

# CONSERVATION SPOTLIGHT

SUMMER 2015

A NEWSLETTER OF THE  
HAMILTON COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT



## Caring For Our Watersheds Contest Winners!

by Gwen Roth

On Saturday, April 25, ten teams of students from Mount Notre Dame, Seton, Summit Country Day, Sycamore and Withrow High Schools competed for over \$12,000 in cash and prizes for their team and their school in the "Caring For Our Watersheds" Ohio competition sponsored by Agrium Inc.

Caring For Our Watersheds is a global competition that asks students to submit a proposal that answered the question, "What can you do to improve your watershed?" Students researched their local watershed, identified an environmental concern and came up with a realistic solution.

Community judges read 129 proposals and selected the top entries to compete in the finals at the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden. The community judges then became watershed mentors to the students helping them to develop their ideas further.

Each finalist had 5 minutes to explain their idea to a panel of judges and a public audience.

Judges included Scott Huber (District Board Member), Ted Hubbard (Hamilton County Engineer), Steve Pucke (Agrium, Inc), Glen Vonderembse (OEPA, Division of Surface Water) and Pat Bruns (State Board of Education - District 4).

Using the judges' written proposal and verbal presentation scores, student's ideas were ranked. Top 10 teams received a cash prize. Their schools also received a matching cash prize. In addition, all students are encouraged to implement their ideas with \$10,000 grant monies from Agrium, Inc.

Caring for our Watersheds is currently offered in Canada within Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario; in the United States within Colorado, California, Ohio, Virginia and Washington, DC; in Argentina within San Antonio de Areco; and in Australia within the Glenelg Hopkins Region in Victoria.

Aleeyah from Mount Notre Dame High School won first place and \$1,000 with her presentation, "Color Me Rain Barrel Initiative." We couldn't be more proud of her and all our teams that participated.

For more information please visit <http://caringforourwatersheds.com/usa/ohio/> or contact local program coordinator, Gwen Z. Roth.



HAMILTON COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
PROGRAMS AND ASSISTANCE  
AGRICULTURE & SOIL FERTILITY | EDUCATION | URBAN STREAMS  
URBANLAND & EARTHWORKS | PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROGRAMS  
22 TRIANGLE PARK DR. CINCINNATI OH 45246  
PHONE: 513-772-7645 | FAX 513-772-7656 | WWW.HCSWCD.ORG  
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# 2015 Ultimate Educator Expo

As teachers prepare to wrap up the end of the 2014-2015 school year, we're already looking ahead to next school year with the GCEE Ultimate Educator's Expo in September.

Mark your calendars!

Wednesday, September 16th, 2015

2:30pm-7:00pm

Hosted by the Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden in partnership with GCEE

Join us at the Zoo for the ultimate opportunity to learn about environmental education resources available in our community. Exhibitors from governmental, non-profit and educational organizations will provide you with grade level appropriate training opportunities, lesson plans,

field trips and tons of free stuff. We offer FREE Zoo admission & parking; breakout sessions, refreshments and door prizes just for you.

This year, teachers get a chance to register early. If teachers sign up in May or June, they will receive the opportunity to win a free field trip to the Zoo for the 2015-2016 school year for up to 90 students. The school with the largest number of teachers who attend the event (and registered early) will win!

To register early, go to <http://cincinnati.zoo.org/events/ultimate-educator-expo/>

**We look forward to seeing you in September!**

## Sycamore HS Wins Envirothon

by Gwen Roth

We couldn't be more proud of these 4 Sycamore High School students and their teacher (Ron Hochstrasser) for placing second at the Area IV Envirothon held this year at Camp Friedlander in Loveland, Ohio (Clermont County). There was a tie for second place, but Sycamore edged out because they had the highest score in Current Environmental Issue category, which was picked earlier in the day as the tiebreaker. The second place finish means that Sycamore will be joining the other top four teams and representing Area IV at the State Envirothon!

The State Envirothon will take place June 8

and 9 at Mohican State Park (Ashland County). We wish Sycamore all the best. They certainly represent Hamilton County well!

The Envirothon is an environmental competition testing students' knowledge of Forestry, Wildlife, Aquatics, Soils and a Current Environmental Issue. This year the topic was Urban and Community Forestry. Over 85 teams from the 18 county area in SW Ohio competed for those four places at the State Envirothon.

CONGRATULATIONS and we will keep you posted on their State performance.



