

Winter 2013



# The Merry Leaflet

Merry Lea Environmental Learning Center of Goshen College

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## Beyond Merry Lea's Borders: Environmental Education Expands Outward

Several times in the course of their eleven-month program, students in Merry Lea's Master of Arts in Environmental Education program (MAEE) leave Noble County and shift their attention to other locales. So far this year, they visited the Indiana Dunes, Chicago, Indianapolis, Grand Rapids, Mich., and Washington, DC.

Paul Steury, who teaches environmental issues in the masters program, says he plans each trip around a theme. In Chicago, for example, students visited attempts to green a variety of settings, from restaurants to a synagogue to a nature museum. The Grand Rapids trip focused on environmental education in school settings. In Indianapolis and Washington, the political side of environmental education took center stage.

"These excursions are a really unique selling point for our program," observes Jonathon Schramm, who teaches pedagogy to the MAEE students. Typically, environmental education programs limit themselves to local ecosystems.

### Integrating a naturalist lens

The field trips are called integrative sessions because several themes are being explored at the same time. For one thing, students revisit the insights about place and landscape that they have developed during their hikes across Merry Lea's terrain and learn to apply them to new settings.

Lisa Zinn, who teaches the natural history course in the masters program, says that she has shifted the emphasis of her class from a

tight focus on Merry Lea's ecosystems to developing the skills needed to approach any ecosystem.

Zinn enjoys traveling with students and watching them encounter unfamiliar locales. She recalls several instances where students were gathered around a tree, trying to figure out what species it was. "They will say things like, 'Well, it is definitely not an oak because it has compound leaves.' Then someone else will notice that it has alternate branching and it is growing in well-drained soil."

Zinn gets excited about these kinds of observations because it means her students have acquired a naturalist lens. They have absorbed both curiosity about the natural world and the basic tools needed to size up a new setting.

"I always love when we're out on a field trip and they see things they wouldn't have noticed at the beginning of my class," she says. "I am careful to point out to them how they have changed."

Miranda Davies, a current MAEE student from Michigan, recalls a case in point. In Chicago, she remembers a small plot of land marked with caution tape because it was contaminated with lead. Most passersby were oblivious to this green rectangle in a sea of pavement, but to a group of environmental educators, it was a story waiting to unfold.

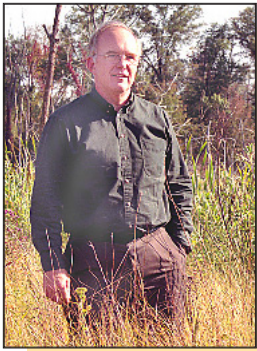


"I have a feeling this isn't Merry Lea anymore," Katherine Johnson, left, may well be saying to professor Jonathon Schramm, right, as they skirt the perimeter of the office building that houses the Indiana Department of Environmental Management in downtown Indianapolis. The visit was part of an MAEE integrative session January 23.

Likewise, Davies remembers how disturbed she felt seeing a prairie restoration near a Chicago river. All the displays and plaques were obliterated with graffiti, testifying to one of the unique challenges of restoring land in an urban setting.

### Integrating multiple disciplines

Secondly, a different mix of faculty accompany each field trip, representing the perspectives of their own academic disciplines.



## Director's Desk Merry Lea Beyond Merry Lea

by Luke Gascho

What do we mean when we say, “Merry Lea?” At its core, Merry Lea consists of wonderful parcels of land that were purchased by Lee and Mary Jane Rieth. It is a place to practice land preservation, a place to experience renewal of body and spirit, and a place to learn to care about the environment. I have experienced the magical ring to the name, as well as the sense of awe and wonder that spending time at Merry Lea inspires.

The mission and vision for Merry Lea depends on the land base. The programs that we offer at Merry Lea are all related to our ecosystems in one way or another. Master’s students study the natural history of Northern Indiana; agroecology students are deep into local soils; students in the Sustainability Semester are immersed in wetlands during their landscape limnology course. As the Merry Lea team works at designing, enhancing and implementing our programs, they reflect frequently on the value of the landscape of this place as foundational to all that we do. Without the 1,189 acres of land, we would be missing our most significant classroom.

Yet, this classroom doesn’t have walls! The transformation these acres can bring about is not limited to just what can happen within the geographical boundaries of the property. The questions and observations stimulated by our ecosystems provide the context for Merry Lea beyond Merry Lea. The knowledge and inspiration gained here can be transferred and applied to many other settings. Meanwhile, the other places of engagement return the favor by helping us understand this place even better.

