

Shirley Heinze Land Trust
INSIGHTS

Spring 2019



- *National Excellence Award!*
- *Wildwood Forest*
- *Remembering Keith Board*
- *Spring Benefit - May 18th*



www.heinzetrust.org

Excellent News!



Last fall Shirley Heinze Land Trust received the Land Trust National Excellence Award from Land Trust Alliance (LTA). Only 18 land trusts out of more than 1,300 in the country have been so honored since the award's inception in 2007. Everyone reading this article helped make this possible. Since you couldn't all be there, I'd like to share with you the remarks I made at the National Land Trust Conference's Opening Dinner on October 11, with more than 900 people in attendance.

Our success is a credit to volunteers, donors, board members, staff, colleagues, funders, and, of course, many partners, including Land Trust Alliance, who over the past decade has invested heavily in us -- leadership trainings, rally conferences, funding innovative programs, giving us credibility with funders, providing Terrafirma, and of course, challenging us through the Accreditation process! In hindsight, it has taken us to unforeseen and ambitious horizons, which all began in 1981 in memory of Shirley Heinze, an everyday person passionate about the dunes.

So, what makes Shirley Heinze Land Trust so unique? Our geography includes Chicago to the west, Lake Michigan to the North, and the Kankakee River to the south, what would be the "Everglades of the North," had it not been drained; we cover 42 municipalities; we are transected by more utility corridors, roads, and rail lines than imaginable; our preserves are integrated with heavy industry; and our region includes one of the most concentrated treasure troves of biodiversity in the country.

What have we done to leverage these unique assets?

We connect protected lands and complete large-scale restoration and reforestation projects.

We lead the charge, along with 30 partners, to protect and make publicly accessible a 12-mile river corridor.

We actively engage children and adults, advancing a robust volunteer program and providing dynamic internships.

We collaborate with local partners to develop regional plans and economic development initiatives that improve quality of life.

And, as we look to the future, we aim to connect every person, municipality, industry, business, and school in our region to the natural world.

I'll just say lastly, thank you to Land Trust Alliance for shining a light on Shirley Heinze Land Trust and thanks to each of you for doing your part to protect our planet.

P.S. If you join us for our Spring Benefit on May 18th, you'll have the opportunity to hear from Andrew Bowman, LTA's President, and see a video produced as part of the award!



Kristopher Krouse,
Executive Director



2018 Land Trust Alliance National Excellence Award

INSIGHTS is published twice a year by Shirley Heinze Land Trust, Inc.

