



# Conservation Highlights

*Serving Conservaton Needs in Darke County Since 1955*



## OUTDOOR ADVENTURES AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION: DARKE COUNTY CONSERVATION DAY CAMP A HUGE HIT

The 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Darke County Conservation Day Camp proved to be a massive hit this year, drawing in 200 enthusiastic kids for two days packed with outdoor adventures and hands-on learning. With the help of nearly 90 dedicated volunteers, the camp offered a mix of fun activities and educational experiences, all centered around nature and conservation.

Fishing was a standout favorite, with kids casting their lines into the pond and learning about local fish species. Many caught their first fish ever; their excitement was contagious as they proudly showed off their catches. "It is so rewarding to see these campers each year, excited to learn about the environment and conservation," explained Elizabeth Farver with Darke Soil and Water Conservation District. Another favorite, the archery range buzzed with concentration as campers practiced their aim under careful supervision from the Tri Village Archery Club, some discovering a newfound love for the sport.

Pollinators took center stage in one of the educational sessions, with kids learning how butterflies and birds play a huge role in the environment. The campers made pollinator seed bombs to take home, ensuring the lessons stuck long after camp ended. Water quality was another big topic, with interactive demonstrations showing how pollution affects rivers and lakes. Kids tested samples, identified tiny aquatic creatures, and discussed ways to keep water clean.

Games and crafts kept the energy high. From nature-themed scavenger hunts to wren house building with Greenville FFA, there was never a dull moment. One of the biggest hits was the Darke County Park District animal ambassadors, where campers met live reptiles, birds and amphibians.

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## CONSERVATION CAMP CONTINUED

The scavenger hunt had teams racing through the woods, checking off items like pinecones, bird nests, and wildflowers while laughing and exploring together. It was the perfect mix of competition and discovery, reinforcing lessons about the outdoors in the most engaging way possible.

“We would like to thank all of the volunteers and sponsors that make this camp possible, we could not do it without each of you” stated Farver. Sponsors for 2025 include: The Light Foundation and Chenoweth Trails; Darke County Pheasants Forever Chapter and Quail Forever Chapter; Darke Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc; Ansonia Lumber; The Darke County Park District; Sport Fish & Wildlife Restoration; Ohio Department of Natural Resources- Division of Wildlife; DMF Bait Co.; Buschurs Custom Farm Services, Inc.; Cy Schwieterman Inc.; Edison State Community College: Department of Agriculture; Farm Credit Mid-America; Hollinger Excavating; Otte Ag, LLC; R. Filbrun Farm & Drainage LLC; The Andersons Marathon LLC; and Greenville Walmart. “We would also like to thank the Tri Village Archery Club for running the archery station and to members of Greenville FFA for helping the kids build bird houses” Farver added.

The hands-on learning approach made complex topics like environmental impacts feel accessible and exciting, sparking curiosity that will hopefully grow into lifelong conservation values. With perfect weather, endless activities, and a team of passionate volunteers, this year’s Darke County Conservation Day Camp was a resounding success. Kids left with muddy shoes, big smiles, and a stronger connection to the natural world—proof that learning about the environment can be as fun as it is important.



## SPOTTED LANTERNFLY UPDATE

The spotted lanternfly, *Lycorma delicatula*, (SLF) is an invasive pest that is capable of killing grapevines, black walnut saplings and tree of heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*). SLF was first identified in Ohio in 2020, and has since been found in several other areas of the state. SLF is a non-native, invasive pest that strongly prefers feeding on tree of heaven, *Ailanthus altissima*, but is also known to be a pest of grapes, hops, stone fruits, and other agriculturally important plants.

### Reporting

If you suspect a spotted lanternfly outside a quarantined county, **please take a picture** and report the finding to the ODA Plant Pest Control using the **Ohio Plant Pest Reporter**. SLF found in or around known infestations do not need to be reported.

**Please note:** reports of SLF are used to monitor the pest spread. ODA is not currently treating reported infestations.



