

FALL 2024 • OCTOBER

CONSERVATION CHRONICLES

SHELBY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT E-NEWSLETTER



TREE-MENDOUS EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Shelby Soil & Water Conservation District

Forestry Field Day

Sunday 10/20/2024
1pm - 4pm
Tawawa Park
(free, open to the public)

- ODNR Booths
- Tractor Rides
- Kids Crafts
- Sawmill Demos
- Bird Walk
- Forester Walks
- Apples & Cider
- Family Fun

YOU'RE INVITED

for more info visit:

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Shelby County BIG TREE CONTEST

Do you think you know of the biggest AMERICAN SYCAMORE in Shelby County?!
Nominate it for the Shelby County Big Tree Contest!

- For more information about identifying Sycamores visit →
- The Shelby County BIG TREE CONTEST winner will be recognized at the Shelby SWCD Annual Meeting.
- Fill out Shelby County Big Tree Contest Nomination Form → and return it to Shelby SWCD office by Friday, Nov. 1st.
- Healthy trees reduce flooding and improve water quality!
- One Sycamore with a diameter of 24 inches can absorb as much as 3,267 gallons of stormwater runoff each year. **AMAZING!**

GET TREE HUNTING!!!

Contact Amanda Hurley with any questions:
amanda.hurley@usda.gov or 937-419-2597



Women in Agriculture Empowerment Event

BY AMANDA HURLEY

The Shelby County Women in Agriculture committee held their annual Empowerment Celebration on Thursday September 5th at VanDemark Farm. The theme of the event was “Forging Your Own Path” this year. Approximately 50 women from the local area attended the event.

The event started with an optional Make ‘n Take session where participants made their own needle felted pumpkins. Next, there was a mix and mingle where attendees were able to network and sample some delicious hors d’oeuvres from The Bridge. There was also desserts from Friedet’s Fantastical Sweets, flavored milks from Mullen Dairy & Creamery, and wine from Austeria Wine Boutique.

To begin the main portion of the event, attendees participated in an activity to get to know each other better and see that most women in agriculture are facing similar issues. Next the recipients of the Women in Agriculture Scholarship were announced - Elizabeth Shatto (Morehead State University) and Lilly Severance (Wright State Lake Campus).

Next the keynote speaker, Emily Mullen, shared her story. Emily reviewed how the agricultural industry has changed over the years and how many people are removed from how their food is grown or raised. She took the reins of her family’s dairy farm in her early 20’s. She has modernized her operation to include robotic milking, selling direct to consumer and selling other milk-based products. She had many inspirational points including encouraging others to advocate for agriculture and share stories about agriculture to connect with the general public.

Then attendees were able to chose which breakout sessions they would like to attend. Options were “Sustaining Our Soils,” “Sourdough: Learn it, bake it, enjoy,” “Insurance: Ensuring you are covered,” and “Composting : Learn how to dig it.” All of the sessions were super informational and well-received.

Overall, the event was a huge success. We are looking forward to the event again next year!

Every woman’s success should be an inspiration to another, we’re strongest when we cheer each other on.

SERENA WILLIAMS



KEYNOTE SPEAKER EMILY MULLEN SHARES HER INSPIRING STORY.



WOMEN IN AG COMMITTEE: LACEY GIBBS, RYLEE KAY PUTHOFF, CHELSEA ANDREWS, JULIE EHEMANN, RACI ZIMPFER, AMANDA HURLEY, TORI BENSMAN, ANDREA FLOWERS-GUCKES, JILL SMITH





Think ahead about grassed waterways this harvest

This is a great time of the year for farmers to consider if a grassed waterway is needed in their fields. Grassed waterways play a critical role in preventing soil loss and improving water quality. While harvesting fields this fall, small gullies and erosion issues can be found. If noted, Shelby Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) can help with the evaluation, planning and implementation of a grassed waterway.

Grassed waterways are a conservation practice that stabilizes areas of concentrated waterflow (where a lot of water is flowing through a field, possibly where a natural waterway would be). They are typically 30 to 50 feet wide, are designed to be crossed by farm equipment, and typically include installation of a tile which helps keep the waterway dry. If the grassed waterway is installed properly and have adequate grass (or other vegetation) coverage they can reduce sediment and nutrients in water runoff and help prevent erosion during heavy rain events. When soil remains in place, sediment and nutrients are not transported to nearby streams, rivers, and lakes. This helps to keep water cleaner and aquatic ecosystems healthier.