The land also serves as our primary teacher. The lessons learned on site from this teacher are boundless. Our varied ecosystems contain wisdom that can inform many topics, including interconnectedness, diversity, leadership, earth care, sustainability, resilience, regeneration, networking, energy balance, and beauty. This teacher is one who doesn’t focus on the self, but rather on health and wholeness for all.

The combination of a lovely classroom and a very wise teacher creates a synergy that is empowering for people of all ages. Merry Lea’s programs are choreographed to move people with ease from the experiences here in the landscape to the opportunities beyond. The articles in this issue of *The Merry Leaflet* give some great examples of how this works and the benefits that result for the participants.

It is such a privilege to have this grand home base, which serves both as a starting point and place to return to. It truly is a center and a springboard. May we continue to enjoy experiencing the Merry Lea here and the Merry Lea beyond for generations to come! Ω

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Laura Yoder, who teaches research methods to the grads, describes a interdisciplinary conversation involving policy, ecology and social science this way:

*Suppose we are all looking at a cornfield. Dave’s going to ask why monocultures are subsidized. Lisa or Jonathon will ask about the ecology of monocultures and how wild animals do or don’t inhabit those spaces. I will ask about how mechanized agriculture has changed rural community structures.*

Through this kind of modeling, integrative sessions enable students to experience the multidisciplinary nature of environmental education.

The people encountered on the trips provide additional perspectives. Students meet people in the halls of Congress who have written bills related to environmental education. They meet a pastor who’s running a gardening program with kids; they watch a park ranger turn an invasive species problem into a public program; they encounter teachers doing environmental education in many different contexts.

“We see the field from a lot of angles,” comments Dave Ostergren, director of the MAEE program. “Even the older students—the wily veterans—come away with a more complete picture of the range of possibilities for environmental education.”

Katherine Johnson, a current MAEE student, says that meeting people who are passionate about what they do is a key part of integrative sessions. “The majority of people we met seemed like they were where they were meant to be,” she observed.

continued next page

Merry Lea was created with the assistance of The Nature Conservancy and through the generosity of Lee A. and Mary Jane Rieth. It is operated by Goshen College. The center provides a comprehensive program of environmental education and recreation.

### MERRY LEA TEAM MEMBERS

Janie Beck Kreider, Public Program & MCCN Intern  
Luke A. Gascho, Executive Director  
Kerry Goodrich, Property Supervisor  
Carol Good-Elliott, Environmental Science Educator  
Dale Hess, Director of Collegiate Programs  
Jane Litwiller, Environmental Educator/Maintenance  
Bill F. Minter, Director of Land Management  
Dave Ostergren, Director of Graduate Program

Jennifer Halteman Schrock, Public Programs  
Jonathon Schramm, Assistant Professor, SEED  
Ryan Sensenig, Director of Environmental Science Program at GC & Lindsey Researcher  
Paul Steury, K-12 Education Coordinator  
David Stoesz, Agroecology Intern  
Maria Tice, Admin. Assistant/Volunteer Coordinator  
Laura Yoder, Director of the Sustainability Semester  
Lisa Zinn, Assistant Professor, SEED

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The *Merry Leaflet*, published in spring, summer, fall and winter, provides news about programs and developments at Merry Lea. Jennifer Halteman Schrock is its editor and the author of articles without bylines. Look online at [www.goshen.edu/merrylea/latest](http://www.goshen.edu/merrylea/latest) for more news.

One person who had an impact on her was Warren Gartner, who works with Indiana's Division of Fish and Wildlife in Indianapolis. Through an informal dinner table conversation, Johnson and Gartner connected on the topic of canned hunting, a controversial practice where hunters shoot at animals confined to a fenced-in area.

"He reeled me in and made me want to learn more," Johnson says. Later, she pursued canned hunting for a class project. She was also reminded that environmental education is not limited to formal settings; it can happen just as effectively in casual conversation.

### **Integrating knowledge and lifestyle**

Finally, integrative sessions challenge students to integrate their training in areas like energy consumption into their lifestyles. When possible, the group travels by public transportation. They take trains to Chicago and Washington

DC. Within cities, they walk and wait for buses. For some students, riding a public bus is a brand new experience.

Steury, who handles logistics, makes no apologies for the runaround and inconvenience bus and train schedules can cause. "This is a way to lessen our carbon footprints and to see how the majority of the world moves from one place to another," he says. Students are often struck by the masses of people they see depending on buses and subways, and they enjoy their interactions with commuters.

