

# FAIRFIELD FEATURES



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The Fairfield Features is published quarterly by the Fairfield Soil & Water Conservation District  
831 College Avenue, Suite B, Lancaster, Ohio 43130 (740) 653-8154

## SWCD ENGINEERING TECHNICIAN RECEIVES AWARD

At the December Area 5 Winter Meeting, Fairfield Soil and Water Conservation District Engineering Technician Nikki Drake was presented with the Ohio Federation of Soil and Water Conservation District's 2016 Area 5 Employee of the Year award. Area 5 consists of 17 counties from central Ohio to the Ohio River. Nikki has been employed with the SWCD since 1999. Congratulations Nikki!



Pictured are Nikki Drake and Mark Boving, SWCD Board Chair.

## THANKS SARAH!



Sarah Miles has been our Ohio University intern since June 2016, and she is on her third semester with us. We were able to get Sarah through a partnership with the Great Lakes Internship Program. Sarah is a graduate of Canal Winchester High School. She is obtaining a bachelor's degree in biology with plans to attend graduate school next fall.

Sarah has been assigned the daunting task of scanning 73 years of conservation engineering project plans, looking up site coordinates and creating a database that can be imported into a GIS file. When it is all complete, we will be able to navigate on our computers to any parcel in Fairfield County and know whether a conservation project has been installed on that property and pull up the associated engineering plan. This will provide information quickly to landowners and save Fairfield SWCD staff a lot of time digging through the archives.

Sarah now has a broader understanding of agriculture and conservation, is an expert map reader and can find anything on an aerial photograph. She says she has learned a lot about different technology programs and their capabilities.



Spring is almost here! It's time again for the Tree & Wildlife Packet Sale. See inside for descriptions and order form.

## PHRAGMITES

Common reed, better known as Phragmites (frag-MY-tees), is one of those rare plants that has become better known by its scientific name (Phragmites australis subsp. australis) rather than its common name, which is common reed. It's complicated, but there are actually two subspecies in Ohio, one that is native, rare, and desirable; the other is invasive and extremely destructive. Invasive Phragmites can be found in environments such as freshwater marshes, river edges, shores of lakes and ponds, and roadsides.

It's believed that the grass was brought to the United States by accident during the late 18th century or the early 19th century. This plant disperses many seeds but they are hard to detect, and this is usually how it spreads except for in rivers where the rhizomes are washed down to new sites. Once common reed is introduced it can quickly take over an area; it crowds out natives, changes the marsh hydrology, and can alter wildlife habitat. Pulling this plant is possible but if you don't pull the entire root system the plant could re-grow. Want to learn more? Visit the Great Lakes Phragmites Collaborative at <http://greatlakesphragmites.net/>.



## NUISANCE WILDLIFE CONCERNS AND CONTROL

For many landowners, both rural and residential, a new year can bring new problems with nuisance wildlife. This can be something as innocent as a mouse scurrying around in a garage, to something as sinister as a flock of black vultures killing a newborn calf. Regardless of the level of nuisance you may be experiencing from the local wildlife, there are several programs available to help manage the problems, but also many rules and regulations governing what you're legally permitted to do.

Three commonly encountered species in Fairfield County (white-tailed deer, Canada geese, and black vultures) have specialized permitting systems in place that allow need-based harassment and/or killing of select individuals if there is visible damage occurring or a plausible threat of such damage. If you are experiencing a conflict with any of these animals, please contact Tommy Springer, SWCD Wildlife Specialist to see if you qualify to participate in one or more nuisance control programs for these species.

Bats in your attic? Moles tearing up your yard? Raccoons looking for dinner in your garbage can? Nuisance wildlife can come in many shapes and sizes, and no two situations are ever the same, so if you are having issues with one of the other hundreds of wildlife species in our area, and need help determining legal methods to harass, control, or remove the problem animal; or if you need tips on how to best manage the problem, you can also discuss any questions or concerns with our Wildlife Specialist as well.

Here's to hoping this year won't result in any fights between you and your neighborhood wildlife, but if it does we're here to help.

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## WINTER IS FOR THE BIRDS!

