



Conservation News

VOLUME 28 No.1

WINTER 2024

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Union SWCD

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937-642-5871 x 4

www.unioncountyohio.gov/USWCD

Mark your calendars for this year's tree sale!

Union SWCD 2024 Annual Tree Sale to be held on April 20!

The sale will be held at the Union County Agricultural Center parking lot and will be conducted as a drive-through.

Evergreens will be sold in packets of 25 for \$40/pkt.

Canaan Fir, Norway Spruce, and White Pine

Hardwood & Shrub species will be sold in packets of 5 for \$15/pkt.

American Chestnut, American Plum, Black Elderberry,
Pussy Willow, River Birch, Shagbark Hickory,
Sugar Maple, and Swamp White Oak

The sale will be held from 9:00 a.m. and run until noon, or until **SOLD OUT!**
Trees are available on a first come first serve basis.

Cash and checks are accepted, but please wait until the time of purchase to fill out your check.

The order form and species description are included in this newsletter or
[Click here for our online tree sale Information.](#)

2024 Annual Conservation Tillage Club Breakfast Meetings

The Union, Hardin, and Logan SWCD's along with Union and Hardin OSU Extension have put together another series of topics to learn about this winter.

The topics at this winter's meetings will be Grain Marketing, Weed Management, Strip Till/Subsurface Fertilizer Placement, and Climate & Weather Challenges. Meetings will be held at the Plaza Inn in Mt. Victory starting at 7:30 am. Breakfast is sponsored by local banks and Agri-Businesses with the program following.

The meetings will take place on the following Thursday mornings:

- * January 11: Subsurface Phosphorus Fertilizer Placement
- * January 25: 2024 Grain Market Outlook
- * February 8: Climate Smart and Farming with Weather Extremes
- * February 22: Drone Use in Agriculture.

The breakfast meetings are open for all to participate, so add these dates to your calendar.

2024 UNION SWCD TREE AND SHRUB SALE

Sale date will be Saturday, April 20, 2024

The sale will be held at the Union County Agricultural Center's rear parking lot
located at 18000 St. Rt. 4, Marysville, Ohio.

Sale runs from **9:00 a.m. to Noon or until SOLD OUT**

Any remaining seedlings will be sold the following week in our office, Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m.- 4:30 p.m.

No orders will be accepted prior to the sale. All sales are **on a first-come, first-served basis**.

Please make selections below and bring the completed form with you on the day of the sale.

After ensuring that all species desired are still available, we will total your order.

We accept Cash or Checks only for payment. Make Checks Payable to: Union SWCD

EVERGREENS

<u># Packets</u>	<u>25/Pkt. (cost + tax)</u>	<u>Species</u>	<u>Size</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Sub-Total</u>
_____	<u>\$40/pkt.</u> (\$37.38 + \$2.62)	Canaan Fir	8-16"	(P+1)	_____
_____	<u>\$40/pkt.</u> (\$37.38 + \$2.62)	Norway Spruce	18-24"	(2-0)	_____
_____	<u>\$40/pkt.</u> (\$37.38 + \$2.62)	White Pine	8-12"	(2-1)	_____

HARDWOOD/SHRUB

<u># Packets</u>	<u>5/Pkt. (cost + tax)</u>	<u>Species</u>	<u>Size</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Sub-Total</u>
_____	<u>\$15/pkt.</u> (\$14.02 + \$.98)	American Chestnut	6-12"	(1-0)	_____
_____	<u>\$15/pkt.</u> (\$14.02 + \$.98)	American Plum	12-18"	(1-0)	_____
_____	<u>\$15/pkt.</u> (\$14.02 + \$.98)	Black Elderberry	12-18"	(1-0)	_____
_____	<u>\$15/pkt.</u> (\$14.02 + \$.98)	Pussy Willow	12-18"	(1-0)	_____
_____	<u>\$15/pkt.</u> (\$14.02 + \$.98)	River Birch	12-18"	(1-0)	_____
_____	<u>\$15/pkt.</u> (\$14.02 + \$.98)	Shagbark Hickory	12-18"	(1-0, 2-0)	_____
_____	<u>\$15/pkt.</u> (\$14.02 + \$.98)	Sugar Maple	12-18"	(2-0)	_____
_____	<u>\$15/pkt.</u> (\$14.02 + \$.98)	Swamp White Oak	12-18"	(1-0, 2-0)	_____

