



OASWCDE news & updates

March | 2020

Upcoming Events

April - Ohio Native Plant Month

April 22nd - Earth Day

April 30th - Arbor Day

If you would like to have your event added to the next newsletter please send details to [Sara Fehring](#).



2020 Award Winners

By: Rebecca Longsmith

A big congratulations to our 2020 Outstanding District Employee, Bonnie Dailey of Delaware SWCD, and Outstanding District Board Member, Chris Wible of Franklin SWCD! These awards are presented annually to recognize those individuals driving conservation efforts in Ohio. While we couldn't all be together in person at the Annual Meeting to hear about their accomplishments and see their looks of surprise as they are called up to the podium, we can certainly still appreciate their hard work and dedication.



Bonnie Dailey 2020 Outstanding District Employee

Bonnie Dailey is the Deputy Administrator at Delaware SWCD, where she is rounding out her 7th and final year before a much-deserved retirement. Bonnie previously spent 13 years at Fairfield SWCD, 3 years with USDA-NRCS, and 14 years with Muskingum County Parks District. Over the course of her career, Bonnie has been involved with or participated in OFSWCD committees and events, serving on the OASWCDE board, the NRAC committee, Ohio Department of Transportation Grants, Nature Works, Clean Ohio Fund, Clean Ohio Trails Fund, National Recreation Trails Fund,

the Muskingum Conservancy District, Project WET, Project WILD, and Project Learning Tree State Board of Directors, as well as the Environmental Council of Ohio.

Bonnie is known as the “go-to” person for all of her coworkers, no matter the topic or situation. Her nomination described her as innovative, articulate, dependable, dedicated, motivated, and perhaps most importantly, a voice of reason. Delaware SWCD Administrator, Scott Stephens, says that Bonnie’s willingness and ability to work with all members of the District staff and across all program areas make her an invaluable member of the team. She has continued to adapt to an ever-growing program and adjusted her role to always fit what was necessary and asked of her for the growth of the Delaware SWCD. One of her big projects over the last two years has been the unenviable but vital task of updating the Delaware SWCD’s Record Retention Schedule which was successfully approved in late 2020. Scott closed his nomination by saying, “Every day with Bonnie is a day to see her show leadership and do it in the most humble and effective way. We should all be so fortunate to have done so much work in Soil and Water Conservation.”

Chris Wible
2020 Outstanding District Board Member

Chris Wible is the Board Chairperson at Franklin SWCD and is currently serving his 8th year on the board. Chris has attended many National Association of Conservation Districts annual meetings and has championed the role of urban SWCDs as Co-Chair of the Ohio Federation of SWCD's Urban Networking Committee, working with the 88 Districts across the state to promote stormwater management and urban conservation efforts. Chris has also been actively engaged with conservation partners and representatives at the local, state, and federal levels. Chris has served as a board member of OPARR (Ohio Professional Applicators for Responsible Regulation), an alliance that strives to ensure safe and effective use of pest control, agricultural, and lawn and tree care chemicals. He has also served as a board member at the Scott Associates Credit Union since 2012 and currently serves as Board President.

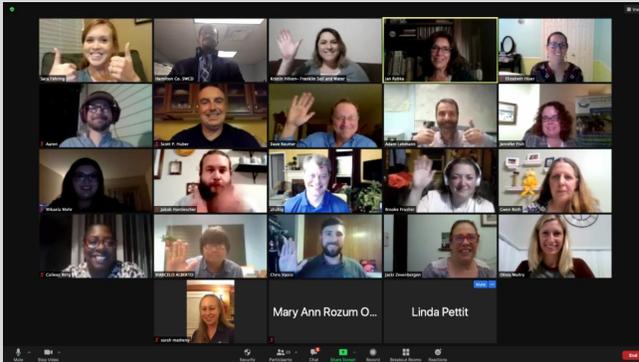


Chris is described as professional, energetic, forward-thinking, and dedicated in his service. In 2019, Franklin Soil and Water set up a Conservation Stewardship Fund at the Columbus Foundation to help put more conservation projects on the ground. Chris recognized that this could be a significant revenue source and has spearheaded the training of the rest of the Board of Supervisors in fundraising efforts, which has contributed to the total secured amount of \$23,000 since its inception. For several years, Chris, Franklin Soil and Water, and many other urban districts have been working with our state partners to propose updated ORC language that simply and clearly recognizes that districts manage stormwater runoff from both urban and agricultural lands and work with ODNR, ODA, and OEPA to implement conservation locally. Chris was integral in this process and a positive force in maintaining momentum, contributing to the recent passage and adoption of the language by the state legislature. Franklin SWCD Director, Jennifer Fish, says, “He is a true supporter that has dedicated much of his time and energy towards ensuring Soil and Water Districts remain a key contributor to the conservation of soil and water resources in the State of Ohio.”

