

MARION COUNTY
SOIL AND WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Conservation in the Neighborhood

VOL. 41, NO. 1



WINTER, 2020

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SWCD to Host 50th Annual Meeting

We are celebrating our 50th Annual Meeting on Tuesday, February 18th from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. at the John Boner Community Center, 2236 E. 10th Street. Please put us on your calendar and plan to attend!

Our keynote speaker will be Brad Beaubien, Director of Destination Development for Visit Indy. He will be discussing the next steps for the White River plan.

Also joining us will be Kevin Hardie, Executive Director of Friends of White River. This past November marked the 20th Anniversary of the notorious White River fish kill. Kevin will be sharing with us the history of the spill and the amazing progress that has been made in the last 20 years. (More info on the fish kill [HERE](#).)

A meal will be served. Keep an eye on our website for updates and registration information.

www.marionswcd.org

*Celebrating 50 Years
of Conservation!*



The focus of our 50th Annual Meeting will be White River –its health & history

Support Conservation Efforts in 2020— Become a SWCD Affiliate Member!

SWCD Affiliate members are special people and companies who support the District financially so that we can continue to improve the natural resources of our county and provide valuable assistance to our community.

We will soon be accepting donations online through Paypal! Visit our website

<https://marionswcd.org/affiliates/>



Native Plantings for Beneficial Insects and Pollinators

By Kevin Allison, Soil Health Specialist

The SWCD is proud to release its new guide entitled “Native Plantings for Beneficial Insects and Pollinators”. This guide provides a recommended species list and methodology for establishing a native planting that provides beneficial habitat near vegetable production on small farms and gardens. The guide was created with support from Indiana State Department of Agriculture’s Clean Water Indiana program with technical contributions from Kevin Tungesvick.

<https://marionswcd.org/native-plantings-for-beneficial-insects-and-pollinators/>

Pest pressure can be one of the biggest challenges in organic gardening, so the

species on this native plant list were selected to attract native bees and favorable insects that work the front lines of pest control. Columns denote whether the native plant is best suited for field strips in close proximity to crops, plantings around the border of a farm, or in tough, hot urban soils. In the spring of 2019, we planted species from this palette in the SWCD Eagle Creek Demonstration Garden to accompany our soil health and vegetable

trials. In our first season, we already saw it buzzing with activity, including native bees and wasps known to control aphids and other pests. Take a stroll down Eagle Creek Trail south of 56th Street and see it anytime or join us for 2020 workshops in the garden!

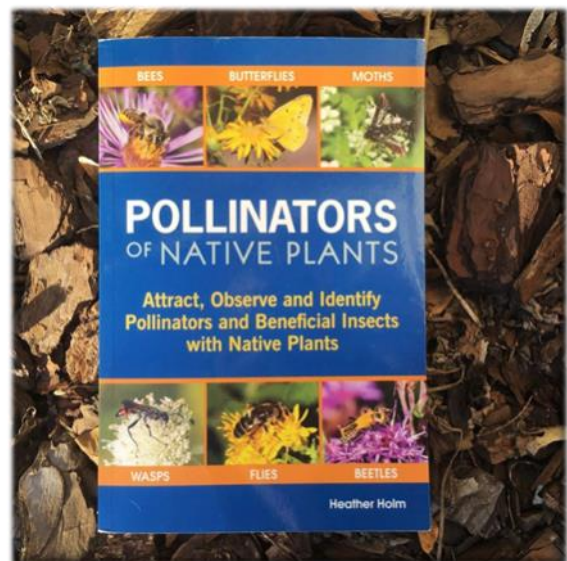
The SWCD’s most recent workshop entitled “Growing Food with Beneficial Insects and Pollinators” at the beautiful Holliday Park (Continued next page)



Dead stems of goldenrod. The one on the right has been hollowed out / “excavated” by a bee that nests in the cavities of flower stems.