## SPOTTED LANTERNFLY UPDATE CONTINUED

### What you can do

#### Home Management

- Do not move outdoor lawn furniture, garden equipment, or fire wood without first inspecting the items for SLF life stages. If moving to a new area, check to see if you are required to follow quarantine regulations of Ohio or any other state.
- Egg Masses
  - Egg masses may be destroyed prior to nymphs emerging, resulting in a reduction in nymphs the following season.
  - Scraping egg masses with a knife or edge of a credit card into soapy water (dish soap works) or rubbing alcohol will kill the eggs.
  - Egg masses may be treated with horticultural oils during the winter months or before bud break in the spring.
- Nymphs and Adult SLF
  - When populations are low, acceptable control may be achieved by swatting or stomping nymphs and adults when you see them.
  - Removing favored SLF hosts, some of which are invasive themselves (tree of heaven and grapevine, for instance) can result in a reduction in SLF populations on your property.
  - The use of lower toxicity insecticides such as horticultural oils and insecticidal soaps can provide control of nymphs and adults, with little residual activity. These products would likely need to be reapplied throughout the season.
  - Contact insecticides such as bifenthrin, carbaryl and malathion may be used as spot treatments against SLF nymphs and adults. Repeat treatments may be necessary.
  - Systemic insecticide treatments with dinotefuran or imidacloprid can be used as trunk sprays, trunk injections, or soil drenches depending on the label, and may provide more prolonged protection.
- Special Management Notes
  - Some of the products above may need to be applied by certified commercial pesticide applicators, or may require specialized equipment to apply.
  - Protect Pollinators! Do not apply systemic insecticides when trees or shrubs are in flower, or if nearby flowering plants may take up pesticide (as in soil drenches).
  - Use products labelled for control of spotted lanternfly in a manner consistent with the label. The Label is the Law!



## AREA IV ENVIROTHON HELD AT LOST CREEK PRESERVE

The Ohio Area IV Envirothon is a competitive, academic, outdoor team event for high school students which tests their knowledge in five areas: Aquatic Ecology, Forestry, Soils, Wildlife and a Current Environmental Issue (CEI). This year's CEI topic was Roots and Resiliency: Fostering Forest Stewardship in a Canopy of Change. The event is designed to stimulate and reinforce the students' interest in the environment and our natural resources and encourages cooperative decision making, team building and problem solving. The Area IV Envirothon was held at Lost Creek Preserve in Troy, Ohio on April 29<sup>th</sup>. This year 62 teams competed from 11 counties; two teams from Greenville and one team from Mississinawa Valley participated. Greenville #2 placed 34<sup>th</sup>, Mississinawa Valley placed 40<sup>th</sup> and Greenville #1 placed 42<sup>nd</sup>. Darke SWCD would like to thank our county schools for participating.

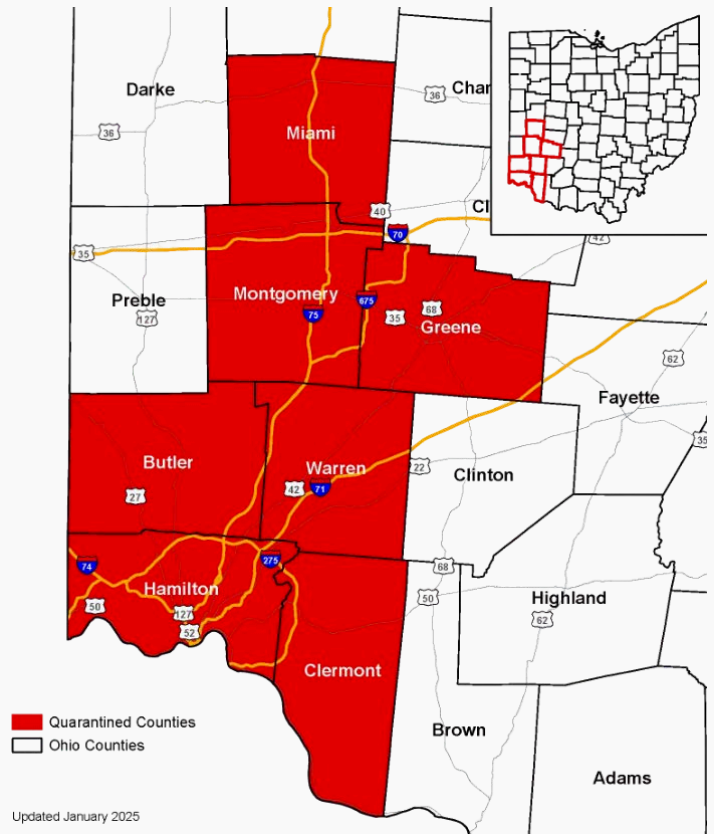


## BOX TREE MOTH QUARANTINE AREA EXPANDED

The Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) is expanding the Box Tree Moth (BTM) quarantine zone to stop the spread of the invasive insect.