2021 Ohio Association of Soil & Water Conservation District Employee membership registration letters were sent out to each district at the beginning of the year. Districts and members can find a fillable membership application on the [website](#). We hope you will take advantage of the numerous benefits of being an Employee Association member and will join us this year.

The Key to Effective Virtual Webinars

By: Rebecca Longsmith



If you've participated in any educational activities in the past year, chances are you're a lot more familiar with video conference and streaming platforms than you ever thought you'd be! In this "Age of Zoom," I've been excited by all of the options for free or low-cost conferences, webinars, and speaker series that have become available

across the country and around the world.

As with any type of presentation though, some speakers and topics are more engaging than others. After watching a speaker session last month, I remarked to a coworker that I thought it was the best session I had attended in the past year. But what makes an engaging Zoom webinar? I wanted to go through some of the things I noticed in that particular session to see if we can all be a little more effective with our next presentation.

The talk I watched was by Doug Tallamy as part of the Living Landscape Speaker Series, put on by a partnership with OSU Entomology and The Chadwick Arboretum. The presentation is still available to view, along with others in the series, at <https://u.osu.edu/certify/living-landscape-speaker-series/>. Tallamy is a professor, author, and ecologist. Titled, "Restoring Nature's Relationships at Home," his talk was about the importance of "keystone" species in nature and ecological relationships, even in small spaces like a suburban backyard. Despite having several published books, I had never heard of him before, but his words drew me in right away.

- **Practiced flow**- Right out of the gate, Tallamy came off as professional and prepared. It was clear to me that this wasn't the first time he had given a talk like this. Most importantly though, was that he was still able to maintain a conversational flow that did not sound robotic or read line-by-line. How a speaker presents themselves can get you excited, or not, to listen to what they have to say.
- **Engaging visuals**- Accompanying his speech, Tallamy used a wide array of visuals that changed frequently to correspond with his points as he made them. Text was included only when necessary and in small amounts. Viewers sometimes struggle listening to a speaker while trying to read at the same time. Single sentences, short clarifications, and bullet points are best.
- **Personal stories or connections**- Tallamy included references to his own

property and those of his friends many times throughout the talk. This is an opportunity where I think many SWCDs have a chance to shine! Using examples from your own experience and interactions is a great way to demonstrate “real-world” applications of a topic.

- **Interesting facts, without creating “data-overload”**- At one point, Tallamy discusses how he was able to find 410 caterpillars from 19 different species on a single oak tree in one day. A single statement like that can make a much larger impact than a screen full of numbers and statistics! Large amounts of data are best presented visually in summary graphs, or broken down across multiple slides.
- **Audience participation**- Audience participation can be more or less successful depending on how it is encouraged. As this was a nationwide presentation, participation was limited to questions typed into the chatbox that would be answered at the end. This allowed interaction, without interrupting the flow of the presentation. Catering to the needs and demographics of your intended audience can make viewers feel engaged and included, without feeling an awkward obligation.

Have you attended any webinars or other virtual events that have been particularly engaging or enjoyable? Did you or your district put on a successful presentation that we can feature? Consider recording live webinars or speaker sessions to make materials available to others at a later date. Always feel free to send us links and information about events that might interest your fellow SWCD employees and we would love to feature them in this newsletter or on our website!

Benefits of Establishing Ohio Native Plant Month

By: Matthew Browne

April is a big month for conservation in Ohio. Not only is the 22nd Earth Day and the 30th Arbor Day, but the entire month of April is Ohio Native Plant Month. While we may be familiar with the common benefits of native plants in our landscape, there are many additional benefits to having a dedicated Ohio Native Plant Month that may not be as obvious.

