

The Guardian Gazette

Newsletter of the Wildcat Guardians
Dedicated to the Health & Beauty of Wildcat Creek
December 2016

President's Report

Mary Rowe, President Wildcat Guardians

Greetings, Fellow Guardians and Friends,

Wildcat Guardians wrapped up year 26 (we were founded in 1990) with a celebration at the Legacy Barn located 6 miles west of Kokomo on Highway 22. Guests of Colin Craig in his restored, historic barn Guardians enjoyed an evening of chili and carried-in dishes topped off with musical entertainment by Dave Inskeep. A short business meeting and election of officers completed the evening. It was a worthy replacement for the annual picnic and paddle which had to be cancelled due to rainy weather.

It has been an honor and pleasure to serve as Guardian president for the past two years. Much has been accomplished with always more possibilities. Devastating tornadoes, a new public access, cleanups, canoe rides, Indiana's 200th birthday, all were part of the action. Many thanks and much appreciation to the officers I depended on and the entire membership for supporting and participating in the many activities of our full calendar.

It's with great anticipation that I turn over the reins of leadership to Garry Hill, the next Guardian President, along with an experienced and able group of officers. They include: Rick Parsons Vice President and Membership Chair, Dave Inskeep Secretary, and Mike Bach Treasurer. They will continue to move the organization forward through the opportunities and challenges of the coming year. Best wishes and God's blessings on each of you.

Guardians will be at Wild Indiana Expo at the Kokomo Events Center January 14 & 15. Stop by our table and renew both your membership and friendship. Garry Hill will again be a presenter, so make sure you take in his show. His tales of Wildcat Creek adventures are always fascinating. May the blessings of this holy season be yours, and best wishes for a new year filled with joy.

Mary

News from the Creek:

Very Important Opportunity to Volunteer at Adam's Mill from Gus Nyberg (Niches):

I will be hosting a workday in which we will be burning or at least attempting to burn the woody debris on top of the collapsed dam at Adams Mill on New Year's Eve Saturday Dec 31st. Workday starts at 11 A.M., but people can come anytime. I am planning to bring my boat and encourage others to do so as well. Once things are done I am planning on taking the loop at the oxbow. Paddlers and/ or workday workers both are more than welcome to join.

Any Questions Contact:

Gus Nyberg

Niches Land Trust: 765-423-1605

MANY WAITING TO SEE IF TRUMP FOLLOWS THROUGH ON ELIMINATING SOME CLEAN WATER REGULATIONS

By: Barbara Brosher, IPBS Reporter

December 9, 2016

INDIANAPOLIS – Hoosier farmers and environmentalists are waiting to see if President-elect Donald Trump will follow through on a campaign promise to eliminate some clean water regulations. Trump says he wants to do away with the revised “Waters of the U.S. Rule,” which dictates what waters the Environmental Protection Agency can regulate. But experts say it’s not that simple. Don Lamb is looking out over an empty field on his Boone County farm. He points to a narrow path in the middle that fills with water on rainy days. Lamb is worried about that area and the drainage ditches on his 8500-acre farm because of a revised rule the EPA implemented last year. The revised version of Waters of the U.S. is on hold as a challenge to the regulations makes its way through the court system. The rule expands the definition of waterways regulated by the EPA to include tributaries, which it defines as any waterway that has a bed, bank and high water mark. Lamb says that definition is broad, making it unclear what features on his farm would require permits. Lamb’s hoping president-elect Donald Trump will deliver on his promise to eliminate the rule. The Indiana Farm Bureau also wants to see changes to Waters of the U.S. But Director for State Government Relations Justin Schneider says it may not be as easy as Trump makes it sound. Schneider says there are three ways change could come about: the federal appeals court could rule on a case filed by Indiana and more than a dozen other states that challenge the rule. That court already placed a stay on the new interpretation of waters of the U.S. Congress could also take action. Or Trump could issue an executive order asking the EPA to withdraw the rule. Talk of doing away with the revised definition of Waters of the U.S. has environmental groups that support it worried. The EPA says it drafted the revised rule to improve and simplify the process of identifying waters protected under the Clean Water Act. Indra Frank is a policy advisor at the Hoosier Environmental Council. She says the rule isn’t a burden to farmers because it provides agricultural exemptions. And its focus is on keeping water clean by making sure water that flows into rivers and lakes meets certain standards. Back on the Lamb farm, Don points out a field full of cover crops, which he plants to protect moisture in the soil. Lamb says farmers have the biggest incentive to keep water quality high because it directly impacts their livelihoods. He just doesn’t think the EPA should tell them how to do it. But, for now, all he and the rest of the country can do is wait to see which of Trump’s stances are rhetoric and which will become reality.