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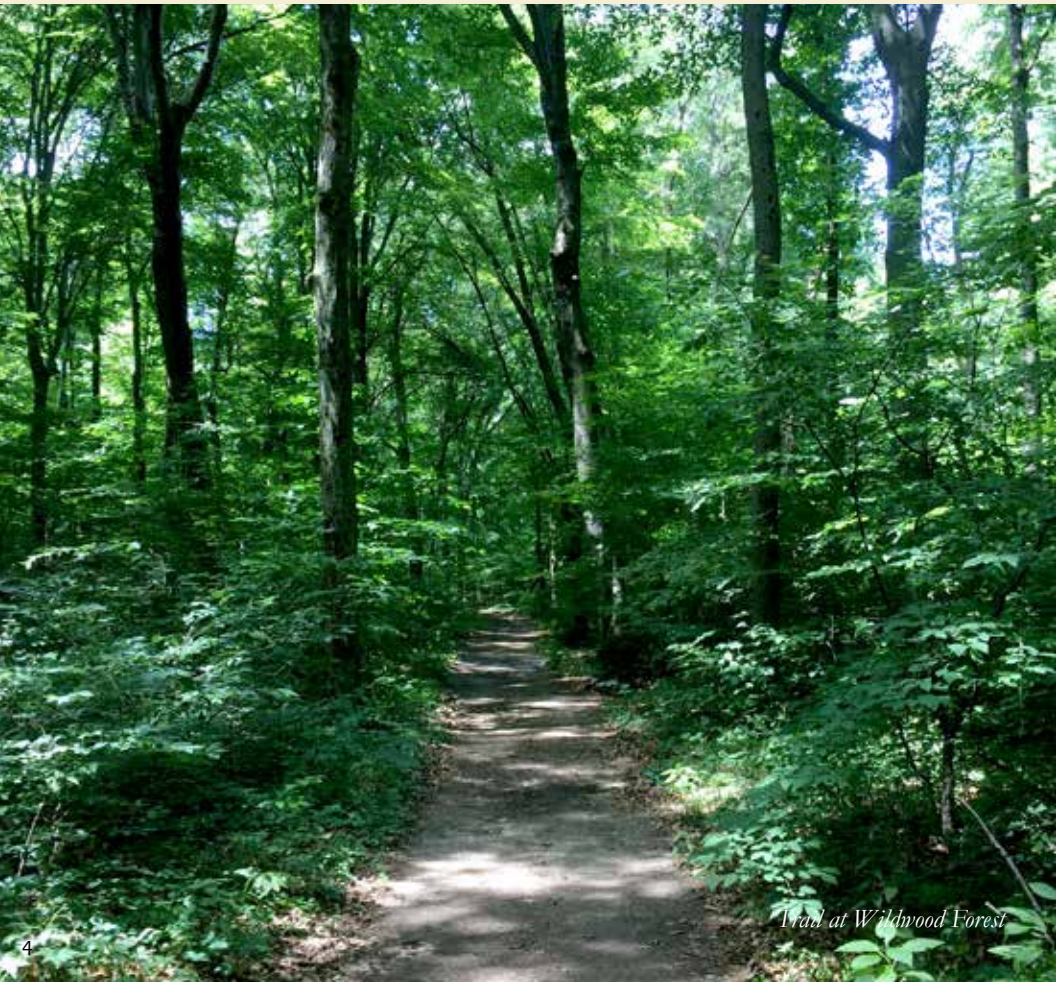
Wildwood Forest

In January, we acquired 30-acres of wooded land in Coolspring Township south of Michigan City. The property was a donation from the Wildwood Bowmen Club, a field archery club which had owned the property since 1955.

The club was a member of the Indiana Field Archery Association, and hosted many archery meets and tournaments at the site over the years. The group disbanded recently due to declining membership, and the remaining members decided to donate the property to Shirley Heinze Land Trust.

The property contains a well-established forest with large oak and beech trees. It has sandy well-drained soils with some dune topography interspersed with low-lying forested wetlands and emergent marsh. It has been well-maintained through the years by volunteer land stewards involved with the archery club.

Our stewardship staff will be working over the next year to improve public access amenities, including signage, an entrance gate, and a parking area. Stay tuned for an announcement about when it will be open!



Trail at Wildwood Forest

Stewardship

Thanks to over 4 years of generous grant funding from the Sustain Our Great Lakes Grant Program, We have been able to conduct significant amounts of restoration on some of our most precious nature preserves. The work includes wetland, prairie, savanna, and woodland restoration at **Cressmoor Prairie, Gordon & Faith Greiner, the Great Marsh, and John Merle Coulter** nature preserves.

Winter restoration work focuses on the removal of aggressive tree and shrub species that shade out and suppress native flowering plants.

The restoration efforts improve habitat for pollinators and other wildlife, restore vital ecosystem services, and preserve rare plant communities. If you haven't visited for a while, we encourage you to get out and see the new look of these properties.



Doug Botka at Bur Oak Woods

Assessing Climate Impacts on the Little Calumet River

Shirley Heinze Land Trust was recently awarded a grant from the Land Trust Alliance Land and Climate Program. The funding will support collaboration with the Northern Institute of Applied Climate Science (NIACS) to assess local climate predictions and the potential impacts on habitats within the Little Calumet River Conservation Corridor.