Beginning March 10, 2025, the updated quarantine will include Miami, Montgomery, Greene, Butler, Clermont, Hamilton, and Warren counties.

A quarantine will allow ODA to restrict the movement of boxwood shrubs. ODA is encouraging landscapers and residents in these counties to check the quarantine boundaries and not transport the plants outside of the area. The extension of the current quarantine is due to the detection of the moth in new locations last May through October. Box tree moths were detected in Ohio in June 2023, near the border of Hamilton and Clermont counties.



Box tree moths are an invasive pest from East Asia that pose a threat to boxwood plantings and Ohio's horticulture industry. Boxwood is an important ornamental shrub that is a valuable part of the state's nursery stock economy. Federal and state officials are asking industry and the public to report suspected box tree moth sightings through ODA's reporting tool.

ODA plant health inspectors and United States Department of Agriculture staff will be conducting inspections and placing traps to monitor populations. Box tree moths are not a threat to Ohio's native plants.

Residents can look for and report any potential infestation by following these steps:

Familiarize yourself with the insect's appearance and evidence of damage on boxwood shrubs.

Check any boxwood plants you have for signs of box tree moth life stages.

If you find any evidence of infestation, take a picture, and report it.

Evidence of damage includes chewed, cut, or missing leaves, yellowing or brown leaves, white webbing, and green-black excrement on or around the plant.

Box tree moth caterpillars are green and yellow with white, yellow, and black stripes and black spots. Adult box tree moths are nocturnal and have white, slightly iridescent wings, with an irregular thick brown border.

Landscape professionals, nursery, and others in the green industry can contact the Plant Pest Control Section if they have any questions about the new regulation at 614-728-6400.

## AFFILIATE MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

The Board of Supervisors for the Darke Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) is conducting their annual affiliate membership drive. Our affiliate members provide much needed funding to help the district offer technical guidance, education and programs focused on conservation needs in Darke County.



Some of the opportunities affiliate membership supports include: Conservation Day Camp, adult workshops, county land judging contest, sponsorship of Darke County teams participating in the Area IV Envirothon, in-classroom education programs,

lending library materials, youth workshops and a scholarship opportunity. Thanks to our affiliate members, these programs and others are available for schools and community groups.

The past support of conservation education programs from our affiliate members is greatly appreciated and we thank those who participated in 2024. We invite those who have never contributed to please consider this worthwhile opportunity. Our affiliate members are recognized at our banquet in November, on our website and in our e-newsletter. New this year, you can include a business card with your affiliate membership form and we will include it in our e-newsletter.

**We appreciate your consideration and support for  
conservation education in Darke County!**

## THANK YOU DARKE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

**Matt Aultman, Marshall Combs & Aaron Flatter**

The Darke Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors and Staff would like to thank the Darke County Commissioners for their financial support and dedication to soil and water conservation. The annual financial assistance from the county is matched by funds from the state which enables the District to continue to provide assistance to all Darke County landowners.

**THANKYOU**

Membership Supports:

Adult Workshops

~

Conservation Day Camp

~

County Land Judging  
Contest

~

Darke County Area IV  
Envirothon Teams

~

In-Classroom Education  
Programs

~

Lending Library Materials

~

Scholarship

~

Youth Workshops

## FREE FARM PESTICIDE DISPOSAL COLLECTION EVENTS

The Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) will be sponsoring three collection events for farmers to dispose of unwanted pesticides. This year, the collections are available in Fulton, Lake, and Greene counties on the following days and locations:

- August 13 - Fulton County Extension  
8770 State Route 108, Wauseon, Ohio 43567, 9 a.m.–3 p.m.
- August 14 - Perry Coal and Feed (Lake County)  
4204 Main Street, Perry, Ohio 44081, 9 a.m.–3 p.m.
- August 27 - Greene County Fairgrounds  
100 Fairground Road, Xenia, Ohio 45385. 9 a.m.–3 p.m.



The pesticide collection and disposal services are free of charge, but only farm chemicals will be accepted. Paint, antifreeze, solvents, and household or non-farm pesticides will not be accepted.

The pesticide collections are sponsored by ODA in conjunction with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. To pre-register, or for more information, contact the Ohio Department of Agriculture at (614) 728-6987.

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## LEARN ABOUT A CAREER AS AN OHIO WILDLIFE OFFICER

COLUMBUS, Ohio – The Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Division of Wildlife is hosting information sessions for interested candidates to learn more about the wildlife officer career path. Ohio wildlife officers enforce wildlife regulations and protect state lands, waterways, and property.