On March 7, the MAEE faculty and students returned from their most recent integrative session, a four-day trip to Washington D.C. If the learning goals outlined beforehand hold true, they've come back louder, more comfortable with U.S. politics, more optimistic, more

networked, and more effective in lobbying for the betterment of the environment. Ω



Above, Miranda Davies, California Twp., Mich., Aradhana Roberts, Dehra Dun, India, and Janie Beck Kreider, Goshen, Ind., on one of many buses during a trip to Washington D.C. Photo by Paul Steury.

## Three Schools Implement Environmental Education in Beautifully Varied Forms

*By Jonathon Schramm*

Late last August, the MAEE students and several faculty spent the day visiting three intriguing schools in Grand Rapids, Mich. Each has been integrating the "standard" school curriculum into environmental contexts for many years. All three act as upper elementary magnet schools for larger school districts. Two are connected to a large urban district, and the third is part of a large suburban district.

These contexts affect the resources available to the teachers in these schools, from the academic preparedness of their students to budgets for supplies to access to technology. Yet one of the most important lessons for us all from the visits was that the environment can be a fantastic arena for learning. Furthermore, outcomes are not dependent on the resources available as much as they are on thoughtful

preparation of curriculum and creative integration of student activities into the larger contexts around the school.

For example, at Goodwillie Environmental School in Forest Hills, Mich., students spend the entire year building their own birch bark canoe from the ground up. This experience culminates in a canoe trip down the nearby Grand River that guides the students tangibly and naturally into watershed-scale thinking.

At Blandford School, a public school in Grand Rapids, Mich., situated adjacent to the property of a nature center, students learn local natural and human history throughout the year. They have abundant opportunity to reinforce that learning by teaching younger students who visit the nearby nature center.

At the Zoo School in Grand Rapids, students gain first-hand experience of animal science and care, as well

as applied research skills, by working with the professional biologists and zookeepers whose offices are directly above their classrooms.

In all three cases, we saw how dedicated, creative teachers, given a high degree of autonomy by their parent districts, are stimulating learning among their students. These experiences not only result in high marks on standardized tests; they also incubate in students the ability to engage their world. This is a skill that will last far beyond their few years at these schools. In other words, we came away very inspired to continue our pursuit of these same goals at Merry Lea and beyond! Ω

*Dr. Jonathon Schramm teaches in Merry Lea's MAEE and SSR programs. His background is in plant ecology and science education.*

# Former Grads Apply Environmental Education in New Settings



Matt McQueen, right, shares a computer program with a visitor on the Science2Go bus. Crowds waited half an hour to see inside the bus during its visit to the City of Goshen's First Friday celebration, March 1.

Environmental education has made a shift in the past few years, both at Merry Lea and elsewhere. So says Lisa Zinn, who has been part of the Masters in Environmental Education faculty since the program's inception.

"All of us who created the program had nature center background," she reports. "We envisioned our students working in parks and natural settings, as trail guides and interpreters. Since then, our students have forced us to see that the environmental education sphere is bigger than that."

Below are updates on two graduates of the MAEE program, doing environmental education in unexpected contexts: a health center and a bus.

## **Matt McQueen, Class of 2012**

Matt McQueen, South Bend, Ind., came to Merry Lea's MAEE program as an eighth grade science teacher. Currently, he works for ETHOS, Inc., which stands for Encouraging Technology and Hands On Science. In his job as a resource coordinator,

his "ecosystem" is a bus that ranges throughout Elkhart County and sometimes beyond.

The Science2Go bus is a mobile science laboratory that was developed by Elkhart County school districts and businesses when funding for field trips dwindled. The full-sized bus is packed with computers, digital microscopes, curriculum and other science equipment.

McQueen both develops lessons for the bus and teaches on the bus. He also gives teacher professional development sessions and visits community events utilizing the bus.

One of McQueen's goals is to incorporate more environmental education into the bus' curriculum. He hopes to have children studying animal habitats, rocks and minerals, plant life cycles and surface water on the bus. At two upcoming stops, the Environmental Education Association of Indiana and the Middlebury River Fest, the bus will be used for observing and analyzing water samples.

## **Nayla Jiménez Cabezas Class of 2009**

Nayla Jiménez Cabezas has found her niche at Maple City Health Care Center, Goshen, Ind. This is a unique medical practice with a commitment to serve a particular community on the north side of Goshen. Its focus is on nurturing healthy communities rather than just treating diseases. Here's how Cabezas reports on her work:

**What are you doing vocationally right now?** My official title is "Guardian of Program." In some organizations this is known as the chief operations officer. I am part of an administrative team of four.

