

Seedling

FALL 2024

NEW FACES AT CONSERVATION DISTRICT

FLUSHING FRIDAY

BACKYARD INVASIVES

**MASTER GARDENER HOTLINE
STILL OPEN**

BE SEEN THIS FALL



**CLICKABLE
VIDEOS**



Editor's Note



"How the gentle wind/Beckons through the leaves/As autumn colors fall" – The Blasting Company, *Over the Garden Wall*

Happy Fall Folks! This season is an exciting time to relish in the fruits of our labor and reflect on the seasons' past. As the trees slowly lose their leaves, take the time to remember what you have lost and gained so far this year, and how curiously nature changes around us.

Don't forget to celebrate the hard work you have accomplished this year– treat yourself to a glass of local apple cider, carve a pumpkin, or have a relaxing night in with your loved ones.

Perhaps take more time to rest as the days grow shorter and colder. You can start by leaving the leaves; instead of raking or burning them this season, leave them be! It is better for the firefly population and other forest life, as the fallen leaves create habitat for critters such as salamanders. Leaving your leaves is also fantastic for your soil, as the leaves become a natural compost.

Enjoy the lovingly crafted newsletter, and don't forget to stay curious about the natural world around you!

Postscript from Porcupine Pat: The change of seasons also brings change to our office. We are very fortunate to have hired Hannah who brings a wonderful and fresh perspective to programs and to this publication. You'll see more from her as we work together to heighten awareness and appreciation that results in actions to help our shared environment.



NEW FACE ALERT: HANNAH KULBITSKY

Hannah Kulbitsky is the new full time Environmental Educator and Outreach Coordinator. She recently graduated from Muhlenberg College with a double major of both Sustainability Studies and Theater. She is thrilled to begin teaching the local community about nature and connecting with the public. Her main natural interest is forestry, combined with a passion for native vs invasive species. She is happy to use her theatrical skills in public speaking and with her puppet bat, Beatrice.



BEARY FUN!



Lakefront Fest



FLUSHING FRIDAY



ALEXA CRANKS OPEN VALVE

Every Friday, Watershed officials Alexa and Wayne conduct routine maintenance at Acid Mine Drainage treatments. They “flush” the projects, meaning they let the typically treated waterways flow without obstruction to give the treatment plant a short rest. After a couple hours, they return to the sites to urge the waterflow back through AMD treatment plant.

LANCE LEAF ASTER GROWS IN TREATED AREA



Plant is living proof that AMD treatment allows for new, healthy growth.

GNOME SPOTTED: NEW ILLUSIVE FISHERMAN AT DCNR TREATMENT



SEEDS

Fall Yard Tips for CONSERVATION

- Leave the leaves** -- leaves provide food, shelter and nesting to a variety of wildlife and insects, such as moth and butterfly pupae
- Build a brush shelter** -- branches, sticks and leaves can be used to make brush piles that shelter native wildlife
- Leave the seeds** -- perennials and grasses should be left standing over winter (seed-bearing perennials such as purple coneflower, Joe Pye weed, and sunflower provide valuable food for songbirds)
- Avoid chemical fertilizers** -- grass clippings and mulched leaf litter can provide plant nutrition; chemical fertilizers can reduce beneficial insects



Virtual Grant Workshop

NEED FUNDING FOR A PARK, TRAIL, OR CONSERVATION PROJECT?

If you would like to apply for funding, register for a free grant workshop to be held:

Thursday, November 7 9:00 A.M. until noon

Recording will be available for those who cannot attend.



BE SEEN Outdoors This Fall



Hikers and bikers should wear at least one piece of hunter orange viewable from all directions such as a hat, jacket, or vest. Also, cover your backpack with orange.



Don't forget your pets! Dogs should wear hunter orange or another visible color vest, leash, harness, or bandanna.



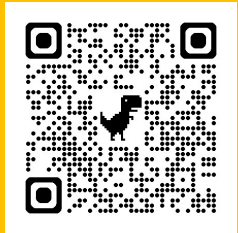
Horseback riders also should wear a hunter orange vest or hat, and use a hunter orange vest or rump sheet on your horse.



Need funding for a park, trail, or conservation project? Learn about who can apply, what can be funded, when funding is available, and how to make a competitive application at this upcoming free grant workshop on Thursday, November 7, from 9:00 A.M. to noon.

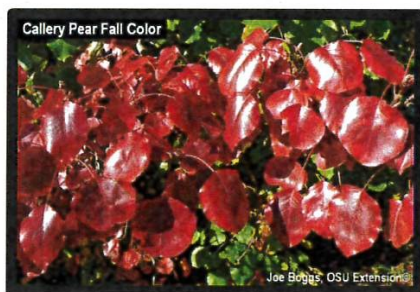
Register here <https://bit.ly/3YjYTPZ>.
[#DCNRgrants](#)

This QR code takes you directly to the website of the Schuylkill Conservation District website.

