



Celebrating summer at Wildflower Woods



The Gene Stratton-Porter State Historic Site has been a hive of activity this summer!

From outdoor concerts, to the inaugural Junior Indiana Master Naturalist class, to an evening of conversation among new friends and old in Gene's cabin, we've been busy with projects that we hope reflect our namesake's adventurous spirit and love of lifelong learning.

At left: Carol, a participant in area artist Rebecca Stockert's watercolor workshop, sketches in Gene's garden

on a perfect June day. You can take home some of Stockert's art inspired by Gene – our gift shop offers a set of notecards of her beautiful watercolor paintings. Call or visit the site for details. (Photo courtesy of Dave Fox.)



SAVE
THE
DATE

The Gene Stratton-Porter Society annual meeting and volunteer appreciation dinner will be held at the site on Sunday, Nov. 4, 2018. More details will be shared in our fall newsletter.

We look forward to this chance to share GSP Society news and to thank our volunteers in person!

Naturalist's Corner

Back to school supplies are showing up in stores, and Labor Day is right around the corner. Summer seems to be already half over, yet the lazy days are still stretching out before us.

July is a busy time for the site for regular visits and a few group tours. This year, we added a few extra programs to our schedule in the month of July. Missing from the July lineup was the Stargazing & Night Hike. Not to worry, though: It will make an appearance Aug. 18, just after Gene's birthday celebration on Aug. 17. The Fort Wayne Astronomical Society will once again be out to showcase the stars, and it sounds like both Jupiter and Saturn will be making an appearance.

We invite you out not only to enjoy one of our many events, but to watch the progress of the Hemingway wetlands, the summer wildflowers blooming or Gene's beautiful gardens bursting with flowers.

-Tiffany Parker, Interpretive Naturalist

The magnificent monarch



A note from GSP Society Secretary and monarch enthusiast Sandie Kern:

Be on the lookout for this unique orange and black butterfly! According to the Journey North Migration Map on *learner.org*, these beauties arrived in our area May 24 through June 6, which coincides with my findings on June 6 of two small caterpillars on my milkweed! They are now in chrysalis. This past week, I found some eggs. Today there are four newly hatched caterpillars. This is great news! I have not seen monarchs in my garden this early for three years.

All of the reports I have seen are feeling more positive about the numbers of the monarchs for this year. Although they continue to be low overall, this gives us hope for their survival.

Our GSP site has milkweed, and I know Tiffany Parker, site naturalist, checks it periodically for eggs and caterpillars. The milkweed is a great attraction of monarchs to a garden, of course, because the mama will lay eggs on the leaves as food supply for the caterpillars. A note about growing milkweed in your garden... it will pop up everywhere. However, it is easy to pull if it shows up in an unwanted area. Be sure to check the leaves before you pull the plant! There could be eggs or caterpillars on the leaves, usually on the underside. Pull the leaf up by the point with your fingertips (so as not to squish a little guy) and peek under it. A couple of ways to spot leaves that are being munched on by monarch caterpillars are: 1) There are small holes, many times near the leaf rib, and 2) Spotting caterpillar "dirt," or what comes out the back end as the front end munches. It looks like tiny pieces of dirt that have fallen on the plant.

You will want to attract the adult butterflies to your garden with some tasty nectar plants. In my garden, they like zinnias, the butterfly bush, red salvia, bee

balm, the milkweed flower, coneflowers, and black-eyed susans. You will note that some of these are in Gene's gardens!

For more information and help with questions, here are a couple of websites I use frequently:

learner.org There are many topics found on this site. Click on "Journey North" for the monarch butterfly.

monarchbutterflygarden.net This one also sells items to help with raising monarchs, if you are so inclined.

These butterflies face survival problems as their food sources, especially for the caterpillar stage, and overwintering areas dwindle. I hope you are inspired to do what you can to help them out. You know Gene would!

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A note from GSP Society President

I finally made it to an event that I've had to miss my previous years as a board member of the Gene Stratton-Porter Society. "An Evening in Gene's Gardens" became "an evening in the cabin" because of rainy, stormy weather, but any time spent in Gene's elegant home is time well spent. As usual, our volunteers came through to make the atmosphere welcoming.

As guests enjoyed music, beverages, and hors d'oeuvres, we had the pleasure of a surprise visitor: Gene's great-granddaughter, Monica Berg, who flew in from Los Angeles. Monica came not as a guest to the event, but as a volunteer. Monica told me she had made a promise to her father, Gene's grandson, to stay involved with the site and help keep Gene's memory alive. She dressed the crypt at the site with beautiful flowers before she returned to the west coast. Thank you, Monica, for your help as a volunteer, and your inspiring commitment to your family's legacy.

While the summer is waning, there are still opportunities to enjoy the site and make new memories. I hope I'll see many of you for Gene's birthday open house in mid-August, or maybe at our Autumn Tea. Please check the calendar of events or like our Facebook page to stay current.

In appreciation,

Angela Mapes Turner



*Join us on Saturday, Sept. 15, at 12 p.m. for our
Autumn Tea!*

Reservations are \$25 per person. Our tea parties have been described as elegant and fun, with delicious food and drink. Gather a few of your friends to fill a table, and spend an autumn afternoon making memories.

*Make your reservation by Sept. 7 by calling
260-854-3790.*

*Check out our full calendar of upcoming
events inside the newsletter!*

We'd love to hear from you! You can reach us at gspmemorialsociety@gmail.com or at the site, 260-854-3790. Be sure to "like" our Facebook page, "Gene Stratton-Porter Society – Rome City" for the latest event information and updates!

Select editions of Gene's books will be on sale in the gift shop during her birthday month of August. Call or visit the site for more details!



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