



Conservation Spotlight

Hamilton County Soil & Water Conservation District
29 Triangle Park Drive, Suite 2901
Cincinnati, Ohio 45246-3411

Summer Edition
2009

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National Women's History Month



Holly Utrata-Halcomb was asked to speak to the U.S. Department of Energy of America's staff on Women in Conservation. After her presentation, the U.S. Department of Energy of America surprised and recognized Holly Utrata-Halcomb for her support to the DOE Environmental Management Consolidated Business Center. Bartley Fain, DOE Assistant Director, Office of Civil Rights and Diversity presented Holly Utrata-Halcomb with a bouquet of flowers and a crystal plaque for National Women's History Month following her presentation.

Holly Utrata-Halcomb's presentation reviewed how women have impacted conservation. One of the most influential events that drew international attention was Harriet Heminway's crusade in 1896 that drew 900 of her friends together to protest birds being slaughtered for the use of their plumes by the fashion industry. As a result, Harriet Hemingway helped to found the Audubon Society. Rachel Carson's "Silent Spring" can be said to be the impetus for the U.S. Clean Water Act.

Rain Barrel Sale a Success!



Over 200 rain barrels were sold to residents of Hamilton County and surrounding counties this past April. Members of the McKie Recreation Center "Vision Trek," a year-round mentoring program for neighborhood children, made the rain barrels and helped staff the sale. Profits from the sale will be used by the Vision Trek program to pay for environmental outings such as canoe and kayak trips for their members.

The rain barrel sale was organized by Cincinnati Recreation Commission, Hamilton County Storm Water District, Hamilton County Soil & Water Conservation District, MSD-Cincinnati Storm Water and Sierra Club Cincinnati Chapter.

Vision Trek makes rain barrels year round. If you would like to order a rain barrel, please call Don Brannen at the McKie Recreation Center at 681- 8247.

SAVE THIS DATE

Hamilton County SWCD Annual Meeting will be held at the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden on **Thursday, September 17, 2009**. Look for more details in the fall edition of the "Conservation Spotlight."

FREE ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS AND YARD WASTE DROP-OFF PROGRAMS

Household Hazardous Waste Collection

With summer on the way, now is the time to start cleaning up around the house and in the yard. To help dispose of all that extra waste responsibly, the Hamilton County Solid Waste Management District has started its free annual Household Hazardous Waste and Yard waste drop-off programs.

Household Hazardous Waste Collection Program

Hamilton County residents can drop off qualifying household hazardous waste (pesticides, solvents, prescription medication, etc.) at the District's two collection sites. Proof of residency such as a driver's license or utility bill is required, and residents are encouraged to review the list of acceptable items prior to visiting the drop-off site. Commercial waste is prohibited.

Questions? Please call The Household Hazardous Waste Hotline, 946-7700.

March 14 – November 14, 2009



Environmental Enterprises, Inc.

4600 Spring Grove Ave.
Cincinnati, OH 45232
Tuesdays: 2 pm – 6 pm
Saturdays: 9 am – 1 pm

Site closed 5/23, 7/4, 9/5



Environmental Enterprises, Inc.

10163 Cincinnati-Dayton Road
Cincinnati, OH 45241
Wednesdays: 2 pm – 6 pm



Yard Waste Drop-off Program

Hamilton County residents can drop off bundled yard waste of the appropriate length and weight at any of the District's three collection sites. Proof of residency such as a driver's license or utility bill is required. Yard waste in commercial vehicles or from commercial establishments is prohibited. Residents are encouraged to view the yard waste drop-off guidelines before visiting the site.

Questions? Please call The Composting and Yardwaste Hotline, 946-7755.



March 28 - November 22, 2009



East (Anderson Township):

Bzak Landscaping
3295 Turpin Ln, Cincinnati OH 45244
Mondays – Fridays: 7:30 am – 6 pm
Saturdays and Sundays: 11:30 am – 5 pm
Site closed 5/25, 7/4, 9/7

North (Colerain Township):

Rumpke Landfill
3800 Struble Rd, Cincinnati OH 45251
Saturdays and Sundays: 11:30 am – 5 pm
Site closed 7/4

West (Green Township):

Kuliga Park
6717 Bridgetown Rd, Cincinnati OH 45248
Saturdays and Sundays: 11:30 am – 5 pm
Site closed 7/4

THE MISS-MULCHING OF AMERICA.