ACCESSORIES

<u># Bundles</u>	<u>100/bd. (cost + tax)</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Sub-Total</u>
_____	<u>\$10/bd.</u> \$9.30 + \$.70)	Marking Flags	_____

TOTAL DUE \$ _____

Name: _____

Phone: _____

E-Mail: _____

Please include your email address below if you would like to receive our quarterly newsletter

OFFICE USE:

Cash / Check

Check # _____

Receipt # _____

2024 Brief Descriptions of Species

Evergreens:

Canaan Fir – *Abies intermedi*

Canaan fir is an attractive medium-sized tree generally reaching 40-55 feet in height and 20-25 feet in width. It exhibits a relatively dense, pyramidal crown with a slender spire-like tip. An important asset of Canaan fir is its ability to grow in areas not well suited to other native firs, but will not do well in heavy, **wet**, clay soils. In recent years, considerable interest has developed in using Canaan fir as a Christmas tree species.

Norway Spruce – *Picea abies*

This hardy spruce is a fairly fast growing evergreen that can reach a mature height of 80'+ and a naturally pyramidal spread of 25-30'. Its dark green needles make it a fine landscape specimen or very effective as screen plantings. Norway spruce will not tolerate excessive moisture for prolonged periods.

White Pine – *Pinus strobus* (native)

The White Pine is a fast growing (2-3 ft per year or more) evergreen that has needles of from 3-6 inches long and are arranged in bundles of five on the stem. In Sep-Oct this pine “sheds” all of its needles that grew out the previous year. It will grow to 80 feet tall by 40 feet wide or larger under optimum conditions, with a rapid growth rate. Its shape is upright pyramidal when young but becomes irregular with maturity. The White Pine performs best in evenly moist, rich, well-drained, acidic soils in full sun.



Hardwoods/ Shrubs:

American Chestnut – *Castanea dentata*

American Chestnut was predominately located in the eastern half of Ohio, where the soils are more acidic. Its nuts were a staple food of the Native Americans and pioneers, while its wood was harvested for the production of furniture, musical instruments, caskets, crates, and tannin. Dimensions of 80 feet tall by 60 feet wide were regularly obtained when it was located in the open. As a member of the Beech Family, it is related to the Oaks and the Beeches, in addition to other Chestnuts.

American Plum – *Prunus americana*

Known as Wild Plum, is present throughout all of Ohio, and is native to most of the eastern and central United States. Its fruits are sweet when fully ripe, and make excellent jelly or jam due to their high pectin and high acid content. American Plum reaches 20 feet tall by 25 feet wide as an individual specimen under optimum conditions, but forms thickets of indeterminate width with time.

Black Elderberry – *Sambucus nigra L. ssp. Canadensis (L.) R. Bolli*

Black elder is a loose, graceful, deciduous shrub with both woody and herbaceous branches to 12 ft. Many long stems arise from the base, arching at the top. Broad, white pith in stems and branches. Flowers white, 3/16 to 1/4 inch across, in broad, flat, conspicuous clusters up to 10 inches or more in diameter, appearing from May to July. Fruit berrylike, dark purple when ripe, 3/16 to 1/4 inch wide, edible.

Pussy Willow – *Salix discolor*

Silvery flowers bloom in late winter. The flowers provide pollen for native bees very early in the season and are conspicuous because they bloom on bare stems, before leaves appear. Finches and cardinals find the flower buds tasty. Several different butterflies use the blue-green leaves as a larval food source. If planted in dense clumps, this multi-stemmed shrub provides good cover and nesting sites for a variety of birds. Prefers full sun. Grows well in most soil, including wet, poorly drained areas.

