



HortusScope | What's Up in the Central Indiana

Gardening Community | [Illustration courtesy of englezadenota10.wordpress.com](https://englezadenota10.wordpress.com)

Still Urgent! Ask Your Legislator to Oppose Senate Bill 389 This bill would remove protections from 80 to 90 percent of our remaining state wetlands. (Indiana has already lost 85 percent of its original wetlands.) If passed, critical isolated wetland habitats in Indiana will have neither Federal nor State protection. Wetlands are among the world's most productive ecosystems, comparable to rain forests and coral reefs. In Indiana, more than 60 wetland-dependent animal species are of special conservation concern, while more than 120 species of wetland plants in Indiana are considered endangered, threatened, or rare. The Indiana Native Plant Society (INPS) estimates that over one third of Indiana's flora, an estimated 888 species, grow in wetlands, showing the critical importance of this habitat. Wetlands also play a vital role in floodwater storage, protecting human health and safety and reducing costs associated with flood damage and stormwater management. Join INPS, Indiana Wildlife Federation, Central Indiana Land Trust, and Hoosier Environmental Council in this urgent call to action. **Call your state representative and just say "Oppose SB 389."**

Tuesday, March 2 Orchids of Indiana with Mike Homoya Did you know orchids occur on all continents except Antarctica? The orchid family is considered by many to have a greater number of species than all other plant families. To the surprise of many, Indiana has over 45 naturally occurring species. This presentation will look at a selection of them and discuss their occurrence in the state. Michael Homoya served as Botanist/Plant Ecologist for the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of Nature Preserves for 37 years before retiring in 2019. He has written more than 75 scientific papers, popular articles, and books about Indiana's natural features, including *Orchids of Indiana*, *Wildflowers and Ferns of Indiana Forests: A Field Guide*, *Wake Up, Woods*, and *Wildflowers of the Midwest* (in press). He is a board member and past president of Indiana Native Plant Society. Sponsored by INPS Central Chapter. 7:00 p.m. Register for the event here: <https://bit.ly/3brqIn6>. A link will be sent out prior to the event.

Saturday, March 13 Nationwide Day of Action for Bee-Safe Plants The Xerces Society has organized this nationwide effort to tell garden centers and nurseries that we want plants free of pesticides that might harm pollinators. Sign up for this Nationwide Day of Action and make a commitment to go visit or call or write to your local garden center or nursery, to ask for plants free of pesticides that could hurt pollinators. For talking points and questions, see the fact

sheet [Buying Bee-Safe Plants](#) and its companion guide, [Offering Bee-Safe Plants: A Guide for Nurseries](#), which explains pollinator-friendly production practices. A second Day of Action is scheduled for Thursday, April 22 (Earth Day). Sign up [here](#).

Tuesday, March 30 Ferns of Indiana with Mike Homoya Ferns are plants without flowers, but what they lack in floral beauty they make up with fancy leaves. They occur in a variety of habitats, including some of driest and wettest habitats in the state. Homoya will discuss many of the state's species, including some which aren't so "fancy." 7:00 p.m. Register at <https://bit.ly/3nAJIwj>. A link will be sent out prior to the event.

Get on the Map! Homegrown National Park™ Doug Tallamy's 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. When you've planted some native plants, add your property to the national map of the growing Homegrown National Park™. Learn more at HomegrownNationalPark.org.

Classes with the Mad Botanist This year Bill's doubling up—doing two classes per month rather than one. The first class (March 7) is on ID of leafless woody plants. The next class is on gymnosperms and conifers. Please check CLASS on Bill's website (themadbotanist.com) for particulars.

Uh oh! Periodical Cicadas in Indiana Purdue Landscape Report tells us what to look forward to when "millions of screaming cicadas" boil up out of the ground this spring. Many of our native ornamental trees may be targeted by females laying eggs in their twigs. Purdue's advice: "When possible, avoid planting new trees during the spring that cicadas will emerge. This could be especially helpful in fruit orchards or woody plant nurseries. Also, delay pruning until the cicadas have disappeared. The injured branches can then be removed after cicadas have stopped flying. You can protect small ornamental trees and shrubs with no larger than 3/8" mesh screening while cicadas are present.

<https://www.purduelandscapereport.org/resource/periodical-cicada-in-indiana/>

New Podcast Midwestoration Podcaster Freya Burntson is "a practitioner of ecological restoration with a Master of Natural Resource Stewardship degree and boundless curiosity for the natural world. After working in a variety of non-profit, for-profit and government settings, I understand that there are countless components to the complexity involved in ecological restoration. One of the most important elements in this profession is communicating what we do to other practitioners as well as folks outside the field. I want to encourage that conversation and that is why I've created Midwestoration." Every episode features a place, a person, and their unique approaches to the complicated ecological restoration challenges they face every day. www.midwestoration.com



Cool! Xerces Society Pollinator Habitat Sign If you have created or care for habitat in your yard or community, sign the [Pollinator Protection Pledge](#) and donate to the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation to receive your sign today! Signs are available in our online [Gift Center](#) for a minimum tax-deductible donation of \$57.

