



Indiana Wildlife Federation's Annual Conference was on January 18th. We had such a big crowd last year that we had to move to a bigger venue at The Garrison. The room was packed with conservationists from all over Indiana. Our lineup of speakers gave fascinating presentations on everything from birds to bobcats. Keynote Naomi Edelson underpinned the entire conference with the important message that we must take action in the face of the climate crisis. While we often spend a lot of time and energy discussing the facts and interpreting what the impacts of climate change will be on our wildlife and their habitats, a huge part of what our organization does is organize people into action so that we can do our part to mitigate the negative outcomes.

We use our Annual Conference as a way to bring together Hoosier conservationists and discuss the most important issues facing our wildlife, but we also strive to deliver important actions we can all take to protect our natural places. Our big push this year was Recovering America's Wildlife Act (RAWA), a financial opportunity for conservation that could be transformative for Indiana conservation.

Thank you to everyone who attended and a special welcome to those of you who joined our membership at the conference. Our organization is defined by our membership and it is through your dedication to conservation in Indiana that we are able to keep advocating for wildlife!

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Speaker Breakdown

Our day began with Ft. Harrison's Naturalist Dylan Allison giving us a tour of the fascinating history of the state park. We even had a few takers on a rainy day hike after the conference.

Keynote speaker Naomi Edelson (NWF) helped us better understand important legislation like RAWA and how we could participate to create sustainable funding for conservation in Indiana. Protecting nature transcends political divides that often separate us. Bi-partisan bills which protect our wildlife and natural resources have a very real chance of passing if we tell our representatives to support them.

Brad Feaster (DNR) helped us better understand how our DNR has developed a State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) to identify and prioritize our wildlife conservation efforts. The plan is massive in scale, but the goal of protecting our threatened and endangered wildlife is one we all share.

Barney Dunning (Purdue) covered research on what we can expect from our bird populations as our climate changes. We explored different emissions scenarios, but ultimately better understood why we need to take action now.

Adam Phelps (DNR) gave us a presentation on invasive Trumpeter Swans and what their population growth means for our native waterfowl.

Finally, Landon Jones (Purdue) presented on Indiana's bobcat population, explaining how data were collected and what the data mean for bobcats as they spread across the state.



▲ Photo, top to bottom: Brad Feaster, Naomi Edelson, and Barney Dunning

Thank you to our Fall Conference sponsors!



Letter from the Executive Director

Dear IWF members and friends,

Happy New Year! As we charge ahead into 2020, we are grateful for your support and the amazing momentum from the past year. Along with the support our members and partners across the state, our federation of course could not do the work that we do without the support of a talented board of directors.

Our board have varied professional backgrounds but all share a deep connection to wildlife and the outdoors. It is with their time and talents that we build the guiding vision and goals around our mission to promote the conservation of Indiana's natural resources.

We are excited to welcome 2 new board members:

Danny McNulty joined the board in September of 2019 and comes from a finance background. He is passionate about conservation and is an avid outdoorsman. Danny is working to engage conservation-minded Indiana businesses and organizations in IWF's efforts to protect our state's most precious natural assets.

IWF was also pleased to welcome Bekah Wuchner to the board in December of 2019 and brings an impressive marketing, social media, and grassroots organizing skillset to our organization. Bekah has been working with IWF for about a year by energizing a number of our public outreach and legislative action initiatives like our campaign to #StopAsianCarp.

We welcome Danny and Bekah to our team and look forward to the new energy and ideas they will generate. As we welcome these new faces, we also wish to recognize several long-serving board members for their incredible service and dedication to conservation in Indiana as they retire from their board seats.

Steve Mueller joined the board in 2013 and served most recently as the Vice President of the Board of Directors. Steve was actively engaged in monitoring fish and wildlife policy at the state level and was also a major champion of the Garden for Wildlife program. Steve and his wife Elizabeth helped Zionsville become the nation's second NWF Certified Community Wildlife Habitat and they maintain a stunning (and buzzing) wildlife habitat at their home. We are grateful that they will remain active volunteers (you'll find them handing out milkweed for Monarchs at the annual Zionsville ZGreenfest)!

