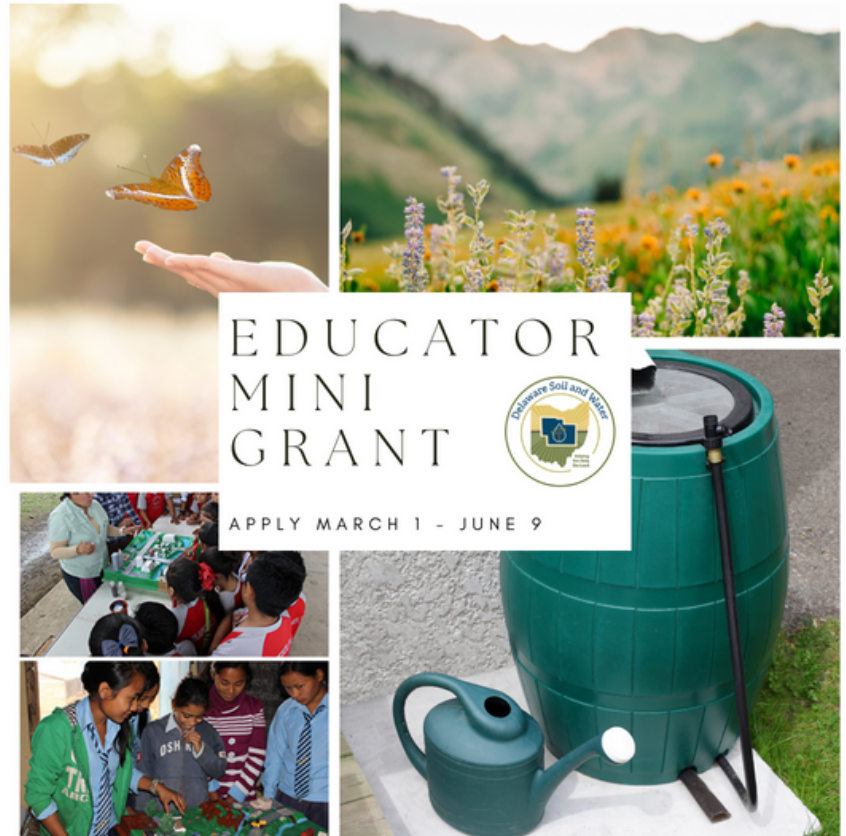


# Focus Newsletter

Do you know or are you a teacher or educator looking to improve and expand conservation education opportunities at your school? We might be able to help!

Our new Educator Mini-Grant program offers educators the chance to apply for 1 of 4 conservation education tools to be used in their classrooms or implemented at their schools. The application is available online from March 1 to June 9, 2023. All awards will be presented prior to September 1, 2023. The number of awards given will be subject to the funding availability.

One of the options that educators can request are butterfly release



kits. They can apply for up to 4 kits for their school/classroom. Each kit includes 5 caterpillars with food needed to grow into Painted Lady Butterflies, a mesh habitat, feeder and dropper, and journal. Another option for educators to apply for is an EnviroScape model. There are numerous model options to choose from and can be used in classrooms from preschool to advanced high school courses. Up to 2 rain barrel kits are an option that help collect and store rainwater from rooftops. The final option to choose from for this mini-grant program is up to 1-acre worth of Ohio blend wildflowers to be planted on or around school grounds. All of these come with sample lesson ideas and teachers are welcome to reach out to us for help in installation and planning if they so desire.

Only one application per education establishment will be accepted. Grant applications will be reviewed by Delaware SWCD staff with final approval of the Delaware SWCD Board of Supervisors.

More information on the guidelines about this mini-grant program as well as the online application can be found on our website at <https://soilandwater.co.delaware.oh.us/2023/03/15/2023-educators-mini-grant-application-opens/>. For questions or for more information feel free to reach out to Sarah Kidd, Communications and Outreach Coordinator, at [skidd@co.delaware.oh.us](mailto:skidd@co.delaware.oh.us).



# Native Plants Matter

Native plants have existed in an area for a long enough time to have evolved in harmony with the soil, climate, and other plants and animals surrounding them. There are several reasons why planting native matters and how incorporating them into your landscape has a positive impact on our world:

- The roots of native plants are traditionally much longer than their non-native counterparts and therefore prevent erosion, act as carbon sinks, transport nutrients, and reduce runoff during rainfall.
- Native plant nectar, seeds and berries provide a source of food for wildlife.
- Native plants attract beneficial insects by providing them food while they offer benefits to your yard and garden like pest control and pollination.

- Native plants are more adapted to the existing soil/climate conditions and therefore, after the first couple years, should not require watering or fertilization.
- Native plants are absolutely beautiful! They come in all sizes, shapes, and colors and there are options for every situation in your yard from moist, shady areas to dry, sunny areas.