Heather Holm
pollinatorsnative-plants.com



Indiana Hort Conference & Expo

February 11-13, 2020

Indianapolis Marriott East

A wide variety of speakers and focus tracks makes this educational conference highly practical for those interested and involved in specialty farming. Whether your interest is fruit, vegetables, wine/grapes, hemp or urban agriculture, this conference has something for you.

Check it out at

<https://www.indianahortconference.org/>

Hoosiers Encouraged to Practice Ice Safety

With the recent snowfall and dropping temperatures, Indiana Conservation Officers advise being mindful of the potential hazards of frozen lakes, ponds, rivers and streams. It's also important to keep a watchful eye on neighborhood retention ponds, lakes and other waterways for others who may venture out and find themselves in trouble.

Every winter, thousands of Hoosiers safely enjoy fishing, skating, hiking, or just sliding around on frozen ponds and lakes. And every year, people drown after falling through ice. Just like driving differently on snow versus clear roads, some may need to re-learn how to safely have fun on ice. Put safety first. The best rule of thumb is, when thinking about getting on the ice, believe it is thin ice unless proven otherwise.



(Native Plantings, continued from page 2)

expounded on this theme. Our guest speaker, Heather Holm, award-winning author of *Pollinators of Native Plants and Bees*, expertly educated us on strategies to provide habitat to attract native specific bees and beneficial insects that are especially helpful in pollination and pest control. We learned that, unlike the European honeybee, many of our native bees only travel short distances, which make protecting their habitat in and around the garden extremely important. Approximately 70% of native bees nest in the ground, a habitat that can be well-protected by native plantings and no-till gardens. Approximately 30% of native bees nest in cavities, such as in wood or plant stems. Leaving native plants' woody stems erect through the winter provide habitat for cavity-nesting native bees. At the SWCD demo garden, our new plan is to wait until late spring and only cut back the prior year's growth to 15 inches. We want to see our native bee and beneficial insect population alive and well come time for veggie season!

NATIVE PLANTINGS

FOR BENEFICIAL INSECTS & POLLINATORS



Many attended our workshop at Holliday Park

Winter Cabin Fever Cures



Areas near water are great places to look for signs of wildlife.



Join the Great Bird Count in February!

Don't forget to drain & disconnect your rain barrel for the winter!

Winter can seem long and boring – stuck inside, short daylight days and longing for

an early spring. But winter is a beautiful time of year and Indiana has a lot of places to enjoy, even on cold snowy days, and even in your own backyard.

Here are a few ideas to get you started:

- 1) Go owling! Winter is a great time for night hikes and often we can spot owls easier in the winter months. Learn to identify our various species of owls by their calls. Look for owl pellets. Check with a state park to see when their next Owl Prowl is scheduled.
- 2) After a snow take a hike looking for signs of wildlife – tracks, scat and raptor “snow angels”. Check out books from the library to help you identify whose been here. One great one is *Peterson’s Field Guide to Animal Tracks*.

3) Take your camera with you on your next outing. Snow glistening on trees and fences can help you look on the landscape with new eyes.

- 4) Invite birds to your yard. Set out bird feeders and a water source and see how many species of birds show up. In February you can participate in the Great Bird Count. Participants are asked to count birds for as little as 15 minutes (or as long as they wish) on one or more days of the four-day event and report their sightings online- at birdcount.org. Anyone can take part in the Great Backyard Bird Count, from beginning bird watchers to experts, and you can participate from your backyard, or anywhere in the world. Each checklist submitted during the GBBC helps researchers at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society learn more about how birds are doing, and how to protect them and the environment we share.
- 5) Visit a state park. Throughout the winter our state parks schedule educa-

tional and fun activities to help us enjoy these wonderful resources. Hike a trail, visit a nature center. Better yet, get a year pass and go often! See the state parks calendar of events at calendar.dnr.IN.gov

6) Is the weather too bad to go outside? IDNR has a great kids page full of fun activities to keep the young ones occupied and learning too! Check it out - <https://www.in.gov/dnr/kids/5989.htm>

7) Try cross county skiing! It's great exercise and a lot of fun. You can ski right here in Marion County at Fort Harrison State Park or at Eagle Creek Park.

