



# Christy Woods

## Outdoor Teaching Laboratory



### Legend

**OGH** - Orchid Greenhouse  
**TRGH** - Teaching/Research Greenhouse  
**Offices**- Staff; classroom

### Hours

M - F 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
 Sat. 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
 Sun. 1:00 - 5:00 p.m. (Apr - Oct)

## Christy Woods

a FSEEC Property

c/o Department of Biology  
 Ball State University  
 Muncie, IN 47306  
 (765) 285-8820  
 or  
 (765) 285-2641



## FSEEC

Field Station and Environmental  
 Education Center

<http://www.bsu.edu/fseec/environment>

## Introduction/History

Christy Woods is a 17 acre portion of the original property given to the State of Indiana by the five Ball Brothers in 1918. The woods and its plant life had been mistreated, mainly due to grazing by hogs. Dr. O.B. Christy, former head of the Sciences, promoted the idea of preserving the wooded area for educational purposes, and beginning in 1919, plans commenced for converting the original pastured woodland into what became known as The Arboretum. With the efforts of Dr. Christy and many others, trees, shrubs and wildflowers native to deciduous forests in Indiana were transplanted from various places throughout the state. Christy Woods has served as an outdoor laboratory for Ball State students and for the Muncie community almost from its conception in 1919.

The name of the property officially became Christy Woods, in honor of Dr. O.B. Christy, on April 25, 1940. The trees, shrubs and wildflowers planted here are protected and the process of restoring the woods continues to this day.

Today, Christy Woods is one of five properties managed by FSEEC, BSU's Field Station and Environmental Education Center, which was founded in the year 2000.

## Facilities

Christy Woods includes two main greenhouses: Teaching and Research Greenhouse (TRGH), and The Wheeler Orchid Collection and Species Bank (WOCSB). The TRGH contains the main teaching

collection (used in a wide variety of classrooms, including biology, art, photography, landscape architecture), and faculty and student research projects. The WOCSB is one of the finest collections of its type (wildtype species orchids), and contains over 1200 orchids, of which approximately 3/4 are wild-type species orchids. Both facilities are available for study and browsing when the staff is on duty.

## Present Uses

Christy Woods is an outdoor classroom and fills a variety of outdoor education opportunities. People of all ages and walks of life enjoy Christy Woods, especially in the spring and autumn.

Christy Woods includes an Eastern Hardwood forest, tallgrass prairie, abundant spring wildflowers, and small wetland areas. The focus of Christy Woods is to highlight the main ecosystems that one would have found in presettlement Indiana.

Christy Woods represents an Eastern Deciduous Forest. Historically, nearly 20 million acres of Indiana were forested. Today, only 4.4 million acres of forest remain (22%). The quality of Christy Woods as a remnant forest continues to increase. The Woods contains a spectacular display of numerous species of spring wildflowers and other native plants.

The tallgrass prairie area contains over 30 species of plants. These plants, and many more, would have been found in presettlement Indiana's 2 million acres of prairies. Many animal species, including hummingbirds, finches, butterflies, numerous

other insects, and small mammals (to name only a few) have arrived to take advantage of the food and cover that these plants provide.

The wetland areas in Christy Woods include a fen, pond, bog and ephemeral forested wetlands. These are just a few types of wetlands that one can find in Indiana. In pre-settlement times, Indiana had 5.6 million acres of wetlands; of those only 0.84 million acres (15%) remain in very fragmented pockets throughout the state.

Descriptive booklets illustrating plants commonly found in Eastern Hardwood Forests such as Christy Woods are available. They are: *A Field Guide to the Spring Wildflowers of Christy Woods*, and *A Field Guide to the Woody Plants of Christy Woods*. Please see a staff person to inquire about these references.

In order to preserve the plants and animals of Christy Woods, please

1. stay on the paths.
2. do not collect any live material.

Guided tours are available as an ongoing part of the educational outreach of Christy Woods. Please contact the FSEEC Office for more information or to schedule a tour (765) 285-2641. Bus parking is available.

Thank you. Enjoy your visit.