

# CONSERVATION SPOTLIGHT

SUMMER 2013



A NEWSLETTER OF THE  
HAMILTON COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

## THE SPECTACULAR RAIN BARREL ART PROJECT

**By John Nelson**

Who thought of this brilliant idea of turning dull boring barrels into canvases for some mind-blowing art pieces? We'll try to be a little humble about it, but we did. The Regional Storm Water Collaborative came up with the idea of the Rain Barrel Art Project to create awareness about storm water runoff issues in the area. Hamilton County SWCD is a part of the Regional Storm Water Collaborative along with other storm water districts, municipalities, and soil and water conservation districts in the Greater Cincinnati Area. HCSWCD along with the collaborators participated and organized the Rain Barrel Art Project entitled 'Saving Rain for Sunny Day'.

The event concluded on April 18, 2013, at the Cincinnati Zoo with a rain barrel auction and a reception. The



reception, which was made possible by our sponsors, was attended by Hamilton County Commissioner Todd Portune, who is an ardent well-wisher of the project. We had many of the artists who painted the rain barrels in attendance as well. In a press conference earlier in the week, Commissioner Portune said that the rain barrels will help the county meet the requirements of Phase II of the Clean Water Act.

The auction had a fantastic response with bids all the way up to \$200 on some rain barrels. The rain barrels were painted by a large spectrum of artist ranging from professionals to students. The rain barrels were displayed at the Zoo for over a week and were open for public voting online.



Commissioner Todd Portune unveiling the rain barrels  
Photo By: John Nelson

Hamilton County SWCD was pleased to be a partner with the Regional Storm Water Collaborative in this great endeavor. The rain barrel art project was instrumental in educating thousands of Hamilton County residents on water quality and run off issues. We hope to partner many more such initiatives with the Regional Storm Water Collaborative. You can find out how your organization or business can be a part of the collaborative at [savelocalwaters.org](http://savelocalwaters.org).



HAMILTON COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
PROGRAMS AND ASSISTANCE  
AGRICULTURE & SOIL FERTILITY | EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATIONS | 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](http://WWW.HCSWCD.ORG)  
EDITOR: HOLLY UTRATA-HALCOMB | DESIGN: JOHN NELSON

# THE AMAZING MONARCHS NEED OUR HELP

By Niki Marengo

In all of our scientific advances, the Monarch Butterfly still remains one of the fascinating mysteries of nature. Each year when the weather gets too cold in Canada, the Monarchs get together to migrate 2,000 miles down to Mexico and Florida, visiting the *same overwintering sites each year!* When spring arises, Monarchs make the trip back to Canada. To make it even more challenging, there is no buddy system on the way back; each Monarch travels the 2,000-mile return trip solo. Do you know what is the most amazing thing about this process? Monarchs only live for 2-5 weeks, so along the way they stop to lay their eggs on Milkweed Plants.



The next generation will continue the journey, knowing exactly where to go. The eggs that are laid in Mexico and Florida have never been to Canada, but somehow know how to get there without any direction.

However, there seems to be a problem! These astonishing marvels of nature are losing their migration habitat. Increased use of herbicides and urban spaces take away the types of plants these Monarchs need. No species could make such a mind-boggling migration without some rest, and beyond that, they need a place to lay their eggs so the next generation can continue onward! Monarchs only lay their eggs on the toxic Milkweed Plant. Even as a pupa they can eat milkweed and become immune to the toxins. They become poisonous to any predators that think they would make a good snack (that's why they are bright orange, as a warning!). Monarchs also need plants that provide them the nectar and nutrients that they need for nourishment. You can help by creating your own Monarch Waystation! Here are some suggestions for the type of plants to use in Ohio to create a Monarch Waystation:

**MILKWEED:** Butterfly Weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*), Narrowleaf Milkweed (*Asclepias fascicularis*), Showy Milkweed (*Asclepias speciosa*), Swamp Milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*)



Butterfly Weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*)  
Photo Courtesy: [www.monarchwatch.org](http://www.monarchwatch.org)

**GENERAL NECTAR PLANTS:** Blue Sage (*Salvia farinacea*), Chia (*Salvia columbariae*), Scarlet Sage (*Salvia coccinea*), Tithonia Torch, Mexican Sunflower (*Tithonia*), Zinnia (*Zinnia elegans*), Dahlia (*Dahlia* sp)

For more information about creating your own Waystation and even becoming certified and registered nationally, visit [www.monarchwatch.org](http://www.monarchwatch.org). Also, check out our program called the 'Amazing Monarchs' on our website: <http://www.hcswcd.org/educate>.