L-R: Cerys Hughes, Kyle Green, Ron Hochstrasser (advisor), Josie Masset, Sierra Whitmore

# Fall 2015 Tree Program

Tree Species	Ultimate Height	Ultimate Spread	Sun	Water	Attracts
<p><b>Red Buckeye - Aesculus pavia</b>  <b>3 gallon, 12"-18" tall, 1/2" Caliper width</b>                      Red Buckeye is a short tree or shrub with open habit. Showy red, spring flowers attract ruby-throated hummingbirds. A good accent plant for large shaded areas, especially when planted in small groves.</p>	10 to 20ft (Slow Growing)	10 to 20ft	Full sun to part shade	Moist, Well drained	Pollinators & Humming Birds
<p><b>Robin Hill Serviceberry- Amelanchier x grandiflora "Robin Hill"</b>  <b>3 gallon, 2' tall, 1/2" Caliper width</b>                      The pink flower buds of 'Robin Hill' Serviceberry distinguish it from other native serviceberry selections. 'Robin Hill' Serviceberry has an upright habit that makes it a good choice for street plantings or other settings where a small, attractive tree is desired.</p>	20 to 25ft	12 to 15ft	Partial shade	Moist, Well Drained	Pollinators, Butterflie & Songbirds
<p><b>Black Gum - Nyssa sylvatica</b>  <b>3 gallon, 3'-5' tall, 1/2" Caliper width</b>                      Black Gum rivals red maples for fall color with spectrum of glowing red shades. Fruit is favored by many birds.</p>	30 to 50ft	20 to 30ft	Full sun to part shade	Medium to wet	Birds
<p><b>Shellbark Hickory - Carya laciniosa</b>  <b>3 gallon, 12" tall, 1/2" Caliper width</b>                      Shellbark Hickory is the largest of the true hickories. The Shellbark Hickory's nut is also larger than others of the species. Bark is similar to Shagbark Hickory on mature specimens.</p>	80 to 100ft (Slow Growing)	75 to 85ft	Full sun	Average, Moist	Pollinators & Wildlife
<p><b>White Oak - Quercus alba</b>  <b>3 gallon, 3'-4' tall, 1/2" Caliper width</b>                      White Oak is a large, majestic, and long-lived oak that holds yearlong interest. Round-lobed leaves and smooth, medium-sized acorns.</p>	45 to 50ft	35 to 40ft	Full sun	Average	Upland Birds & Game
<p><b>American Elm - Ulmus Americana</b>  <b>3 gallon, 3'-5' tall, 1/2" Caliper width</b>                      American Elm is a hardy, easy-to-grow, adaptable native tree. Matures quickly to characteristic vase shape.</p>	50 to 60ft	40 to 50ft	Full sun	Moist, Well Drained	Pollinators & Butterflies



Red Buckeye



Robin Hill Serviceberry



Black Gum



Shellbark Hickory



White Oak



American Elm

Follow order instructions on page 4.

Online orders can be placed on [www.hcswcd.org/tree](http://www.hcswcd.org/tree)

# Hamilton County Soil & Water Conservation District Fall 2015 Tree Program



Your SWCD has joined the regional efforts of Taking Root and Releaf Cincinnati to inspire our County to better preserve and maintain existing trees and to plant two million new trees—one for each citizen in the region—by the year 2020. Taking Root is a collaborative partnership within the eight counties of the Tri-State region. Its mission is to raise awareness of the current crisis taking place in our tree canopies. Threats include the invasive emerald ash borer as well as other pests and diseases responsible for the loss of millions of this region’s native trees, posing a serious threat to the local ecosystem which will impact our quality of life in many ways.

This year’s tree selection is native and excellent wildlife and pollinator habitat. Trees come in 3 gallon containers and are 1/2” caliper wide. Landowners may order any number of trees at \$15 per tree. Orders must reach us on or before July 17.

Here is what you need to do:

1. Fill and mail the below form with payment or place your order online at [hcswcd.org/tree](http://hcswcd.org/tree)
2. Once we receive your order we will send you a receipt
3. Bring your receipt to pick up your tree

Pick up date:

Saturday, September 26, 2015 from 9:00am to 2:00pm  
during our 70th Anniversary Celebration.  
(Bring the entire family for fun, food, hayrides and games)

Pick up location:

The Sunflower Farm  
Turpin Farms  
3295 Turpin Lane, Cincinnati, Ohio 45244  
Cut Along The Dotted Line

## Tree Request Form

Make Your Selections Below  
(No Limit on the Number of Trees)

Tree Species	No. of Trees	Cost
Red Buckeye	x\$15	\$
Robin Hill Serviceberry	x\$15	\$
Shellbark Hickory	x\$15	\$
Black Gum	x\$15	\$
White Oak	x\$15	\$
American Elm	x\$15	\$
<b>Total</b>		

Return this form and payment to the District office before July 17th, 2015.