By choosing native over non-native (and hopefully not any invasive) plants, you are joining in on the effort to restore balance to our natural world.

*More information on Native Plants:*

- [Local Sources for Ohio Native Plants](#)
- [Selecting Plants for Pollinators](#)

## Delaware Soil and Water Conservation District

557 Sunbury Rd  
Delaware, Ohio 43015  
740-368-1921



### Employee Highlight

Mike Hollingsworth is a Resource Conservationist at Delaware SWCD. He manages the upkeep and maintenance of the storm water infrastructure on the western side of the county. He, with the help of his teammates, make sure that the storm water is able to flow properly, meets with landowners, sprays unwanted vegetation, inspects each component of the storm water system, and uses a robotic camera to look for defects or obstructions in the subsurface drainage tiles. Mike is married with 2 adult children and is a grandfather of 5, soon to be 6. In the summer, he enjoys getting some "wind therapy" by riding his Harley. Mike and his wife have a rescue Doberman, named Smokey, and enjoys working with Doberman rescue groups.

## Camp Canopy Sponsorship

The Delaware Soil and Water conservation District is excited to once again offer one, full-ride (\$400) sponsorship to attend Camp Canopy. The camp, located at Camp Muskingum on Leesville Lake (Carroll County), will be held June 11-16, 2023. Camp Canopy is open to high school students entering their freshman year through seniors graduating in 2023. The application, will help the Delaware SWCD select a student for the sponsorship. The application must be received in our office by May 10, 2023.

Application: <https://soilandwater.co.delaware.oh.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/20/2023/02/2023-Camp-Canopy-Application.pdf>



## Delaware SWCD Scholarship



The Delaware Soil and Water Conservation District will award one (1) five-hundred-dollar (\$500.00) scholarship for the academic year 2023-2024.

Applicants must be a Delaware County resident, or have graduated or be graduating from one of the Delaware County public or private high schools. At the time of application, the applicant must have achieved at least a 2.5 grade average on a 4.0 scale. Applicants must be entering his/her first year as a full-time or part-time student at a two or four-year

accredited college, technical school or university, or entering his/her first year of Graduate school. Applicants must be pursuing a degree in agriculture, natural resources, or a similar environmental studies discipline.

Apply Online Today:

<https://soilandwater.co.delaware.oh.us/2023-delaware-soil-and-water-conservation-district-scholarship/>

## Free Trees for Educators



This year, through the Free Trees for Educators program, 3 schools requested 175 trees for their school grounds or to give to their students. Delaware SWCD is happy that the first year of this program was a success! Some of the schools that participated were:

- David Smith Elementary
- Olentangy Berkshire Middle School
- Olentangy Orange High School

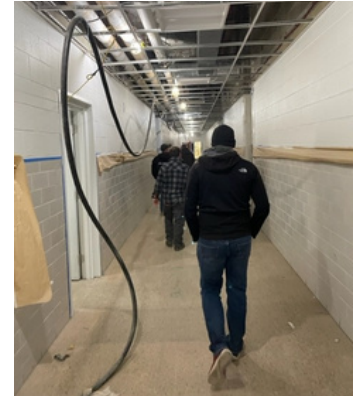
## It's been a busy quarter!



*Staff Training - Chainsaw Safety*



*Powell Seed Starting Class*



*Staff Tour of new  
Byxbe Campus*

## Upcoming Events

**March 1 - June 9** - Educators Mini-Grant Program accepting [applications](#)

**April 18** - Monthly Board of Supervisor's Meeting, 6:30p.m.

**May 10** - Last day to turn in [Camp Canopy Sponsorship Applications](#)

**May 10** - Last day to apply for the [Delaware SWCD Scholarship](#)

**May 16** - Monthly Board of Supervisor's Meeting, 6:30p.m.

**May 28** - Preservation Parks Summer Kick-Off, Shale Hollow Park, 1-3p.m.

*Check out the Soil Tunnel*

**June 10** - Olentangy River Festival

*Come see Delaware SWCD*

**June 20** - Monthly Board of Supervisor's Meeting, 6:30p.m.

**June 23-24** - Powell Festival

*Come see Delaware SWCD*

## Applications Open for Scioto CREP

The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) provides funding to install conservation practices on agricultural land and participants receive “enhanced” annual rental payments for 15 years to maintain conservation practices. CREP provides state funded conservation incentives to encourage farmers and landowners to enroll in the program. Landowners located within the Lake Erie and Scioto River CREP project areas can sign up for the CREP program by visiting their local Farm Service Agency office. [Fact sheet Here](#)

Delaware  
Soil and Water  
Conservation District