**Pond & Water Garden Clinic**

**Two concurrent sessions:**

<b>Session I: Pond Management</b> Construction, Fish Stocking Aeration & Aquatic Weed Control	<b>Session II: Water Gardens</b> Fish Stocking, Aquatic Weed Control, Water Gardens & Construction
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(handouts will be available to take home)

**Date & Time:**  
June 5th, 2013  
6:00 PM to 9:00 PM

**Admission is Free**  
(advance registration is recommended)

**Speakers:**  
Chey Alberto | Robert Sheets | Dan Taphorn  
Rep. from Jones Fish Hatchery

**Venue:**  
Sharon Centre @ Sharon Woods  
11450 Lebanon Rd. Sharonville, OH 45241

**Information and Registration Contact:**  
Hamilton County Soil & Water Conservation District  
(513) 772-7645

# ORGANIZE A STORM DRAIN LABELING EVENT TODAY!

By John Nelson



Each Hamilton County Resident probably passes by numerous storm drains during their everyday commute. These metal structures by the curb are widely misunderstood and misused on a daily basis. We have interacted with a lot of people who assume that water entering the storm drain goes to a water treatment plant. However, predominantly this is not the case; storm drains drain to local water bodies.

The education of people on the final end of the storm water gives people a new perspective on their neighborhood storm drains. People no longer want to use it as a dumping area for litter, or as a drain to dispose of unwanted liquids. The community is zealous in protecting what goes into the storm drain once they know how it affects their living quality. One of the most

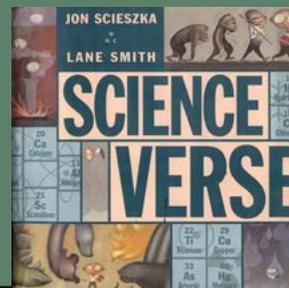
effective ways in educating people on this topic is Storm Drain Labeling. This task can be accomplished with very few resources but has a great impact and can be done by practically any age group.

By organizing a storm drain labeling event in your neighborhood you can improve water quality. You can organize a storm drain labeling event in your neighborhood in Hamilton County by contacting us. We will be happy to provide you with all the resources you will need. We will also collaborate with your local municipality and press to bring awareness on water quality. So what are you waiting on? Call us today!



## Science Verse by Jon Scieszka Ages: 7 and up

Who would think to mix poetry, children's nursery rhymes and science? The ever-popular and entertaining team of Jon Scieszka and illustrator Lane Smith bring the poetry of science to reality in "Science Verse", mirroring the writing styles of Edgar Allen Poe, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and Robert Frost. Poems such as "Scientific Method at the Bat", "Amoeba" and "What's the Matter" will have you laughing along with your kids. A CD of the author and illustrator reading the poems (with some entertaining commentary) is included.



# BOOKWORM BURROW

# FALL COVER CROP SALE

The District is currently taking orders for Fall Cover Crop Seed Mix. This mix should be planted or interplanted with the existing crop between August 15 – September 31, 2013. The earlier it is planted, the more benefits you will realize.

The fall crop will germinate and grow until hard frost; at which point it will die. Next spring a brown mass of organic matter will be left which can serve as a mulch for the next crop. The real magic, however, is what has been produced underground!

The root mass from the cover crop provides valuable organic matter to feed the famished soil biota. In addition, the nodules on the legume root are a virtual storage bundle of nitrogen that will be slowly released as the root decomposes in the spring.

Fall Cover Mix contains Winter Pea, Cow Pea, Oats, Pearl Millet, Radish, Flax and Phacelia.

Application Rate:

½ lb. = 50 – 80 ft. sq. | 1 lb. = 150 – 200 ft. sq.

5 lb. = 750 – 1,000 ft. sq. | 10 lb. = 1,500 ft. sq. – 4,000 ft. sq.

## Order Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_

1/2 lb.	1lb.	5lb.	10lb.	Total
x \$6	x \$8	x \$25	x \$40	

Deadline for seed order is July 29, 2013.

All orders must be prepaid

Total Amount Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Seed may be picked up at the District Office:

August 12,13,15, 2013 - 8:00am – 4:30pm.

August 14, 2013 - 8:00am - 6:30pm

All payments can be made and sent to:

Hamilton County Soil & Water Conservation Dist.

22 Triangle Pak Dr. Cincinnati OH 45246

If a larger quantity of seed is desired, please call Walnut Creek Seeds directly at 330-245-7618.

## CHANGES TO OEPA'S NPDES WILL IMPACT DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY

By Dan Taphorn

It is spring and with the changing of the season, we are also anticipating changes to Ohio EPA's National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Construction General Permit. This is the third permit to be issued by the Ohio EPA under Phase II Stormwater Management Regulations, which are part of the Federal Clean Water Act, and were first enacted in March 2003. All Phase II Stormwater Management Regulations are revised and reissued every 5 years. The revised general construction permit was implemented April 21, 2013. ([http://www.epa.ohio.gov/dsw/permits/GP\\_ConstructionSiteStormWater.aspx](http://www.epa.ohio.gov/dsw/permits/GP_ConstructionSiteStormWater.aspx))

The following is a summary of some of the more significant changes to the new permit.