NIACS will provide technical assistance to develop management strategies that will mitigate predicted climate change impacts. We are very excited for this opportunity to implement local climate science knowledge into our management strategies.

Lydick Bog Master Plan Progress

Thanks to numerous partners and generous support we are moving ahead with our master plan for Lydick Bog Nature Preserve. We are currently working to salvage barn wood and construction materials from the former buildings before they are dismantled and removed from the property.

As we move forward with building, we are recruiting volunteers with unique skill sets who may be willing to provide professional services, expertise, and consultation on aspects of the project.

Some skills we expect to be helpful during the process include: Planners familiar with local building codes and ordinances, Planners familiar with universal design and accessibility guidelines, Engineers, Architects, Designers, General Contractors, Carpenters, Plumbers, Electricians and Landscapers/hardscapes.

If you are willing to consider volunteering your expert skills, please contact Stewardship Director Eric Bird at ebird@heinzetrust.org or call 219-242-8558 for more details.



*Eric Bird,
Stewardship Director*

Volunteer Program

We're very grateful for all of the volunteers who generously donate their time to further the mission of Shirley Heinze Land Trust. Whether spending hours cleaning and sorting native seed, braving the cold to assist with invasive brush removal, planting native plugs, or transforming scrap lumber into useful benches for nature preserves; your efforts do not go unnoticed.

Recently, we have been fortunate to have a number of new volunteers who have stepped up to coordinate, assist, or lead volunteer workdays and special projects, amplifying the work we are able to accomplish in a year. We are truly blessed to have a community of caring, ambitious, and dedicated volunteers who selflessly preserve, restore, and enhance nature preserves for the enjoyment of everyone.

If you are interested in getting involved as a volunteer, or want to learn more, please contact Volunteer Coordinator Christine Maloney at volunteer@heinzetrust.org or call (219) 242-8558.



*Christine Maloney
Volunteer Coordinator*



Please Sign In!



Kris Krouse with box-maker Dale Nichols

The next time you are out on the trail, you may come across these beautiful new boxes at the trailhead. They are the handiwork of Dale Nichols, a longtime volunteer who has recently joined the Board of Directors of Shirley Heinze Land Trust. Dale has generously utilized his home wood shop to craft the new and improved visitor sign-in boxes and map boxes.

We hope to have Dale's trailhead stations out at all of our public access preserves this year. Please help us improve visitor experiences by signing in and providing comments at trailhead stations!



Scraping senna seeds into envelope



Seed cleaning volunteers: (back row) Peggy Foster, Maureen Kolbusz, Susan Kenning, Linda Lewin (front row) Marisa Villareal, Alison Visnyak, Julie Gergash



Volunteers John DeVaney and Mike Boos burning brush piles with Stewardship Assistant Rich Dorton



Volunteer Rebecca Kozlik at our Science Alive booth

Benchmarkers Wanted

We are in need of folks with woodworking experience to construct Leopold benches, picnic tables, bird and bat houses, and boardwalks for several of our preserves. We have a cache of salvaged and scrap lumber, and would love to "be green" and repurpose it.





Remembering Keith Board

“One sunny day in 1990 while out botanizing, I saw a compass plant flowering at the edge of a dreadful thicket of invasive gray dogwood in Hobart. I thought, what are YOU doing HERE? I went exploring in the area and before long, I was in the middle of a beautiful meadow filled with thousands of native prairie plants. I let the DNR Division of Nature Preserves know about the place. I also contacted Shirley Heinze Land Trust.”

Keith Board, on finding Cressmoor Prairie

The conservation community lost a remarkable friend with the passing of Keith Board on January 12. He was a true Renaissance man: a beloved teacher, an exquisite photographer, a skilled craftsman, an avid outdoorsman, and a passionate amateur botanist.

