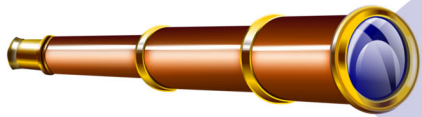


Conservation



Kaleidoscope



Site Preparation



Our last issue had an article about planning native habitat as an alternative to "no-mow May," so this time we thought we would give you some tips for success.

If you are planning to install a native planting and reduce the size of your lawn, site preparation is key to success. Eliminating any existing vegetation and weeds is important to remove competition for the young plugs. Having a clean soil surface is necessary for good seed to soil contact if you are starting with seed.

Ways to remove existing vegetation can include:

- Mechanical removal: Use a sod cutter or hand tools to remove vegetation and the top inch of soil, which contains most weed seeds.
- Smothering: Cover the area with cardboard or several layers of newspaper. Then weigh it down with a layer of compost, mulch, or yard trimmings. For best results, allow the site to smother for an entire growing season.
- Tarping and occultation: Occultation refers to blocking out light so that existing vegetation cannot grow. Black silage tarps can be used to smother vegetation.
- Herbicides: Herbicides should be used judiciously to reduce the environmental impacts. Please read and follow all instructions carefully. Note that a permit is required to apply herbicides near streams, rivers, and lakes and is best left to professionals.

Tilling is not recommended. Tilling brings up and simulates germination of weed seeds. It is also difficult to kill rhizomatous grasses (quackgrass and Kentucky bluegrass) by tilling. Cultivation also damages soil structure and releases carbon dioxide into the air.

Feel free to contact the office with any questions!



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Have You Seen the Spotted Lanternfly? Report It!

The spotted lanternfly is a planthopper native to Asia. It was first noticed in the United States in 2014 in Pennsylvania. Since then, it has been found in 11 counties in Indiana, including St. Joseph.



Tree-of-Heaven

Spotted lanternfly's favorite food is tree of heaven, a commonly seen invasive plant. But it also feeds on at least 100 other species of plants in our area, including many of our native trees, rose bushes, grapevines, fruit trees and hops. This insect could have serious impacts on the grape, orchard, hops, and logging industries if it continues to spread.

Egg masses look like gobs of dried mud and are laid on hard surfaces such as tree bark, outdoor furniture, and even vehicles. The eggs overwinter in the masses and the next generation hatches in spring. The lanternfly goes through 4 immature stages of instars before growing into a flying adult in late summer.

One method of control is to destroy egg masses during the winter. The DNR has an entomologist who is training her dogs to sniff out spotted lantern fly egg masses so the eggs can be destroyed before hatching! Another possibility for control is a trap that involves vibrations. There were rumors that spotted lanternfly nymphs and adults were attracted to the vibrations of buzzing electrical power lines. The USDA did a laboratory study and found that they did walk towards vibrations of 60Hz and so now they are working on how to use that as a control method.



If you see a spotted lanternfly (of any life stage), please report it. You can call the DNR hotline 866-NO-EXOTIC, email depp@dnr.IN.gov, or fill out the online form at the Entomology page on the DNR's website.

SMIPP Strike Team

August saw the first Strike Team day at Potawatomi Wildlife Park in Tippecanoe. The team targeted honeysuckle, mulberry, and oriental bittersweet, along with other invasives they saw along the way. Their work cleared a lot of invasives along the trail.

Strike Teams focus on intense, targeted removal. Experienced volunteers and trained individuals focus their efforts in a particular area, using specific methods of control to manage the invasives.

If you are interested in being a part of our team, email us at info@stjosephswcd.org or info@marshallcountyswcd.org.



Upcoming Dates

Tuesday, September 10th
Invasive Plants and What We Can Do
About Them - An Invasives
Presentation

Two Times!
 3 PM to 4:30 PM ~ 6 PM to 7:30 PM
 St. Joseph County Library
 Community Learning Center, Ballroom B

Saturday, October 12th
Weed Wrangles

10 AM to 12 PM
 Two Locations!
Rum Village Park
 2626 S. Gertrude St, South Bend
Potato Creek State Park
 25601 Pierce Road, North Liberty

Local Farmer Receives Indiana River-Friendly Farmer Award

Darrell and Andrea Gill from Lakeville were honored as a River-Friendly Farmer of Indiana on August 7 in Indianapolis.

The Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (IASWCD) hosts this annual event to recognize farmers who use best management practices like cover crops and filter strips. These efforts enhance soil health and prevent erosion, protecting Indiana's waterways.

Darrell and Andrea's Maple Crest Farm, situated in the Kankakee watershed, implements cover crops, no-till, and filter strips for nitrogen management, erosion control, weed management and prevention of fertilizer runoff. This farm also supports wildlife with woods, ponds and cedar boxes for wood duck nests. Owned by the family since 1925, they share their conservation journey with neighbors and when speaking to farmers who are new to conservation practices they state, "Be patient as results can take 3-4 years, but the benefits are well worth the wait!"



Sponsored by Indiana Farm Bureau, The Nature Conservancy, and the Indiana State Department of Agriculture, the River-Friendly Farmer Award ceremony takes place during the Indiana State Fair. This year's recipients join over 1,100 farmers recognized since the program began in 2000.



Lieutenant Governor Suzanne Crouch, along with Kendell Culp, Vice President of Indiana Farm Bureau, and other Indiana Conservation Partner leaders, expressed gratitude for the farmers' dedication to preserving Indiana's natural resources and contributing to the quality of life in the Hoosier state.

You can view a complete list of recipients on the IASWCD website, www.IASWCD.org.

Environmental Education Programs

We offer a variety of environmental education programs! In-class, field trips, teacher workshops, and more!



Check out our website for more information, or email our educator Shelley, to see what we can set up for your class or group!

education@stjosephswcd.org





St. Joseph County
Soil & Water
Conservation District

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Upcoming Events

September

2nd - Labor Day - Office Closed
10th - SMIPP Invasives Talk
17th - Board Meeting
26th - SCRAP Quarterly Meeting

October

12th - Weed Wrangle - Nationwide!
15th - Board Meeting



Go Green!

Contact us to choose
to get your newsletter
by email!



Visit our website & watch Facebook for info on events and more!

St. Joseph County Soil & Water Conservation Partnership

St. Joseph County SWCD Partnership Staff

Sarah Longenecker, SWCD
Misty Sorchevich, SWCD
Shelley Chaffee, SWCD
Debbie Knepp, NRCS
Jorge Lozoya, NRCS

SWCD Honorary Members:

Keith Lineback

SWCD Supervisors:

Chris Matthys, Chairman
Marty Lappin, Vice Chairman
Dave Vandewalle
Joe Gregory
Ryan Lee

Farm Service Agency Staff

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