Winter is great for watching wildlife, especially birds. Setting up a feeder full of seed and being able to enjoy cardinals, nuthatches and chickadees from the warmth of your own living room is an enjoyable experience shared by many nature lovers. Once winter is over, and birds are able to find plentiful food from natural sources, they are often still in need of suitable nesting habitat to raise the next generation of feathered fliers.

Constructing birdhouses, and installing them around your property can provide needed relief for many bird species, especially the cavity nesters like eastern bluebirds and tree swallows. As dead trees, where natural cavities would typically occur, are cut down in the name of safety or firewood, the artificial cavernous spaces within birdhouses provide suitable alternatives. Not only do the birds benefit, but building a birdhouse can be a fun experience shared with family members.

We have nest box plans and bird feeder plans available at our office as well as booklets for attracting birds and wildlife to your yard. Stop in today to see us and pick one up free of charge!

## PLANTING TREES IN URBAN AREAS

With our annual tree sale now going on, those of you that live in urban areas with a limited amount of property on which to plant may be wondering if it is worth trying to grow trees. Yes, it is worth it! If you have trees located in the right areas on your property, you can reduce your heating and cooling costs by 10-20% and sale prices of homes with trees can give you almost a 5% increase over similar homes without trees.

Trees also offer benefits to the earth. Everyone learns in elementary school that trees take in carbon dioxide and give off oxygen, and tree roots break up compacted soil and hold it in place to reduce erosion. Ever been walking around in a city where it is all brick, concrete, metal, glass and asphalt? Trees help provide shade and can decrease surface temperatures.

A lot of the benefits of trees can be harnessed with planting bushes, shrubs or other vegetation, but if you are looking for full-size trees to place on your property, then things can get tricky. There are many things to consider when looking to plant and maintain trees in an urban area. The first thing you should look at is, are you allowed to? Some communities have zoning restrictions that prohibit or restrict certain types of trees and vegetation, and also restrict placement. Planting large canopy trees on property lines can lead to disputes between neighbors and having branches that hang over the street can be a hazard for drivers. Check with your local zoning officials to see about restrictions.

Other major obstacles for placement of trees are utilities and easements. Probably the most common cause of power/telephone/cable line destruction is falling branches from a tree. Make sure trees that mature over a long period of time are placed far enough away so that 50+ years later, the branches will not interfere with those utilities. Before you plant, it may be a good idea to call the Ohio Utilities Protection Services (OUPS) at 8-1-1. Some properties may have an easement located on site, where drainage can run through, or access is given to other areas. Stay away from planting trees in easements, as the grantee of the easement may have the right to cut the tree down and you may be liable for the costs. Check your property deed to see if there are any easements on your property. Trees should not be planted on pond dams or near underground tile to prevent clogging.

Also keep in mind that certain species of trees can bring nuisances. Needles, leaf litter, nuts and fruit, smells, sticks and twigs, and most of all, the critters! All of these can be easily managed if you properly maintain your trees and property, and some people may feel that some of these are benefits!

Article courtesy of Union SWCD

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### FAIRFIELD SWCD BOARD OF SUPERVISORS REORGANIZE

On January 12, 2017, the Fairfield SWCD Board of Supervisors selected the following officers for 2017:

Mark Boving - Chair  
Tim White - Vice Chair  
Matt Reese - Secretary  
Don Rector - Treasurer/Fiscal Agent  
Wendy LaRue - Member

The regular monthly Board meetings will be held on the second Thursday of each month at 5 p.m. at the Fairfield County Ag Center. Anyone is welcome to attend the meetings. Since the time and date of the meetings can vary, please contact our office for information on any changes to the schedule.

### FAIRFIELD COUNTY "FUTURE CONNECT" BROADBAND INITIATIVE

Fairfield County has put together a Broadband Committee comprised of local community leaders and is performing an assessment of the county's broadband environment. They are asking for public input by conducting surveys of local residents, businesses and other organizations across the county.

Responses to the surveys will help them better understand the existing resources and capabilities they now have to support the access, adoption and use of broadband technology in our homes and businesses.

To take the survey, please go to <http://connectmycommunity.org/fairfield-county/> and select the appropriate option.

Copies of the survey will also be available in the Fairfield SWCD office.

