



Wild Art News

Fall 2023



Notes from the Editor

Fall greetings to all of you! Please let me introduce myself as your new editor. My name is Sara Anne Hook, Professor Emerita, Indiana University, and recently retired after 37 years as a faculty member at IUPUI. My passion is botanical illustration, especially native plants. Fortunately, our yard is filled with lots of specimens, so I have a “learning laboratory” right outside my door. I also monitor and report on the status of our redbud trees for Nature’s Notebook. (https://www.usanpn.org/natures_notebook, accessed 11/22/23) One of my other interests is deltiology - I am a deltiologist, which is a person who collects postcards. You will notice that some of my postcards will be featured in *Wild Art News*, such as the peaceful scene of swans above and the bear at the end of this issue. I have been the editor of many publications over the years, currently for *Indy Postcard Collector*. Sara

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at shook@butler.edu.

Fall 2023 IWA President's Message

It was so good to see our members who could attend the 40th Annual Indiana Wildlife Artists Show. We had a good time meeting, having a delicious catered lunch, hanging the artwork and enjoying the reception. The board put a lot of effort into the event, and I hope everyone enjoyed the day. We are thinking it might be a good idea to have lunch at Minnetrista again so that we have more time to be together. Let me know what you think.

I hope you have had a chance to look over our new website. The address is the same, but the layout is new and clean and I think it presents our group quite well. Jenny Moore Smith spent so much time coordinating our ideas with our new web designer.

Another October has come and gone. It is a favorite time of the year for me. A lot of this stems from when I rode horses with friends many miles in Ohio and Indiana. Often, we rode most of the day and didn't see anyone else. It is surprising how much space there is in the southern parts of these two states that isn't developed. Fall is so good for trail riding as it is cooler, generally drier, and most of the bugs are gone. The horses seem to enjoy the rides also.

I did manage a trip to Brown County with my friend, Ed Allen, the third week of October. We hit the color at its peak and enjoyed hiking, campfires and just enjoying every minute of being outside. It seemed like you could just find beautiful spots to take pictures virtually everywhere – and we did!

I love living where there are four distinct seasons. Each has its own special characteristics. We are in a transition time now, and winter is not quite here (although temperatures the last few days are hinting that it is approaching). Thanksgiving is right around the corner and I hope you enjoy family and friends and a time of reflection.

It isn't too early to be thinking about what you might like to create for our next show. We are surrounded by an abundance of flora and fauna and it's a privilege to both see it and interpret it in our own individual ways.

Feeling thankful for all of you –

Marianne, Marianne Darling Ballenger, President, Indiana Wildlife Artists



Resources for Wildlife Artists

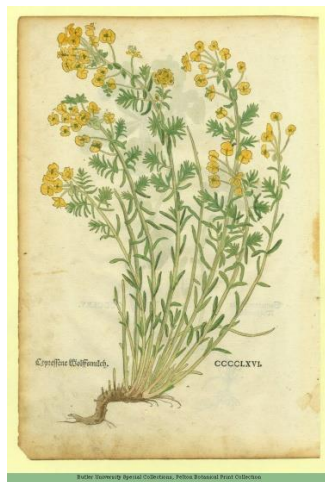
The Friesner Herbarium at Butler University contains a systematic collection of over 100,000 dried, pressed and preserved plant specimens. It is the third largest herbarium in Indiana, which started as the personal collection of Dr. Ray C. Friesner, Professor and Chair of the Botany Department at Butler University from 1920-1952. According to the website, “the collection has samples of 96% of the approximately 2500 taxa of native Indiana plants.” (<https://herbarium.butler.edu/>, accessed 11/22/23) The Herbarium is open to the public by appointment by calling (317) 940-8302 or emailing Marcia Moore, Interim Herbarium Director at mmoore@butler.edu. If you are not able to visit in person, you access the Herbarium Specimen Digital Collection, which now contains over 43,000 images and data about the Indiana specimens, which is most of the Indiana collection, with new specimens and images added each year. (<https://palni.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/herbarium4>, accessed 11/22/23)

Another resource, also on Butler University’s campus, is its collection of botanical illustrations, with plates from the 1500s. The Jeanette Siron Pelton Botanical Print Collection originated as a gift from Dr. John F. Pelton and the Jeanette Siron Pelton Memorial Fund in 1969. It is located in the Special Collections, Rare Books, and University Archives room on the third floor of the Irwin Library. As stated on the website,

The Pelton collection comprises seventy-one original plates from herbals, plant histories, and botanical magazines published in the 15th through the 19th centuries, illustrating technological developments in early modern botanical, pharmacological, and medical sciences as well as the history and development of botanical illustration from woodcuts to copperplate engravings, to chromolithographs.