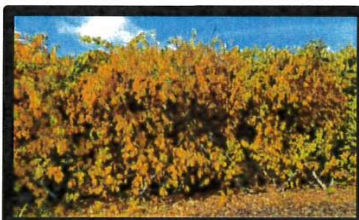
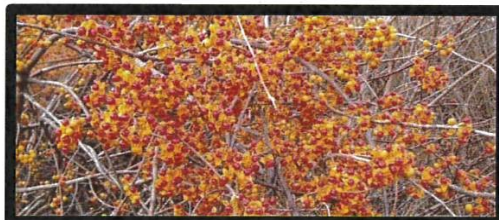


Keep an eye out for these common backyard
Invasives plants this Fall:

Callery Pear



Oriental Bittersweet



Japanese Barberry



SWATARA

Floodplain Restoration Phase 1 Report

Fall Newsletter

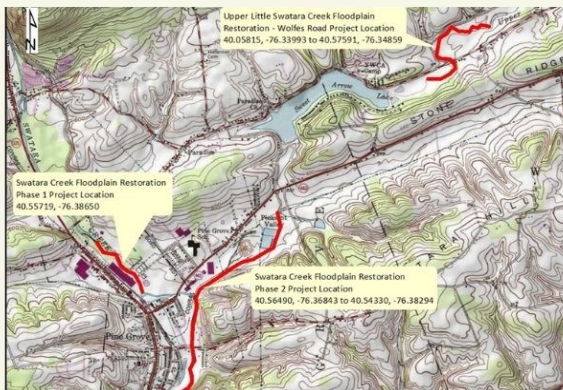


Above: View downstream of Phase 1 Project

GOALS: Reduce flood impacts while reducing nonpoint source pollution in the Swatara Creek Watershed through environmental restoration projects such as floodplain restoration, streambank stabilization, wetland creation, etc.

RESULTS: Funding allowed phase 1 and 3 additional projects, restoring 20.9 acres of floodplain, created 8.1 acres of wetlands, and stabilized 8,139 linear feet of streambank.

Below: Project Location Map



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project sites were in the Northern Swatara Creek Watershed (NSCW) within and upstream of Pine Grove Borough (Pine Grove), Schuylkill County, PA. Local resource extraction, development and agriculture have significantly changed NSCW's landscape characteristics resulting in deforestation, destruction of wetlands, and loss of floodplains, which led to flooding and sediment and nutrient pollution. The Swatara Floodplain Projects lessened flooding impacts to Pine Grove and communities downstream and reduced nonpoint source pollution leading to improved water quality in the NSCW and ultimately in the Chesapeake Bay.



Above: Upstream rock vane

FUNDING

Growing Greener Grant: **\$2,991,000.00**

County of Schuylkill's DCED CDBG-DR Grant & In-kind : **\$2,550,317.52**

Project partners: Schuylkill Conservation District, Northern Swatara Creek Watershed Association, PA DEP, PA DCED, County of Schuylkill, Pine Grove Joint Treatment Authority, Guilford Performance Textiles by Lear, Pine Grove Borough, Roots Farm Inc, Philip Riehl

Penn State Extension Energy Team and PDA

FUNDING WEBINAR

November 21, 2024
12:00pm-1:00pm
FREE to Register

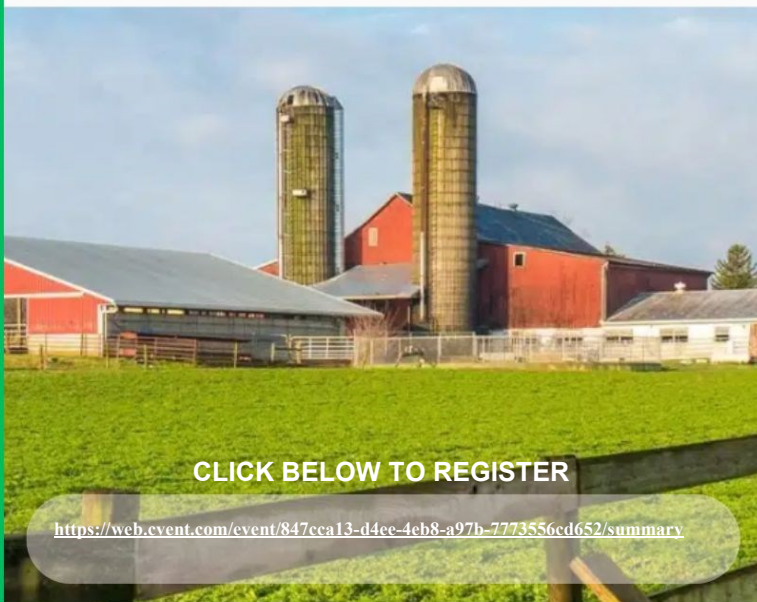
Explore opportunities available through the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture's (PDA) grant funding programs .

Who is this for?

- International energy regulators
- Energy policymakers
- Local governments
- Landowners

LEARN

- Funding opportunities for energy innovation
- Business planning resources
- To connect with agricultural technical assistance providers to innovate and upgrade farm operations and business management



CLICK BELOW TO REGISTER

<https://web.event.com/event/847cca13-d4ee-4eb8-a97b-7773556cd652/summary>

SCHUYLKILL COUNTY CHRISTMAS

DECEMBER 22, 2024 FROM 1-4 PM.

