



FOX ISLAND SOL FEST MAY 3 AND 4

The birds are back, the wildflowers are blooming and there's music in the air. Celebrate the sun and the environment with a full weekend of music and activities. Enjoy live bands, hikes, hayrides, children's activities and visit environmental groups' activities and displays. (There may be additional fees for some kid's activities.) Test drive a bike, canoe or kayak, shop the vendors, munch festival foods, or relax in the Mad Anthony Brewery beer and wine garden.

COST \$5; ANNUAL PASSES ARE NOT HONORED ON MAY 3 AND 4, because the PROCEEDS BENEFIT SCHOOL FIELD TRIPS.



ANNUAL MEETING PICNIC MAY 18th

The 2014 Fox Island Alliance Annual Meeting will look different this year. All members are invited to meet at pavilion #2 and share in the fun and frolic. The events planned are free hot dogs by the fire with potato salad, baked beans, chips, drinks and homemade ice cream followed by a photography hike, pond dipping for the kids, and other activities meant for the whole family. A sack race and other surprises may even be on the agenda. There will be the required business meeting from 1PM until 1:30PM with weenie roasting immediately following. Put the event on your calendar for May 18, 2014, 1PM-4PM and watch for details in the mail. **Again this is a free event for members of the Alliance, made for young and old.**



IT'S TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!

Opossum: a potpourri of adaptations

By Jeff Ormiston

In the Algonquin language it is known as “apasum” meaning “white face” or “white animal”. The formal name is Virginia Opossum, *Didelphis virginiana* and here in “Hoosierland” just plain “possum” seems to fit it best. A mammal of ancient origins, the Opossum is North America’s only marsupial as the females have a pouch where the newborn opossums spend the first 60 days of their life after being born. The sightless, hairless “joeys” are about the size of a honeybee at birth and usually have 7-8 siblings to keep them company in mom’s pouch. Under ideal conditions a female may have up to 3 litters in a year but due to their unusually short life expectancy a female may only have 1 or 2 litters in her lifetime. Opossums will eat nearly anything which may account for the fact that they have 50 teeth, more than any other woodland mammal. As carrion eaters, opossums are prone to become road kill themselves when they are the victims of the automobile, one of the chief causes of opossum demise. As snake eaters they have adapted to be extremely resistant to snake venom. One researcher found that after several bites from a venomous snake the only effect on an opossum was a slight increase in the mammal’s heart rate. Further study showed that there was no damage to the opossum’s internal organs. The opossum has also developed a resistance to the rabies virus being about 8 times less likely to have rabies than other woodland mammals. The opossum’s hairless, prehensile tail serves as a means to steady it as it climbs through bushes and low branches but is not generally used to hang vertically as seen in drawings and cartoons. The hind feet of the opossum have an opposable hallux or “thumb” which aids in climbing though opossums do not live in trees. Opossums usually find housing in hollow logs or other above ground protection and use these in extremely cold weather when their hairless feet, tail and ears are most susceptible to frost bite. In pre-Columbian times opossums were primarily residents of the southern United States, but now opossums are found as far north as southern Canada and reside in most states east of the Rockies and along the Pacific coast as they expand their range.



Nemophilist:

- One who is fond of forests or forest scenery; a haunter of the woods.

(From the 1913 edition of Webster's Dictionary)

Chorus of Spring by Kenlyn Peters



Spring is finally just harsh winter, everyone is no teasing us with those few is starting to melt, and the sun every day! The birds who left

can hear their long awaited songs start to fill the air. Soon to be joining their chorus will be the aptly named, spring peeper or *Pseudacris crucifer*. While they may sound similar to a bird, spring peepers are actually frogs! They are small (~1in) light tan to brown frogs with a dark “X” on their back that are native to eastern North America and are found all throughout Indiana. They prefer wooded areas near water or flooded areas. Males begin their mating calls shortly after hibernation, which is the shrill “PEEP PEEP PEEP” heard in the springtime, likely starting in late March or early April. They survive the winter by hibernating deep in logs, crevices, holes in trees or by burrowing into the leaf litter. Most frogs and toads can survive the winter by hibernating because they possess natural antifreeze. Ice crystals may form inside of their bodies, but they have high levels of glucose in their vital organs and this prevents those from freezing. Be sure to listen for these amazing amphibian harbingers of spring as they emerge from their winter retreats.

around the corner! After such a long doubt relieved. Mother Nature has been days of warmer temperatures, the snow is staying with us for just a bit longer us for the winter are returning and we

A SPRING HAIKU, by Cynthia Powers



Up from the basement
Tornado watch is over.
A double rainbow!