Keith spent countless hours exploring secluded woodlots, abandoned fields, railroad rights-of-way, roadside swamps, and forgotten lands, always on the lookout for interesting and unusual plants. His 30 years of “botanizing” contributed significantly to the scientific literature for our area, and it uncovered many places which have subsequently become protected nature preserves.

“Keith’s interest in plants was not restricted to the showy or rare,” recalls Heinze Trust life board member Barbara Plampin. “He was just as delighted by railroad weeds (non-native plants whose seeds generally arrive in animal feed brought by a train) as he was by a savanna slope carpeted by lady’s slipper orchids.”

Keith Board believed in sharing his botanical knowledge with others. He led nature hikes for the Heinze Trust and donated his photography for our programming. He taught botany courses on ferns and grasses, using plant specimens he had collected himself. High scorers on the final test were rewarded with quart jars of homemade strawberry preserves.

Keith’s greatest gifts to us were the properties he discovered. He helped explore an old sand mine in Portage that is now John Merle Coulter Nature Preserve. He found a spectacular wildflower woods amidst farm fields near Rolling Prairie; it’s now Myrna J. Newgent Nature Preserve.

That beautiful meadow in Hobart has become Cressmoor Prairie State Nature Preserve. The Board of Directors of Shirley Heinze Land Trust has voted to name the trail there in his honor. The Keith Board Nature Trail will be dedicated later this year.

Keith Board was also a talented writer and an eloquent speaker. His love of the natural world and his sense of humor shine through in his words. The following excerpts are from an address he made on May 6, 2006, at the dedication of Ambler Flatwoods as an Indiana State Nature Preserve.

Henry David Thoreau said, “I long for a forest which I cannot put my foot through.” When I worked on the Ambler plant survey, there were times that I longed for a forest I could find my way out of! Ambler taught me the value of carrying a compass. I enjoyed many pleasant hours in the dappled light of this forest, listing the plants I saw while birds twittered and sang in the treetops. The experience was more than enjoyable, it was altogether glorious, and I wouldn’t trade the memories for gold. I attempted to develop an understanding of the entire site, the plant communities that occur here, and especially the individual species. “My research may not have been exhaustive, but it certainly made me tired” [borrowed from Patrick McManus].

Around the edges, this preserve is degraded and recovering, but the inner sanctum is a special place indeed, and it occupies nearly all of the preserve. It features meandering clearwater streams, buttonbush ponds, elevated sandy flats, pools of water, and lots of hummocks. These hummocks or tip-up mounds are like little islands, each with its own unique and special flora, and often a small pool of water alongside. Looking at little pools and green hummocks, Gerry Wilhelm might say “This is a holy place.” Of course, we wouldn’t know whether he meant that in a religious sense, or whether he just meant, this place is full of holes! Some might find the idea of sloshing around in a swamp forest unattractive, but I assure you it is fun, and there is beauty here, and even elegance.

We know of 359 plant species that grow here. 311 of them are native. Many are uncommon, and 14 are listed as rare, endangered, or threatened in Indiana. Amazingly, this preserve comprises only half of the forest that is actually here. Hopefully, the other half can be preserved someday.



Keith Board at Ambler Flatwoods in 2015

The most intriguing aspect of the plant study is that it’s not complete. It is a work in progress and always will be. Rare and remarkable things live here, and I’m confident there are more to be discovered. Very few plants elude the sharp eyes of people like Myrna and Barbara, but this preserve has more than 8.5 million square feet, and every square foot is unique. It is likely that many more conservative species will be found, so I encourage you to explore, discover, and enjoy. Immerse yourself in the beauty of a great forest, and find your spirit renewed.

Thoreau said, “Every creature is better alive than dead, men and moose and pine trees, and he who understands it aright will preserve life rather than destroy it.” Your efforts and your financial contributions have provided a safe haven where plants and animals can survive and even flourish. It’s a living, genetic database, and I believe you saved it because you care and care deeply about the sanctity of all life.