SWEET ARROW LAKE

FREE ADMISSION with donations are welcome for local organizations at each activity.

Activities include: winter hike, crafts, campfire, scavenger hunt, cookie contest, and more.



Master Gardeners of Schuylkill County
schuylkillmg@psu.edu 570.622.4225 ext. 23

“From the Greenhouse Column” by Master Gardener Tom Reed

Well, it is hard to believe fall is here, but for a reminder it was 28 degrees at my place this morning with a very hard frost. I did get cover crops in for soil protection over the winter. If you didn't put in a cover crop, make sure your garden beds are covered with straw, mulch, or even cardboard and layers of newspaper. This will protect your topsoil from winter erosion and combat those pesky winter annual weeds. An example of a winter annual is chickweed which in spring seems to cover everything. Right now, it is an inconspicuous little leafy rosette that you wouldn't notice. By covering your soil you will reduce the amount of infestation in the spring. There are other winter annuals and protecting the soil will reduce their effect on your gardens.



This is a great time to finish recording the results of you 2024 garden successes and oops. Weather was a challenge this year, so I had success and several oops. It can be frustrating, and the urge say “No more!” Then, in a few weeks you will receive the first of many seed catalogs all with perfect flowers, succulent vegetables, and aromatic herbs. In your mind “One more try!” Then you begin planning and laying out the garden plan for 2025 and ordering seeds.

If you haven't soil tested your garden or lawn in the last 3 to 5 years this is a good time to get it done before the soil freezes. The results will inform you of any amendments you soil requires and what fertilizer requirements you will need in 2025. Soil test kits are available at the Extension Office in the Ag Center.

Now is the time to start the 2025 growing season! It is time to plant garlic. Hard neck garlic (not the type you can braid) grows best in our area. This type of garlic puts up a seed stalk in June called a scape. They are clipped off, and are excellent to chop, sauté, and use just as you would garlic. Garlic should be ready to harvest in July. If you want more information on growing garlic, you can contact the Penn State Master Gardeners at 570-622-4225 on Mondays and Wednesdays or e-mail schuylkillmg@psu.edu.

Have a wonderful fall and Thanksgiving!

FALL GARDEN CHECKLIST

- Document your summer garden ups and downs
- Plant another round of fall garden vegetables
- Harvest as much as possible before frost arrives
- Clean up the garden space
- Pot up herbs to bring indoors



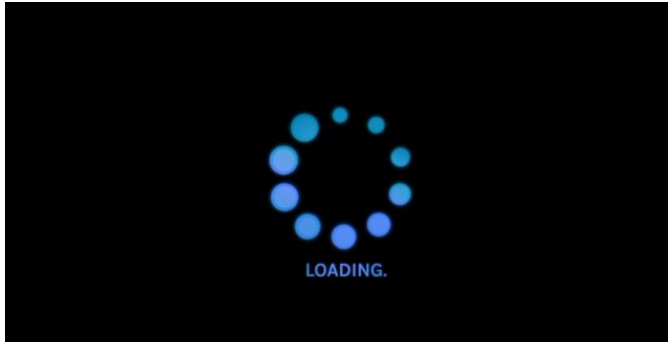
GARDENARY.COM



The Schuylkill County Master Gardener Hotline is Open!

- Hotline Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 10:00 AM until 1:00 PM
- Call 570-391-0984 or 570-622-4225
- Schuylkill County Extension Office Hours Monday - Friday 8:30 AM until 4:30 PM
- Penn State Master Gardener Volunteers will answer your questions about home garden, lawn, tree, insect and wildlife.
- Email us at SchuylkillMG@psu.edu





CLICKWORTHY VIDEOS

Just click on
link to open!

<https://youtu.be/7wyB9MIClqM?si=SaxFvpPjsbxvW9yj> **A Good Day for Fossil Hunting with the Wandering Woodsman**

<https://youtu.be/7UKKBuW6u18?si=Jc2EyGPA7ahsjC7f> **Latham’s Acre, Native Species Thrive Inside Deer Exclosure PA Game Commission**

https://youtu.be/ZXIW6DW-OJw?si=iw-hMaVW7_TJ-jG2 **EF-1 Tornado confirmed in Schuylkill County on Memorial Day 2024**

<https://youtu.be/c2oxpffsQg0?si=iMQuL1VJ8YxMLyz0> **Where to see fall foliage in Pennsylvania — Travel Smart**

<https://youtu.be/cX3onCDKL48?si=dA3ySO5kPQQWQBed> **Lovely Locust Lake State Park in Pennsylvania Hiking Outdoor Family**

https://youtu.be/FIU6wZwVEVc?si=t_LvNxRdjr21Y-6z **Fall Leaves Public Service Announcement PA Association of Conservation Districts**

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- Hannah Kulbitsky, Environmental Education and Outreach Coordinator: 3331, Cell: 272.208.0406
- Jeremy Frible, Dirt, Gravel, & Low Volume Roads Specialist, Cell: 484-894-1309



Sweet Arrow Lake County Park hosts a wide variety of programming for many audiences. Check out their website to see the latest in what is happening! Click below:

[Events & Programs](#)

Look for the seedling sale order form in the winter issue.

