



The Clermont Conservation Quarterly

Summer 2021



Don't Forget Annuals in Your Gardens!

If you've been following along with us on social media, you will know that April was National Native Plant month and by now be well versed in some of the amazing native trees, shrubs, and perennials that call Ohio home. Conversations surrounding planting natives in our landscaping tend to focus on perennials because they are typically lower maintenance and once established, tend to take care of themselves. When encouraging homeowners to make the switch to natives, commonly recognized landscaping favorites like the purple cone flower or black-eyed susan are often an easy sell. Now, this does not mean that annuals are difficult to care for and should be left out of your yard. Rather, it's about finding what works best for you and your landscaping needs.



A hummingbird moth on a zinnia flower

Another benefit of planting annuals is that they tend to thrive in poor soil conditions where there is little competition from other species. This means that they can easily be used to fill in bare patches in your landscaping without having to fuss too much over amending the soil beforehand. Annuals help improve soil health by preventing erosion and helping storm water get into the ground faster. Also, since annuals rely on their ability to reproduce and spread, it is likely that they will pop up in new, unexpected places in your landscaping. If you are someone who craves predictability in your yard, this may seem like a negative trait to you. However, this is just the plant doing what it does best: it finds a new open bare patch and sets down roots to bloom for another year. Last but not least, annuals are a great opportunity to try something new in your landscaping because if you don't like it, it will die off over the winter and you can start fresh again next year!

For more native annual options or information on where to buy native plants near you, visit our website www.clermontswcd.org.



Our Mission:

"To promote the wise use of our natural resources through service and education"

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

- Todd Winemiller
- David Anspach
- Joe Glassmeyer
- Connie O'Connor
- Tim Rose

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

- Christina Gates
- Brittany Feichtner

DISTRICT STAFF

- John McManus
- Connie Miller
- Becky McClatchey
- Jacob Hahn
- Kat Zelak

So what makes a plant an annual? Native annuals typically survive one or two growing seasons before they die. Since they have a relatively short life span, they put all their effort into reproducing and spreading. This means lots of flowers and lots of seeds. As a gardener, an abundance of flowers is an appealing, vivid addition to our landscapes. This bloom boom also makes annuals a great food source for wildlife. Annuals are a favorite for pollinators of all types since they provide a wealth of pollen and nectar to feed on. After the flowers die off, hardy seed heads are a source of food for birds throughout cool fall and winter months. While perennial plants can also be a food source for wildlife, annuals out produce perennials since their survival relies on their ability to spread their seeds.

Summer Litter Clean-up Logo Design Winners Announced

For the second year in a row, New Richmond student Ellie Arkus won the Summer Litter Clean-Up logo design contest. Ellie's artwork is featured on signs, advertisements, and promotional giveaways for the event.

Join us for the 2021 Summer Litter Clean-Up in Clermont County and the East Fork Little Miami River Watershed. Volunteers are needed throughout the month of June! Individuals and small groups can Do-It-Yourself (DIY) at the location of your choice, or join coordinated in-person events (space will be limited) at various locations. Volunteers can enjoy the outdoors while helping to spruce up our local communities. Join us and register for the event today at <https://www.springlittercleanup.com/>.



2021 Winning Design by Ellie Arkus

Office COVID-19 Update

Clermont SWCD continues to adjust to the changes required to combat COVID-19. At the time of this publication, Clermont SWCD offices and others at the Agricultural Resource Center in the County Fairgrounds remain closed to the public. Staff are rotating the days during which they work in the office, and are available to make site visits any time during regular business hours (M-F, 8 to 4:30). Visits to the District office may be made by appointment only. To schedule an appointment, email our staff or call (513) 732-7075. Upon arrival for your appointment, please come to our walk-up window located to the right side of the main entrance to the Ag Center. Masks should be worn by anyone visiting the office or meeting with staff off-site.

Earth Machine Compost Bins Available for Purchase from OEQ

When most people hear the word 'compost', they automatically think of a smelly pile of moldy food. However, when done correctly, composting does not smell bad and is a sanitary way to dispose of organic waste. There are many excellent reasons to compost and the greater Cincinnati area has numerous resources available to assist you on your composting journey. Composting yard, garden, and food waste at home saves transportation and disposal cost, and provides an environmentally sound way to manage waste, since yard waste makes up to 30% of the municipal solid waste stream. In addition, composting can provide excellent fertilizer for gardens, yards, and other plants. Adding compost to your garden will increase drainage and provide a continuous source of nutrients required for plant health.