Dr. David Hoffman joined the IWF board in 2007 and is an author, active bird watcher and sportsman. Dave has shared his love of the outdoors in his writing of *The Great Buck Caper* and *The Great Trophy Catch*. Dave served on the Policy Committee and brought a wealth of insight and critical thinking to a number of fish and wildlife policy battles and mitigation settlements. Dave and his wife Judy look forward to more travel and time with family.

Chuck Brinkman has served on the IWF board since 2006 and exhibits all the sign of a major fishing addiction. As an avid fisherman, Chuck has been a fierce defender of water quality across the state and is deeply engaged in water planning and policy both through his service on our board and the board of the Tippecanoe Watershed Foundation. Chuck also plays a major role on our conference planning team and habitat programs committee. Chuck and his wife Kathy look forward to spending time on the water with their family at Lake Wawasee.

Our organization exists because of the passion and dedication of people like this and their willingness to spend hundreds of hours writing letters, holding meetings, tabling events, leading workshops, planting trees, calling legislators, organizing conferences, stuffing envelopes and inspiring their friends and neighbors to do the same. We are truly grateful.

Yours in conservation,

Emily Wood, Executive Director



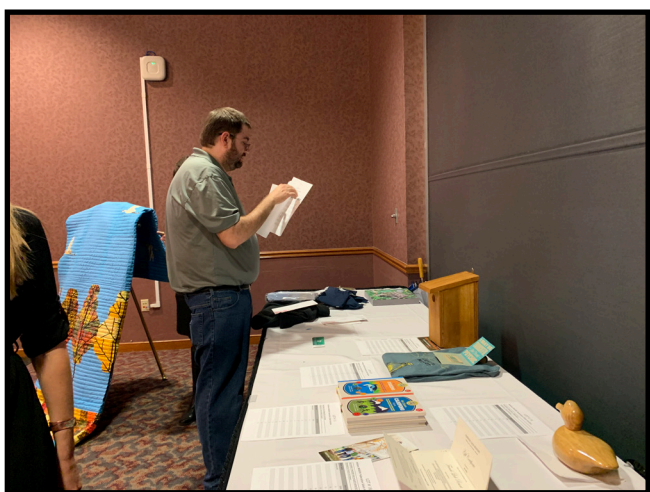
Annual Conference Photos



▲ Emily Wood (left) and Stacy Cachules (right) collecting co-sponsor cards for RAWA.



▲ RAWA co-sponsor cards to let Indiana legislators know we want to fund conservation.



▲ Ray Watkins, IWF volunteer extraordinaire, setting up our silent auction.



▲ Emily Wood accepting a monarch plushy as a thanks from NWF for supporting conservation.



▲ Our information and swag table run by Jenny Blake, Sustainable Trails Coordinator at IWF seen here practicing her prairie dog impersonation.



▲ Left to right; John Goss (IWF), Emily Wood (IWF), and Jordan Lubetkin (NWF) visiting IndyStar to discuss RAWA coverage.



Coyotes



Canis latrans

Once known as the prairie wolf, the coyote is native to Indiana and a member of the Canidae family. Long ago, they primarily existed in the prairie regions of the state, but due to human alteration of the land and the eradication of their wolf rival they have managed to successfully adapt in all regions of Indiana.

Adult coyotes weigh 30-50 lbs., have long slender snouts, pointed ears, and bushy tails, stand about 24 inches tall at the shoulder, and are approximately 4 feet long (tail included). They are often mistaken for a fox or a German Shepherd dog.



February is mating season for our state's largest carnivore. Coyotes are mostly monogamous and maintain pair bonds for several years. Litters, ranging from 4-9 pups, are born in early spring and remain with both parents for up to nine months or longer. Both parents raise their young with frequent help from older offspring. Coyotes dig their dens in rocky outcrops, thickets, and the dens of other animals. Their den is abandoned after the pups are weaned but may be reused in future years.