Long live Ambler Flatwoods, and all the wonderful things that make it their home, and all the wonderful people who saved it!





photo: Warren Buckler

2019 Educational Hike Series

Explore the beauty of the Calumet Region and beyond and support Shirley Heinze Land Trust in working to preserve natural lands in northwestern Indiana by attending our educational hikes. Groups are led by expert naturalists and are limited in size to fifteen or fewer hikers. Hikes are held at outstanding nature preserves located across the region.

There is a \$25 fee per person for each hike. Registration and payment must be made in advance by calling us at 219-242-8558 or by sending an email to Sarah Barnes at sbarnes@heinzetrust.org.

Please Note: *The Spring Ephemerals Hike at Trillium Ravine Plant Reserve on May 4 is full. The Winter Waterfowl hike that was scheduled in January was cancelled due to weather. The remaining hikes in the series are listed below.*

Clark & Pine Nature Preserve Saturday, June 22, 2019 9 am–noon (Central time) Emily Stork, Regional Ecologist for the Indiana DNP

This very special nature preserve, not open to the public, contains globally rare dune and swale topography and the plants and animals that reside there. Expect to encounter some special and beautiful wildflowers, but be prepared for wet feet by wearing high waterproof boots or shoes you don't mind getting soaked.

Springfield Fen Nature Preserve Saturday, July 13, 2019 9 am–noon (Central time) Derek Nimetz from the Indiana DNP

The Springfield Fen Nature Preserve protects a mesic upland forest natural community and numerous wetland habitats. Of particular interest to this excursion, this nature preserve contains a high quality example of a calcareous wetland known as a prairie fen. It also contains many rare plant and animal species. The terrain may be uneven and muddy so you must come prepared for wet feet and hummocky surfaces. Like at Clark and Pine, the best places to see are often the most difficult to walk through.

Wild Mushrooms of NW Indiana Saturday, August 24, 2019 Cowles Bog 9 am–noon (Central time) Dr. Greg Mueller

There are over 1,000 species of mushrooms reported from the greater Chicago region, many of them from Indiana Dunes National Park. Join mycologist Dr Greg Mueller on a mushroom hunt at Cowles Bog. Greg is Chief Scientist and Negaunee Foundation Vice President for Science at the Chicago Botanic Garden and has been studying the fungi of the Indiana Dunes for over 30 years.

Citizen Science

Join us for a number of opportunities to learn how to contribute to the larger conservation community by participating in community science!

Community or citizen science is a great way to learn about the habitats around us while collecting information that can help land managers track changes over time and adjust stewardship and land protection strategies.

Here are some programs that you can be a part of.

Calling Frog Survey – collects amphibian abundance and distribution data throughout the Chicago Wilderness region – Shirley Heinze Land Trust holds annual workshops in February to train monitors. frogsurvey.org

Hoosier Riverwatch – increases public awareness of water quality issues and concerns by training volunteers to monitor stream water quality. We will be hosting a training workshop on Sunday, May 19. hoosieriverwatch.com

iNaturalist – a popular nature app that

helps you identify the plants and animals around you. By sharing your observations, you'll create research-quality data for natural scientists. We will be hosting an iNaturalist orientation and walk at Meadowbrook on Wednesday, June 19. iNaturalist.org

*Sarah Barnes
Programs Manager*

eBird – birdwatchers share their checklists through this popular app managed by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, which are then used to document bird distribution, abundance, habitat use, and trends. Most of our preserves are listed as “hotspots,” which allows us to easily see data collected on the sites. Birders have recorded 143 species at Seidner Dune and Swale. eBird.org

Illinois Butterfly Monitoring Network – engages citizen scientists in the process of collecting quantitative data on butterfly populations on public lands in Illinois and Northwest Indiana. bfly.org

