

CONSERVATION COMMENTS

Preble Soil and Water Conservation District

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MAY 2012

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Preble SWCD
Web Address:
www.prebleswcd.org

JOIN US FOR OUR POND AND AQUACULTURE CLINIC!

Mark your calendars! Join us for our free Annual Pond Clinic, this year with a focus on Aquaculture! The event is sponsored by Montgomery Soil and Water Conservation District and Preble SWCD and will be held on **Wednesday, May 23rd from 5:30 p.m. until 8:00 p.m.** This year the event is at Sycamore State Park Overlook located at 10300 Providence Road, in Trotwood, Ohio. It is held rain or shine, and is open to everyone!



This year there will be a focus on Aquaculture. It is commonly defined by the State of Maine's Department of Marine Resources by 'the farming of aquatic organisms such as fish, shellfish and even plants'. If you are just beginning, already established or just wanting to learn more about the life and liability of a pond, then this is the event for you!

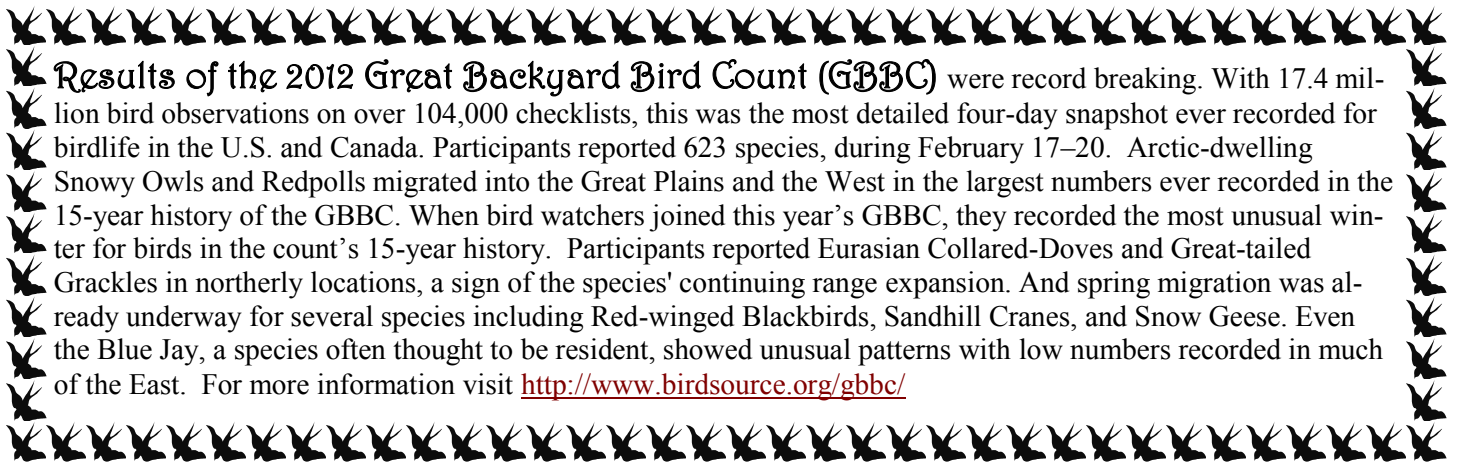
The Pond Clinic starts at 5:30pm, with a meal of hamburgers, hotdogs, chips, potato salad, cookies, and soda provided by Hometown Comfort. At 6pm, the program will start. Our first presenter this year will be Brukner Nature Center, discussing pond wildlife. Next will be Pastor Donovan Larkin, discussing the aquaculture program they have instituted at Shekinah Ranch. Eugene Braig from OSU Extension will discuss pond fish and vegetation, and lastly, Shawn Murphy from Michael Murphy Insurance will discuss liability issues. The evening will conclude by 8:00pm. Please bring your own lawn chairs, as seating is not provided.

If you have any questions or would like more information about the pond clinic call Kristen Lauer, Montgomery SWCD Education/Information Specialist, at (937) 854-7646 ext. 109 or send an email to LauerK@mcoho.org.



The Preble Soil and Water Conservation District will hold our annual Fish Fingerling Sale in the fall of this year.

Watch for the Fish Order in your next newsletter!



Results of the 2012 Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) were record breaking. With 17.4 million bird observations on over 104,000 checklists, this was the most detailed four-day snapshot ever recorded for birdlife in the U.S. and Canada. Participants reported 623 species, during February 17–20. Arctic-dwelling Snowy Owls and Redpolls migrated into the Great Plains and the West in the largest numbers ever recorded in the 15-year history of the GBBC. When bird watchers joined this year’s GBBC, they recorded the most unusual winter for birds in the count’s 15-year history. Participants reported Eurasian Collared-Doves and Great-tailed Grackles in northerly locations, a sign of the species' continuing range expansion. And spring migration was already underway for several species including Red-winged Blackbirds, Sandhill Cranes, and Snow Geese. Even the Blue Jay, a species often thought to be resident, showed unusual patterns with low numbers recorded in much of the East. For more information visit <http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc/>

Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation Compliance Reminder:

Don't Risk Your USDA Benefits!

Submitted by Dennis Bunger, NRCS *District Conservationist*

On December 23, 1985 the Conservation Compliance rules were signed into law in the 1985 Farm Bill. This was the first time in a Farm Bill where eligibility for farm program benefits was tied to protecting our nation’s natural resources. These rules still apply in 2012 and must be followed in order to be a program participant in USDA programs.

