



HortusScope | What's Up in the Central Indiana

Gardening Community | Photo by Big Sue Arnold

Happy New Year, dear reader! Welcome to our sixteenth year of posting news and events for the Central Indiana gardening community. HortusScope now has more than 1500 subscribers! Please continue to send me details of your gardening events and environmental efforts, and let's roll up our sleeves to make this a fruitful and satisfying year.

Friday, January 1 First Day Hike on New Year's Day Welcome 2021 with an Indiana DNR tradition. First Day Hikes are a healthy way to start the new year and provide a chance to get outside, exercise, and enjoy nature. These hikes have become a tradition for thousands of Hoosiers. This year, in response to the need to practice social distancing and keep group sizes to those within your personal "bubble," the DNR has created hiking opportunities that allow you to be your own tour guide. [Learn more](#)

Through January 3 Winterlights at Newfields The magic continues! 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>.

Tuesday, January 12 Good Bug, Bad Bug? Native Plant Gardening and Reducing Pesticide Risk Indiana Native Plant Society's Central Chapter introduces Stephanie Frischie from the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation. She will give a Zoom presentation on gardening with native plants for pollinators. Starting with an overview of planning, creating, and managing native plants the landscape, Stephanie will also present the associated insects, microbes, and ecological relationships the native plant gardener can expect and look forward to experiencing. She will cover how to reduce the risks and use of pesticides to support life-friendly habitat and beauty around our homes and communities. The virtual meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m. Register at <https://bit.ly/3opcCAq>

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](#)

Advocacy Opp Wilderness and Greenways Expansion The pandemic of 2020 has led to a tremendous increase in people being outdoors. Hoosier Environmental Council is “meeting the moment” by seeking to make sure the outdoor recreation job sector thrives and vulnerable habitats for our native wildlife are protected. Over the course of 2020, among other actions HEC helped facilitate the significant expansion of the coalition opposed to the Mid-States Highway Project, which would threaten forests, including the Hoosier National Forest and the unique Lost River Karst area; served as the informal convener of a broad array of groups united in pursuit of greater funding for open space protection; and expanded the number of organizations, citizens, and landowners in support of a greenbelt and linear park along the White River, called the Mounds Greenway. HEC is urging citizens to ask their legislators to consider sponsoring a bill that would establish a first-ever terrestrial carbon sequestration program in Indiana, helping to create a new mechanism to protect Indiana’s precious open spaces. You can learn more about HEC’s open space legislation at [Bill Watch 2021](#) and by viewing [testimony](#) from the fall. Learn about the overarching issue on HEC’s [Wilderness and Greenways Expansion page](#).

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*, 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. Kick off the new year with this inspiring read. Learn more at [HomegrownNationalPark.com](#).

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.

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/>.

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](#), [Meltzer Woods](#), and [Nonie Werbe Krauss Nature Preserve](#). More about how to participate [here](#).

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/>.

Good Reads Interviews with Hoosier Environmental Leaders This fine series written by Ben Valentine at NUVO, this week features an interview with Ellen Jacquart, president of the Indiana Native Plant Society. Find Ben's interviews [here](#), and please subscribe to NUVO to keep local journalism alive.

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/>

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/>

Photo Notes I'm seeing a lot of beautiful sunset photos on Facebook these days. Mesmerized by Nature's majesty, I'm encouraged to see in them the big picture behind the daily woes of this awful year. These things I know: The pandemic will pass, the sun will rise and set, we'll make plans, God will laugh. Whatever happens, Nature will be there to nurture and soothe us, provided we take proper care of her. Happy New Year, fellow gardeners. May your winter dreams be full of summer flowers and gorgeous sunsets.

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. Your supporting donation cheerfully accepted at 6911 Cabernet Way, Indianapolis, IN 46278, check made out to Wendy Ford.

Thank you, Jim Kincannon, Anne Jay, and Bill “The Mad Botanist” McKnight, for your generous support of HortusScope.