As temperatures rise, so do the piles and layers of mulch in Ohio landscapes. Mulch, at the proper depth of 2-3", can have many benefits including the prevention of weed growth, conservation of moisture in the soil, stabilization of soil temperatures and the addition of organic matter to the soil. However, too much of a good thing can be bad.

The application of heaping mounds of mulch against the tree trunks is often referred to as "volcano mulching." When mulch is applied in this manner, moisture captured by the mulch can keep the plant's bark in a continued state of wetness. This can cause the bark to decay, and lead to insects, fungi and bacteria feeding on the damaged tissue. Not a good thing! Keep mulch at least 2 inches away from the tree trunks.

You probably won't have to look far to see this miss-application of mulch. Let's pull back the mulch and get the word out about how to properly apply mulch. For more information about mulches, refer to OSU FactSheet HYG 1083, Mulching Landscape Plants [<http://ohioline.osu.edu/hyg-fact/1000/1083.html>]. From: *BUCKEYE YARD AND GARDEN LINE* (BYGL) 2009-01 4/09/09. BYGL is available online at: [<http://bygl.osu.edu>] and has images associated with the articles and links to additional information.

Education Corner

2009 Ultimate Educator Expo “LEEDing the Way To A Greener Future” REGISTER NOW!!!

Tuesday, September 15, 3:00 pm - 6:00 pm



The Greater Cincinnati Environmental Educators (GCEE), The Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden and the Environmental Education Council of Ohio (EECO) present the 2009 Ultimate Educator Expo. 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, especially about how to be “green.” We offer FREE Zoo admission & parking, break out sessions, refreshments and door prizes just for you.

DOUBLE CHECK THIS WEBSITE to register: go to <http://www.cetconnect.org/ultimateeducatorsexpo/>

E-mail list

Teachers, would you like to receive e-mail notification of upcoming events and workshops for educators? If so, please e-mail your name, e-mail address, school name and grade level to gwen.roth@hamilton-co.org.

“The Secrets of Soil” Poster and Essay Contests Winners



There were many wonderful entries from which to choose! Everyone at the Soil and Water Conservation District enjoyed seeing the variety. We thank the teachers and parents for encouraging the students to enter both the poster and essay contests which are in celebration of NACD Stewardship Week. For more information on Stewardship Week, go to www.nacd.org.

Essay Contest Winners

Third Grade Winner– Zoe R., Symmes Elementary School, Mrs. Amy Wuebbolt’s class
Third Grade Winner– Max S., Symmes Elementary School, Mrs. Margaret Brochu’s class

Poster Contest Winners

First Grade Winner – Madison N., Sharpsburg Elementary School, Ms. Amy Zoz’s class
Second Grade Winner – Hayley H., Crosby Elementary School, Ms. Julie Nolan submitting teacher

Third Grade (tie) – Harsimran M., Symmes Elementary School, Mrs. Amy Wuebbolt’s class

Third Grade (tie) – Matthew I., Symmes Elementary School, Mrs. Margaret Brochu’s class



Read the prize-winning essays and see the pictures of the winning posters from the next generation of conservationists on our website at www.hcswcd.org.

Ag News

John Williams, D.C. and Jeff Barnes, Soil Conservationist-NRCS

Deadline Extended For DCP and ACRE Farm Service Agency (FSA) Programs

Amy J. Harter, County Executive Director, Warren, Butler and Hamilton Counties

Aug. 14, 2009, is the new deadline for both the traditional Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) and the new Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) Program. ACRE sign-up began on April 27. By participating in ACRE, producers elect to forgo counter-cyclical payments, agree to a 20-percent reduction in direct payments and a 30-percent reduction in loan rates. The decision to elect ACRE binds the farm to the program through the 2012 crop year. Unsure about ACRE??

Then sign up for DCP now and decide later about ACRE before the August 14th deadline. Please call for an appointment. For more information about ACRE, DCP and other price support programs, please visit your local FSA office or FSA’s website at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov> or call Amy Harter, County Executive Director, with Warren, Butler and Hamilton Counties at 513-887-3727.

Earthwork News.....