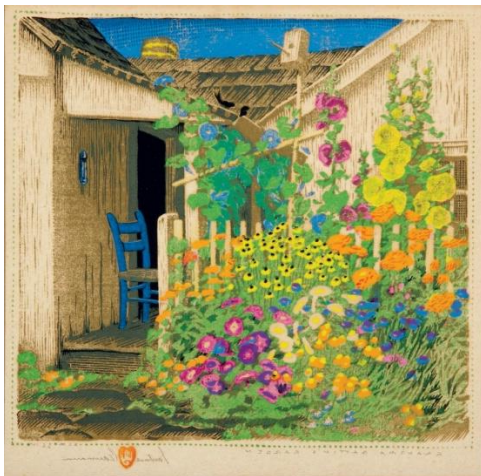
(<https://palni.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/botanicals2>, accessed 11/22/23)

Although the Special Collections, Rare Books, and University Archives room has limited hours, the archivist will be pleased to show you as few examples. You are welcome to search or just browse the collection online. The collection is exquisite, with exacting detail and colors so vibrant that the items might have been painted yesterday!



According to the website, “Scott Namestnik’s engaging presentation recounts the quest to document the Indiana flora, from Charles Deem through today’s intrepid researchers, asking how we light “the spark” that will ensure we can pass the torch to a next generation of botanists.” (<https://indiananativeplants.org/2023/the-state-of-indiana-botany-in-2023/>, accessed 10/31/23) Scott, who is with the Indiana Natural Heritage Data Center, Division of Nature Preserves, gave his presentation titled “The State of Indiana Botany in 2023” at the open house for the remodeled Friesner Herbarium. You can view Scott’s PowerPoint slides at https://indiananativeplants.org/wp-content/uploads/20230308_The-State-of-Indiana-Botany-w-intro_compressed.pdf.

We love to go to Brown County, Indiana, especially to the Brown County Art Gallery. (<https://browncountyartgallery.org/>, accessed 11/23/23) In addition to its permanent collections of historic and contemporary Indiana artists, it has regular juried exhibits that celebrate the changing seasons. My favorite rooms are those that are devoted to the woodblock prints of Gustave Baumann from his time in Brown County and William H. Zimmerman (1937–2011), considered the “Audubon” of Indiana. According to the website, Zimmerman “illustrated a host of important books, including *The Birds of Indiana* and *Waterfowl of North America*, along with the woodpecker volume of *The Life Histories of North American Birds*.” The collection rotates regularly and “it is a step into nature through the eyes of a great artist.”



Indiana Native Plant Society, <https://indiananativeplants.org/> (accessed 11/22/23).

