



t r i l l i u m

Spring 2007 Volume 6 Issue 1

Newsletter for the La Porte County Conservation Trust,

Winter Time at Wintergreen Woods

While most of us try and stay inside during the winter, activity continues at Wintergreen Woods, a 23 acre dedicated state nature preserve owned by the LPCCT. On a recent visit, the many animal tracks in the new snow left evidence of the activity. Deer, squirrel, rabbit, and mice all left their imprint. Even more dramatic evidence was observed; a Red-shouldered hawk flew up from its' prey, a recently killed rabbit. The outline of the hawk's wings were imprinted in the snow straddling the unlucky rabbit.

In a few short weeks Wintergreen Woods will be transformed into a carpet of wildflowers. Visitors are invited to take the Phyllis Benn trail through the woods. The trail guide may be downloaded at www.lpcct.org/pbguide.pdf. An extension to the trail is being planned; more information will be available in the future.



A White pine (*Pinus strobus*) adds some green to the winter scene. Although a commonly planted ornamental tree, white pine is native to only a small area in northwest Indiana. It is considered a state rare species. This particular tree measures 93 feet in height.



A Red-shouldered hawk sitting on a branch above a freshly killed rabbit. The Red-shouldered hawk is considered a species of special concern by the State of Indiana and is a prime example of important wildlife protected at Wintergreen Woods.



A small animal surfaced from below the snow and made its way to a nearby tree.

Are you interested in preserving La Porte County's natural areas? If so, consider a financial gift or a donation of land to the LPCCT. Your generosity will insure that future generations will enjoy the beauty of La Porte County. For further information visit www.lpcct.org



A pair of ducks seen on a pond at Ridgway Wetlands.

LPCCT PARTICIPATES IN NORTHEAST LAPORTE COUNTY CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

It is often said that when the weather is good, the birding is poor, and vice-versa. The experience of the 21st annual Northeast La Porte County Christmas Bird Count would seem to agree with that statement. The weather was very pleasant with a sunny sky and temperatures in the 30's and 40's, but the birds were hard to find. Several LPCCT members participated in the count.

Our Ridgway Wetland Preserve is located within the count circle, and LPCCT member Jim Simon visited the site. Five **Lesser scaup** were spotted flying from one of the ponds at Ridgway. Lesser scaup are ducks that breed in Canada and migrate to the central and southern U.S. in the winter. These were the only Lesser scaup located on the count. This finding highlights the critical importance of preserving suitable habitat for birds that over winter in our area. The shallow ponds at Ridgway provide food for ducks. Various ducks can be seen at Ridgway in any season.

Despite the "good" weather a decent 46 species were seen by the 14 participants in the bird count.

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STEVE BARKER VISITS WASHINGTON, D. C. ON BEHALF OF SEVERAL CONSERVATION ORGANIZATIONS

LPCCT board member, Steve Barker, recently visited Washington, D.C. in support of several environmental concerns. Steve was joined by three members of the Save the Dunes Council and all met with the offices of Senators Lugar and Bayh and Representatives Joe Donnelly and Pete Visclosky. The main focus of this effort was to obtain passage of the Clean Water Authority Restoration Act. This legislation would reaffirm Congress' original intent to protect all waters of the United States. The "Water Quality Investment Act of 2007" would theoretically support low impact development and green infrastructure. The main objective of the legislation is to address the problem of sewer overflows by authorizing \$1.8 billion in grants over five years.

Steve also lobbied on behalf of the 2007 Farm Bill, which is to be reauthorized this year. More specifically, it is critically important that the conservation programs in the bill be fully funded. This is an important issue for La Porte County. Look for more information on this particular issue in the next Trillium newsletter.

Steve's trip was sponsored in part by Save the Dunes Council and the Clean Water Network.

Info. Source: Clean Water Network homepage-www.cleanwaternet.org
Also, Steve Barker



NATURE HIKE ANNOUNCED FOR SUNDAY, JUNE 3, 2007

A hike is planned for Sunday, June 3, 2007 at 2 p.m. by the LPCCT at the property of Dr. Nicholas Timm and Deborah Longworth. They own approximately 160 acres which is part of the Forest Legacy Program.

The purpose of the Forest Legacy Program is to conserve forest lands in Indiana. By joining the program, the landowners have agreed to maintain the natural state of their property. This property is part of an extensive morainal forest that extends across northern La Porte County. The Timm/Longworth property, located in northern Hudson Township, contains an exceptional variety of plants, including native wild orchids.

The landowners have donated part of their property to the Nature Conservancy which is known as the Yellow Birch Wetland.

An important part of the mission of the LPCCT is to encourage private landowners to practice conservation and protect the ecological quality of their property.

Dress for hiking and wear boots as the ground may be muddy, especially if it has been raining.

For further information/directions call Dennis Richardson at 219-778-2810.

**WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN
THE LA PORTE COUNTY CONSERVATION TRUST, INC.**

Annual Memberships

Individual: \$15.00 Family: \$25.00 Corporate: \$100.00

Additional Donations Welcomed

Name: _____ Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: _____

Detach and return with your check to: La Porte County Conservation Trust, Inc.
405 Maple Avenue, La Porte, IN. 46350 Phone: (219) 778-2810

The La Porte County Conservation Trust is a non-profit corporation,
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Contributions are deductible for tax purposes.