Payment and forms can be sent to:  
HCSWCD

22 Triangle Park Dr. Cincinnati OH 45246

### Contact Information:

Name:.....  
Street Address:.....  
City:..... Zip Code:.....  
E-Mail Address:.....  
Daytime Phone No.:.....

# Prairie and Pollinator Workshop



When and where:  
Wednesday, July 8, 2015 – 8:30am – 3:30pm  
Sharon Centre, 11450 Lebanon Road, Sharonville, OH 45241

Cost:  
\$30.00 – Continental Breakfast and Lunch included

Who should attend:  
A must attend for everyone



We are all part of the living web. Diversification is needed for a healthy environment. It is possible to turn an environmental food desert into a symbiotic, thriving system. Learners will glean information on how to enrich their soil by assessing its current status, using natural means such as cover crops and no-till planting to support a wide variety of plants. Suggested prairie and pollinator plantings will be discussed along with planting preparation and maintenance. The critical role of bees and pollinators will also be presented.

## Agenda and Scheduled Speakers

- Soil Health – Holly Utrata-Halcomb, Administrator, Hamilton County SWCD
- Prairie and Pollinator Crops – Pam Simmons, Turpin Farms and Bob Kares, Ohio Prairie Nursery
- Bees & Other Pollinators – Liz Tillman – Two Honeys
- Demo Projects – The diverse use of Prairie/Pollinator plantings. – Mary Klunk, Dayton Metro Parks

Visit [www.hcswcd.org](http://www.hcswcd.org) or call (513) 772-7645 to register and more information.

### Board of Supervisors

Scott P. Huber, Chairman  
Denny Benson, Vice-Chairman  
Steve Johns, Secretary  
Pam Simmons, Treasurer  
Sam McKinley, Program Chairman

### District Staff

Holly Utrata-Halcomb, Administrator  
Susan Juriga, Administrative Assistant  
John Nelson, Public Relations Specialist  
Dan Taphorn, Urban Conservationist  
Chey Alberto, Urban Technician  
Steve Eberts, Urban Technician  
Gwen Z. Roth, Education Specialist  
Brian Bohl, Stream Specialist  
Carrie Gibbons, Program Assistant

### NRCS

John Williams, District Conservationist  
William Cook, Soil Conservationist

## Harvesting with Heroes

Our District is partnering with the Cincinnati VA Hospital to expand a therapeutic gardening program for recovering veterans. Turner Farm, the Civic Garden Center of Cincinnati, OSU Extension and others have formed a committee to support this successful program. District Administrator, Holly Utrata-Halcomb, worked as a Horticultural Therapist prior to coming to the District. She is coordinating the development of a comprehensive indoor and outdoor curriculum.

The purpose of the program is to provide vets with an outdoor experience in working with the natural cycles, rewards and potential occupational activity of gardening. We will introduce new concepts, foods and community resources to enrich their lives and offer a new hobby. Each participant will receive a gardening handbook to reinforce concepts taught and to extend their interest when transitioning back into the community.

One goal is to develop a horticulture library at the VA Hospital for the participating veterans. If you have any books or magazines you would like to donate, please bring them to our District office.

**Follow us on social media!**

WEBSITE



NEWSLETTER



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FACEBOOK



Hamilton County  
Soil & Water  
Conservation District  
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**UPCOMING EVENTS**

Board Meeting - June 9th, 2pm

Sayler Park Sustains Fair - June 13th @ Sayler Park

Kids Fest and Paddle Fest - June 18th & 19th @ Coney Island

Prairie and Pollinator Workshop - July 8th (See page 5)

Office Closed - July 3rd (Independence Day)

Board Meeting - July 14th, 2pm

Deadline for tree orders - July 17th

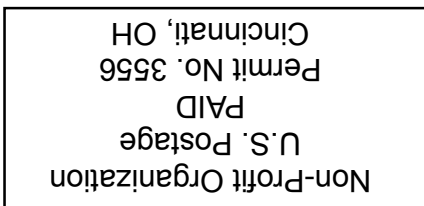
Board Meeting - August 11, 2PM

**Check out our website for upcoming public events  
and library programs this summer.**

Mission Statement: A public organization committed to assisting the citizens of Hamilton County through education, technical assistance and leadership to be stewards of our soil and water resources.

All District programs are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status or handicap.

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Hamilton County Soil and Water  
Conservation District  
22 Triangle Park Drive  
Cincinnati, OH 45246-3411