# 2017 Tree & Wildlife Packet Sale

**PLEASE ORDER EARLY** as orders are processed on a first-come, first-served basis. All orders are subject to availability. There is no limit to the number of packets you may order; however, payment must be included with your order. **Pick-up date is Thursday, April 13, 2017.** The Fairfield SWCD will not be liable for any seedlings not picked up on the original pick-up date.

All trees and shrubs are state and federally inspected. We may need to make reasonable substitutions based on availability of certain species. All trees and shrubs are bare root seedlings 6 to 18 inches in height. **Orders must be received by Friday, March 17, 2017.**

## Tree Descriptions

| Tree Name   | Mature Height | Mature Width | Growth Rate | Light Required | Soil Moisture                                   | Soil pH | Comments/Uses   |
|---|---------------|--------------|-------------|----------------|---|---------|---|
| Eastern White Cedar   | 20' - 60'     | 10' - 15'    | S-M         | S              | M,W   | A       | aka American Arborvitae, well-adapted                               |
| White Pine  | 60' - 80'     | 20' - 40'    | F           | S              | M   | N,A     | windbreaks, timber, wildlife  |
| American Beech  | 50' - 80'     | 40' - 70'    | S-M         | S, P           | M,W   | A,N,B   | wildlife, shade tree, prefers constantly moist soil                 |
| American Plum   | 20' - 24'     | 12' - 18'    | M           | S              | M,W   | A,N,B   | edible fruit, adaptable but prefers well drained soil               |
| Bald Cypress  | 50' - 100'    | 20' - 40'    | M           | S              | D,M,W   | A       | deciduous conifer, wetland species, timber, wildlife                |
| Black Walnut  | 50' - 70'     | 50' - 70'    | F           | S, P           | D,M,W   | A, N    | nuts, timber, wildlife  |
| Black Willow  | 30' - 60'     | 30'          | F           | S, P           | M,W   | A,N,B   | great for stream banks, permanently wet, poorly drained soil        |
| Hackberry   | 50' - 60'     | 70' - 80'    | F           | S              | D,M,W   | N       | adaptable, interesting bark, wildlife                               |
| Northern Pecan  | 80' - 120'    | 60'-100'     | S           | S              | M,W   | A, N    | nuts, wildlife, shade, fall color                                   |
| Ohio Buckeye  | 45' - 100'    | 20' - 30'    | M-F         | S, P, SH       | M   | A, N    | Ohio's state tree, early to leaf out in spring, interesting flowers |
| Persimmon   | 40' - 50'     | 25' - 30'    | S-M         | S,P            | M,W   | N       | edible fruits, fall color, specialty lumber                         |
| Red Oak   | 50' - 60'     | 50' - 60'    | F           | S              | D,M   | N       | tolerates dry conditions, landscape, timber                         |
| Redbud  | 25' - 30'     | 26' - 33'    | M           | S, P           | M, W  | B       | adaptable, abundant lavender flowers                                |
| River Birch   | 40' - 60'     | 30' - 50'    | M           | S, P           | M,W   | N       | landscaping beauty, interesting bark                                |
| Shellbark Hickory   | 100'-120'     | 74' - 80'    | M           | S, P           | W   | A       | great in bottomlands/floodplains, wildlife                          |
| Sugar Maple   | 60' - 80'     | 20' - 40'    | S-M         | S              | M   | N       | landscaping, timber, orange fall color, maple syrup                 |
| Swamp White Oak   | 50' - 70'     | 50' - 70'    | S-M         | S,P            | M,W   | A       | does great in bottomlands, adaptable, wildlife, timber              |
| Tuliptree   | 70' - 90'     | 35' - 45'    | F           | S              | M   | N       | interesting flowers, timber   |
| White Flowering Dogwood   | 20' - 30'     | 20' - 25'    | S-M         | S, P           | M   | A       | four-season appeal, white flowers, red-purple fall color            |
| White Oak   | 50' - 70'     | 50' - 70'    | S-M         | S, P           | D,M,W   | N       | timber, very beneficial to wildlife and ecosystems                  |
| Soil Moisture (W = wet, M = medium, D = dry)  |               |              |             |                | Light (S = sun, P = part sun/shade, SH = shade) |         |   |
| Soil pH (N = normal pH range 6.5 - 7.5, A - acidic 6.5 or less, B = basic/alkaline 7.5 or higher) |               |              |             |                |   |         |   |
| Growth Rate (F = fast 12+ inches/year, M = medium 6"-12"/year, S = slow 2"-6"/year)               |               |              |             |                |   |         |   |

For more plant information, visit: <http://forestry.ohiodnr.gov/trees>, <http://plants.usda.gov/java> or search the web for a specific plant.