Wildlife officers combine law enforcement, conservation, and public service in a career that makes a difference for Ohio's communities and wildlife.

Wildlife officers serve from Lake Erie to the Ohio River and in every county, supporting the mission of the Division of Wildlife. The hiring process to become an Ohio wildlife officer can be competitive. In recent years, hundreds of applicants have applied when positions are announced.

In-person information sessions are designed to provide an overview of the Division of Wildlife law enforcement program, meet officers, and see the specialized equipment that officers use on the job. Each event includes information on the qualifications and preparation needed to apply for the wildlife officer cadet training academy.

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# LEARN ABOUT A CAREER AS AN OHIO WILDLIFE OFFICER

## ***Northwest Ohio:***

- When: Friday, July 25, 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
- Where: District Two office located at 952 Lima Ave., Findlay, OH 45840

Details: This event is limited to 40 attendees. Email [Alyssa.Knaup@dnr.ohio.gov](mailto:Alyssa.Knaup@dnr.ohio.gov) to register.



## ***Southwest Ohio:***

- When: Sunday, Aug. 10, 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.
- Where: Spring Valley Wildlife Area Shooting Range located at 3570 Houston Rd., Waynesville, OH 45068
- Details: This event is limited to 50 attendees. Email [Alyssa.Knaup@dnr.ohio.gov](mailto:Alyssa.Knaup@dnr.ohio.gov) to register.

## ***Central Ohio:***

- When: Sunday, Aug. 24, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.
- Where: Delaware Wildlife Area Shooting Range located at 1110 State Route 229, Ashley, OH 43003
- Details: This event is limited to 50 attendees. Email [Alyssa.Knaup@dnr.ohio.gov](mailto:Alyssa.Knaup@dnr.ohio.gov) to register.

Ohio wildlife officers speak to hundreds of clubs and groups about conservation and wildlife programs and perform fish and wildlife surveys. Wildlife officers also provide technical advice and instruction about wildlife management issues, hunting, fishing, and other outdoor-related recreation, and work closely with law enforcement partners in their communities.

To learn more about Ohio wildlife officers, visit [ohiodnr.gov/becomeawildlifeofficer](http://ohiodnr.gov/becomeawildlifeofficer). The Division of Wildlife plans to begin the hiring process this fall and winter, with final selection of candidates in the summer of 2026. Selected candidates will complete the 33rd Wildlife Officer Training Academy later next year.

To be considered for the wildlife officer training school, applicants are required to be 21 years of age upon completion of the Ohio Peace Officer Basic Training Course and possess a valid driver license. Completion of at least a minimum of core course work in an associate degree or undergraduate program in natural resources, fisheries and wildlife

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# LEARN ABOUT A CAREER AS AN OHIO WILDLIFE OFFICER

conservation, natural sciences, biology, criminal justice, environmental law enforcement, agriculture, or a related field is required.

Eighteen months of training or experience in the above fields may also be acceptable, as would 18 months of training or experience in the U.S. military with an occupational specialty related to law enforcement or investigations. Other qualifications include meeting physical fitness and swim standards, vision and hearing requirements, completing a background check, as well as passing a psychological exam and drug screening.

*The mission of the Division of Wildlife is to conserve and improve fish and wildlife resources and their habitats for sustainable use and appreciation by all. Visit [wildohio.gov](http://wildohio.gov) to find out more. ODNR ensures a balance between wise use and protection of our natural resources for the benefit of all. Visit the ODNR website at [ohiodnr.gov](http://ohiodnr.gov).*

