana Gardening Almanac** Bill “The Mad Botanist” has tasked himself with providing an historical account of important statistics and events that relate

to gardening. Occasionally he notes an upcoming event that is certain or at least strongly suspected to occur but does not go in for long-term weather prediction as that is “malarky.” Find the Almanac and Bill’s informative Garden Rants at <https://www.themadbotanist.com/>.

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**Trek Our Trails! Central Indiana Land Trust Challenge** Visit all five of the Trust’s most popular nature preserves over the coming year and inspire others by sharing that you did it. The preserves are [Burnett Woods](#), [Fred and Dorothy Meyer Nature Preserve](#), [Laura Hare Preserve at Blossom Hollow](#) (closed through December 4 for dear control), [Meltzer Woods](#), and [Nonie Werbe Krauss Nature Preserve](#). More about how to participate [here](#).

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**Wildflower Hikes Best Places to Find Native Plants in Indiana** Indiana Native Plant Society President Ellen Jacquart has picked the very best places to see Indiana native plants in spring, summer, fall, and winter. She gave this presentation at the INPS Virtual Annual Meeting on November 14, 2020. It’s a brisk hike through 20 of Indiana’s beautiful natural areas and covers a mix of geography, plant communities, terrain, and seasons. All these sites are open to the public, and all but one have trails. View the presentation at <https://indiananativeplants.org/2020/best-places-to-find-native-plants-in-indiana/>.

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**Good Reads Interviews with Hoosier Environmental Leaders** Just discovered this series written by Ben Valentine at NUVO. Says Ben, “When I was a young boy, eastern Indiana’s White River (East Fork) was where I felt most at home. Although I splashed and played in and around its waters, it never occurred to me to call this “nature” because that word always felt reserved for someplace out there — someplace big, and distant from people and homes and the endless acres of soy and corn that surrounded me—maybe the Rockies, or a remote jungle far, far away. I’ve traveled through the glaciers of Alaska and Iceland, to the jungles of Cambodia; from the Serengeti through northern China, and somehow find myself back home, in Indiana. Here, in the heart of the Midwest you find a diverse ecology of prairie and old growth forest largely gone, but not completely. Our cities and homes are full of nature, too, and Indiana has its very own ecology and geology that demands that we be good stewards of our home. To have a healthy place to live and play, we must learn to live within its contours.” Find Ben’s interviews [here](#), and please subscribe to NUVO to keep local journalism alive.

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**Web Tools from INPS Toward a Native Plant Friendly HOA** Thanks to Indiana Native Plant Society member Mary Durkin, we have a blueprint for how to persuade your homeowners association to be more native plant friendly. Mary has shared her experience overcoming such challenges as establishing credibility, budget concerns, and residents’ objections. With her condo board she has established best practices that help in selecting landscape maintenance contractors. <https://indiananativeplants.org/toward-a-more-native-plant-friendly-hoa/>

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**Travel Garden and Nature Tours with C. Colston Burrell** Experience nature’s beauty and diversity in designed and native landscapes with C. Colston Burrell, who offers personalized leisure tours to exceptional gardens and natural areas around the globe. 2021 Tours: March, Chile’s Gardens and Glaciers; June: Secret Gardens of Santa Fe; October: Gardens and National Parks of New Zealand. <https://gardenandnaturetours.com/>

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**Photo Notes** December at last. What a memorable and awful year this has been! What's kept me going is getting to know—and like—new people who share my interest in landscaping with native plants (via Zoom); holding biweekly chat sessions with my far-flung family (via Zoom); AND gardening my heart out in my own yard. The sweet routine tasks of weeding, deadheading, watering, cutting back all kept me grounded when my head threatened to explode. I wish all of you a peaceful, safe holiday and happy thoughts of what projects come next in your own yard.

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**HortusScope**, an e-bulletin for the Central Indiana gardening community, is published the first of every month as a public service by Wendy Ford. To submit news items, add or update your e-mail address, or remove your name from the HortusScope e-mail list, please drop me a note at [hortusscope@comcast.net](mailto:hortusscope@comcast.net). Your supporting donation cheerfully accepted at 6911 Cabernet Way, Indianapolis, IN 46278, check made out to Wendy Ford. *Thank you, Peggy Hall and Shirley Fry, for your generous support of HortusScope.*