**Are you able to incorporate your training in environmental education at Merry Lea? If so, how?**

While studying at Merry Lea, it became clear to me that meaningful relationships can lead to sustainable change. Maple City Health Care Center has a strong focus on meaningful relationships. Along with empowerment and integration, it is one of the three core values that we use to guide our shared work. I have found myself continuously learning what "meaningful relationships" can mean and what they can look like.

Some of the more concrete ways in which interests sparked while at Merry Lea show up in my job include:

- Helping to coordinate and plant several rain gardens. We now have a total of four rain gardens. Creating them was a great deal of fun. We worked with community members, patients, and staff to prepare and plant them.

- Starting a community garden. We are in our fourth year and proudly boast 36 raised beds, a couple of fruit trees, a beehive, and a number of experiments.

**Did getting to know Merry Lea's landscape change the way you approach other settings?**

The natural landscape at Merry Lea is impressive. However, it is the people I learned with and from that truly cemented that knowledge and made me want to be intentional and careful with my world. Ω

# My Sons Love Minecraft

Environmental Education How-tos by Paul Steury

What is Minecraft? It's a virtual game – kind of like Legos, but in a computer – where children create a world of their own with animals, mountains, rivers, rain and zombies!

They play with their friends on a virtual landscape, each from his own computer. They love it! They could play for hours. But Dad gets frustrated because he desires them to have that same crazy love for the outdoors.

Where we live shapes who we are. Ruth Wilson, an education philosopher, describes the effects of our setting this way:

*Places shape human history— both collectively and individually. People who grow up in one part of the world and within a particular culture develop a different set of attitudes, values, and behaviors than do people growing up in a contrasting part of the world and within a different cultural group. Similarly, children growing up in an inner city tend to differ in some ways from children growing up in a rural community. These differences are often reflected in what the children fear, like, or dislike, as well as in the types of skills they develop through their own set of experiences.<sup>1</sup>*

So what do I want my sons to know about the place we call home?

We are an urban family, so we spend more time indoors than I did when I was a child. That means it's my job to get them outside where we can go to the woods and play zombies! It's also my job to ask myself what my boys gain from their fascination with the virtual world. I believe they love the discovery and ownership that they find in Minecraft, so these are things that I push when I get them outdoors.

The Principles of Place-Based Education<sup>2</sup> help me guide my boys as well. Here are some of them:

- *Learning is personally relevant to the learner and provides the tools for lifelong, self directed learning.*
- *Learning is interdisciplinary, hands-on and engaging.*
- *Learning involves the intergenerational and cross-cultural sharing of knowledge and experiences.*
- *Learning experiences are tailored to the local audience (my sons!)*
- *Learning is grounded in and supports the development of a love for one's place.*
- *Local learning serves as the foundation for understanding and participating appropriately in regional and global issues.*
- *Learning experiences contribute to the community's overall vitality and environmental quality and support the community's role in fostering global environmental quality.*

How do I encourage this kind of learning with my boys? This past summer when it was 106 degrees outside, we jumped in the car and headed to Bonneyville Mill County Park to follow a tributary of the Elkhart

River. For four hours, we played in the river. We found holes in the river that were cooler and darker than most places; we found branches to jump from to test Earth's gravity; and we noticed how much cooler we were with water on our bodies. The shade provided by maples and black cherries reminded us of the importance of trees.

Often my boys and I go to my mom's to jump in a row boat called The Steury. We go off on a pirate adventure across the Goshen Dam Pond to "discover" natural dirt slides and swing on grape vines just like pirates did.

We can also go to the river and become National Geographic explorers looking for fish and mussels. In the spring, we are Knights for the Native Species and behead the garlic mustard with our swords!

Minecraft has its advantages. It encourages computer literacy, and it provides a social bond with other gamers. Better yet, it offers me strategies that help me connect the Minecraft world to the world that I love outside of the computer and the home. Ω

## Staff Celebrates Winter Weather



If Merry Lea has a team sport, it is broomball, a hockey-like game played with brooms, balls and shoes instead of sticks, pucks and skates. This winter's freezing weather offered the best broomball season in years, and staff squeezed several lunchtime games into their workdays. Broomball came to Merry Lea via Lisa Zinn, second from left, who learned the game from her years in upstate New York and northern Michigan.