## THANK YOU 2025 CONSERVATION CAMP SPONSORS



OUR WORMS CATCH FISH,  
OR DIE TRYING!™

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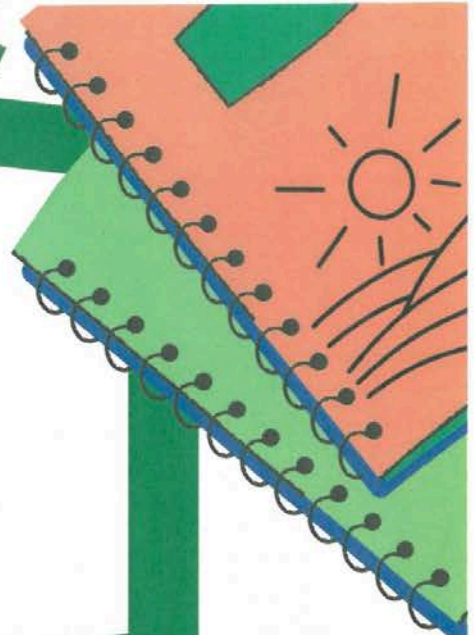
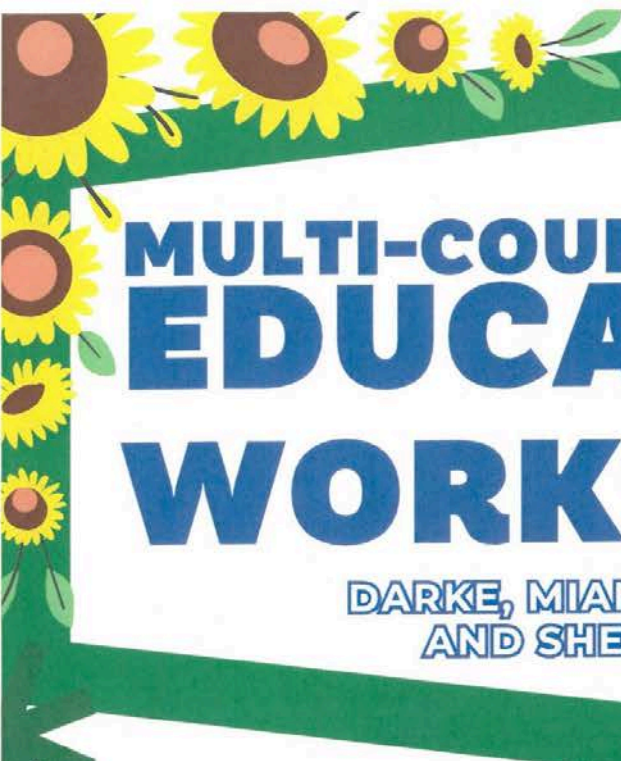
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# MULTI-COUNTY EDUCATOR WORKSHOP

DARKE, MIAMI, MONTGOMERY,  
AND SHELBY COUNTIES

## CULTIVATING CONNECTIONS: From Soil to Sustainability



Join us for a 2 day educator workshop focusing on hands-on lessons about alternative agriculture, sustainability, food chains, and more in Miami County (1280 N. County Rd. 25A Troy, OH). Again this year we will have sessions in a meeting room and "field trips" to visit several locations for a more immersive experience!



7/30 &  
7/31



### JOIN US



Montgomery SWCD  
Mike Mullen  
937-854-7646  
mullenm@mcohoio.org

Miami SWCD  
Linda Raterman  
937-335-7645  
lraterman@miami  
swcd.org

Shelby SWCD  
Amanda Hurley  
937-419-2597  
amanda.hurley@usda  
.gov

Darke SWCD  
Jared Coppess  
937-548-1715 x3  
www.darkeswcd.com

Contact the above staff to get a registration form

## Register before July 18th

# MULTI-COUNTY EDUCATOR WORKSHOP

DARKE, MIAMI, MONTGOMERY,  
AND SHELBY COUNTIES

7/30 &  
7/31

## CULTIVATING CONNECTIONS:

From Soil to Sustainability

Montgomery SWCD

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Darke SWCD

Jared Coppess

937-548-1715 x3

www.darkeswcd.com

Shelby SWCD

Amanda Hurley

937-419-2597

amanda.hurley@usda.gov

Join us for a 2 day educator workshop focusing on hands-on lessons about alternative agriculture, sustainability, food chains, and more in Miami County (1280 N. County Rd. 25A Troy, OH). Again this year we will have sessions in a meeting room and "field trips" to visit several locations for a more immersive experience!

CULTIVATING CONNECTIONS REGISTRATION DEADLINE JULY 18TH

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

CELL #: \_\_\_\_\_

SUMMER ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY & ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

HOME EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOOL NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOOL EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

GRADE: \_\_\_\_\_

I will attend 7/30 OR 7/31 (circle one) for \$60 \_\_\_\_ I will attend 7/30 AND 7/31 for \$75 \_\_\_\_

dietary restrictions: \_\_\_\_\_

Address check to **MIAMI SWCD** send to 1330 N CR 25A, Troy, OH 45373 **Attn: Linda**  
(Miami SWCD will also accept credit cards, charges apply)

I will be Seeking (1) Graduate Credit from Ashland University (circle one): YES NO

Arrangements are in the works for Ashland University credit  
Graduate credit is a separate & direct cost to Ashland University. COST TBA