# 2017 Tree & Wildlife Packet Order Form

|  | Pack of 5<br>12"-18" |      | Pack of 25<br>9"-16" |      | Pack of 100<br>9"-16" |        |       |
|--|----------------------|------|----------------------|------|-----------------------|--------|-------|
| Evergreen Trees  | # of pkts.           | Cost | # of pkts.           | Cost | # of pkts.            | Cost   | Total |
| Eastern White Cedar  | x                    | \$10 | x                    | \$20 | x                     | \$60   |       |
| White Pine   | x                    | \$10 | x                    | \$20 | x                     | \$60   |       |
| Deciduous Trees  | 12"-18"              |      | 6"-12"               |      | 6"-12"                |        |       |
| American Beech   | x                    | \$10 | x                    | \$30 | x                     | \$90   |       |
| American Plum  | x                    | \$10 | x                    | \$30 | x                     | \$90   |       |
| Bald Cypress   | x                    | \$10 | x                    | \$30 | x                     | \$90   |       |
| Black Walnut   | x                    | \$10 | x                    | \$30 | x                     | \$90   |       |
| Black Willow   | x                    | \$10 | x                    | \$30 | x                     | \$90   |       |
| Hackberry  | x                    | \$10 | x                    | \$30 | x                     | \$90   |       |
| Northern Pecan   | x                    | \$10 | x                    | \$30 | x                     | \$90   |       |
| Ohio Buckeye   | x                    | \$10 | x                    | \$30 | x                     | \$90   |       |
| Persimmon  | x                    | \$10 | x                    | \$30 | x                     | \$90   |       |
| Red Oak  | x                    | \$10 | x                    | \$30 | x                     | \$90   |       |
| Redbud   | x                    | \$10 | x                    | \$30 | x                     | \$90   |       |
| River Birch  | x                    | \$10 | x                    | \$30 | x                     | \$90   |       |
| Shellbark Hickory  | x                    | \$10 | x                    | \$30 | x                     | \$90   |       |
| Sugar Maple  | x                    | \$10 | x                    | \$30 | x                     | \$90   |       |
| Swamp White Oak  | x                    | \$10 | x                    | \$30 | x                     | \$90   |       |
| Tuliptree  | x                    | \$10 | x                    | \$30 | x                     | \$90   |       |
| White Flowering Dogwood  | x                    | \$10 | x                    | \$30 | x                     | \$90   |       |
| White Oak  | x                    | \$10 | x                    | \$30 | x                     | \$90   |       |
| Additional Items   |                      |      |                      |      |                       |        |       |
| Wildflower Seed Packet - showy annuals & native perennials; plants up to 200 sq. ft.                     |                      |      |                      |      | x                     | \$4.50 |       |
| Marking Flags will be available for purchase on the day of pick up at a cost of \$10 for a bundle of 100 |                      |      |                      |      |                       |        |       |

**Order Grand Total** \$

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

(needed if you would like to receive notice as to when you can pick up your packets - if you do not supply an e-mail, you will receive a post card in the mail)

Orders must be received by:  
***Friday, March 17, 2017***

Send payment to: Fairfield SWCD  
831 College Ave., Suite B  
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**For Office Use Only:**

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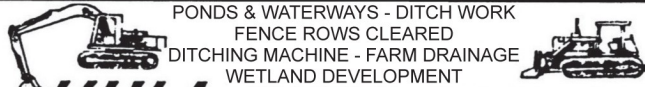
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## **FAIRFIELD SWCD OFFERS COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS**

In 2017, the Fairfield SWCD will offer two college scholarships of \$500 for any graduating high school seniors that plan to study Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation, Environmental Education, Geology, Biology, and the like. The scholarship can be used for the pursuit of two-year or four-year degree programs as well as certification at a technical college. Applicants must be residents of Fairfield County and can be home-schooled. The applicant must have a minimum cumulative grade-point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale at the time of application.