If you have an eroded area or small gully, contact the Shelby SWCD office to set up a site visit. The SWCD personnel will determine if the site is eligible for a grassed waterway and explain any potential cost-share programs. One extremely crucial factor is that waterways take several months from start to finish, so contacting the Shelby SWCD office 6 to 12 months in advance is best. Ideal conditions allow for installation of the tile in the fall and construct the waterway the following spring or summer. Once your grassed waterway is installed it is important to maintain it for it to do its job.

Thank you to all who have thought about and implemented conservation measures on your land. Conservation efforts would not be where they are at the present day without the people right here in Shelby County willingly signing up for programs that support conservation. This shows devotion and a desire for continued preservation of soil and improved water quality for a cleaner tomorrow.

If you are interested in learning more about grassed waterways or any other conservation program, please contact Jason Rethman at Shelby SWCD at (937) 419-2594.



GULLY



GRASSED WATERWAY



GRASSED WATERWAY AFTER HEAVY RAIN



Multi-County Educator Workshop

AMANDA HURLEY

The Multi-County Educator Workshop was a great success again this year. This workshop is held in conjunction with Miami SWCD, Montgomery SWCD and Darke SWCD and is offered to educators K-12 who would like to incorporate more environmental science and conservation content in their teaching.

This year the theme was Dirty, Wet, & Wild and was held at Miami Valley Career Technology Center. Day one focused on soil, while day two focused on water-related topics.

Again this year we were able to offer graduate credits from Ashland University to participants for an additional charge. All participants who completed the post-workshop survey said they would recommend this workshop to a colleague - which is a ringing endorsement! We appreciate everyone who attended or presented at this workshop and look forward to having it again next year!

If you would like more information about the Multi-County Educator Workshop please contact Amanda Hurley - amanda.hurley@usda.gov.



Educators from Jackson Center complete Escape Room activity.



Educators at a soil pit.



Shelby Soil & Water Conservation District

Milkweed Collection

OCTOBER 1ST-31ST

Collect established & mature seed pods from **Common Milkweed** when the pods are **brown-gray in color** and seams pop easily with pressure



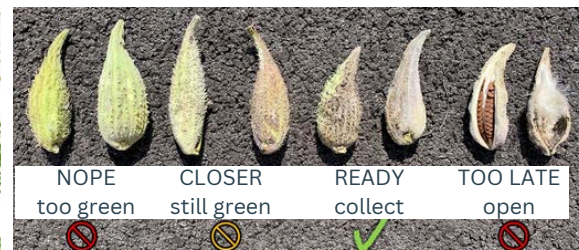
Collection container is in the lobby of the **Shelby County Agricultural Center**
822 Fair Rd. Sidney

The Ohio Pollinator Habitat Initiative is calling on all Ohioans for another year of milkweed pod collections! Volunteers collected 3,425 gallons of milkweed seed pods! These seeds are then redistributed to be planted in Ohio to ensure plenty of milkweed is present.

Milkweed is the only host plant for the Monarch butterfly for egg laying and caterpillar rearing. It also serves as a food source for Monarchs as well as many other pollinator species.

Milkweed pod collection tips:

- Only collect pods that are ready (see below)
- Only take 1/4 of the plant's pods
- Place pods in brown bag, plastic hold moisture
- Do not place rubber bands around pod
- Do not collect milkweed pods without landowner's permission



SCRAP TIRE RECYCLING



What:

Shelby County Tire Recycling Event

When:

October 16, 2024
8am - 1pm

*Registration & payment required before Oct.11th

Where:

Shelby County Fairgrounds
655 S. Highland Ave. Sidney

Cost:

\$2 per passenger tire
(less than 20" rim diameter)

\$8 per semi truck tire

\$15 per tractor tire
(larger than 34" rim diameter)

**LIMIT 10
TIRES PER
HOUSEHOLD**

*Register at Shelby Soil & Water Conservation District office 822 Fair Rd. Sidney

The best way to prevent tire build-up is to leave your tires with the dealer you purchase new ones from.

Too late?
DON'T BURN!
DON'T DUMP!
DON'T PILE UP!