Random spot checks are made every year by the office to check compliance with the provisions.

What is Conservation Compliance?

The Highly Erodible Land (HEL) and Wetland Compliance (WC) provisions purpose is to protect highly erodible land from excessive soil erosion and protect wetlands. These provisions help reduce soil loss due to water and wind erosion, protect the nation’s long-term capability to produce food and fiber, reduce sedimentation and improve water quality in our lakes and streams and help preserve the functions and values of the nation’s wetlands.

Highly Erodible Land (HEL) is a field where either one-third or more is highly erodible, or the highly erodible land in the field totals 50 acres or more. The NRCS and FSA offices can tell you if you are farming a field labeled as HEL. Crop fields that are HEL must be farmed in accordance with an approved conservation plan. If you have not reviewed your plan for a while or are not sure of the requirements, now is a good time to check with the office. With higher commodity prices and dry soil conditions, some producers may be changing their rotation or contemplating more tillage. This may not be in accordance with your plan on the HEL fields.

Sodbuster-if you plant crops on land that was previously not farmed such as pasture, a determination of whether it is HEL must be made first. Planting or “sodbusting” of new land that is HEL with no conservation plan could cause the loss of program payments.

Swampbuster-these program provisions apply to wetlands that are manipulated and drained for the purpose of planting a crop. A wetland is land with all three of the following characteristics 1) primarily wet soils 2) supportive of wetland-type plants and trees and 3) possesses natural wetland characteristics. Under the Swampbuster rules, persons are ineligible for benefits if they convert a wetland by draining, dredging, filling, leveling, or any other means for the purpose of planting it to a crop.

Rent my farm. Do these provisions apply to me?

Even if a landowner does not receive USDA program payments it’s important for owners to ensure the lands eligibility for future programs and tenants. Producers who violate compliance requirements risk losing all USDA farm program payments on all farms operated-not just those payments that were made or might have been made on the HEL or wetland farm where the violation occurred. Violations could affect your ability to rent or sell the land in the future.

For more information on Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation provisions, contact the NRCS/USDA office or the FSA office at (937) 456-4211.

Flags for Sale

Do you need flags to mark tree seedlings, field plots, garden rows, or tile holes? Preble SWCD sells 36” tall, fluorescent pink, Marking Flags which are easy to see in a variety of field conditions. Flags sell for \$1.50 per bundle of 10 or \$15.00 per 100.

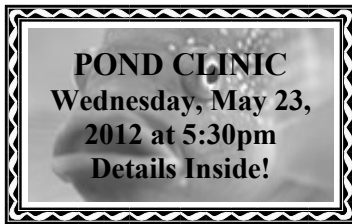


♥ Are you looking for the perfect gift for Father’s Day? We now have the newest edition of the Preble County Plat Book available to purchase for \$20 each. Stop by the office to get your copy today! ♥

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1651 N. Barron Street
Eaton, OH 45320-1021
Office Hours-Mon-Fri 7:30a-4p
Phone: 937-456-5159
Website: www.prebleswcd.org

Non-Profit Organization
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Eaton, OH 45320

Return Service Requested



Dates to Remember:

May 16-Board Meeting @ 7am
May 23-Pond Clinic @ Sycamore SP
May 28-Memorial Day-Office Closed
June 20-Board Meeting @ 7am
July 4-Independence Day-Office Closed
July 18-Board Meeting @ 7am
July 28-Aug 4-Look for us at the Preble County Fair!

All programs and services of the Preble SWCD are offered on a nondiscrimination basis, without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, or handicap.

GET OUTSIDE AND EXPLORE NATURE

By Michelle Illing, Preble SWCD Conservation Assistant

I get inspired by so many things; books, TV shows, literature, movies, music, nature, photographs, and people, inspiration is everywhere. Education is very important to me. Studies show that we are happier and healthier when we get outside every day. People are losing their connection with the natural world, the wilderness, outdoors, nature, whichever you prefer. So, I came up with this list to help you get inspired and learn a little about the ever-changing world around us.

1. Try something new. If you like walking around your neighborhood, then you might enjoy a hike at a local park.
2. Start taking pictures. When you explore, you never know what you might find. Capture it on camera!
3. Be respectful. Take only photographs, and leave only footprints by following the 'Leave No Trace' method.
4. Go camping with friends. Camping can be so refreshing. Find a campsite, pitch a tent, make a campfire, and enjoy!
5. Be a good citizen. When you see a piece of trash, pick it up and throw it away. Maybe others will follow your lead.
6. Don't be afraid of a challenge. You will feel better about your accomplishment if it takes more work to achieve it.
7. Be proactive. It is healthy for children, and adults, to have outside play for 60 minutes every day! You could hike, toss a Frisbee, bird watch, climb a tree, swing, fly a kite, listen to a naturalist program, go to a zoo, or plant a garden.
8. Go on a picnic. Pack a lunch or dinner, a blanket, and meet a friend for an outdoor eating experience.
9. Ride a bike. Bikes are easy to maintain and there is no fuel required. Plan family bike rides, even if its around your neighborhood. For a day trip, the Five Rivers MetroParks have miles of bike trails.

One way to make sure we always have these beautiful natural resources is to Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle. Find out if your area provides recycling pick up or drop off sites. If in city limits, visit the City of Eaton building for a red bin or the Preble County Landfill offers a drop-off site for their recycling program. They accept all household items and it is available to all Preble County residents. To learn about your environmental impact, visit www.preblecountyrecycles.org.