Get out and have fun this winter!



Indiana 2020 Small Farm Conference

March 5-7th

Hendricks Co. 4H Fairgrounds & Conference Center

1900 E. Main Danville, IN



Break the winter cabin fever with an excellent conference for anyone involved in gardening and small farm enterprises. Thursday's topics include writing a food safety plan, vegetable crop planning, mushroom cultivation, biological orcharding and two tours: on the subjects of agri-tourism and livestock processing. Breakout sessions on March 6-7 will cover topics ranging from vegetable and livestock production to farm management and marketing. Participants will have an opportunity to network with Extension educators, expert speakers, other farmers and vendors.

The [Small Farm Trade Show](#) takes place on March 6-7 where more than 50 vendors will showcase their products and services. The [Small Farm Poster Session](#) on March 7 will feature research and programs on local foods, diversified agriculture, and small farm production and education. Poster session registration is now available. Submit a proposal by January 27th online at <http://bit.ly/SFCposter2020>

Lunch is included with your registration. Catering will be provided by Lali Hess and the wonderful staff at [The Juniper Spoon](#), using ingredients sourced from Indiana farms and food businesses. They have booked a limited block of rooms for attendees at the [Fairfield Inn & Suites, Avon](#) and the [Baymont Inn & Suites, Plainfield](#).

Keep up with the latest information and listing of presenters at their website:

<https://www.purdue.edu/dffs/smallfarms/small-farm-conference-2020/>

Attendee Early Registration

\$75 for one day registration

\$135 for two day registration

\$190 for three day registration

Attendee registration fees increase by 20% after February 7th. Registration is available through February 20th or until full. Discount student tickets also available.

Please direct questions regarding registration, billing, and payment to Purdue Conferences at 866-515-0023.

Online registration is available at <http://www.cvent.com/events/indiana-small-farms-conference-2020/event-summary-eda2b84f41f640d4b6d25c7b3c068c5a.aspx>

PURDUE
EXTENSION | 5TH ANNUAL

Indiana **Small Farm** Conference





MARION COUNTY
SOIL AND WATER
—CONSERVATION DISTRICT—

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The Mission of the Marion County Soil & Water Conservation District is to assist Marion County land users in conserving soil, water, and related natural resources by providing technical, financial and educational services.

We are now looking for 2020 Supporting Affiliate Members! Please consider supporting your Marion County SWCD. Applications are available on our website: www.marionswcd.org

Find us on the web: www.marionswcd.org

Invasives Highlight: Tree of Heaven

Tree-of-Heaven is a fast growing tree from Asia that vigorously sends up root sprouts forming dense colonies. Tree-of-Heaven has a large, compound leaf that is up to 3 feet long with as many as 30 leaflets, and a distinct glandular notch at the base of the leaflet. The winged seeds are produced in abundance and help the species colonize new areas quickly. In southern Indiana Tree of Heaven has already completely taken over acres and acres of land.

If you have Tree of Heaven on your property be aggressive in eradicating it. Every year you wait it is sending out more root sprouts. Trees produce seeds by their 2nd or 3rd year. The best way to combat this species is by using the integrated vegetation management approach. This usually includes mechanical, cultural, biological and chemical approaches to disrupt the lifecycle of the plant. For Tree of Heaven cultural and chemical approaches are most commonly used. Mechanical treatment can be used in limited circumstances, but if used incorrectly can make the problem worse. There are currently no Biological controls available, but there is mounting evidence that a verticillium wilt caused

by *Verticillium albo-atrum*, a soil fungus, may prove to be a viable biological control for Tree-of-Heaven.

For more information visit the Indiana Woodland Steward website: <http://www.inwoodlands.org/managing-tree-of-heaven/> and to help you identify it watch <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HYQvT3l2y1Q>



Look for smooth leaves with a glandular notch at the base and a distinct rancid smell.

[For more information on invasive species check out our website.](#)

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