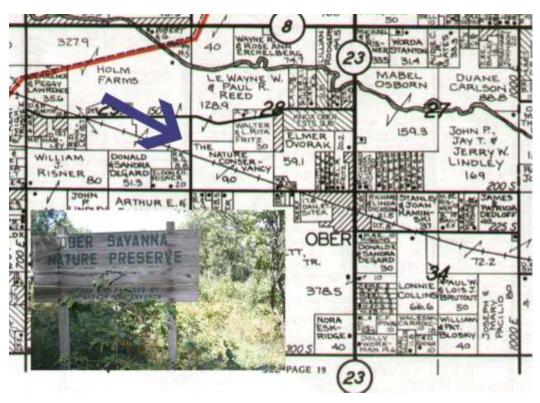
Starke County No. 38 -- **OBER SAVANNA**

Savanna - Now what is that? You have heard of savannas in Africa, but here in Indiana? Yes, right here in Starke County. In fact, there are several in Northern Indiana. For the most part, savannas occurred in Indiana's main prairie region in the northwestern part of the state. The plant geography of Indiana is a transition between the wide open prairies of Iowa and Illinois and the deciduous forests of Ohio and Pennsylvania. Early Indiana had prairies (almost 15 percent of the state) and forests. Savannas were interspersed between and shared some characteristics of both prairies and forests. Savannas have trees like a forest and many of the same grasses and wildflowers as a prairie. Typical trees are black and white oaks with scattered wild black cherry and sassafras. Typical shrubs are winged sumac, blueberries, and huckleberries. Wildflowers in the savannas are very different from the typical forest ones. They are more of the prairie type flowers. Lupines, puccoons and bird'sfoot violets welcome the spring, while coreopsis, sunflowers, blazing star and butterfly weed accent the summer. Fall is heralded by asters and goldenrods. Prairie grasses are also highlighted in the landscape. We probably have several small savannas in Starke County, isolated on some of the sand ridges, but one that gets all of the attention is the Ober Savanna.

Ober Savanna - Located just west of Ober, Indiana, this 59-acre parcel is owned by The Nature Conservancy and contains a high-quality remnant of a black oak savanna. Clusters of large black oaks grow among prairie grasses and wildflowers, such as little and big bluestem, Indian grass, porcupine grass, June grass, and puccoons. The rare prickly pear, yellow wild indigo, globally endangered fame flower, and wild indigo are found here, as are some rare, prairie-specific butterflies.



To find the Ober Savanna, drive west of Ober on 200 S., cross the RR tracks, and within a few hundred feet there is a small parking area on the north side of the road with the Ober Savanna sign. Follow the instructions on the sign.

Jim Shilling Starke County Historical Society

http://www.starkehistory.com http://www.scpl.lib.in.us/historical/