



▲ Photo: Jenny Blake, IWF Sustainable Trails Coordinator

IWF Sustainable Trails Certification Program

Jenny Blake joined IWF in July of this year as the Sustainable Trails Coordinator. Although an Indiana native, Jenny ventured out west to pursue a degree in Park and Recreation Management at Northern Arizona University. She spent the next 13 years working as a U.S. Park Ranger for the National Park Service, specializing in bear management for many of those years. Jenny's Midwestern roots brought her back to Indiana where she is already working to improve existing trails through our sustainability initiative and create new trails Hoosiers have never seen before! Indiana lags behind our neighbors in the trail experience offered to residents. We hope to change that by creating new opportunities and convening current trail projects to make an even greater impact. If you love trails as much as we do, keep an eye on our website and newsletter as we work to connect people and habitats through sustainable trails! We're thrilled to have a new staff member and we hope you'll join us in welcoming Jenny aboard.

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We spent a beautiful July 27th morning at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College working along the newly certified Lake Le Fer Trail with St Mary alumni and United Way volunteers! With the invasive species gone, the banks of the lake need to be stabilized to prevent erosion. We started by spreading native seeds along the bare spaces on the bank. We mix fast-growing annual grasses with perennial flowers to provide immediate and long-term stability. Those plants will also enhance and create current habitat on the lake.

Our group also seeded a new prairie in a section of the campus which was no longer in use. The bare location will now provide quality habitat for pollinators and other Indiana wildlife.

The hard-working volunteers laid down erosion control mats made of natural fibers to keep the seeds in place to finish the day. Thanks to Duke Energy Foundation, this is one of many workdays to come where we will work with SMW College to enhance their already incredible campus!



▲ Photo: IWF, United Way, and Saint Mary-of-the-Woods volunteers



▲ Photo: Lake Le Fer

Letter from the Executive Director

Dear IWF Members, Partners, Volunteers and Friends –

For the August edition of our Hoosier Conservation Newsletter I will ask that you consider taking this Letter from the Executive Director, and turning it into a letter to your legislator. Currently, the United States Congress is on recess in Washington, D.C. and while many are concerned this is a vacation in the middle of several national crises' it can be an excellent opportunity to reach out to your legislators while they are at home in their districts.



The Recovering America's Wildlife Act (HR 3742) was reintroduced into the U.S. House of Representatives in July and now needs to gain bipartisan support. A letter to your district representative ([find your legislator](#)) could read:

Indiana holds a diverse array of fish and wildlife. However, while some species are thriving, others are declining—the result of habitat loss, invasive species, emerging diseases, extreme weather and other challenges. The Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) Division of Fish & Wildlife is concerned about a number of species from Monarch Butterflies to White-Tailed Deer. But the IDNR currently lacks the funds to stop the decline. The Recovering America's Wildlife Act, introduced by Representatives Debbie Dingell (D-MI) and Jeff Fortenberry (R-NE) will direct existing revenue towards state and tribal-led efforts to help wildlife species in decline. If it passes, Indiana could receive up to nearly \$20 Million annually—without any tax increases or new fees.

I hope that you and your Indiana's House colleagues on both sides of the aisle will champion this ground-breaking bill.

(Signed by YOU!)

If you are interested in learning more about Recovering America's Wildlife Act, [click here](#). You can also learn more about this landmark conservation legislation from Naomi Edelson, National Wildlife Federation's Senior Director of Wildlife Partnerships who will be the keynote speaker for our January 18, 2020 Indiana Wildlife Conference. Save the date now and stay tuned for updates and registration details!

Yours in conservation,
Emily Wood

Calendar Updates

**August 18 - Climate Presentation
to Indiana Native Plant Society**

**August 25 - BugFest at
Southeastway Park**

**September 11 - Monarch Tagging
with Indiana Native Plant Society**

**September 15 - Monarch Tagging
at Monarch Meadows with Oak
Heritage Conservancy**

**September 21 - Circle City CISMA
Weed Wrangle and Riverside Park**

**September 21 - Monarch Tagging on
Urban Wilderness Trail**

**September 27 - Trail building
day at Holliday Park**

**October 31 - Garden Clubs of
Indiana workshop**

**January 2020 - IWF Annual
Conference**

More on RAWA - The Recovering America's Wildlife Act ([H. R. 3742](#)) will provide states, territories, and tribes with annual funding to catalyze proactive, on-the-ground, collaborative efforts to restore essential habitat and implement key conservation strategies, as described in each state's Wildlife Action Plan. This legislation follows the recommendation of a diverse group of conservation and industry leaders—the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies' Blue Ribbon Panel on Sustaining America's Diverse Fish & Wildlife Resources.

- The House bill would provide \$1.4 billion in dedicated annual funding for proactive, collaborative efforts by the states and tribes to recover wildlife species at risk.
- The state agencies have identified 12,000 species of wildlife and plants in need of conservation assistance in their federally-approved State Wildlife Action Plans. These plans would guide spending from the bill.
- The Tribal Nations would receive \$97.5 million annually to fund proactive wildlife conservation efforts on the more than 140 million acres they manage.
- At least 10 percent of the resources would be used to recover species listed under the Endangered Species Act.
- A 2018 report, [Reversing America's Wildlife Crisis: Securing the Future of Our Fish and Wildlife](#), found that one-third of America's wildlife species are at increased risk of extinction. More than 150 U.S. species already have gone extinct. Nearly 500 additional species have not been seen in recent decades and are regarded as possibly extinct.