Other Hikes and Events

- Sat. April 20—Spring Bus Tour of Shirley Heinze Nature Preserves
- Mon.–Wed. April 29–May 1—Volunteer Workdays at Walner Nature Preserve
- Sat. May 18—Annual Spring Benefit at Purdue Northwest / Westville
- Sun. May 19—Hoosier Riverwatch Workshop at Meadowbrook
- Wed. June 19—iNaturalist Hike at Meadowbrook
- Mon. July 15—Application Deadline for *Bringing Nature Home* Native Plant Program
- Wed.–Fri. August 21–23—Annual Stewardship Gathering at Meadowbrook
- Sat. September 14—Annual Appreciation Hike at Meadowbrook
- Sat. September 21—Monarch Festival in East Chicago
- Sat. October 12 — Fall Bus Tour of Shirley Heinze Nature Preserves
- Thu.–Sat. October 17–19—LTA Rally / Nat'l Land Conservation Conf. in Raleigh, NC

Advance registration is required for most events. For the latest schedule, full details, and to sign up for events, call 219-242-8558 or visit our website at www.heinzetrust.org/events. Schedule is subject to change.



Annual Spring Benefit Saturday, May 18th

The Great Hall - James B. Dworkin Complex
Purdue University Northwest - Westville
1401 US-421, La Porte, IN 46350

Join us for an evening of friendship and festivity in support of
the conservation work of Shirley Heinze Land Trust.

5:30 p.m.
Reception and hors d'oeuvres

7:00 p.m.
Seated Dinner and Program
Dress for the evening is Business Casual

Host Committee

Brenda Ashley & Gary Johnson	Sue Rutzen & George Rogge
Ann & Dave Bochnowski	Violet & Sam Sistovaris
Mike Keen & Gabrielle Robinson	Suzy Vance & Tim Griffin
Erin & Ben Labovitz	Anne & Tim Walsh
John & Jim Leinweber	Paul & Susan Zucker

The evening's program will feature a presentation by
Andrew Bowman,
President of the Land Trust Alliance.

The evening includes both live and silent auctions with many
unique and diverse items and a Funding the Future program.

Please visit the event website at www.heinzetrust.org
to view our live and silent auction catalogs.

You may also fill out the form on the next page
and mail it to us with your payment.
Please reply by May 3rd.

TICKET FORM

TICKET OPTIONS

- _____ BENEFACTOR - \$10,000 (includes 20 seats / 2 tables)
- _____ KARNER BLUE BUTTERFLY SPONSOR - \$5,000 (includes 10 seats / 1 table)
- _____ GREEN HERON SPONSOR - \$2,500 (includes 10 seats / 1 table)
- _____ YELLOW LADY'S SLIPPER SPONSOR - \$1,500 (includes 10 seats / 1 table)
- _____ BLANDING'S TURTLE SPONSOR - \$750 (includes 4 seats)
- _____ BIG BLUESTEM SPONSOR - \$500 (includes 2 seats)
- _____ INDIVIDUAL TICKET - \$150 (\$75 per seat is tax deductible)

If purchasing more than one item above, please indicate on the line

- _____ I cannot attend. Please accept my gift in support of Shirley Heinze Land Trust.
(Fern Sponsor - \$499 and under)

I am a guest of: _____

DINNER OPTIONS:

Chicken Marsala, Root Vegetable Risotto

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Seating accommodations available for guests with special needs. Please
check here if special needs are required.

PAYMENT INFORMATION

Total Amount Enclosed \$ _____

Enclosed is my check payable to **Shirley Heinze Land Trust**

Please charge my: DISC VISA MC AMEX

Card Number _____ Exp Date _____

Cardholder Signature _____ Security Code _____

Please RSVP by Friday, May 3rd, 2019

(Reservations after this date cannot be guaranteed.)

Please contact Bonnie Hawksworth at bhawksworth@heinzetrust.org
or call **219-242-8558** to provide your meal options and guest names.