River Birch – *Betula nigra*

River birch is a 30-50 ft., usually multi-trunked tree which can reach 90 ft. in height. River birch is fast growing and long-lived and is probably our most trouble-free birch. The tree's selling point is its satiny, silver bark that peels to reveal a cinnamon-brown trunk beneath. Its ability to thrive on moist sites makes it useful for erosion control.

Shagbark Hickory – *Carya ovata*

Rare are the Union County woodlots that do not boast this native and truly "American" tree. Found throughout the county, it often appears as a majority species in many woodlots. With maturity it develops naturally re-curving bark and produces edible hickory nuts that are beloved by wildlife and people. Strong and hard, it also makes great firewood.

Sugar Maple – *Acer saccharum*

Another Union County native, Sugar Maple can be expected to grow across Union County – except in areas of extended seasonal wetness. This maple is the most efficient at producing maple syrup. Growth habit includes a broad canopy and beautiful fall color. It prefers plenty of space and sunlight. Will tolerate shade with subsequent slower growth.

Swamp White Oak, or "Bicolor Oak" – *Quercus bicolor*

If Union County had an official tree, this would be an excellent candidate. While it is tolerant of extended seasonal wetness, this white oak family tree is just as much "at home" on higher and drier sites. It is used as a tree lawn tree where space is afforded, but grows anywhere adequate space will permit (Mature height 60', with a 50-60' wide crown). Swamp white oak has recently been referred to as "Bicolored Oak" in the landscape industry - taking from its scientific second name of *bicolor*. This reference is to the summer's glossy green leaves that are silvery white on the backside.

Technical Activities

As we begin the new year, our technical staff is busy planning and designing various projects, including grassed waterways and ponds, to be installed in 2024. We continue to be active both in and out of the office in order to gather and compile site data before putting plans down on paper.

Other activities have included assistance with home site drainage, expiring contract re-enrolls for CRP (Conservation Reserve Program), and technical education events.



Recently constructed waterway with grass growing



Image Source: Pixabay

NOTICE:

If you have a new or existing waterway request with the Farm Service Agency (FSA), please be aware that we are temporarily unable to receive documentation of requests due to the current lack of a farm bill. If you have a waterway request filed with FSA, please bring us a copy of your maps and request for assistance, as this will allow us to begin the research, survey, and design process for your waterway project.

*** This is in no way a guarantee of payment or issuance of a contract from the Farm Service Agency.**

Up the Crick...

Using resources today, conserving for tomorrow.
Joseph Grove, Urban Technician - jgrove@unioncountyohio.gov



El Niño, La Niña, and Ohio's Winter

I may not be a fortune teller, but I can tell you that Ohio's winter will most likely be a lot warmer and drier than usual this year. This is due to a weather phenomenon called El Niño. This past summer, scientists at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) declared that El Niño conditions had emerged. But what does that even mean?

Normally, the Pacific Trade Winds blow west, carrying warm water from South America toward Asia. To replace that warm water, cold water rises from the ocean depths in a process called "upwelling". However, two different weather patterns called El Niño and La Niña can emerge, and they disrupt these conditions.

During El Niño, the trade winds weaken. This means that the warm water sticks around near South America instead of being carried away. These warmer waters cause the Jet Stream to move south of its normal position, which means that the moisture carried by the Jet Stream is hitting the southern US. This can lead to very wet conditions in the South, while in the northern US and Canada, the weather becomes warmer and drier than usual. This process is happening right now.

La Niña is the opposite of El Niño. During it, the trade winds get stronger. This means that more warm water is carried away from South America than normal, which makes the water there colder. These colder waters cause the Jet Stream to move north of its normal position, which carries moisture (and cold polar air) directly over the northern US and Canada. This typically leads to wet and cold conditions in the North while the South becomes warmer and drier than normal. In fact, last winter happened during La Niña conditions.