1.) Disturbed ground that is expected to be idle for more than 14 days must now be temporarily stabilized. The previous time allowed was 21 days. (Disturbed land within 50 feet of surface water of the State and not at final grade must be stabilized in 2 days; areas beyond 50 feet from surface waters must be stabilized

within 7 days.) See the 2 tables on page 9 of the new permit.

2.) Under the new requirements, permitted construction projects that last more than 5 years will have to renew their permit coverage at the 5 year anniversary date. A new Notice of Intent must be submitted, along with a fee based on acreage that has yet to be disturbed. Ohio EPA will send letters to project permittees the quarter before the 5 year anniversary date of the original permit.

3.) A log documenting grading and stabilization activities must be kept, along with amendments or revisions to the site's original stormwater pollution prevention plan (SWP3).

4.) Ohio EPA's NPDES Construction Permit makes reference to several "non-numeric effluent standards", listed on page 8 of the new permit. These include mostly common sense ideas, such as disturbing no more land than necessary, minimizing disturbances on slopes, provide vegetated buffers next to streams, and so on.

**Contd. on Page 5**

# CAN YOU CLICK IT?

## 2013 Amateur Digital Photography Contest

Do you have a special natural area that you go to get refreshed?

A quiet place to enjoy nature?

This year's Photography Contest is looking for  
your favorite natural place within Hamilton County.

### Rules and Guidelines

1. Submit only high resolution digital photographs. Please use the highest quality setting available in your digital camera. Please avoid phone camera pictures.
2. All pictures must be taken in Hamilton County, OH and the location should be identified in the caption.
3. Individuals may submit only one photograph for consideration. Digital images can be uploaded to our Facebook contest page, emailed to [john.nelson@hamilton-co.org](mailto:john.nelson@hamilton-co.org) or sent via mail, in a disc. Mail entries may be sent with your name, address, daytime phone number and location of photo to: Hamilton County SWCD, 22 Triangle Park Drive, Cincinnati, OH 45246
4. The first prize winner receives \$150. The second prize will receive \$100 and the third place winner receives \$50. Winners and one guest will be invited to our Annual meeting in October to share their winning picture with our guests.
5. Winners will be chosen by public voting on Facebook. Entrants are encouraged to vote and promote their own entries with other Facebook friends.
6. **Voting begins on July 4 and will end on August 31.**
7. **Deadline for submission is August 2, 2013.**
8. By entering this contest, entrants will agree for their pictures to be used in District publications. In order to ensure the highest quality images, the entrants may be asked to provide a high-resolution file of their photograph.



*Contd. from Page 4*

### CHANGES TO OEPA'S NPDES WILL IMPACT DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY

The Hamilton County Earthwork Regulations and Rules and Regulations of the Hamilton County Storm Water District will be updated later in 2013 to ensure compliance with these new Federal and State requirements.

### US Army Corps of Engineers 404 Nationwide Permits

The current US Army Corps of Engineers 404 Nationwide Permits were enacted in August of 2012. If your project will impact Surface Waters of the United States it is likely that this work has to be covered under a 404 Permit. There are more than fifty, 404 Nationwide Permits for the State of Ohio and they address a variety of work. We strongly encourage everyone to become familiar with the US Army Corps of Engineers permitting process; this will help prevent delays and/or potential compliance issues. Note: A copy of your permit approval or exemption must be provided to the District before an Earthwork Permit can be issued. For more information on 404 Permit requirements contact the Huntington District of the US Army Corps of Engineers (304) 399-5210, Cincinnati Field Office (513) 825-2752 or their website <http://www.lrh.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory.aspx>.

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Hamilton County  
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22 Triangle Park Dr.  
Cincinnati, OH 45246  
(513) 772 7645  
[www.hcswcd.org](http://www.hcswcd.org)

**Event Calender**

**June**

1st - BugFest  
@Cincinnati  
Museum Center

5th - Pond Clinic  
@ Sharon Center

11th - Board Meeting

20th & 21st -  
Paddlefest  
@Coney Island

**July**

9th- Board Meeting

11th - College Hill  
Farmer's Market

15th - Great Miami  
River Water Quality  
Monitoring

16th - Curious  
Garden  
@ Main Library

**August**

1st - Edible Soils  
@Delhi Twp Library

8th - College Hill  
Farmer's Market

13th - Board Meeting

**For more events visit:  
[www.hcswcd.org](http://www.hcswcd.org)  
[SaveLocalWaters.org](http://SaveLocalWaters.org)**

**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

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit No. 3556  
Cincinnati, OH

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