It's a privilege to live in Indiana!



Battle of the Herps

Bull Frog

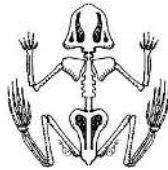


VS

American Toad



Smooth, slimy skin
Long legs for jumping
Bulging eyes
Skinny & sleek
Tooth ridge (top only)
Long, curling, sticky tongues
Group called an array
Live near water
Good swimmers / webbed back feet
Large tympanum (ear)
Eggs a jelly mass
No ribs



Dry, bumpy skin (warts)
Short legs to walk or climb
Ridges above eyes
Rather chubby
No teeth
Short, fat tongues
Group called a knot
Live in leaf litter & trees
Good climbers / claws on back feet
Parotid gland (poisonous)
Eggs a beaded string
Ribs



Amphibian Fact: Some can throw up their stomachs to scrape away swallowed poisons. The Greeks called them "herpetons" meaning "creepy things that crawl around on their bellies." All start their lives in water, as tadpoles with gills, and only salamanders have tails as adults.

DAY CAMPS AT FOX ISLAND

Indiana Junior Master Naturalist Camp

June 16-June 20, 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday



This camp is designed for children who are really nuts about nature! For campers that want to learn more about the natural world of Fort Wayne, we offer this camp that offers “teachable moments.” Kids will learn about specific topics such as bats or snakes. Also we will catch amphibians and other pond life. They will also do 6 community service hours during the regular day camp hours. The registration fee of \$100 allows them to become certified Jr. IMN’s if they are ages 9-12; Campers ages 6-8 will receive a Fox Island Kit Certification.

Once they have completed these, they can achieve Advanced Certification Status. They will also swim daily at our beach with our certified lifeguards. Ages 6-12; Registration forms available under Programs and Day Camps at www.allencountyparks.org. Register by 6/11.

Fishing and Survival Camp June 23-27

9:30a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday

If your camper wants to learn how to canoe, and loves to swim the summer days away, this camp is the Island’s beach with our certified also teach fishing, canoeing, fire ter skills and debris shelters. Be- even want to build a fort in your for children ages 6-12. Registration forms available under Programs and Day Camps at www.allencountyparks.org. Cost \$100, register by 6/18.



one! We swim daily at Fox lifeguards. This camp will safety, and how to build wa- fore long, your child may own back yard! Camp is

SPRING ACTIVITIES AT FOX ISLAND

To register for programs or for more information contact one of the following:

For Ron Zartman call 449-3186 or rzartman@allencountyparks.org

For Natalie Haley call 449-3246 or nhaley@allencountyparks.org

Most activities and programs have a \$2.00 charge and require pre-registration.

COMING UP VERY SOON, for preschoolers: \$3 per child, \$2 per adult.

April 8, Tuesday, 1-2 p.m. ANIMAL TRACKS. Call Ron to pre-register and get details.

May 13, Tuesday 1-2 p.m. TADPOLES AND FROGS. Call Ron to pre-register and get details.

June 10, Tuesday 1-2 p.m. WETLAND CRITTERS. Bring boots! Call Ron to pre-register.

FOR ALL AGES: April 5, Saturday: STOCKBRIDGE AUDUBON SOCIETY Field Trip

Meet in the parking lot near the Bird Observation Building. Park admission is the only cost.

Look for spring migrants, finish by noon. Dress for the weather and bring binoculars.

MORE FOX KIT CLUB ADVENTURES for preschoolers: \$3 per child, \$2 per adult.

April 22, Tuesday 10-11 a.m. POND AND EARTH DAY Learn about pond life and celebrate Earth Day at Fox Island.

Call Natalie for details and to pre-register by 4/17; cost \$3 per child, \$2 per parent.

May 13, Tuesday 10-11 a.m. SNAKES Free gate entrance for the day, so stay and play! Call Natalie to pre-register by 5/8.