Shop Without the Waste Loop Comes to Indiana Our addiction to single-use packaging has resulted in a lot of unintended consequences. Most products and packaging sold today are designed for a single use, and because they are not always accepted by public recycling systems, they end up in our landfills (or worse, our oceans). Meet Loop, a new way to shop for favorite products without the waste. Imagine zero-waste versions of everyday essentials from your favorite brands. You pay a temporary deposit to borrow the product's packaging, and when you're done with the contents Loop professionally cleans and reuses it. What a concept. <https://loopstore.com/>

Plant Shopping! Native Plant Kits and Rain Barrels Hamilton County Soil and Water Conservation District has all the tools you need to conserve water and support pollinators like bees and butterflies with beautiful native plants. Native plant kits take the guesswork out of plant selection by providing a set of plants that will be perfect for your yard. Each native plant kit contains 50 native plant plugs for \$125. There is a kit for all areas of your yard including pollinator, rain (for wetter areas), prairie, and shade garden. Each kit contains 10 species of native perennials and can fill a space 50 to 150 square feet. Rain barrels are also available for pre-order for \$75. These re-purposed 55-gallon barrels capture rainwater from your downspout and roof and hold it for later use to water plants and gardens or even wash the car. In peak summer months, a rain barrel can save around 1,300 gallons of free, naturally soft water for your use. Pre-pay for your barrel and choose between grey, terra cotta, and black. Diverter systems for easily installation are also available for \$25 and wooden pedestal stands are available for \$30. Plant kit orders are **due April 14**; and rain barrel pre-orders are **due May 26** at www.hamiltonswcd.org. Orders will be available for pick up on Friday, June 4, in Noblesville. Proceeds support conservation projects and education in Hamilton County. Questions can be directed to Claire Lane at claire.lane@hamiltoncounty.in.gov or 317-773-2181. ** Carmel residents are eligible for a \$50-\$75 rebate from the City Stormwater Program after installing a rain barrel. The SWCD can provide an application for this program at the barrel pick up event.**

Plant Shopping! Buy Natives Directory Indiana Native Plant Society makes it easy for you to locate native plants for sale. Our interactive Buy Natives Directory lets you find sellers and designers near you who offer native plants and do not use or sell invasive plants. A new URL takes you there directly: www.BuyIndianaNatives.org

Volunteer Opp Weed Wrangle® Indiana is part of a national movement to highlight the importance of managing invasive species and celebrate our native plant communities. Each event is a hands-on opportunity to learn invasive species identification and management techniques to support native plants, pollinators, birds, and other wildlife that require healthy green spaces. By engaging our community, we strive to build a sustainable network dedicated

to keep areas free of invasive plants. These opportunities are promoted by Southern Indiana Cooperative Invasives Management through the Indiana Invasives Initiative project. Visit the Weed Wrangle® Indiana page to find events in your area: sicim.info/weed-wrangle-indiana

Citizen Science Recording Seasonal Changes 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.

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. Join her for a brisk virtual hike through 20 of Indiana's beautiful natural areas covering 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/>.

Interviews Hoosier Environmental Leaders A fine series written by Ben Valentine at NUVO. Find Ben's interviews [here](#), and please subscribe to NUVO to keep local journalism alive.

Webinars Missouri Prairie Foundation & Grow Native! MPF announces a new series of virtual learning opportunities with webinars and master classes planned through March of 2021. Every Wednesday at 4:00 p.m., participants can learn from a variety of speakers on topics such as native edibles, designing with native plants, building a bird sanctuary, and many others. Speakers include prairie and native plant experts from across the Midwest, including Scott Woodbury of Shaw Nature Reserve, authors Alan Branhagen and Heather Holm, Dr. Nadia Navarrete-Tindall of Lincoln University, and more. <https://grownative.org/2020/12/15/webinars-and-master-classes-for-the-new-year/>

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 The snowdrop—referring to an earring, not a drop of snow—brings Spring's message of love and hope for balmy days ahead. From a Romanian blogger, we learn that the

snowdrop is closely linked to Martisor, a spring festival where everyone offers their friends a necklace or bracelet of twisted red and white strands. You have to wear it until you see a stork, then you can take it off and hang it up on a tree. This tradition will bring you luck all year long. Who knew?

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.