These patterns matter to SWCDs because they influence the work we do. During drier conditions, SWCDs try to encourage water conservation. During wetter conditions, flooding or intense snowfall can pose challenges for SWCDs. According to forecasters, this El Niño has a 62% chance of lasting through sometime between April and June. This means that in Ohio, dry conditions will probably continue for a while.

Wild About Wildlife

Brent Nickel, Union SWCD Wildlife Specialist.
bnickel@unioncountyohio.gov

Winter Wildlife, Habitat, Interests and Concerns

What's In-Season

Always Refer to the Current Year's Regulations.

Hunting Regulations:

Fishing Regulations:

"Hunting With Permission" forms and hard copies of the **Hunting and Fishing Regulations** are available at our office.

Get the **HuntFishOH Mobile APP** and get everything in one place!

Muskrat or Beaver Problems?.... Now is the Time!

A timely reminder for anyone experiencing chronic damage from Muskrats or Beaver.

Now is the time to recruit trappers to reduce the potentially explosive muskrat population. In Union County, the regulated Muskrat and Beaver trapping seasons run until

February 29, 2024

Duck, Duck, Goose!

Waterfowl seasons will be ending soon and the nesting season is right around the corner. Now is the time to think about next years ducklings by constructing nest structures and placing them before the ice melts.

I have nest plans available in my office.

On another note, if you have had nuisance geese problems in the past, you are likely to have them again. Efforts to legally discourage Canada geese from nesting on properties should begin early. It takes uncommon persistence to keep them from instinctively nesting.

If, despite one's very best efforts, one still needs assistance, the Ohio Division of Wildlife has an on-line website to assist with human-geese conflicts.

To learn more about human/ goose conflicts and to apply for a **Goose Damage Permit** [click HERE!](#)

Christmas Trees for Wildlife

Placing a wildlife brush shelter on your property can add an interesting and important element to your backyard habitat, attracting a wide variety of wildlife that may have been missing. Providing dense, heavy and secure shelter close to the ground can attract many animals that may not feel comfortable otherwise. An old Christmas tree can make a great base. This is the easiest thing you can do with your tree if you have a yard. It directly benefits the wildlife in your backyard during winter months because brush piles and dead trees offer food and needed protection from the chill.

Wildlife Brush PilesCottontail Condos

Winter is a great time to construct heavy-duty brush piles.

No, not small piles of limbs. Begin by placing large diameter pieces (Six inch +.), at the base. Arrange the base to have four compartments by placing logs across the middle of each side. As each row goes up, move the logs "in" one width, so that a pyramid shape begins to form. At about four feet high, place leftover limbs and other cuttings on top as a roof. Add to the top of the pile as necessary.



Wildlife Conflict Management

...Forget Control!

Experiencing wildlife conflicts? Try the solutions associated with this wildlife conflict resolution website!

The Internet Center for Wildlife Damage Management:

<http://www.icwdm.org/>

OLHAP



OHIO LANDOWNER/HUNTER ACCESS PARTNERSHIP

- This is private property open to access for the purpose of wildlife-based recreation.
- OLHAP permit is required.
- Please practice leave no trace by packing all trash out.
- Funding for OLHAP is partially funded by grant monies in the VPA section of the Farm Bill.
- For more information on this program or to obtain your OLHAP permit visit ohiodnr.gov.



VPA-HIP

DIVISION OF WILDLIFE
OHIO DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES



**OLHAP - OHIO
LANDOWNER/
HUNTER ACCESS
PARTNERSHIP
PROGRAM**

Looking for some new places to hunt? Have you heard about the OLHAP program? Check out the above link to find out more about the newest hunter access program in Ohio.

Injured—or what appears to be Helpless Wildlife?

Call or contact the **Ohio Wildlife Center** – 614-793-WILD (9453) – then follow their every instruction!
<http://www.ohiowildlifecenter.org/dnn/>

Conservation Stewardship Program Funding Available to Ohio Landowners and Producers

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Ohio Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is accepting applications from landowners interested in the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) to build on existing conservation efforts to increase operational efficiencies and environmental benefits as well as reduce overall input costs. This year, Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) funding is providing additional financial opportunities for select conservation practices and enhancements to increase direct climate mitigation benefits.