Applications for this scholarship can be acquired from high school guidance counselors, the SWCD office or through the Fairfield SWCD website at [www.fairfieldswcd.org](http://www.fairfieldswcd.org) under Education. Along with the application, an official high school transcript, 400 word essay and two letters of recommendation are required. One recommendation needs to come from a teacher at the applicant's school; the other should be from a person in the local community. Neither can be a relative of the applicant.

Once the applications are received, they will be reviewed by a three-member committee who will contact applicants to schedule an interview. Applicants will be required to interview in April to be eligible for the award. Students will be notified of the selection by the end of the school year, and the successful applicant must submit a copy of their college acceptance letter to the SWCD office.

The scholarship money will be awarded after the applicant successfully completes the first semester of college and has maintained a minimum 2.5 GPA on a 4.0 scale. The student is required to show a copy of their college grades before the award check will be issued. The deadline to apply is March 31. Please call the Fairfield SWCD office at (740) 653-8154 with questions.

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## **COUNTY AUDITOR IMPROVES ACCURACY & EFFICIENCY OF CAUV PROGRAM**

The County Auditor administers the CAUV program in Fairfield County for the State of Ohio. Within the past year, the Auditor's office has taken steps to improve the accuracy and equity of the CAUV Program by developing a new land use data feature in combination with technology such as Geographic Information System (GIS). With approximately 6,000 parcels in the CAUV program, these improved tools provide an accurate and repeatable way of producing the soil/land use combinations needed to determine the CAUV value for each parcel. Efficiency has been gained by utilizing these tools to verify eligibility as outlined by the State of Ohio for each existing parcel, as well as new applications submitted to the Auditor's office.

In addition to those properties in commercial agricultural production, the CAUV program also may provide benefits to those qualifying woodland properties which are actively managed. The CAUV program gives a reduction in woodland value based on the land's soil types and their soil rates that are assigned by the Ohio Department of Taxation. The County Auditor's office does require, in this instance, submission of a Timber Management Plan for the CAUV program to ensure that those receiving these benefits are actively managing their woodlands.

A second woodland program available to those who are growing and selling timber as an agricultural business is under Ohio Forest Tax Law (OFTL). OFTL provides a 50% reduction in woodland value for the qualifying woodland acres. An active Timber Plan is also required for acceptance in this program.

Both programs require a minimum of 10 woodland acres, but can lower the taxable value of the portion of land if it qualifies. If you are a new owner of woodlands, or if you have not actively managed your woodland acreage, consider working with an ODNR service forester. The representative for this area is Jason Van Houten and his phone number is 614-265-6703. Your ODNR Forester can assist with developing a Forest Stewardship Management Plan aka Timber Management Plan to fully maximize the woodland's potential commercial value. Having a timber management plan may also qualify some of land that you own for the Current Agricultural Use Value program or CAUV.

For additional information regarding the CAUV program you can contact Bill Williams who is the Fairfield County CAUV administrator at [bill.williams@fairfieldcountyohio.gov](mailto:bill.williams@fairfieldcountyohio.gov) or his direct line at 740-652-7037.

## SPRING POND MANAGEMENT

It's never too early to start planning and implementing your pond management strategy. Controlling vegetation, removing problem wildlife such as muskrats and beaver, or discovering how to gain more enjoyment from your personal aquatic oasis is not something to put off. The warmer weather will be here before you know it and so will the weeds!

If you want to get a head start this year and avoid a repeat of previous pond problems, feel free to contact Tommy Springer, Wildlife Specialist, to create a personalized management strategy for your pond no matter how big or small.

## UPDATE ON OHIO POLLINATOR INITIATIVE

Approximately 2,500 gallons of milkweed pods were collected throughout the state last fall. All of the milkweed pods collected have been delivered to Department of Corrections institutions where they are currently harvesting the seeds from the pods.

Once the seeds are harvested, they will be stratified (placed in cold storage) for approximately 40 days to improve germination. Once this process is complete, a portion of the seeds will go back to each Soil and Water Conservation District that assisted with the collection. Beyond what is provided to the SWCDs, the remaining seed will be used on habitat projects in Ohio.

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To file a complaint, write the Secretary of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington D.C. 20250 or call 1-800-245-6340 (voice) or (202) 720-1127 (TDD). USDA is an equal employment opportunity employer.

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