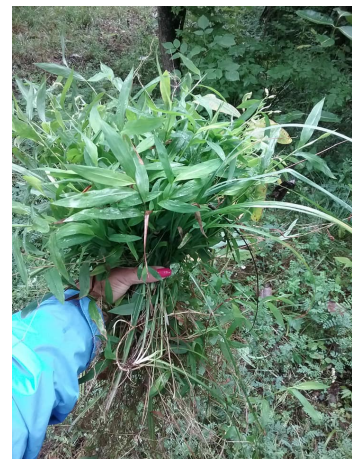


JANUARY 2021 CONSERVATION UPDATE

Your Source for Conservation News in Washtenaw County



CISMAs: A Local Ally in the Fight Against Invasive Species

By Dr. Shikha Singh, Regional Coordinator for JLWCISMA

The State of Michigan defines invasive species as those that are not native and whose introduction causes harm, or are likely to cause harm, to Michigan's economy, environment or to human health. Invasive species can include a variety of plants, animals, bacteria, fungi, and insects. In order to address some of the challenges faced by communities, Cooperative Invasive Species Management Areas (CISMAs) were established, and are comprised of non-profits, local governments and other partners.

CISMAs can assist landowners with species identification, provide technical assistance on how to manage various plant and pests, organize trainings and workshops, speak at meetings and in classrooms etc.

There are currently 22 CISMAs across Michigan, with all counties having representation. Each CISMA is customized to meet the needs of their local communities with their own objectives and priority species. Washtenaw County falls within the JLW CISMA jurisdiction, which also services Jackson and Lenawee County. Through the Michigan Invasive Species Grant Program, the JLW CISMA was established in March of 2017. Our organization's goal is to prevent, detect, eradicate and control invasive species in the region, and provide outreach and educational opportunities for local citizens and stakeholder groups.

We provide assistance on both aquatic and terrestrial invasive species, as well as pests, fungi and other Michigan watch list species. JLW CISMA partners have identified five priority species which include Japanese stiltgrass, parrot feather, Japanese knotweed, giant hogweed and phragmites. Last year European frog-bit was discovered within the Waterloo Recreation Area, and we are participating in a collaborative effort with the Department of Environment, Great Lakes & Energy to determine the extent of the infestation and prevent its spread to new areas. Other projects include monitoring for red swamp crayfish, Japanese knotweed removal and surveying for Japanese stiltgrass. Additionally, we have outfitted each Conservation District with backpack sprayers and herbicide injectors for public rental for those wanting to manage species on their own properties.

To report a species, request assistance or book a speaker for your meeting or classroom, please contact the JLW CISMA Coordinator Dr. Shikha Singh via email (shikha.singh@macd.org) or by phone at (517) 432-2089. Please visit our website (www.jlwcisma.weebly.com) to learn more about us and access valuable resources!

Dr. Singh will be the Keynote Speaker at the WCCD 73rd Annual Virtual Meeting. To RSVP please fill out the form: <https://docs.google.com/forms/..>

Steps to Reduce the Spread of Invasive Species:

1. Clean, drain and dry your boat and trailer to remove all aquatic organisms.
2. Familiarize yourself with Michigan's watch list species (<https://www.michigan.gov/invasives/>).
3. Check clothing, shoes, gear and pets for seeds, burrs and insects.
4. Burn firewood where you buy it.
5. Don't bring home unknown plants or animals from the wild.
6. Check your car or packages for insects or egg masses prior to shipping or leaving a new area.
7. Report watch list species at www.misin.msu.com.

2020 Conservation Awardees

The WCCD is happy to announce our 2020 Conservation Awardees! This year three individuals



are being celebrated for their efforts and commitment to conservation and tree planting in Washtenaw County.

Awards are typically given at our Annual Meeting in January, but due to the pandemic and virtual format of our Annual Meeting on [January 21st](#), awardees have already accepted their awards.

[Read about 2020 Awardees](#)



Funds Available for Soil Sampling and Fertilization Placement

By Nick Machinski, MAEAP Technician

There is cost-share funds available for farmers located within the Western Lake Erie Basin through STRAND. This area includes the Raisin River Watershed and the Stony Creek Watershed (Figure 1).

The funds cover the grid/zone soil sampling and variable rate application (or subsurface placement) of fertilizer (N, P, K). The program pays \$7/acre and \$10/acre for the respective practice. To qualify for the program, you need to be growing corn, soy or wheat, be able to provide maps from the Farm Service Agency (FSA), be willing to participate in the Michigan Agricultural Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP) and sign a short contract. The land being enrolled in this program also cannot have had conservation practices implemented on them for the past 5 years.

If you have questions, want to know more about STRAND or would like to apply, please me at [734-302-8711](tel:734-302-8711) or at Nicholas.machinski@washtenawcd.org



WCCD Resource Updates for 2021

By Doug Reith, Resource Coordinator

WCCD Order forms: Now in Technicolor!

We've updated the **WCCD Tree & Shrub Distribution and Native Plant Distribution Order forms** to be cleaner and more colorful. In addition to some of our long time offerings, you'll find many new species including: Red Pine, European Larch, Black Hills Spruce, Bur Oak, Tulip Poplar, Hackberry, Serviceberry, Nannyberry, Redbud, River Birch, and many new fruit varieties (apple, cherry, peach, pear and nectarine). And the Native Plant pre-order form has over 54 native wildflowers and 12 native grasses.

However, If you prefer the convenience of shopping online, look no further than our newly redesigned online store! <https://store.washtenawcd.org>. You'll find the new interface clean and easy to browse over 150 plants and other materials. New filters are available to browse the plants by soil type, moisture and sun requirements, and more.

Questions on resources for 2021? Contact me at doug@washtenawcd.org or [\(734\) 302-8713](tel:734-302-8713).



Photo: Students plan garden at Emerson School

School & Community Habitat Grant Now Accepting Applications and Donations

We are officially launching the new and improved School & Community Habitat Grant Program. The grant program is designed to provide plants, materials, design plans, and technical support for schools and community groups looking to establish natural areas. And we need your help! The grants award will be determined by donations we receive for the program. Every dollar donated will go to a local school or community habitat installation. You can donate online now:

<https://store.washtenawcd.org/products/donate>

Are you a School or Community organization? You can sign up for more information and updates or start your application now:

<https://www.washtenawcd.org/school--community-habitat-grant.html>

Washtenaw County Conservation District: A link to 2018 Farm Programs

By Erez Brandvain

The Farm Bill is a piece of legislation designed to provide support to landowners and consumers to implement a variety of programs and services around land use and food production. For landowners and land managers, the Farm Bill offers incentives to implement conservation practices on the ground.

[Read more on Farm Bill Programs](#)

Upcoming Events

Request your WCCD Absentee Ballot

Download an absentee ballot for WCCD Director elections (January 21st) or request one by mail by emailing megan.deleeuw@macd.org. Must provide a copy of piece of identification showing residency. Only Washtenaw County residents are eligible to vote. <https://www.washtenawcd.org/20...>

73rd Virtual Annual Meeting, January 21st

2020 Conservation Farmer of the Year, 2020 Beginning or Small Conservation Farmer of the Year and 2020 Tree Conservationist of the Year awardees, Special guests and WCCD Director Election results from absentee ballots counted & winners announced. RSVP [here](#).

Planning and Design for Native Plant Gardens Webinar

Wednesday, February 17th from 2-3:30 p.m.. Vern Stephens of Designs By Nature LLC will present details on how to select a site and design for various types of native gardens. Participants will have the opportunity to ask Vern questions. RSVP [here](#).

Washtenaw County Conservation District

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