

# Acres of ACRES to Treasure!

**JASON KISSEL, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**  
ACRES Land Trust, Inc.

ACRES Land Trust has been preserving natural areas in northeast Indiana since 1960, preserving over 4300 acres in total, including over 800 acres in Noble County. The Noble County nature preserves listed below are open to the public daily from dawn to dusk and have maintained parking lots and trail systems. The preserves are available for hiking, bird watching, photography, and general nature enjoyment. See pages 20-21 — for directions.



preserve. It has a variety of habitats, swamp forest with cottonwood and sycamore trees, upland forest with oaks and hickories, a small lake, a length of shore along the Elkhart River and areas of low wetlands. Birds and wildflowers are diverse and abundant. Wood ducks, mallards, other ducks and coots have been seen on the water; great blue and green herons wade along the shores and woodland birds among the trees. Cardinal flowers, marsh marigolds, blue flag and marsh mallow are a few of the flowers that bloom here. There are two trail access points, one from the IDNR Public Access Site on the north branch of the Elkhart River, and a trailhead off Eagle Island Rd.

## Lloyd W. Bender Memorial Forest - Albion, IN

You enter this 116-acre preserve on a short boardwalk in a wetland, go uphill, then down, then up, then down again traversing wetland forest, upland forest, and area of forested flood plain of the Little Elkhart River called "the spreads". The trail will also lead you through a sedge meadow. The variety of habitats is more than matched by the variety of trees, birds and wildflowers. There are burr oaks, white oaks, hickories, swamp white oaks, red elms, black willows, green and black ash, cottonwoods and red maples. Plants include royal and cinnamon fern - which can be seen as large as six feet tall within this preserve.

## Detering Nature Preserve - Kendallville, IN

In the past this preserve served as a "Green Grocer" farm where vegetables were grown and sold to people of Kendallville and the area around. Now trees, including many redbuds, grow where corn and beans and other produce once grew. Round Lake forms a wetlands boundary along the northeast part of the preserve. Plants, in addition to the trees, include shrubby cinquefoil, red osier dogwood, wild iris, cattails and sedges. Birds are as varied as the plants and deer are seen frequently.

ACRES continues to preserve land in Noble County and as of this printing, are closing on two additional nature preserves within the County. To learn more about ACRES and how you can get involved, visit their website at [www.acreslandtrust.org](http://www.acreslandtrust.org), or call their office at (260) 637-2773. ACRES is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to preserving natural areas.

## Edna Spurgeon Nature Preserve - Ligonier, IN

This 65-acre preserve was ACRES' first acquisition in 1961 - a gift from Edna W. Spurgeon. The property contains an area of low ridges or kames left by glaciers and cut by glacial melt water. The locals refer to this area as "The Knobs". As you travel along the 1.2 mile loop trail, you will discover a climax forest of beech, sugar maple, and tulip poplar trees that are among the largest in the state. Visitors are amazed at the blanket of wildflowers that are present within this preserve from mid April through the summer. Blue-eyed Mary, bloodroot, hepatica, celandine poppy, Dutchman's breeches and squirrel corn are present in great abundance.

## Lonidaw Nature Preserve - Kendallville, IN

Lonidaw is a Native American name meaning Spirit Queen of the Woods. The wife of Potawatomi Chief Simon Pokagon, bore the name. This 25-acre preserve is known for its trillium display that typically is at peak near May 1st. The preserve also contains a kettle lake along with numerous birds and other wildlife. The one mile trail leads you through beech and maple trees on the high ground and sugar maple, red elm, walnut and hackberry on the lower ground.

## Art Hammer Wetlands - Rome City, IN

At 373 acres, the Art Hammer Wetlands is ACRES' largest

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