Below are a few excerpts from ‘**Benefits of Establishing Ohio Native Plant Month (ONPM)**’ that highlight some additional benefits of promoting our native plants.



Conserve Resources and Protect the Environment

Because native plants are adapted to local soils and environmental conditions, they generally require less water and little maintenance once established. This helps landscapers, nurseries and home gardeners conserve resources.

Grow Public Awareness

Increasing public awareness of Ohio’s natural abundance of native plants will help ensure a strong and healthy ecosystem in Ohio. There are hundreds of native plant species in Ohio, and many are underutilized in the industry and by home gardeners. Many native plants offer beautiful and showy flowers, produce attractive fruits, seeds/pods, and display vibrant colors in the fall!

Build School Programs

With the Ohio Native Plant Month being in the Spring, students will still be in

school with numerous educational opportunities to learn about the benefits of planting native plants. Students could be taught to identify invasive non-native plants and insects, the importance of removing invasive plants, and the economic and environmental benefits of planting native plants.

Increase Interest in Plant Careers

A recent Washington Post article by Adrian Higgins shed light on the increasing shortage of employees in horticulture, botany, plant sciences, and related fields. His article, “The horticulture industry age problem is bigger than you think,” discusses the fact that many young people have not heard of horticulture or are unaware of employment opportunities in these areas. According to Higgins, “The gulf between jobs and takers is so obvious and alarming to insiders that more than 150 green industry employers, colleges, botanical gardens, and others in April launched a national initiative seeking to reverse the decline.” Building awareness of native plants in Ohio will help encourage citizens to seek jobs in the horticulture field.

Boost Retail Nursery Sales

Having a dedicated Native Plant Month in Ohio will give the nursery and landscaping industries a platform for increasing outreach and boosting sales. By building and leveraging public awareness through advertising and point-of-purchase displays, and by offering a greater selection of plants, Ohio businesses will have the opportunity to boost sales.

Focus on Non-Native Invasive Species (NNIS)

There are a few plant species that, in addition to being non-native, are also highly invasive. Invasive plants can quickly dominate large areas and push out beneficial natives. Extremely aggressive, hard to control, and usually of little value to wildlife, these invasive plant species can overwhelm and destroy entire ecosystems. According to a NASA report on the planet, “the threat of invasive species is perhaps our most urgent economic and conservation challenge.” The Ohio Invasive Plant Council (OIPC) states that “Invasive plants cost natural resources and recreation agencies, farmers, industry, and homeowners millions of dollars each year.” Removal of highly invasive non-native plants should be a priority in Ohio. Organizations across the state could use ONPM to encourage the removal of invasive plants and their replacement with wonderful Ohio natives!

What Motivates People to Make 'Greener' Decisions

By: Matthew
Browne

Did you know that getting the community engaged in one conservation practice leads to further conservation practice adoption in the future? [**Click here**](#) to read more about research done through OSU.

Welcome, New Hires!

By: Sara Fehring

Muskingum SWCD



Doreen Mauer
 Administrative Assistant
doreen.maurer@muskingumswcd.org



Ashlee Kopchak
 Education and Information Specialist
ashlee.kopchak@muskingumswcd.org

As new staff members are added to your team please send an email and photo to [Sara Fehring](mailto:Sara.Fehring@muskingumswcd.org). The goal is to highlight new staff members quarterly.

2020 Board of Directors

Area 1

- [Matthew Browne](#) - Lucas SWCD
- [Beth Diesch](#) - Seneca CD

Area 2

- [Amy Roskilly](#) - Cuyahoga SWCD
- [Chad Stang](#) - Huron SWCD

Area 3

- [Katie Kovaly](#) - Monroe SWCD
- [Hannah Carpenter](#) - Belmont SWCD

Area 4

- [Kelly Crout](#) - Butler SWCD
- [Sara Fehring](#) - Hamilton County SWCD

Area 5

- [Bonnie Dailey](#) - Delaware SWCD
- [Rebecca Longsmith](#) - Delaware SWCD



Visit our [website](#) for:

- Catastrophic Sick Leave Program
- Events and Education
- Membership Forms
- Scholarships and Awards
- By-laws

Serving Employees - Building Community - Developing Professionals