



Conservation News

Coles County Soil and Water Conservation District

6021 Development Drive, Suite 2, Charleston, IL 61920

Phone: (217) 345-3901 ext. 3

Email: info@colescountyswcd.org

<http://www.colescountyswcd.org>

[facebook.com/ColesCountySWCD](https://www.facebook.com/ColesCountySWCD)

Volume 62 Issue 2

Filter Strips Benefit Water Quality and Your Wallet

A filter strip is an area of permanent vegetation located between cropland or grazing land and an environmentally sensitive area, such as a stream. Vegetative filter strips can reduce soil erosion, improve water quality, and provide significant habitat for grassland wildlife. They filter runoff by slowing water flow and causing contaminants such as excess nutrients, sediment, and chemicals to get trapped in the vegetation before reaching the environmentally sensitive area. Accumulated nutrients and chemicals are utilized by the vegetation rather than entering the water supply. Filtered water then enters the water bodies.

The Illinois Vegetative Filter Strip Assessment Law provides tax incentives for the development of filter strips for the primary reason of reducing soil erosion. Filter strips **do not have to be enrolled in other SWCD or USDA programs** to qualify for the tax incentives, but the vegetative filter strips must meet NRCS standards and specifications to be assessed at a reduced rate. SWCDs have the authority in certifying that existing vegetative filter meet requirements.

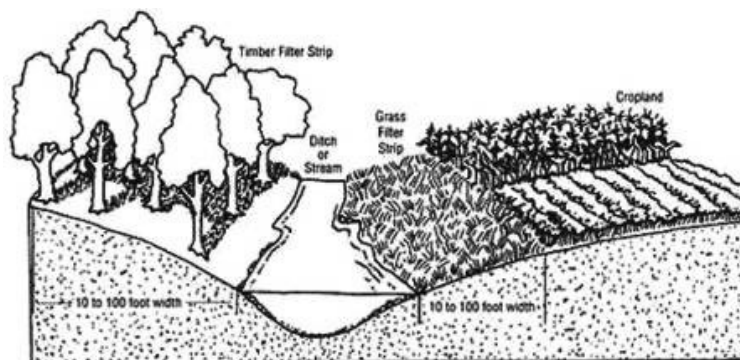
Do you have an existing filter strip on your property?

Landowners with fully established filter strips on their land need to complete certification to qualify for the property tax reduction.

If interested in applying for the property tax reduction on filter strips, stop by the Coles County Soil and Water Conservation District to fill out the necessary paperwork. In order to complete the forms, the property tax identification number for each filter strip area is needed. An aerial map or FSA farm and tract number of the location is also helpful, but not required. Once eligibility has been determined, it is the landowner's responsibility to file documentation with the office of the Coles County Assessor in Charleston.

Could your property benefit from adding a filter strip?

If you have a body of water (creek, pond, wetland, etc.) on your property that does not currently have at least 30 feet of dense, permanent vegetation around it, that might be a good spot for a filter strip! If the area is on existing farm ground and meets a few other qualifications, it may be eligible for enrollment in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). In addition to the reduced tax rate already discussed, CRP provides cost-share for installation of the practice and an annual payment for acreage enrolled in the program. Landowners and producers interested in CRP should contact their local USDA Service Center to learn more or to apply for the program. If the land in question doesn't qualify for CRP, some other programs exist as well. Give the SWCD office a call and make an appointment to talk to Lauren for more information.



Upcoming Events:

April:

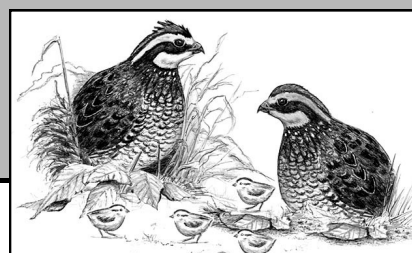
- 6th—Fish Pickup (11AM)
- 8th—Tree Pickup
- 12th—Board Meeting
- 22nd—Earth Day
- 29th—Arbor Day

May:

- 6th—Native Plant Orders Due
- 10th—Board Meeting
- 16-20th—Native Plant Pickup
- 30th—Memorial Day (Office Closed)
- 31st—Photo Contest Entries Due

June:

- 14th—Board Meeting



Delay mowing of roadsides and waterways from May 15th-Aug. 1st for ground-nesting birds... Don't Mow, Let Them Grow!

Landscaping with native plants increases biodiversity

Biodiversity commonly refers to the distribution and abundance of plant and animal species within an ecosystem (US Forest Service 1989).

Biodiversity provisions us with foods and materials, it helps regulate natural phenomena such as the water cycle, it inspires cultures to create art, and it supports vast ecosystems. In other words, biodiversity allows us to live healthy, happy, and productive lives.

Unfortunately, we're abusing this natural support system. As of 2009 in the US alone, more than 3,400 species of alien plants have invaded over 200 million acres. Over 40 million acres has been planted to lawns. Up to 33,000 species of plants and animals are now imperiled – too rare to perform their role in their ecosystem. One-third of our nation's birds are endangered. We directly threaten biodiversity through habitat loss, spread of non-native species and diseases, and over-harvest. We also indirectly threaten biodiversity through pollution and climate change.