There are many different ways to start composting and no matter what your restrictions may be, there is a composting method that will work for you. At the most basic level, composting can happen when materials are placed in a mound and left alone. If you want a faster or more contained system, you can consider building or purchasing a composting bin. It is not necessary to have a bin, however, it can make it easier to turn the pile, keep the pile manageable, and remove finished compost. You can make your own bin out of wood or fencing and posts. You can also purchase a compost bin that is an enclosed system which will produce usable compost typically in less than a month. These types of bins include rolling bins, tumblers, enclosed bins, and worm bins. If you are interested in purchasing a composting bin, the Office of Environmental Quality currently has Earth Machine compost bins available for purchase for \$46. Contact Hannah Lubbers (513) 732-7894 x 4 or hlubbers@clermontcountyohio.gov for more details.

Composting can be an easy and cost effective way to improve the soil quality in your gardens and help your landscaping thrive. No matter how you choose to compost your organic waste, know that you are doing your part to help reduce the amount of waste that goes to our landfills.

Susie Steffensen retired after 21 years of service



Susie Steffensen

After 21 years of serving as Clermont SWCD's administrative assistant, Susie Steffensen retired on May 28. Susie began her career in April 2001, and quickly made substantial improvements to the District's accounting system. Before long, administrative assistants from SWCDs across the state would turn to her for guidance.

Along with maintaining the District's finances, Susie was always eager to take on additional duties, such as assisting with pollution abatement complaints, stream sampling and maintenance of monitoring equipment, storm sewer mapping, and taking care of multiple public rain gardens across the county, not to mention the annual plant sale. But most will remember Susie as the first person they spoke with when they called or visited the office. Over 21 years, Susie answered questions and provided guidance on District services to thousands of people.

We will greatly miss Susie's enthusiasm and dedication to her work, but most of all we will miss seeing our friend in the office each day. Thank you for 21 wonderful years, Susie. You will be missed!

Ohio River Sweep Update

The Ohio River Valley Water Sanitation Commission's (ORANSCO) Ohio River Sweep 2021 will be held on June 19, 2021 from 9 am to noon as part of the Summer Litter Clean-up month long event. The annual volunteer cleanup extends the along the entire river and is a great volunteer opportunity for groups and individuals. The event includes cleanups in New Richmond, Neville and Moscow. For more information and registration, contact Penny at OhioRiverSweep@gmail.com.

Pond Management Series Coming Soon



A screenshot from the first video in the Pond Management video series

A series of videos are in the works by our office to assist landowners in making management decisions on their ponds. These short videos will contain the basics of pond management here in our county and address some of the most common problems and questions our office receives calls on. These will be released as they are completed and will supplement our annual pond clinic. As always, we still offer free onsite consultations to your pond management and pond construction needs. You can also check out our website for additional educational pond material.

Clermont SWCD Welcomes Connie Miller as new Executive Assistant



Connie Miller

Please join us in welcoming Connie Miller as the new SWCD Executive Assistant. Connie started work in April, and comes to us from the Clermont County Water Resources Department, where she served as the Executive Assistant and Office manager for 12 years. Before that, she worked for seven years at the Clermont County Law Library. Connie

grew up on a small family farm in Brown County, and is excited to have the chance to work with the agricultural community.

Calendar

Holiday (Office Closed)	July 5
Monthly Board Meeting	July 14 8am
Monthly Board Meeting	Aug. 11 8am
Holiday (Office Closed)	Sep. 6
Monthly Board Meeting	Sep. 8 8am
Annual Meeting	Sep. 14 5pm
Monthly Board Meeting	Oct. 13 8am

Clermont Soil and Water Conservation District
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Phone: 513-732-7075
www.clermontswcd.org
<http://www.facebook.com/clermontswcd>
<http://www.twitter.com/clermontswcd>



Annual Meeting 2021

Shor Park
Tuesday, Sept. 14th from
5:00 to 8:00 PM.

Call for SWCD Supervisor Candidates

Clermont SWCD is seeking candidates for its Board of Supervisors. Two supervisors will be elected at the Annual Meeting which is scheduled for September 14.

Board Supervisors guide the district, its staff, and cooperating agencies in efforts to implement conservation programs in the county that address management and conservation of soil, water and related resources. Board members should have a sincere interest in conservation and must have the enthusiasm, dedication and the time to serve as an elected official. This is a volunteer position, but supervisors can be reimbursed for mileage & expenses (registration, lodging, meals, etc.) related to events involving soil & water professionals.

What a potential supervisor needs to know:

- * Candidate must be over 18 years old and a resident of Clermont County.
- * This is a volunteer position and runs in 3 year terms.
- * Board meetings are on the second Wednesday of the month at 8:00 AM and normally run 1 ½ to 2 hours.
- * Attendance at occasional outside meetings, events or trainings is encouraged.

If you are interested in becoming a Board Supervisor for Clermont SWCD, please contact John McManus, District Administrator at (513) 732-7075 Ext: 103 or jmcmanus@clermontcountyohio.gov