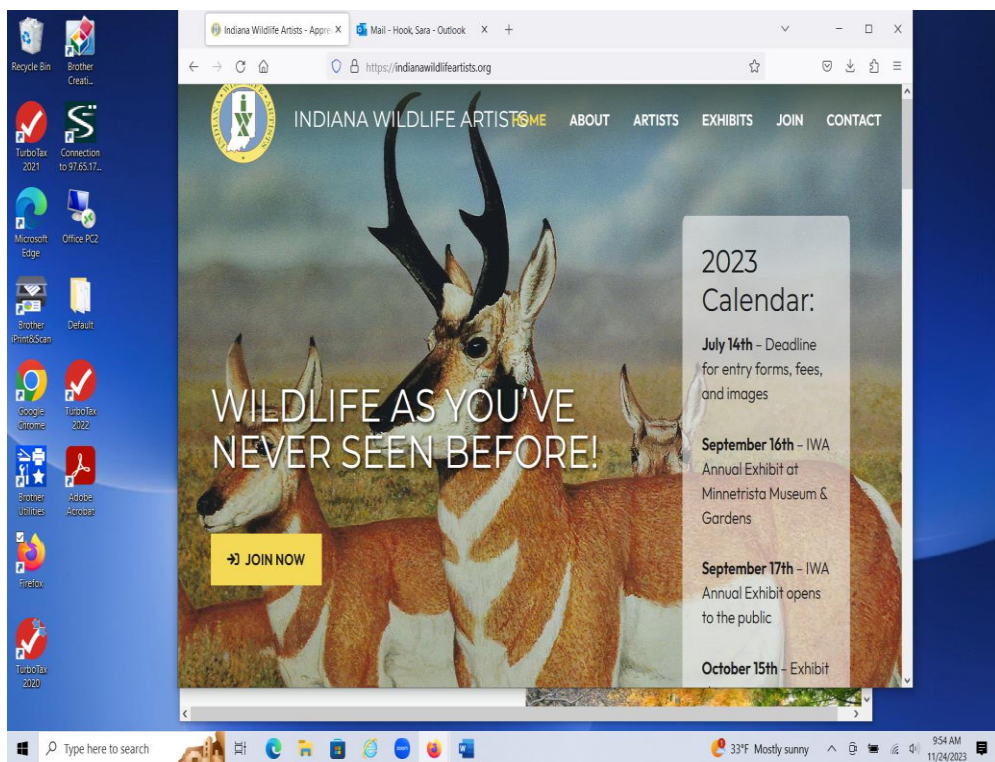
Subscription to *Outdoor Indiana*, Indiana Department of Natural Resources, <https://www.in.gov/dnr/communications/outdoor-indiana-magazine-archives/> (accessed 11/22/23).

Indiana Phenology, <https://www.indianaphenology.org/> (accessed 11/22/23).

Please let me know any resources that you use that would be helpful to other member of Indiana Wildlife Artists so that I can feature them in a future issue of *Wild Art News*.

Redesign of Indiana Wildlife Artists Website

Be sure to access the redesigned website for Indiana Wildlife Artists. (<https://indianawildlifeartists.org/>, accessed 11/23/23) Congratulations to Jenny Moore Smith and other IWA members who contributed ideas and coordinated with the web designer. The redesign is fresh, clean and contemporary, and uses best practices in “information architecture” so that the website is easy to navigate. Note how easy it is to find information about upcoming events, membership, artists, the prospectus for 2024, who to contact, links to issues of *Indy Wild News*, winning artwork from 2020-2023, and more. The images are especially stunning and the tagline of “Wildlife as You’ve Never Seen Before!” is particularly compelling. The website makes it easy for people to join or for current members to renew and strikes a wonderful balance between robust content while not being overwhelming or cluttered. Bravo!



2024 Prospectus Posted

The prospectus for the 41st Annual Fine Art Exhibit by Indiana Wildlife Artists is posted on IWA’s website. (<https://indianawildlifeartists.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/2024-Prospectus-FINAL.pdf>, accessed 11/26/23) Once again, the exhibit will be hosted at the Minnetrista Museum & Gardens, 1200 Minnetrista Parkway, Muncie, Indiana 47303. The IWA’s Annual Meeting will be Saturday, August 24, 2024, with a business meeting, catered lunch, hanging the exhibit, presentation and awards ceremony. Entries are due after June 1, 2024, but no later than July 20, 2024. Please read the instructions carefully.

40th IWA Annual Exhibit

The 40th anniversary exhibit of the Indiana Wildlife Artists (IWA) was held at the Minnetrista Museum & Gardens in Muncie, Indiana, on Saturday, September 16, 2023. Our experience at the event was enhanced by the wonderful staff of Minnetrista and the opportunity to spend some time in the gardens on a lovely early autumn day. Important issues were address at the annual business meeting, including election of new officers for 2024, a review of the upcoming website redesign, a discussion of how to attract new members, whether the monetary awards given for the exhibit are appropriate, whether there should be Best in Show and a People's Choice awards, especially since the exhibit is open to the public for several weeks.

Fourteen members offered their work for the exhibition, including photography, ceramics, painting (oil, acrylic, watercolor, gouache), drawing and pastel. Two judges examined each submission with great care. IWA was honored to have Patricia Nelson as its Fine Arts Judge and James Edwards as its Naturalist Judge. Given the quality of the artwork that they had to evaluate, their decision must have been difficult.