You can play a part in protecting the biodiversity of your local community by creating backyard wildlife habitat that provides food, water, and shelter. The core of your backyard habitat should be native plants. If you have enough space, native trees and shrubs are great! For smaller yards or even apartment patios, native grasses and flowers can provide food and habitat for birds, pollinating insects such as bees and butterflies, and more!

The Coles Co. SWCD is selling a large variety of native plants through May 6th that can be used to create a biodiverse backyard habitat. Design help and other resources may also be available. Check out the order form (opposite) or give us a call!



Photo Contest Open Until May 31st

Are you an amateur photographer residing in Coles County who would like a chance to enter your photos in a local, state, and nationwide contest? The Coles County SWCD is sponsoring a conservation photo contest to recognize individuals whose pictures are worth more than words!

In addition to the chance to win at the local level, local winners will be entered in the statewide Association of Illinois Soil & Water Conservation District Auxiliary Photo Contest. Winners at the state level will then be submitted to the National Association of Conservation Districts photo contest. Entries must be received by May 31st to be considered for this year's contest.

Photographs can be entered in the following categories:

- Conservation Practices
- Close-Up Conservation
- Conservation in Action
- Conservation Across America
- Youth: Submissions from a photographer up to 18 years of age, which must fit into one of the above categories.



Complete rules and entry forms are available at <http://www.colescountyswcd.org/events/annual-photo-contest/>

COST SHARE SIGN UP

Coles County SWCD



Practices Include: Cover Crops, No Till/Strip Till, Conservation Cover (Pollinators), Well Decommissioning, Filter Strips, Grassed Waterways, Terraces, Pasture & Hayland Planting, Saturated Buffers, Bioreactors, Raingardens, and more!

For practice information and applications call or email:

217-345-3901 x 3
info@colescountyswcd.org



Charleston Field Office Staff and Directors

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As a cooperator of NRCS, SWCD must provide reasonable accommodations to USDA customers with disabilities, where appropriate. Individuals requiring reasonable accommodation for any NRCS or SWCD programs or services should contact Carzella Pritchett, Illinois NRCS' Disability Emphasis Program Manager, at (217) 353-6651 directly. Determinations on requests for reasonable accommodation will be made on a case-by-case basis. USDA-NRCS/SWCD are an equal opportunity employer and provider.

Coles County SWCD

2022 Native Plant Sale

Quantity	Common Name	Scientific Name	Height	Soil Moisture
	species availability subject to nursery supply		Feet	Dry↔Mesic↔Wet
	~Columbine	<i>Aquilegia canadensis</i>	2-3'	D, M
	*Milkweed, Marsh	<i>Asclepias incarnata</i>	3-4'	M, W
	Milkweed, Prairie	<i>Asclepias sullivanti</i>	3'	M, W
	Milkweed, Butterfly	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	2-3'	D, M
	Wild White Indigo	<i>Baptisia alba</i>	2-4'	M, D
	*Turtle Head	<i>Chelone glabra</i>	3-4'	W
	~Prairie Coriopsis	<i>Coreopsis palmata</i>	1-3'	D, M
	~Purple Coneflower	<i>Echinacea purpurea</i>	3-4'	D, M
	*Common Boneset	<i>Eupatorium perfoliatum</i>	3-4'	M, W
	~Prairie Smoke	<i>Geum triflorum</i>	1'	D, M
	*~Blue Flag Iris	<i>Iris virginica shrevei</i>	2-3'	M, W
	*Water Willow	<i>Justicia americana</i>	1-3'	W
	Rough/Tall Blazingstar	<i>Liatris aspera</i>	2-3'	D, M
	*Prairie Blazingstar	<i>Liatris pycnostachya</i>	3-5'	D, M, W
	Marsh/Dense Blazingstar	<i>Liatris spicata</i>	3-6'	M, W
	*~Cardinal Flower	<i>Lobelia cardinalis</i>	2-4'	W
	~Prairie Sundrop	<i>Oenothera pilosella</i>	2'	M
	~Foxglove Beardtongue	<i>Penstemon digitalis</i>	2-3'	D, M
	~*Obedient Plant	<i>Physostegia virginiana</i>	3-4'	M, W
	~*Common Mountainmint	<i>Pycnanthemum virginianum</i>	2-3'	D, M, W
	~Yellow Coneflower	<i>Ratibida pinnata</i>	3-5'	D, M, W
	Little Bluestem	<i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i>	2-3'	D, M
	~*New England Aster	<i>Symphotrichum novae-angliae</i>	4-5'	M, W
	X \$2.50 = \$	~tolerates partial shade *great for rain gardens, wetlands, and pond edges		

Orders Due May 6th, Pick Up: May 16-20th

Return order form with payment to:

Coles County SWCD
6021 Development Drive, Suite 2
Charleston, IL 61920

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Stop by the office or visit us online for pictures of each species, wildlife benefits, and growing tips!

Please remind me prior to pick up: Phone Email

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