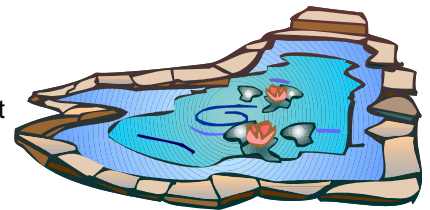
Dan Taphorn, Urban Conservationist, Chey Alberto, Nate Sturm, Urban Technicians and Robert Sheets, Geotechnical Engineer

SOUTHWEST OHIO EROSION AND SEDIMENT CONTROL FIELD DAY

The 2009 Southwest Ohio Erosion and Sediment Control Field Day has been postponed until February 2010. After discussion with the Greater Cincinnati Home Builders Association and the Soil & Water Conservation Districts of Southwest Ohio, it was decided to evaluate this important educational program to improve the content and increase attendance. The goal is to provide a more comprehensive program and to have a keynote speaker to highlight the importance of effective erosion and sediment control and water quality best management practices on construction sites. The Planning Committee has received a grant from the Ohio Environmental Education Fund (OEEF) to assist with improving this event. Stay tuned for more information in the District's Fall Newsletter. This is sure to be a quality educational program!

2009 POND, WATER GARDEN AND STORM WATER BASIN MAINTENANCE CLINIC

The agenda for this year's pond clinic has been expanded to cover Water Gardens and Storm Water Basin Inspection and Maintenance. Thinking about building a pond, having problems with aquatic weeds, want to know how aeration can improve the overall health of your pond? Have you wanted to install a water garden but you did not know where to begin? Do you live in a new residential subdivision or condominium development and wonder what your responsibilities are or how to inspect and maintain your basin? Join the knowledgeable staff from the Hamilton and Butler County SWCD's along with experts from Jones Fish Hatcheries to find answers to all of your questions. The 2009 Pond Clinic will be held at the Sharon Center located in Sharon Woods, 11450 Lebanon Road, Sharonville, OH 45241 on Wednesday June 10, 2009 from 6:00 pm – 8:30 pm. There is no fee, but an RSVP is required by June 5, 2009. Call (513) 772-7645 to make your reservations.



POND MANAGEMENT

With the warm temperatures this spring, aquatic weeds are starting to appear. Some weeds such as filamentous algae are particularly heavy this year. Pond owners need to understand the cause of filamentous algae and how to effectively control them. The biggest cause of the algae in ponds is from phosphorous in the runoff into ponds. The source of phosphorus entering ponds is primarily from animal waste such as Canada Geese, livestock or from fertilizer applied to lawns. Some simple solutions to reduce algae are to leave a buffer around the pond and perform a soil analysis to ensure that the appropriate amount of fertilizer and nutrients are being applied to your lawn. Not applying fertilizers before a heavy rain can help ensure the fertilizer is being used by the lawn. Also, avoid applying fertilizer within 20 feet of the lake and pond. A little forethought on the front end can help save you a lot of money and headaches in the long run.



There are several options for effective control of filamentous algae; these include: 1.) Raking — this is laborious and will require weekly effort to be effective, 2.) Pond dyes can be effective, but need to be applied early in the spring (April) and continued treatments through August for the most effective control. The dyes minimize the depth sunlight can penetrate the water which limits the filamentous algae. 3.) There are several algaecides such as copper sulfate and sodium carbonate peroxide that are effective in controlling filamentous algae. Be sure to follow the manufactures directions when applying any algaecide. Information for this article was gathered from the Ohio Pond Management Newsletter "Spring 2008" by Bill Lynch, Program Specialist with Ohio State University Extension.

For more comprehensive information , please check Ohio State University Extension Ohio Pond Newsletter <http://snr.osu.edu/secondary.asp?id=68&sub=188>

"In the confrontation between the stream and the rock, the stream always wins - not through strength, but through perseverance." H. Jackson Brown

GO GREEN!! —"Conservation Spotlight" can be delivered via e-mail. This alternative will help save paper. If you are interested in changing your subscription to e-mail, contact holly.ustrata-halcomb@hamilton-co.org or call us at 772-7645.

Stream and Storm Water Management News

Stream Specialist Brian Bohl

The Mussel Behind Improving Water Quality

Below the clear, clean waters on the bottoms of streams, rivers, lakes and ponds live a little-known but important group of aquatic animals called freshwater mussels. Mussels belong to a larger group of animals with shells called mollusks. Approximately 1,000 species have been identified worldwide and 300 (or nearly 30%) of these exist in North America. Early explorers were surprised by the richness of mussel species on the continent, considering the fact that fewer than 20 mussel species are found in most other countries of the world. The Ohio River basin supports an extraordinary variety of these shellfish, nearly 127 species, or 42% of the 300 species found in North America. Unfortunately, at least 21 species have become extinct since 1850 and 46 other species are classified as endangered, threatened or species of concern. In the Little Miami River system, 1/3 of the mussel species are extinct and another 1/3 are nearing extinction.