After the business meeting, we retreated to a conference room for a catered lunch. The tables were set so elegantly, and the food was both beautiful and delicious. Members and guests hesitated to eat the dessert, a tulip made of chocolate filled with chocolate mousse and topped with fresh berries. Artwork was expertly hung, with a presentation and awards ceremony that followed. Thank you to Diana Hunter for providing the photographs!

Be sure to look at IWA's website to see the winners in each category.

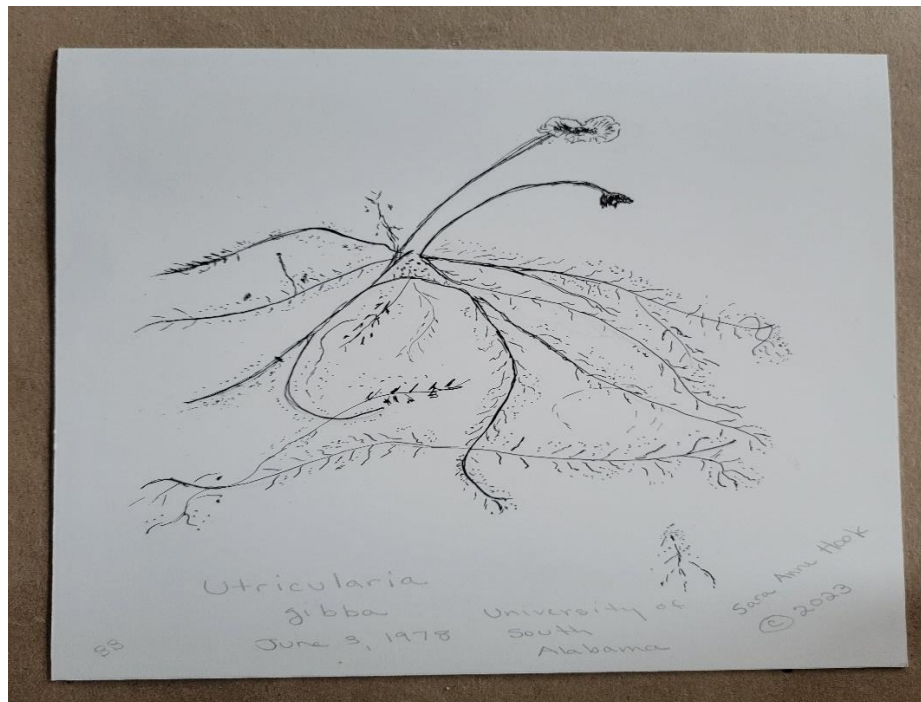


ASBA Annual Conference 2023

In October, I attended the American Society of Botanical Artists (ASBA) conference in Mobile, Alabama, with Deanna, my BBF (Best Botanical Friend). I have been a member of ASBA for several years, but this was my first time to attend the conference. We stayed at the historic Battle House Hotel, which is right downtown. Accommodations were outstanding and the food was plentiful and delicious. I took two classes from Heeyoung Kim (<https://www.heeyoungkim.net/>, accessed 11/25/23), with the first class titled “Get the Curves Right,” so that leaves and petals look accurate, and the second class on composition. It is her opinion that as long as a specimen is rendered accurately, it is fine to arrange leaves, stems, bulbs, flowers, etc. into a pleasing work and recommends adding a small bee or butterfly to add interest and balance, especially if there is too much “white space” on your drawing/painting.

The class I chose for Saturday was held at the Mobile Botanical Gardens. Students from the University of South Alabama had set up individual microscopes for us and brought stacks of mounted specimen sheets as well as live specimens for us to draw from, particularly parts of pitcher plants. How lovely the tip of a pitcher plant looked under the microscope! Our instructor, Deborah Ravin, a medical and biological illustrator, showed us how to “scale up” a drawing from a tiny specimen and to draw with dip pen and ink. See my drawing of *Utricularia gibba* below. Laugh and enjoy!

In the meantime, Deanna took courses in watercolor and colored pencil. We are still under the “glow” of this experience – and from meeting the top botanical artists in the world. We are already planning for 2024, which will be in Pittsburgh, where ASBA will be hosted by the Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation (<https://www.huntbotanical.org/>, accessed 11/25/23)



Contribute to the Indiana Wildlife Artists newsletter:

If you would like to write an article or be interviewed for a future issue of *Wild Art News*, please contact Sara Anne Hook, Newsletter Editor, at shook@butler.edu.