Others pictured are, left to right, Jane Litwiller, David Stoesz, Jonathon Schramm, Dave Ostergren, Tom Hartzell, Laurina Graber-Ditzler and Maria Tice.

<sup>1</sup> Wilson, Ruth. "A Sense of Place." Early Childhood Education Journal, Vol. 24 Issue 3, p191-194, 1997.

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.promiseofplace.org/what\\_is\\_pbe/principles\\_of\\_place\\_based\\_education](http://www.promiseofplace.org/what_is_pbe/principles_of_place_based_education)

# Women's Workshop Embraces Darkness

by Janie Beck Kreider

On the last weekend in January, Merry Lea hosted 37 women for Worshipping with Creation: A Women's Spirituality Retreat. The weekend was designed to be an inspiring, restful, rejuvenating time for women to come together, discuss, create, hike, eat, sing and worship.

The input included:

- An interactive bible study on the creation accounts in Genesis with Mennonite biblical scholar Jackie Wyse-Rhodes
- A creative workshop on worship and ritual with Hilary Scarsella, a recent seminary graduate whose focus is on worship
- A table fellowship liturgy on the sacredness and spirituality of food with Krista Showalter Ehst, who blends her seminary background and interest in food systems on a farm in Bally, Pa.
- And a meditative night hike with Janie Beck Kreider, a recent seminary graduate and Merry Lea staff member.

The following article is a reflection on one piece of the weekend: the night hike.

The nighttime has a way of heightening our senses. When we are not so narrowly focused on what we see, we hear new things. We smell new things. We feel new things. We become aware of new things. Our eyes adjust to the dark, and the moon starts to illuminate our path. When we do not speak, we open ourselves to hear what God—and creation—are saying to us.

The nighttime is a sacred, holy time. It is a wonderful time to be outside, exploring the woods, gazing at the stars. Yet especially as women, we do not often have the opportunity to experience the dark of night without a shield of fear and hypervigilance—and a strained awareness of what is going on around us.

Participating in the night hike at the women's spirituality retreat provided a space for women to reclaim the joy and majesty of the dark. Before bundling up and setting out into the

## Night Hike

Dark figures crunching slowly  
through woods and wetland  
Marching over bridge  
feet in unison  
Spreading out one by one  
circling the meadow  
Standing in solidarity  
apart, yet together  
Walking in community once again  
over bridge, though wetland and  
woods  
A part of trees, snow and landscape  
one with God, nature and each other.

- by Betty Schrag, retreat participant

cold, the group sang the hymn, Joyful is the Dark, a mysterious melody with beautiful lyrics:

*Joyful is the dark, holy, hidden God  
rolling cloud of night beyond all  
naming  
majesty in darkness, energy of love  
Word-in-flesh the mystery  
proclaiming.*

Instead of setting out into the night with anxiety and fear, we walked together with a sense of belonging and safety. We felt empowered by the women surrounding us. We lowered our guard and defenses, and entered into what the darkness had to offer.

The night hike provided a worshipful space where we were stripped of our defenses and fears. It connected us together in a circle of empowerment, where we were surrounded by the beauty of a restored meadow blanketed in snow. Standing there in the winter cold, worshipping silently in a circle of darkness, both women and creation were uncovered, simply being, seen by God. Ω



Kathy Beck, Archbold, Ohio, and Kay Fleming, Goshen, Ind., spent some free time sketching and coloring mandellas during the women's spirituality retreat.

# Merry Lea Offers New Ways to Learn About Birds

Our Nature Notes column will return at a later date.

Spring birding season is upon us, and this year, Merry Lea offers two new opportunities to connect with the feathered world. Both of them have a citizen science twist:

## Adopt-A-Net

Each summer Merry Lea participates in the MAPS<sup>1</sup> national bird banding research program to help monitor bird populations. You can support bird banding research at Merry Lea by sponsoring a bird net.

In recent years, we have left the nets set up throughout the summer so that they only need to be opened and closed on banding days. This saves countless hours of staff time that would be required to set up and take down nets. However, it also means we need to have 20 nets instead of sharing 10 nets between the two banding sites. In addition, the nets don't last as long because they are exposed to the sun and rain all summer.

We are asking for your help in keeping our nets up to research quality standards. If you donate the \$75 cost of a new net, we will keep you informed all summer about how your net is doing. We will send you photos of birds that are caught and banded from your net, and we will see whose net catches the most birds. Adopting a net is a great way to join in this exciting research. You are also welcome to visit during banding times and see your net in action.