**BRING YOUR SCRAP TIRES
TO THE SHELBY COUNTY
TIRE RECYCLING EVENT!**

VISIT
for
more
info



Contact Amanda Hurley,
Shelby SWCD, with questions:
amanda.hurley@usda.gov,
937-492-6520

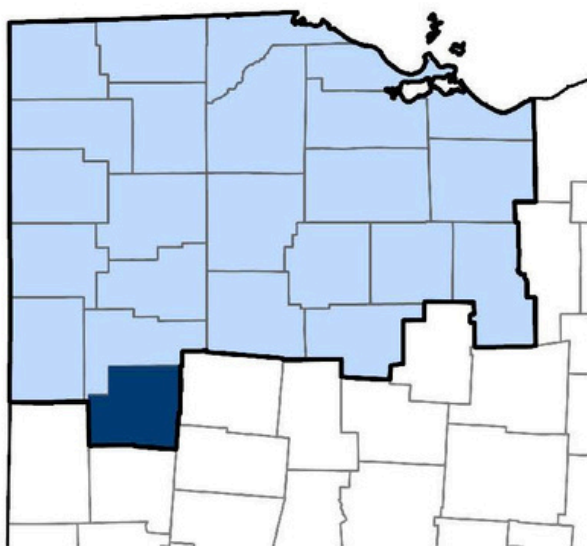


2023 H2Ohio County Summary

H2Ohio was first made available to producers in the Western Lake Erie Basin in 2019. Since then, more than 3,200 producers across the state have enrolled 2.2 Million acres in voluntary conservation practices that are improving Ohio’s waters.



Shelby County



Total 2023 Dollars for Completed Practices

\$722,057



Estimated Phosphorous Reduction:

7,371 lbs

VOLUNTARY NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT PLAN (VNMP)

A Voluntary Nutrient Management Plan (VNMP) is required for all cropland enrolled in H2Ohio. The VNMP shows the amount of nutrients in the soil and helps determine which Best Management Practices (BMP) will be most effective.

ABOUT H2OHIO

H2Ohio is Governor Mike DeWine’s statewide water quality initiative designed to address complex issues impacting Ohio’s waters.

The Ohio Department of Agriculture is leading efforts to reduce phosphorus runoff. Producers can receive incentives for implementing proven, cost-effective best management practices on their land.

For more information, visit h2.ohio.gov.

2023 Completed Practices	Total acres installed within Shelby County
Total Active Acres (VNMP)	31,700
VRT Phosphorous Application	3,000
Subsurface Phosphorous Placement	400
Manure Incorporation	1,700
Overwintering Cover	10,100



Staff Spotlight - New Employee!

ASHLEY WISMAR

Role: **District Technician**

Employee Since: **August 2024**

Previous experience: **Previously worked at Garmann Miller designing HVAC and plumbing systems.**

What I do: **Design grassed waterways and other conservation practices.**

What conservation practice resonates most with you? **Grassed waterways because of the work they do to reduce erosion and improve water quality.**

About Ashley: **My husband Travis and I have been married for 4 years and have one child. Outside of work I enjoy gardening, camping, and working on our small hobby farm.**



[See www.shelbyswcd.org](http://www.shelbyswcd.org)
[for full staff directory.](#)

Supervisor Spotlight

STEVE BERNING

Years as a Supervisor: **8 years**

What made you want to be a Supervisor? **Interested in conservation and want to be involved in conservation in Shelby County.**

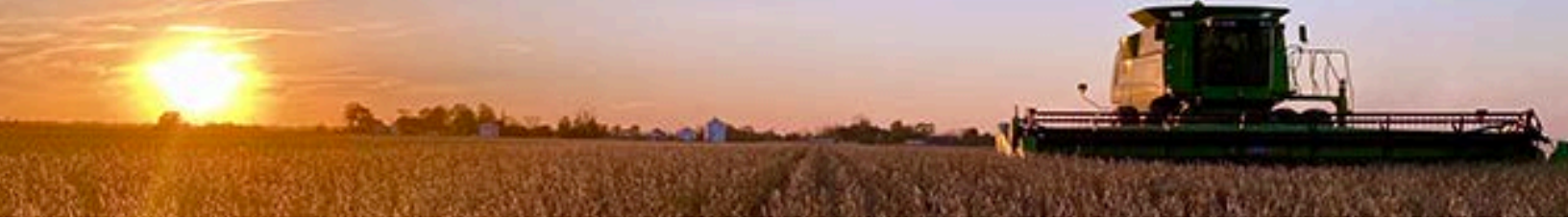
What conservation practice resonates most with you? **Filter strips and grassed waterways.**