Mussels have extremely unique life cycles as they depend on fish to become adults. This life cycle includes a short parasitic stage attached to a fish. The life of a mussel can be partitioned into 5 different life stages:

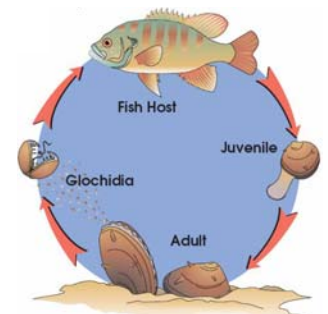
- a larva (called glochidium, plural glochidia) developing in the gill of a female mussel,
- a free-drifting glochidium expelled from the female mussel, generally in the spring or early summer (must find a fish host in a few days to survive),
- a parasitic glochidium attached to the gills or fins of a living host fish,
- a free-living juvenile mussel and an adult mussel.

Mussels lead a passive life, burrowed in sand and gravel substrates of water bodies. They typically inhabit unpolluted, standing or flowing waters that are rich in oxygen, calcium and suspended food particles. There are many values to freshwater mussels, but from a soil and water conservation perspective, they act as important natural filters in the riverbed and improve water quality by straining out suspended particles and pollutants. Most mussels consume a variety of microscopic particles suspended in the water column (e.g., algae, bacteria and organic particles).

Although the mussels contribute to water quality improvements, the sharp decline in numbers and diversity of mussels in the rivers, streams and reservoirs of the Ohio River basin is attributed to a number of human disturbances:

- dams and impoundments,
- channelization and dredging,
- water pollution, especially spills of toxic wastes (e.g., oil and petroleum products, industrial acids, pesticides and fertilizers),
- sedimentation from agricultural land, construction projects and logging and mining operations,
- fish kills that eliminate host fish for mussel glochidia and
- introduction of nonnative species, especially the Asian clam and the zebra mussel.

Mussels are not only sensitive to water pollution, but are dependent on the survival of the right species of host fish. Young freshwater mussels are parasitic on fish during their early life stage (glochidia stage). If the right species of fish is not present in sufficient quantities during the spawning season, then reproductive success will be low. Fish habitat changes, migration blockades such as dams, water pollution or other potential impacts to fish can also serve to reduce freshwater mussel populations. Due to the sensitivity of our significantly reduced mussel populations, we all must do our part to protect and preserve water quality. If we do our part, the mussels will do the rest! For an extensive list of pollution prevention tips, contact the Hamilton County Soil & Water Conservation District.



SOURCE: Source: North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission

Volunteers Needed Throughout The Summer!!

We are always looking for volunteers to help staff booths at public events. All volunteers will be partnered with a Hamilton County Soil and Water employee or supervisor. Come help us play storm water cornhole or plinko. Most shifts are 4 hours in length. For more information about events and dates, please contact Gwen at gwen.roth@hamilton-co.org.

Board of Supervisors

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Craig Abercrombie, Secretary
Sam McKinley, Treasurer
Steve Johns, Program Chairman

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Susan Juriga, Adm. Assistant
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Chey Alberto, Urban Technician
Nate Sturm, Urban Technician
Gwen Z. Roth, Education Specialist
Cheryl Reinke Peck, Education Ass't.
Brian Bohl, Stream Specialist
Annette Meagher, Public Involvement
Coordinator
Robert Sheets, Geotechnical Engineer

NRCS

John Williams, D.C.
Jeff Barnes, Soil Conservationist

Additional Upcoming Events

May 30 – Kids Day America (Sycamore Twp.) 12:00 pm to 3 pm

June 26 and 27 — Paddlefest (Coney Island)

“LEEDing the Way to a Greener Future”

September 15 – 2009 Ultimate Educator Expo
registration – <http://www.cetconnect.org/ultimateeducatorsexpo/>

Hamilton County SWCD Annual Meeting — **Save the Date** —
September 17, 2009

Will be held at the Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden

Library Programs

Did you know that there may be worms, soil crayons or Dr. Seuss lurking between the stacks of books at local libraries? You never know what you may find? Call our office for a list programs we provide at libraries, 772-7645.
(Some library programs may require pre-registration.)



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.

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
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