Interesting Ideas for the Season:



Snowbirds

By Cathy Parsons

It is summer and you’re out paddling in your canoe and you start to spot wildlife everywhere. It is wonderful seeing various kinds of wildlife along the creek, and what is really amazing is the many different species of birds you see along the way. You might see Blue or Green Heron, Woodpeckers, Great Horned Owls and Kingfishers or more commonly seen birds such as Nuthatches, Black Cap Chickadees, Cardinals, and Goldfinches.

When the snow starts to fall in Indiana many of the “summer” birds stay for the winter dealing with all the snow and cold just like each of us. It is a fun and fascinating hobby to feed and care for the wintering birds. Many people make their own birdfeed such as homemade suet, seed cakes and orange feeders. Below are some recipes for your bird friends to enjoy and a nice winter hobby for you and your family! P.S. These make great gifts too!

Easy Peanut Butter Bird Treats

These are fun to do with kids.

Supplies: Day old bread- Heart shaped cookie cutter- Peanut Butter (you can also use shortening)- Birdseed- Yarn- Skewer (or a tapestry needle will work) Directions: Use your cookie cutter to make shapes from your bread--- Thread your yarn through the top of each heart, not getting too close to the edge, with the skewer or tapestry needle--- Spread each shape with peanut butter--- Sprinkle birdseed all over the hearts--- Hang them for the birds and start bird-watching!

Birdseed Wreath

Supplies: 1/3 slightly rounded cup of cornstarch—1/2 cup of warm water—3 Tablespoons light corn syrup—1 ½ package of unflavored gelatin—4 cups of bird food (such as seeds, peanuts, berries, dried fruits)—1 bundt pan or you can use other molds—Nonstick cooking spray Directions: Spray bundt pan with cooking spray and set aside---

On stovetop over medium heat, whisk gelatin and water until dissolved—whisk in corn syrup and cornstarch next—Keep whisking until there are no lumps—It will form a thick paste—Make sure mixture is thick before moving on to the next step (if it is slow to thicken, sometimes allowing it to cool helps)—Add 4 cups of birdseed to thickened mixture--- Mix well—Spoon into mold—Spray back of metal spoon with cooking spray and press firmly down on mixture so it is well packed in mold—Place in refrigerator until set—It will be hard to the touch when set—It usually takes about ½ hour—Remove from mold onto baking sheet, carefully—Let dry for a couple of days (turning occasionally)—Tie on a bow for hanging (I use tulle because it is soft and doesn’t cut into the wreath while hanging, double it up for strength) * Do not use twine or other hard wire hangers as it will cut through the wreath and cause it to fall—(It’s also a nice touch to wrap the wreath in cellophane with a bow for gift giving!)