Favorite part of being a Supervisor: **Work with other supervisors and being involved in plans for the soil and water district.**

About Steve: **He has been farming for more than 45 years. Currently has corn, soybean and wheat operation and has Holstein dairy beef. All of his fields are no till and he uses cover crops on all fields. Steve has been married to Alison for 37 years; they have 2 children and 5 grandchildren.**



May you be proud of the work you do, the person you are, and the difference you make.



Events & Announcements

10/1/2024-10/31/2024	Milkweed Pod Collection
10/11/2024 @ 11:15am	<u>Conservation Storytime "Batty for Bats"</u> <u>Anna Community Library</u>
10/14/2024	Federal Holiday - Shelby SWCD Office Closed
10/16/2024 8:00am	<u>Tire Recycling Event</u> <u>Shelby County Fairgrounds</u> (pre-registration required)
10/18/2024 @ 6:30am	Board Supervisor Meeting 822 Fair Rd. Sidney
10/18/2024 @ 2:00pm	<u>Conservation Storytime "Batty for Bats" -</u> <u>Jackson Center Community Library</u>
10/20/2024 1pm-4pm	<u>Forestry Field Day</u> <u>Tawawa Park</u>
10/23 & 10/24	<u>OFSWCD Educator Workshop</u>
10/25/2024 @ 12:30pm	<u>Conservation Storytime "Batty for Bats" -</u> <u>Fort Loramie Community Library</u>
10/30/2024 @ 10:00am	<u>Conservation Storytime "Batty for Bats" -</u> <u>Amos Memorial Public Library</u>
10/31/2023	Area IV Tech Tour - Darke County
11/1/2024 @ 10:30am	<u>Conservation Storytime "Pumpkins" -</u> <u>Russia Community Library</u>
11/1/2024 @ 12:30pm	<u>Conservation Storytime "Pumpkins" -</u> <u>Fort Loramie Community Library</u>
11/1/2024 by 4:30pm	<u>Shelby County BIG TREE Contest</u> <u>Nomination Deadline</u>
11/8/2024 @ 11:15am	<u>Conservation Storytime "Pumpkins" -</u> <u>Anna Community Library</u>
11/11/2024	Federal Holiday - Shelby SWCD Office Closed
11/15/2024 @ 6:30am	Board Supervisor Meeting 822 Fair Rd. Sidney

11/15/2024 @ 11:00am	<u>Conservation Storytime "Pumpkins" -</u> <u>Jackson Center Community Library</u>
11/27/2024 @ 10:00 am	<u>Conservation Storytime "Pumpkins" -</u> <u>Amos Memorial Public Library</u>
11/28/2024	Federal Holiday - Shelby SWCD Office Closed
12/2/2024	OFSWCD Area IV Winter Meeting Der Dutchman
12/5/2024 @ 6:00pm	<u>Shelby SWCD Annual Banquet &</u> <u>Supervisor Election</u> <u>St. Michaels Fort Loramie, OHio</u>
12/20/2024 @ 6:30am	Board Supervisor Meeting 822 Fair Rd. Sidney
12/20/2024 @ 12:30pm	<u>Conservation Storytime "Oh Deer!" -</u> <u>Jackson Center Community Library</u>
12/25/2024	Federal Holiday - Shelby SWCD Office Closed

leave the leaves

LEAVES ARE NOT LITTER, THEY ARE HABITAT
Where do insects and other invertebrates go in the winter? The vast majority "overwinter," or spend winter, right where they spent all summer — just less active and more hidden.

Think twice before you rake, mow, and blow this year. Invertebrates rely on fallen leaves and other organic debris to cover and insulate them from the elements. Whatever your landscape, you can ensure that resources for nests and overwintering habitat are available.

See this website for more information about providing habitat for wildlife in your landscape: <https://xerces.org/leave-the-leaves>

If you must rake - do not rake leaves over storm drains!! This can cause the drains to not perform well and adds nutrients to our area waterways.



If you have questions about events or announcements, please contact Amanda Hurley (937-419-2597 or amanda.hurley@usda.gov)