

Conservation Quarterly

April is Native Plant Month!



Eastern redbud (Cercis canadensis) produces seed pods that are eaten by quail, pheasant, and white-tailed deer. Deer will also browse on new leaves.

Why are native plants important? Native plants are adapted to our specific growing conditions in Ohio. Over thousands of years, they have become accustomed to Ohio's unique soils, range of temperatures, and amount of rain fall. These factors often allow native plants to

thrive in our gardens without irrigation and fertilizers, unlike many non-natives.

Native plants also provide food and shelter for bees, butterflies, insects, caterpillars, birds, and many more. Some pollinators would not survive without specific native plants. For example, the Monarch butterfly requires the native milkweed to reproduce and complete their life cycle.

The largest irrigated "crop" grown in the U.S. is turf grass – covering more land than corn, soybeans, and wheat combined. The typical residential neighborhood consists of turf grass lawns that consume massive amounts of water. Replacing traditional turf grass with native grasses and plants not only saves you on maintenance and watering costs, but also helps you to provide the food and shelter your local pollinators need to survive.

If you are planning to do some landscaping this year, be sure to include native plants! For a list of native plants, visit ohionativeplantmonth.org or contact Broc Sehen, District Technician-Wildlife Specialist.



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Important Dates

4/20	Earth Day
4/26	Area IV Envirothon
4/28	Earth Care Challenge
5/11	SWCD Board Meeting
5/30	Memorial Day (Office is closed)

Pollinator Plug Sale—In cooperation with Muskingum SWCD

The Muskingum SWCD is growing native pollinator plugs from seed for plug trays. Each tray holds approximately 48 plugs. The trays will be mixed with the following species, subject to availability:

Butterfly Milkweed
Purple Coneflower
Black-eyed Susan
Rough Blazing Star

Common Milkweed
Rattlesnake Master
Smooth Blue Aster
Spotted Joe-Pye Weed

Swamp Milkweed
Wild Bergamot
Showy Goldenrod
New England Aster

A pollinator is an animal that causes plants to make fruit or seeds. They do this by moving pollen from one part of the flower of a plant to another part. They are incredibly important for our food supply.

Plugs are seedlings that have a root system about 2" deep and 5" wide.

Farmers and gardeners may enhance the function and beauty of their landscape by planting native flowers, which attract beneficial pollinators such as butterflies and bees, and feed native birds like quail and song sparrows.

Each tray is \$60. Orders are due by May 13th. Payment is due at time of pickup at the Madison SWCD office in late May/early June—customers will be notified of the pickup date once known. An order form may be obtained by visiting our [website](#) or by calling 740-852-4003.

Earth Care Event and the Ecological Education Initiative

The Ecological Education Initiative Committee has partnered with Ohio Department of Natural Resources—Scenic Rivers to hold an Earth Care Event at the Little Darby Preserve on April 28, 2022. Volunteers will work alongside conservation professionals to remove invasive honeysuckle and help restore the ecological balance. Approximately 100 high school students, parents, and others from the community are expected.

Ecological Education Initiative for Madison County is a committee of teachers and volunteers whose purpose is to create outdoor learning opportunities through stewardship of our natural resources. Students will learn that “invasive species” are non-native species whose introduction to new areas cause harm to our economy, environment and/or human health. Students will then learn how to identify invasive honeysuckle in particular. Lastly, they will gain hands-on experience of removing them using loppers and honeysuckle poppers. ODNR staff will follow up after the event with herbicide application, which is necessary because honeysuckle will resprout vigorously after cutting.



Planting trees at the Earth Day Event in 2019

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New in Madison County, Amanda Douridas, Extension Educator

Amanda Douridas is the new Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension Educator for Madison County. She joined the Madison office on March 1st and has been with OSU Extension since 2008. She spent the last eight

years as the Extension Educator in Champaign County where she worked with farmers, community leaders and numerous organizations to further agriculture in the county.

Having lived in Madison County for nearly a decade, she is excited to work in the county where she lives. Douridas received her B.S. and M.S. in agricultural economics from The Ohio State University. Her work has been focused on agronomy and farm management but she also has a passion for gardening and wildlife and enjoys working in those areas as well.



Amanda Douridas (left) co-leads the OSU Extension Agronomic Crops team and does on-farm research.

On-farm research initiatives underway for the 2022 growing season include soil moisture monitoring in different field management practices, nitrogen rate trials with and without cover crops and studying pollinators in soybeans. She enjoys working with farmers who have an interest in testing products or practices and has been contributing to the eFields on-farm research report for several years (go.osu.edu/eFields).

Douridas is grateful for the hard work her predecessor, Mary Griffith, put into the Extension program here in Madison County. She looks forward to continue providing home horticulture education with the Master Gardener Volunteers and wildlife programming with ODNR. One area she would like to expand is women in ag and lady landowner programming.

Douridas sends out a monthly e-newsletter sharing upcoming events in ag and natural resources, educational articles and additional resources. To sign up, please visit go.osu.edu/AgEmails. Douridas can be reached by email or phone: Douridas.9@osu.edu or 740-956-5051.

Earth Care Event Continued

The event is possible through generous donations. A special thank you to our event sponsors: Darby Plains Chapter of Pheasants Forever, Darby Creek Field & Flowers, Friends of Madison County Parks and Trails, Madison Conservation Foundation, Madison County Farm Bureau, Merchants National Bank, Yoder Hardware & Dwyer Bros Hardware.



Camp Canopy-Ohio Forestry & Wildlife Conservation Camp Scholarship



The Madison SWCD is pleased to offer scholarship funding from Heiner Gantenbrink Farms for 2022 Camp Canopy, held June 12-17, 2022 at FFA Camp Muskingum in Carroll County. This is a wonderful opportunity for high school students to learn about Ohio's forests, wildlife, conservation, tree identification, ecology and much more.

Students entering their freshman year through seniors graduating this year are welcome to apply. Contact Gail Wilson at gail.wilson@oh.nacdnet.net for an application or for more information. Preference will be given to applications received by May 6, 2022.

Visit <https://campcanopy.com/> or call 1-888-388-7337 to learn all about camp.

Also, college scholarships will be awarded to top scorers on the final exam at camp. These scholarships are offered by Ohio State, Ohio University, Hocking College, and OFA and must be used to pursue an education in the natural resources field.

Conservation at Work Video Series

A video series from NRCS and farmers.gov, Conservation at Work, presents short and easy to understand videos about popular conservation practices. These videos feature producers explaining how an individual practice helps their land and why they are using it.



The videos shine the spotlight on farmers, ranchers, and forestland owners from across the U.S. who explain why they've implemented the conservation practices and how they work on their land. They also provide insight into how each practice is helping them protect and improve resources and save time and money.

We've got videos showcasing high tunnels, no-till, cover crops, prescribed grazing, and many more. Check out the Conservation at Work video series at farmers.gov/conservation/conservation-at-work.

Contact us

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