Coyotes are opportunistic feeders. This means that their diet entails of anything from small mammals, fruit, vegetables, carrion, pet and bird food, and even human garbage. A 2013-2016 study of 1400 samples of urban coyote scat (Chicago metro area) indicated their diet consisted of 42% rodent, 23% fruit, 22% deer, 18% rabbit, and 2% of human garbage. Only 1% contained evidence of cats. Feral cat deterrence by coyotes may have a positive impact on ecology as feral cats kill songbirds and coyotes do not, thus reducing the impact on our bird populations.

As coyotes travel for food, they utilize diverse spaces such as forests, fields, parks, golf courses, backyards, and urban developments. Contrary to popular belief, coyotes rarely hunt in packs unless the intended prey happens to be much larger. Coyotes are very vocal animals and they are known to have a varied range of calls. Depending on the context of the message, they consist of howls, yips, barks, growls, whines, whimpers, and high pitch barks.

Human and coyote conflict can exist when bird feeders, garbage, and pet food are left unsecured. To avoid such conflict, eliminate easily accessible food sources from your backyard. If you insist on feeding birds and squirrels, keep a watchful eye on what animals are actually visiting the feeders. If necessary, remove the feeders for a few weeks to discourage any unwanted guests. Feed pets indoors and secure livestock feed where it cannot be accessed by wildlife. Secure your compost/garbage by means of a tall fence, a wildlife proof container, or an electric fence. Do not let your pets roam free without proper supervision, especially in the evening hours. Secure vulnerable livestock pens, such as rabbits and poultry.

Humans and coyotes can coexist with education and responsible practices. Just merely seeing a coyote near an urban structure does not necessarily constitute a reason for fear or persecution. Take time to figure out why the coyote might be moving through the area and talk about it with your neighbors. By discouraging unwelcome coyote visits from your community, you will increase the odds that they will live natural lives and not become involved in conflicts with humans, domestic pets, or livestock.

IWF Bioblitz

On May 16th, IWF will be hosting our first ever bioblitz at Southwestway Park!

If you've never heard of a bioblitz before, it's a citizen science project led by experts and professional researchers in an effort to catalogue certain species at a location. We will be out pretty early in the year compared to most bioblitzes, but we're hoping that will allow us to document some species that are not as frequently seen as our charismatic summer butterflies and flowers. Our bioblitz will target ephemeral flowers, which only appear briefly in the spring, and the insects which pollinate them, as well as other species active early in the year. Hopefully, you will see some plants and animals you may not have noticed before.

The event will likely run from 9a - 3p with a lunch provided. Details on the event and a registration form will be made available soon on our website and social media.

Earth Day 2020

We're looking to get back to the heart of what Earth Day really means this year. We believe Earth Day is about giving back to the planet from which we take so much. That's why we want to get outside on Earth Day and make a positive impact.

We are planning an outdoor trail day with our members and friends so we can get our hands dirty and improve our shared nature spaces. We will have more details coming soon on our [events page](#) and social media.

Follow Us



Trails Projects

White Owl Work Day



IWF is more active now than ever before at our trail partners' sites, like our work day at the White Owl property with our friends at CILTI. We have a lot of work days planned for trail building, invasive removal, and cleanup. Subscribe to our newsletter or follow our [events page](#) for opportunities.

Educational Workshops



Spring is workshop season here at IWF! We'll be presenting all over Indiana, including at our newest Certified Sustainable Trail at Teter Organic Farm on March 5th from 1-2p.

If our Wildlife Habitat Workshop or Indiana's Wild Climate Workshop interest your group, send an email to info@indianawildlife.org

ADVERTISE HERE!

Does your business share the IWF vision of sustainable wildlife and wildlife habitats for Indiana? If your business would like to show its commitment to conservation and be highlighted for doing so through our communications and website, please contact us by e-mail at info@indianawildlife.org or by phone at 317-875-9453