

# Seedling

Spring 2023

**Tire recycling information**

**Spring  
garden  
tips**

**PHOTOS FROM THE ENVIROTHON**



**Schuylkill County Fair  
celebrates 40 years**

**PEOPLE • CONSERVATION • RESOURCES**



**Lakefront Festival  
Flyer....mark your  
calendar for Sun-  
day, Oct. 15 at SAL**



## Jenna St. Clair, District Manager

I am writing this after we concluded the 44<sup>th</sup> Schuylkill County Envirothon competition. For those that are not familiar with this event, student teams from school districts all over the county come to the Schuylkill County Fairgrounds to test their knowledge in the following topics:

Aquatics  
Wildlife  
Soils  
Forestry  
Current Issue

The high school level teams compete for a spot at the Pennsylvania State Envirothon, held in Mifflinburg, PA. State winners from the USA, Canada, and China then go on to compete at the National Envirothon.

I want to applaud the students, faculty, and volunteers who prepare and study year-round for this event. While we can't expect all participating students to become environmental professionals, we can see that environmental interest and excitement being fostered to carry throughout their lives.



Jenna helping with the awards ceremony

I welcome your thoughts, ideas, concerns, and questions about the Schuylkill Conservation District and can be reached at (570)622-3742 x3335 and [jstclair@co.schuylkill.pa.us](mailto:jstclair@co.schuylkill.pa.us).



Jenna with the captain of the Blue Mountain team at the Sch Co Envirothon

***Congratulations to the Schuylkill County Fair!***

—————→ **1983 to 2023** ←————

***Visit the fair this year to help celebrate!***



**[www.schuylkillfair.com](http://www.schuylkillfair.com)**



# Lakefront Festival

**At Sweet Arrow Lake**

**County Park**

**Sunday, Oct 15 from 11 to 2**

**Free admission and parking**

**Food Programs Vendors**

**Special dedication of habitat  
improvement project upstream**



**MARK YOUR  
CALENDAR!**



Water accumulating in old tires provides good habitat for mosquitoes. Take advantage of this program!

The Schuylkill Conservation District be hosting  
**A FREE Passenger Car and Light Truck Tire Collection at  
Compost Park**

**\*St. Charles Street, Schuylkill Haven\***

**\*At the end of the road next to the Wastewater Plant\***

**\* \* \* No one will be accepted without an approved drop-off\* \* \***

Due to limited funding, drop-offs are scheduled first come first served basis.

Please email [kschutt@co.schuylkill.pa.us](mailto:kschutt@co.schuylkill.pa.us) to schedule your drop-off. Please leave a message with your name, phone number, number of tires, and date/time you wish to drop off. The Conservation District will contact you to confirm your drop-off.

Drop-offs must be scheduled by Wednesday June 7th.  
Tires will not be accepted if you do not schedule a drop-off!

Drop-off dates and times are listed below:

Monday June 12<sup>th</sup> 4-6pm

Tuesday June 13<sup>th</sup> 4-6pm

Wednesday June 14<sup>th</sup> 4-6pm

Please note the following items:

1. Tires with rims will not be accepted; all tires shall be free of dirt, water, and foreign objects. Tires shall not be deformed and must have the normal geometry of a typical tire.
2. Tires will not be accepted if you do not pre-register for a drop-off.
3. There is one drop-off per person and a 30 tire maximum.
4. This is a free event and due to limited funding SCD will schedule on a first come first serve basis.
5. Semi-Truck tires will only be accepted under special circumstance.
6. Tires cannot be taller than 4 feet or wider than 14 inches.
7. SCD, their partners, and volunteers reserve the right to reject any and all tires that do not meet the guidelines above.

#### QUICK TIP

Get rid of any tires you might have lying around. They're responsible for breeding thousands of mosquitoes.

mosquito.buzz  
...they will buzz



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## Nature At Risk Series: Why Backyard Pollinators Are All The Buzz

By Carol Hillestad for [Brodhead Watershed Association](#), Monroe County  
(copy from the PA Environmental Digest 5-1-23)

For all the people with backyard beehives, you'd think that bees were rolling in clover. But if you know someone who keeps bees, you've heard them bemoan the parasites, diseases, and just plain mysterious collapses that can affect honey bee colonies. Keeping hives healthy is time- and labor-intensive, and takes serious know-how.

Wild bees are more forgiving. Most are solitary. Females make a single nest in rotting wood, a dead-tree snag, the ground, even leaf litter or another creature's abandoned nest. Because they don't have hives to protect, they aren't aggressive. (If you get stung, it's likely a yellowjacket or other wasp, not a solitary bee.)

Many have very limited foraging range — 300 to 3,000 feet from their nest. That means they need food — flowers — from the earliest warm spring mornings to the coldest fall afternoons.