You may also register online by going to www.heinzetrust.org

or return this form with payment to

Shirley Heinze Land Trust

109 W 700 N, Valparaiso, IN 46385

2018 Snapshot

Acres Acquired 14,34
 Bringing total acreage permanently protected up to 2,462

Wetland Acres Under Restoration 85
Upland Acres Under Restoration 136

Environmental Education Hours Delivered 16,659
Outreach Event Attendance 4,447
Volunteer Hours Contributed 2,600

Number of Donors 691

REVENUE / EXPENDITURE

Revenue (includes income and the value of land acquisitions) \$2,106,410
Expenditures \$971,662
***Net Revenue** \$1,134,748

ASSETS

Value of Nature Preserves \$9,888,799
Bank Accounts \$785,191
Equipment & Buildings \$249,614
Investments & Endowments \$1,488,663

*Revenue generated for land purchases and land donations are a transfer of assets and therefore cannot be reflected as an expenditure.

Note - The financial figures presented in this snapshot are preliminary and will be adjusted after an audit later in 2019.

photo: Jackie Huppenthal

Leave Your Legacy... Join Shirley Heinze Land Trust's Legacy Circle

The Legacy Circle is a group of individuals who have committed to safeguarding northwestern Indiana's rarest and most significant natural lands, by including Shirley Heinze Land Trust in their estate plans.

Joining the Legacy Circle is simple. You can name Shirley Heinze Land Trust as a beneficiary of:

- A life insurance policy
- A bank account
- An IRA or other retirement plan
- A donor advised fund

There is no minimum amount for Legacy Circle membership, and designations can be made in the form of a percentage or a fixed dollar amount.

We hope you will consider joining this visionary group. If you have any questions, or if you have already included Shirley Heinze Land Trust in your estate plans, please call Vicki Sparks or Andrea Huntington at 219-242-8558.

Thank you!

Important: *Please be sure to check with your financial advisor to determine whether this gift plan is right for you. This information is not meant as tax or legal advice.*

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Sprinting Across the Sand *by Ron Trigg*

The six-lined racerunner (*Aspidoscelis sexlineata*) is our most abundant local lizard, but it can be very difficult to get a good look at one. Indeed, even if you're at the right place at the right time, you're likely to sense the creature's presence long before you actually lay eyes on it.

Start your quest by walking a high dunes trail on a hot, sunny day in mid-summer. Rustling sounds emerge from the grasses around you, but you see nothing more than a little movement in the leaf litter. Then you catch a glimpse of something dashing over the landscape. It's more a sensation of speed than any visible object. And by the time you realize what's happening, it will have disappeared. Congratulations! You've found your first racerunner.



photo: Ron Trigg

Many factors contribute to the lizard's elusiveness. It's very small in size, a slender body just six to ten inches in length, two-thirds of which is tail. The racerunner is speedy, up to 18 miles per hour according to some estimates. It has very specific habitat needs, living only in dry, sunny places. The lizard's activity season is short, with the vast majority of

sightings occurring from June through August. (It spends most of the rest of its time, including winter hibernation, in underground burrows.) And finally, it is generally skittish by nature and wary of potential danger.

The persistent observer, willing to invest some time lying in wait beneath the summer sun, may eventually be rewarded with a good view, and it's well worth the effort. With pale yellow stripes down its back and splashes of iridescent blue and green under its chin, the little racerunner paints a colorful picture against its home sandscape. It may also entertain you by leaping into the air to capture the insects on which it feeds.

Only three species of lizards have been recorded in Northwest Indiana, and the other two are even harder to find. The racerunner is your best bet for local lizard viewing. They inhabit the entire coastal dune zone from Miller to Mount Baldy, as well as other sandy prairie and savanna habitats like Coulter Preserve and Ivanhoe.

Ron Trigg is a past Executive Director and former board member of Shirley Heinze Land Trust. An author, photographer, and naturalist, he volunteers his photography and wordsmithing talents.