## Citizen Science Bird Photo Contest

Having difficulty justifying the price of that new camera lens you want? Did it occur to you that your photos might have scientific value as well as aesthetic value?

That may be true if you choose to enter Merry Lea's photography contest, focused on birds eating insects. In addition to the joy and beauty that nature photography affords, this photo collection will assist in the study of food chains that sustain native species.

Dr. Doug Tallamy, a professor of entomology at the University of Delaware, will judge the contest and make use of the photos. Tallamy is the author of *Bringing Nature Home: How You Can Sustain Wildlife with Native Plants* (Timber Press, 2009). His research has focused on the effects of native versus non-native plantings in sustaining wildlife. On average, non-native plants will support four species of native insects. In contrast, over 500 species of insects have been counted on native oak trees.

The availability of insects affects bird populations and has contributed to the decline of many species. We know that most terrestrial birds—even seed-eaters—rear their young on insects, but what, exactly, are birds eating? That's hard to track, and that's why Tallamy is collecting photographs of birds eating insects.

Participants can submit photos anytime between now and May 31. All entries must depict birds eating insects, spiders or other invertebrates. Ideally, the photo



**This net could be yours!** Dr. Dave Miller's firm grip soothes a panicked songbird as he untangles it from a bird banding net near the Kesling Prairie. Merry Lea's former program director is retired but still assists with bird banding research.

should reveal what the bird is eating. Two \$50 prizes are available: one for artistic quality and one for the scientific information provided.

All participants are invited to a birding party in June (date to be announced) where we will celebrate both the team birding results and the best of show from the photography contest. See complete registration details at <http://merrylea.goshen.edu/news-events/upcoming-events>.

## And Our Old Favorites...

**The Spring Birding Challenge** is now underway, but it's not too late to enter a team. Groups of up to four adults and any number of children compete to see the most species of birds within a 100-mile radius of Merry Lea. At least two members of the team must see each bird. Teams can compete at the novice, experienced or super-crazy birder level. Email [lizarz@goshen.edu](mailto:lizarz@goshen.edu) for more information.

**The Midwest Birding Expedition** will travel to Grayling, Mich., this year in search of the endangered Kirtland's warbler, *Setophaga kirtlandii*. The dates are Thursday, May 16 to Sunday, May 19 and the cost is \$325, double occupancy. To join the group, call 260-799-5869 ASAP.

<sup>1</sup> MAPS stand for Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship.



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## Upcoming Public Programs at Merry Lea

*Please pre-register for all programs. Call 260-799-5869 or email [jenniferhs@goshen.edu](mailto:jenniferhs@goshen.edu). See page 7 for information on birding opportunities.*

### **Friends of Merry Lea Dinner & Hike Saturday, March 23**

#### **Hike, 4:30 at Rieth Village; Dinner 6 p.m. Farmstead**

This year's Friends event will focus on Merry Lea in relation to the larger northern Indiana community. The hike will skirt some of our borders. The presentation following the dinner will highlight Merry Lea's new Sustainability Semester in Residence and its weeklong canoe trip through the Elkhart River Watershed. Free to Friends; \$15 others.

### **Spring Break Frog Hikes**

#### **Thursday, April 4 and Friday, April 5, 1 to 3 p.m.**

Many schools are on break this week, so our frog hike is geared for families. Bring the gang, and we'll hunt down peepers, wood frogs and everything else that croaks. Hopefully you'll get to hold a frog as well as hear it. \$5 adults, \$2 children.

### **Earth Day Hike**

#### **Sunday, April 21, 3 to 5 p.m., Farmstead Site**

Celebrate Earth Day by reacquainting yourself with Indiana's spring plants and animals. We'll pay special attention to wildflowers given the season. \$5 adults, \$2 under 18

### **Organisms Found in a Vernal Pool at Merry Lea**

#### **Monday, April 8, 3 to 5 p.m., Learning Center Building**

Pre-K to 12 educator Carol Good-Elliott focused her graduate research on the Luckey's Lane Dipping Pond: a mysterious world of fairy shrimp and salamanders. She will share her findings. Volunteer Training Series: free to volunteers, others \$5.

### **NatureFest**

#### **Friday, 6:30 p.m. to Saturday, 3:30 p.m., Farmstead**

NatureFest offers people of all ages a chance to encounter Indiana landscapes through engaging, hands-on activities and hikes. Canoeing and geocaching are NatureFest favorites. Camp overnight if you wish. Breakfast and lunch are provided. Kids pay \$5 any time, the whole time. Adults \$10-\$25 depending on activities. Ω