They also need to be protected from pesticides, which kill everything in their path, including essential workers like wild bees.

Wild pollinators like solitary bees pollinate dozens of fruits and vegetables humans eat. They also pollinate wild plants like milkweed, huckleberries, crabapples, shadbush and redbuds — whose fruit other animals and birds eat.

It's easy to give wild bees a helping hand.

First, lay off the pesticides, or at least use them sparingly (and never broadcast them). It's better for the bees, and also healthier for you, your family, birds, and pets. Find ways to welcome bees to your yard. Consider providing a "bee box" for bees that nest in wood. Offer birdbaths or puddles of water, and add a variety of flowering shrubs and plants that provide pollen and nectar all season long.

Need some ideas? A few plants to try are Canadian Columbine, Blue Spiderwort, Joe Pye weed, milkweed, Wild bergamot, Purple coneflower, and asters like Blue mistflower.

If you can't find native plants like these at local garden centers, [Brodhead Watershed Association offers native plants for sale](#).

Your garden — and the bees — will thank you!

For more information on programs, initiatives and other upcoming events, visit the [Brodhead Watershed Association](#) website or [Follow them on Facebook](#).



### Keystone 10 Million Trees Partnership Plans To Plant 500,000 More Trees Across PA During 2023

The 2023 planting seasons will be the most ambitious yet for the [Keystone 10 Million Trees Partnership](#), to directly fund and plant over 300,000 new trees for Pennsylvania this spring and add another 200,000 in the fall.

The effort reached its midpoint milestone last October when the 5 millionth tree was planted at Furnace Run Park in Franklin County.

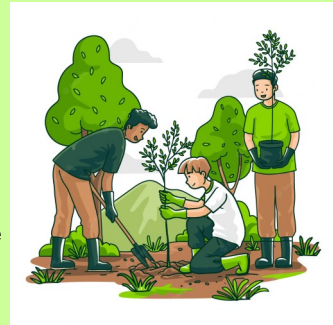
Since it launched 2018, the partnership, coordinated by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, has grown to nearly 300 partners. New partnership manager Joe Hallinan is confident that reaching the 10-million tree goal by 2025 is achievable. "With the commitment shown by our partners, both new and old, I'd like to believe we can exceed that," Hallinan said.

Roughly 28,000 miles of Pennsylvania's rivers and streams are damaged by polluted runoff and the legacy of coal mining. Trees are the most cost-effective tools for cleaning and protecting waterways.

Trees filter and absorb polluted runoff, stabilize streambanks, and improve soil quality. Trees also help address climate change by cooling the air and sequestering carbon.

"We often don't think about the positive effects that trees have on a community, local economies, and the physical and mental health of our residents," Hallinan said. "Students learn better, patients heal faster, and our minds are less anxious when we have access to outdoor green space."

Pennsylvania's Clean Water Blueprint calls for about 95,000 acres of forested buffers to be planted in Pennsylvania's portion of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.





## PLANTS THAT REPEL MOSQUITOES



Merlin Bird ID is a FREE app offered by Cornell. Whether you're curious about a bird you've seen once or you're hoping to identify every bird you can find, the answers are waiting for you with this free app from the renowned Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Download Merlin Bird ID for iOS and Android – Merlin Bird ID – Free, *instant bird identification* help and guide for thousands of birds.



A new Special Fund license plate is now available to Pennsylvanians. The Pollinator Habitat plate helps recognize some of the Commonwealth's smallest – yet hardest working – residents.

Twenty-Five dollars from every Pollinator Conservation plate will be credited to the Pollinator Habitat Program fund, which helps support the program to reinvigorate the populations of insects which pollinate plant life.

Learn more : <http://bit.ly/3zE0wLi>

## Who's singing?

Merlin Bird ID can tell you



Common Yellowthroat Geothlypis trichas © Brad Imhoff Macaulay Library



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**Scenes from the Schuylkill County Envirothon that was held in early May at the Schuylkill County Fairgrounds. Three levels of competition were held for elementary, middle school and high school students. The team placing first at the high school level represented our county at state competition.**

**Good luck to Blue Mountain High School at this competition!**



# Some of Porcupine Pat's favorite sites for you to visit:



Got to YouTube search  
and type

“PA Game Commis-  
sion” to get many wild-  
life videos.

The PA Game Commission  
also has the award-winning  
Wildlife on WiFi program.  
Check it out!

[Wildlife on WiFi \(pa.gov\)](http://pa.gov/Wildlife%20on%20WiFi)

[Common-  
treesofPACover2011Print.cdr](http://Common-treesofPACover2011Print.cdr)  
([envirothonpa.org](http://envirothonpa.org))

Good resource from  
DCNR—Bureau of  
Forestry to help ID  
trees.