FOR ALL AGES:

April 27, Sunday 3:30 p.m. till 5 p.m. LAY OF THE LAND:

Take a two mile look at Fox Island before the trees leaf out. You will observe landforms within and beyond the park. Ron Zartman will point out geologic and historical features, as well as changes he has observed over the past three decades.

Cost: free with park admission, or use your pass. Pre-register by 4/22.



TIMBERDOODLE SKY DANCE: May 17, Saturday 8:30 p.m till 9:45 p.m. Prepare to be amazed at the courtship dance of the American Woodcock. Dress for the weather and bring bug spray. Pre-register by 5/12; call Ron.

SCRAPBOOKING “Crop Till You Drop” 6 P.M. TO MIDNIGHT!

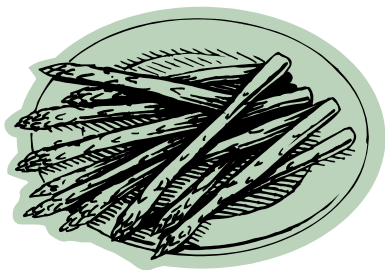
THIS POPULAR ACTIVITY CONTINUES:

April 25, May 9, and June 6, Fridays. CONTACT NATALIE FOR DETAILS and to pre-register,



TAI CHI with Sandy Gebhard continues on Wednesdays, 6 p.m to 7 p.m.

April 23-June 11 cost \$50 for 8 weeks or \$8 drop-in fee. Gentle, non-strenuous Sun form that can be practiced by all. Be prepared to have fun as you join this light-hearted group. Call Ron to pre-register by Feb. 16. Minimum 10, max. 25.



Edible Wild Plant Hike: June 1, Sunday 1-2:30 p.m. Cost \$2 , call Ron to pre-register by 5/27.

Discover some of the many edible wild plants that live in parks and public places, and learn why they should not be collected there. Dress for the weather and bring bug spray for this two mile hike.

Home School Family Days: April 3 and May 8, Thursdays 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.

This quarter we will be teaching nature concepts such as “Fossils and Rocks” or “Snakes” geared to preschool/1st grade, but for upper elementary/middle school ages from 2-4 p.m. on April 24 and May 22. Contact our environmental educator, Natalie Haley, at 449-3246. Cost \$2-\$5 depending on materials provided. Pre-register by 3/29 and 5/3 respectively.



Indiana Master Naturalist Continuing Education Series:

COME HIGH WATER April 27, Sunday 1-3 at Fox Island

Dress to get wet, marooned on an island, or hip deep in water!

BACK FROM THE ARGENTINE May 18, Sunday 1-3

At Metea Park

THE ALDER FORK June 29, Sunday 1-3 at Fox Island. (It’s about fish!)

These programs are for Allen County Park trail guides and Indiana Master Naturalist Alumni. Preregister to make sure we have enough materials; no fee.



Fox Island Alliance
Ed Powers
12206 W. Yoder Road
Roanoke, IN 46783

Officers:

Jeff Ormiston, President
 Liz Hincks, Vice President
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Fox Tale Editor:

Cynthia Powers

The **Fox Island Alliance** is a volunteer not-for-profit organization. Its purposes are to help preserve the natural features of Fox Island County Park, to assist its orderly development as a nature preserve, to raise funds to facilitate its development, to promote Fox Island's use as an educational center, and to coordinate volunteer efforts.

MEMBERSHIPS EXPIRE ON MARCH 31. CHECK YOUR ADDRESS LABEL TO BE SURE.

Use the application to the right and check the "Renewal" area!!

Fox Island Alliance Membership Application __New__ Renewal

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

__ Check if you would like to receive your Fox Tale by email

— Check if you do not want your name published

Please Circle One:

Students \$5 - Senior \$5 - 2 Seniors \$10 - Indiv. \$15 - Family \$20

Sustaining \$30 - Patron \$50

Additional gift \$__ Education \$__ Exhibits \$__ Scholarship

\$__ Preservation

Total Dues and Gifts \$ __

If this membership is a gift, enter donor's name:

Check if you are interested in volunteering. You will be contacted.

Will your employer match your gift to FIA?

Check with your Human Resources/Personnel Department.

FIA is a 501 (c) (3) organization; extra gifts are tax deductible.

Make your check payable to FIA, Inc. and mail with this form to:

Ed Powers, Membership 12206 W. Yoder Rd., Roanoke, IN 46783