



# t r i l l i u m

Summer 2007 Volume 6 Issue 2 Newsletter for the La Porte County Conservation Trust, Inc.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF LPCCT HIKE ON TIMM PROPERTY

Most natural areas in Indiana are privately owned. An outstanding example of private stewardship is the property in Hudson Twp. owned by Nickolas Timm and Deborah Longworth. Members of the LPCCT and their guests were privileged to be led by the Timms on a hike of the property on June 3. The Timms have protected the property by two methods. 40 acres have been donated to the Nature Conservancy, which is known as the Yellow Birch Wetland. Another parcel of land containing approximately 160 acres has been placed in the Indiana Forest Legacy program. The Forest Legacy program is designed to preserve Indiana's forests into the future. This is accomplished by the state purchasing the development rights of the forest; the land owner maintains ownership but the land must remain a forest in perpetuity.

The Yellow Birch Wetlands boasts Indiana's largest yellow birch (*Betula alleghaniensis*). This water loving tree is characteristic of northern



Great Angelica (*Angelica arropurpurea*) was spotted by board member Jan Baumer during the hike.



Showy Lady's Slipper (*Cypripedium reginae*) was another flower spotted by Jan Baumer's camera on the hike.

bogs and lakes. The Yellow Birch Wetland also is home to the Showy Lady's Slipper (*Cypripedium reginae*), Indiana's largest orchid. Plenty of photos were shot during the hike of these spectacular flowers since they were in full bloom. Another feature of the wetland is a raised fen. The raised fen has the unusual property of a wet area on the top or side of a hill, not at the bottom. Clay deposits in the hill trap water in the upland area, creating an unusual wet ecosystem. Hikers were able to stick their boots far into the wet earth which was many feet above the wetland area below.

The forest legacy area contains mature trees, especially walnut trees. The forest is managed to provide both an environmentally diverse forest habitat as well as timber for harvest. The many birds calling in the woods were testament to the rich environment. Pileated Woodpeckers (*Dryocopus pileatus*) are frequently seen in these woods. Out of many candidates the Timm property is one of only two properties in the northern part of Indiana to be chosen to participate in the Forest Legacy program.

The future of natural area preservation in Indiana will depend upon the type of outstanding land stewardship practiced by the Timms.

## MISSION STATEMENT

To protect the natural diversity and scenic values of LaPorte County by

- preserving environmentally significant lands and scenic areas
- enabling the voluntary protection of environmentally valuable land
- fostering appreciation for and understanding of the natural environment



Partridge-berry (*Mitchella repens*)

## SPOTLIGHT ON...

### PARTRIDGE-BERRY

Where did American native plants get their common and Latin names? Early explorers of what is now the United States often included scientists interested in botany, or friends of botanists back in Europe. Carolus Linnaeus, a Swedish scientist in the 1700's, is one of the most famous, and is the scientist responsible for the classification system used worldwide for naming plants and animals (family, genus, species, etc.).

Let's consider Partridge-berry, one of the common plants of Wintergreen Woods Nature Preserve. This evergreen groundcover plant was named by Linnaeus after his friend John Mitchell, an Englishman who lived in America and gave him valuable information on American flora. Thus the name *Mitchella repans*, *repans* meaning reclining.

Why "Partridge-berry"? The plant produces bright red berries eaten by ruffed grouse and other "partridges". It is said to be "tasteless", but that is what humans think. Who knows what partridges think of it – after all, birds eat poison ivy berries with obvious relish while a human wouldn't dare eat one!

Partridge-berry is only found in America and is the only species in its genus. The red berries last a long time (if not eaten by partridges!) and can be found as bright spots on the ground into the winter.

Native American women used a tea made from the dried plant to help in childbirth. It was also used as a diuretic and astringent.

Partridge-berry can be found in mildly acid soils associated with pinelands throughout the eastern United States. Look for it when you visit Wintergreen Woods Nature Preserve.

Article submitted by board member Liz McCloskey

Photo credit: James H. Miller@USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database/James H. Miller and Karl V. Miller, 2005. *Forest plants of the southeast and their wildlife uses*. University of Georgia Press, Athens.

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Are you interested in preserving LaPorte County's natural resources? 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](http://www.lpcct.org)



Hikers discovering the unusual plant life on the Timm property Sunday, June 3rd.

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: \_\_\_\_\_

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