To ID turtles, frogs  
and more visit:  
[www.paherps.com](http://www.paherps.com)

To better appreciate  
soils and learn more  
about water visit:

The Soil and Water  
Conservation Society at  
[www.swcs.org](http://www.swcs.org)

Check out the Bird Guide at  
[www.audubon.org](http://www.audubon.org)  
You will see the birds that  
live around you and also  
hear what they sound like.

Search “DCNR Find  
Your Park” to locate any  
type of park from local  
municipal parks to the  
national forest. Good  
resource!



PEOPLE • CONSERVATION • RESOURCES



Master  
Gardeners  
PennState Extension

# NEWS LEAF



## Master Gardeners of Schuylkill County

[schuylkillmg@psu.edu](mailto:schuylkillmg@psu.edu)

570.622.4225 ext. 23

### "From the Greenhouse Column" by Master Gardener Tom Reed

Spring is here and we have had some early warm weather that certainly outs the "bug" to get the garden going. Many perennials such as daffodils have already bloomed and faded. Annual flowers and vegetables are already on sale. Do not get impatient to get these plants out into the soil yet. It is early May as I am writing this with weather like 39 degrees, cloudy, breezy, with a chance for rain.

Peas, potatoes, radishes, cabbage "cool season" crops can be in the garden now. Although you can purchase tomatoes, cucumbers, pepper plants now you must "babysit" them by keeping the inside and warm or the weather will either kill or stunt them reducing yield.

If you start your own seeds, check the seed package or catalog for when to start indoors and see what temperatures are needed to keep them for optimum germination and development. Using heat mats and lights correctly will ensure a good start.

If you are direct seeding into the garden, check the packet/catalog for germination temperatures for both soil and air. Some will say "when the soil can be worked in spring" (that is for a cool season plant).

Tomatoes, for example, set transplants when the soil temperatures are 60 degrees or above and night air temperatures are not below 55 degrees. For most of us that is around Memorial Day weekend or even early June.

At this time of the year fertilizing lawns and gardens is usually well underway. Fertilizer recommendations should be from a current soil test. (3 to 5 years unless there were specific deficiencies from a previous test). Do not overfertilize more is not better and will have adverse effects to plants and add to water pollution. The same goes with pesticides/herbicides more is not better!

Read and follow the label instructions, it is the law. The label will also provide any PPE (personal protective equipment), gloves, mask, clothing requirements.

Enjoy the springtime and burst of new life and I wish you all a successful gardening season and always "take time to stop and smell the flowers."



## FEEDING BODY AND SOUL

Come visit us as we celebrate our annual Garden Gathering at the grounds of First UCC Church, 110 Route 61, Schuylkill Haven, PA (adjacent to Penn State Schuylkill Campus). Master Gardeners will be in attendance to help with your gardening questions!

**Admission and Parking are FREE**



**Garden Gathering  
Saturday,  
August 12  
10 am to 2 pm**

**When in Doubt, Mulch** Possibly the single easiest thing you can do from both a functional and aesthetic point of view is to give the garden a fresh layer of mulch. A several-inch-thick layer of your favorite mulch, say wood chips, straw, even finished compost, gives everything a clean, tidied-up look while [helping to suppress weeds](#) and retain moisture.

**Listen to Master Gardeners on WPPA AM 1360 or 105.9 FM at 10 a.m. on the first Tuesday of each month year round.**



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# Working Together to Keep the Tradition Alive

*40 Years of the  
Schuylkill County Fair*



**July 31 to August 5, 2023**

**Schuylkill County Fairgrounds, Rt.895, Summit Station**

**“Porcupine Pat” will have a lineup of programs and speakers to be held at the Weston Pavilion located next to the Dr. James S. Shadle Nature Center. Programs are free and open to fair visitors and will be held Monday to Saturday of each day of the fair at 6:00 p.m. More information will be in the summer “Seedling” newsletter. Visit: [www.schuylkillfair.com](http://www.schuylkillfair.com) for more fair information.**

## Schuylkill Conservation District Board and Staff

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### STAFF PHONE EXTENSIONS FOR 570.622.3742

- Jenna St. Clair, District Manager, 3335
- Martie Hetherington, Ag Project Coordinator, 3328
- “Porcupine Pat” McKinney, Education Coordinator, 3326
- Missy Seigfried, Conservation Fiscal Technician, 3324
- Stephanie Lubinsky, Conservation Program Technician, 3329
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- Drew Kline, Parks & Rec. Supervisor, 570-527-2505
- Alexa Smith, Natural Resources Conservationist, 3336
- Kyle Schutt, Insect Management Technician, Cell: 484.331.4499

**Mark your calendar for Lakefront  
Festival at Sweet Arrow Lake County  
Park Sunday, Oct. 15 11 am to 2 pm**



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