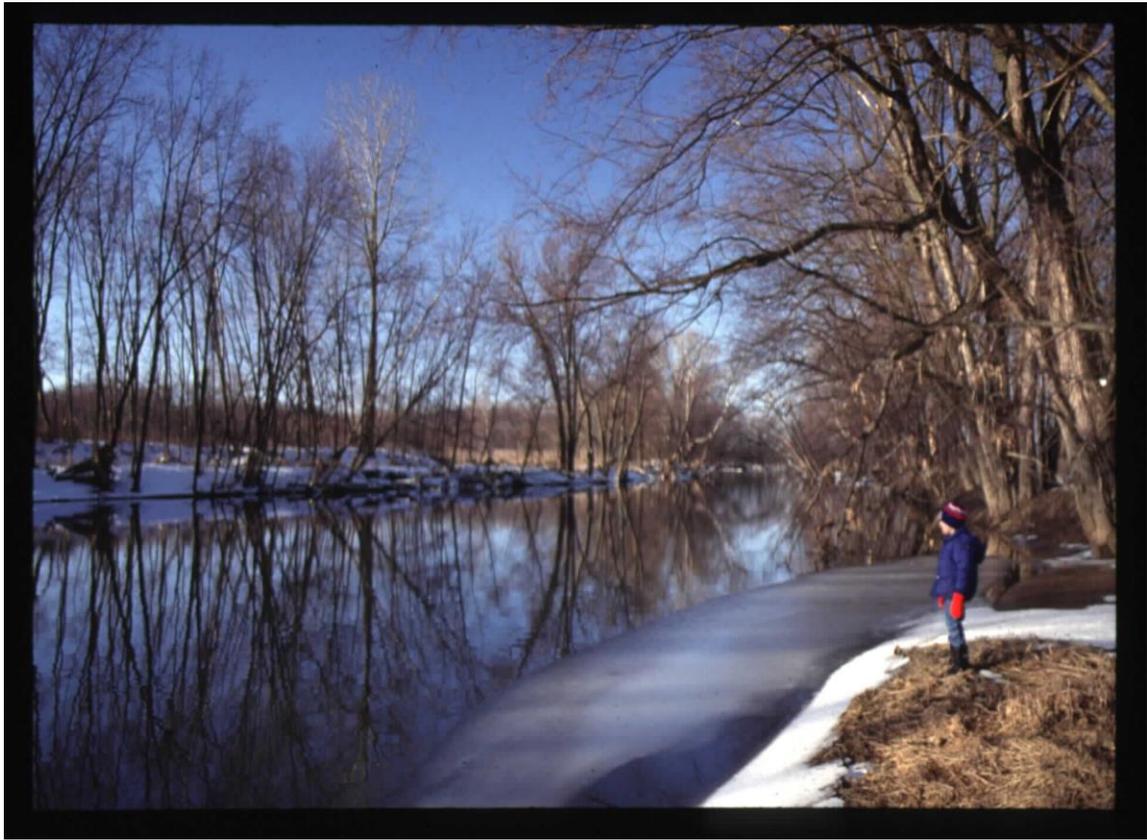
Peanut Butter Suet Cakes

Supplies: 1 cup of shortening—1 cup of peanut butter—3 cups cornmeal—1 cup whole wheat flour—1 cup rolled oats—1 cup peanut pieces (you can change the ingredients and amounts—birds aren’t picky) Directions: Line an 8 X 8 pan with wax paper and set aside (If you crinkle up the wax paper first it will fit the pan better)--- Melt shortening in a saucepan over low heat –In the meantime crush or chop peanuts---- Once shortening has completely melted, stir in the peanut butter until smooth, then mix in the flour and cornmeal and remove from heat---- Stir in the rolled oats and peanuts and pour into the 8 X 8 pan and smooth the surface with the back of a spoon--- Place in the refrigerator to set--When the cake has solidified pull it out of the dish and flip it over on a plate, wax paper side up--- Peel off the paper and cut the cake into quarters--- Wrap each piece in wax paper--- Store in the refrigerator or freezer until you are ready to pop them into your suet feeder----Enjoy!

Fruit Feeders

Slice oranges, apples and other fruits in half and put the halves in suet feeders for the birds Use a mesh orange fruit bag from the grocery to put cut up fruit in and tie to a branch on a tree You can also hang the bags with suet in them or whole peanuts in them.

Photos Wildcat Creek:



Links for Learning

Surf the Web for Issues of Interest

United States Environmental Protection Agency
<http://www2.epa.gov/learn-issues/learn-about-water>

Indiana State Dept. of Health – Fish Consumption Advisory
<http://www.in.gov/isdh/23650.htm>

Indiana Dept. of Environmental Management - Blue Green algae information
<http://www.in.gov/idem/algae/>

Flow Can You See the River?
(White River arts project in cooperation with the Indianapolis Museum of Art)
http://flowcanyouseetheriver.org/?page_id=2



Reminders

2017 GUARDIAN CALENDAR

Jan. 14-15th Indiana Outdoor Expo at the Kokomo Events Center
9:00 A.M. – 5:00 P.M. Each Day
Jan. 16th Wildcat Guardians Meeting at Martino's Restaurant
5:30 P.M.- Meal 6:30 P.M.- Business Meeting

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