# NEW EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

## Brooke Waterman

### PHEASANT'S FOREVER FARM BILL WILDLIFE BIOLOGIST



#### What is your role with Pheasant's Forever?

As a Farm Bill Biologist serving Shelby, Darke, Mercer, and Auglaize Counties, I provide technical assistance to landowners who wish to establish, enhance, or maintain wildlife habitat on their land, often through Farm Bill conservation programs like CRP and EQIP. This involves collaborating with partner agencies like NRCS; communicating with landowners by phone, email, or in-person; visiting sites to determine conservation program/practice suitability, feasibility, and eligibility,

and appropriate management activities; and writing conservation plans. I am always deepening my expertise in wildlife ecology, conservation program requirements, plant identification, and habitat management in grassland and agricultural contexts. Additionally, I engage with local Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever chapters by attending and contributing to meetings, assisting with wildlife education and outreach, and providing technical assistance for habitat projects.

#### What conservation practice resonates with you most?

Ever since two of my field seasons were impacted by wildfires, I have been intrigued by and enthusiastic about prescribed fire. It is an excellent tool for enhancing wildlife habitat!

#### What do you like to do in your free time?

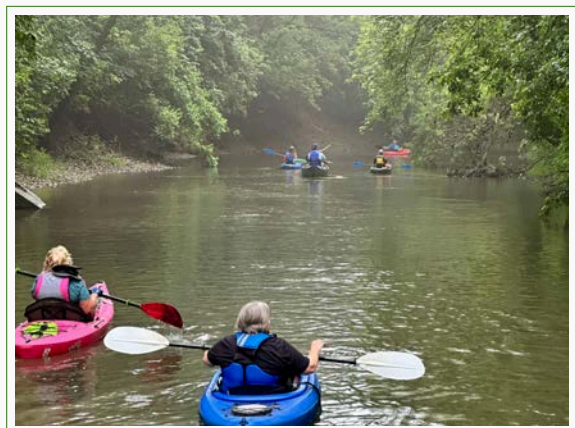
I love playing outside with my dog, eating local foods, and watching Milwaukee Brewers baseball.

**WILDLIFE HABITAT QUESTIONS?  
BWATERMAN@PHEASANTSFOREVER.ORG**



## EDUCATIONAL CANOE FLOAT AND ELECTROFISHING DEMO

On June 6<sup>th</sup>, Darke SWCD teamed up with Miami SWCD, Darke County Park District and Miami County Park District to hold the annual educational canoe float. 25 attendees joined us on Greenville Creek near Bish Discovery Center and floated in canoes and kayaks to the Historic Bears Mill. At the Bears Mill, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources-Division of Wildlife showed us how they monitor fish and other aquatic species in Ohio's rivers and streams. They were able to use their electrofishing equipment and collect species from the Scenic Greenville Creek downstream of the Mill. Species identified included creek chub, spotfin shiner, bluntnose minnow, northern hog sucker, small mouth bass, longear sunfish, green sunfish and rainbow darter. We would like to thank ODNR-DOW Fish Management for taking the time to educate us about our local streams. Save the date for next year: June 5th!





Anthony Wayne Farm Day



Native Plant Sale



Shelby County Conservation Camp

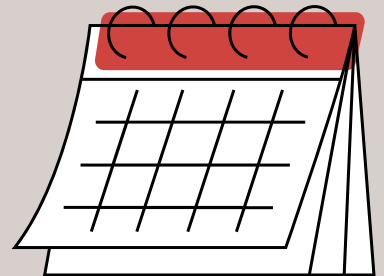


Versailles FFA Farm Day















## Upcoming Events

Main Street Greenville: Let's Go Cruising  
 Office Closed- Independence Day  
 Annie Oakley Sidewalk Sales  
 Gathering at Garst  
 Multi County Educators Workshop  
 Main Street Greenville: Artisan Stroll  
 Tour de Darke  
 Great Darke County Fair  
 Rolling 50's Car Show  
 Office Closed- Labor Day

Each Friday in July; 6-9p  
 July 4  
 July 25 & 26  
 July 26 & 27  
 July 30 & 31  
 August 1; 6-9p  
 August 3  
 August 15-23  
 September 6; 2-8p  
 September 7



# THANK YOU 2025 AFFILIATE MEMBERS

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- Tim Rank- *Technician*

## Darke NRCS Staff

- Ryan Kemper- *District Conservationist*
- Brooke Waterman- *PF Wildlife Biologist*
- Daniel Francis- *Natural Resources Specialist*