IWF Annual Conference

Our 2018 Annual Conference was a huge success! For our 2019 Annual Conference, we're hoping to bring even more conservationists together. In an effort to avoid competing with all the other events and activities which take place in spring and fall, we've decided to hold this conference on January 18, 2020 at Fort Harrison State Park. We will be hosting some fantastic speakers, engaging conservation activities, and running our silent auction again this time around.

Headlining the event will be Naomi Edelson. Naomi is the Senior Director for Wildlife Partnerships at National Wildlife Federation. She is leading NWF's campaign to secure greater funding to through efforts like RAWA and strengthen overall partnerships with state wildlife agencies. Joining Naomi on the agenda will be Brad Feaster, State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) Coordinator with Indiana DNR Division of Fish & Wildlife.

The theme of this conference focuses on the changing climate of Indiana. Barny Dunning, Professor of Wildlife Ecology at Purdue University, will talk about the results of Purdue's climate change modeling and the impacts of those changes on Indiana's wildlife.

Other speakers will include DNR wildlife biologist W. Adam Phelps, speaking on the comeback of the trumpeter swan to Indiana, IWF Executive Director Emily Wood, providing an update on IWF initiatives, and a speaker from Purdue discussing the results of a study of bobcat populations in Indiana.

More detailed information will be provided as we get closer to the date. We hope to see you there!



▲ Tagging and releasing monarch butterflies on the Urban Wilderness Trail

Monarch Tagging

Our award winning Monarch Tagging is back again in 2019! For three years, we have netted and tagged monarch butterflies as part of the Monarch Watch citizen science effort. If you have never participated before, this is a unique opportunity to get hands-on with the conservation of these incredible insects.

These migratory butterflies pass through Indiana on their way to Mexico in mid September. They can travel upwards of 100 miles a day at an altitude of thousands of feet. In the evening, they make their way down to rest and eat.

Urban Wilderness Trail - Hosted by Indiana Native Plant Society from 6:00pm - 7:30pm on September 11

Urban Wilderness Trail - From 6:00pm - 7:30pm on September 21

Monarch Meadows Nature Preserve - Hosted by Oak Heritage Conservancy from 6:30pm - 7:30pm on September 15 (rain date September 20)



Least Weasel



Meet the world's smallest carnivore

Weighing in at nearly as much as a golf ball and stretching out to the length of a pencil, the Least Weasel (*Mustela nivalis*) is a resident of Indiana. This fierce little hunter's slinky-like body is well-adapted to chase its prey down into tunnels below the ground. Because of their lightning speed, grace, and 34 razor-sharp teeth they are also equipped to flush out their target for an above ground attack. With an intense requirement to eat nearly half of their body weight per day, these weasels are on-the-go day and night. Although its diet consists largely of mice and voles, it can take on prey 5-10x its size! This includes frogs, birds, and even rabbits.



Do not mistake this bounding hunter as a rodent, for it is the smallest member of the weasel family and a true carnivore. Other animals in this family that also live in Indiana consist of the badger, mink, otter, and long-tailed weasel.

Least Weasels live in forests, grasslands, agricultural areas, pond edges, and anywhere their prey is abundant. Although the Least Weasel is a resident of our state, it is listed as a species of concern by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) with scarce documented encounters to support its whereabouts. It resides in abandoned (sometimes involuntarily by the former resident) chipmunk or vole burrows and therefore seldom seen.

Urban Leaders Fellowship

The Indiana Wildlife Federation had the pleasure of hosting a student from the Urban Leaders Fellowship Program this summer. The program is for highly accomplished students that are looking to accelerate their leadership through fellowship with a focus on policy and practice. During the program, fellows work half-time on high-level policy projects with an elected official (Indianapolis Mayor Joe Hogsett) and half-time alongside a local partner organization.

Our distinguished fellow, Eric Sutton III, holds B.A.s in International Politics & Economics, and Sociology from Kenyon College, as well as an M.A. in Education from Marian University. His project with IWF focused on producing 4 case studies that highlight the economic, health and social benefits of investing in conservation. The 4 properties that he studied were Pokagon State Park, Goose Pond Fish & Wildlife Area, the Monon Trail and both the Dunes national and state parks.

These study he performed will be used to persuade and compel the public, legislators and economic stakeholders, that investing in conservation strategies is the cornerstone of a healthy and vibrant Indiana economy.



▲ Left to right; Emily Wood, Eric Sutton, Aaron Stump, Jenny Blake

Native Plant Sale

Miss the spring sale?

If you weren't able to participate in our spring native plant sale, we have good news! IWF is now offering a fall window for ordering and receiving our native plant kits provided by Cardno Nursery.

Our trees and shrubs have always shipped in the fall, but now the full array of native plant kits, except shade kits, will be available for fall purchase.

We are often asked when is the best time to plant, divide, and transplant. While fall plantings won't provide that immediate satisfaction of seeing flowers in your garden, it's actually a better time to plant when considering the success of the plugs. Fall plantings require less water and won't have to endure the stress of a hot summer.

To download our order form, [click here](#) or go to indianawildlife.org/wildlife/native-plants/native-plant-sale/



▲ Photo: Bird and Butterfly Kit



Corporate Sponsorship for Conservation

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