Ohio NRCS is increasing the minimum annual payment for agricultural producers participating in CSP from \$1,500 to \$4,000 starting in fiscal year 2024. The increase addresses challenges faced by small scale, underserved, and urban producers and improves equity in the program by making participation more financially beneficial for smaller operations. The new minimum payment is available for new and renewed CSP contracts, and applications for the program.

Additionally, producers and landowners can take advantage of the ACT NOW process, which immediately approves and obligates applications when the application meets or exceeds a state-determined minimum ranking score. Applicants will experience a targeted, rapid streamlined application and contract approval process.

“Participating in this program allows landowners to build on their conservation efforts,” Ohio State Conservationist John Wilson said. “Increasing the minimum payment to CSP participants regardless of the size of their operation helps to make participation worthwhile for a larger number of producers.”

CSP offers technical and financial assistance to help agricultural and forest producers take their conservation efforts to the next level. The program is designed to compensate agricultural and forest producers who agree to increase their level of conservation by adopting additional conservation activities and maintaining their baseline level of conservation.

Learn more about the CSP application process and eligible land use resource concerns on the [Ohio NRCS Conservation Stewardship Program](#) webpage.

To learn more about other technical and financial assistance available through NRCS conservation programs, visit [Get Started with NRCS](#) or contact your local [USDA Service Center](#).

Drainage Maintenance Update

This fall drainage maintenance crews have been busy dipping the following ditches:
Marriott Ditch, Landon Patton Run, Kile Ditch and Elliot Run.

Drainage maintenance crews will be back in the spring to level spoil piles.
Crews will then level and grade these areas and plant grass seed to restore the filter strip.
Pictured are some of the drainage improvements we were able to accomplish.



If you have any drainage related questions, please contact our office
Monday - Friday from 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. at the contact information listed below.

Joe Eads
Drainage Maintenance Supervisor
18000 State Route 4, Ste. D
Marysville, OH 43040
937-209-2236
jeads@unioncountyohio.gov
<https://www.unioncountyohio.gov/USWC>

**Union SWCD Board of Supervisors and staff
would like to THANK the 2023 Affiliate Members
for their continued support!**

Cook Real Estate (Gold Member)	59 years
Ohigro Inc. (Silver Member)	50 years
MJS Oil, Inc., dba Smith Distributing (Silver Member)	37 years
Dean Cook Nationwide Insurance (Gold Member)	31 years
Select Sires, Inc (Platinum Member)	29 years
Union County Farm Bureau (Gold Member)	26 years
Smart Oil, LLC (Gold Member)	10 years
Millcreek Gardens LLC (Silver Member)	4 years
Seed Consultants (Silver Member)	4 years
Vititoe Construction, Inc. (Platinum Member)	4 years
Connolly Construction Co. (Silver Member)	3 years
MitchellAgri (Gold Member)	3 years
The Seed Center (Gold Member)	3 years
Benny's Pizza (Gold Member)	2 year
Bluescreek Farm LLC (Gold Member)	2 year
Bokes Creek Hot Shots (Gold Member)	2 year
Bokes Creek Orchard (Gold Member)	2 year
Mitchell's Berries & Blooms (Silver Member)	2 year
Richwood Tire Center (Silver Member)	2 year
Steve Stolte (Gold Member)	2 year
Al's Leather Craft LTD (Silver Member)	1 year
Heart of Ohio Fish & Game Association (Gold Member)	1 year
The Grainery (Gold Member)	1 year

Become a Union SWCD Affiliate Member

The Union Soil and Water Conservation District is seeking 2024 Affiliate Members. These contributions help the Board of Supervisors continue their efforts to educate the people of Union County about protecting our natural resources. Such efforts include field days, pond clinics, displays, tours, camp scholarships and presentations to schools and civic groups.

Contributions to the District are voluntary and tax deductible.

The following memberships are available to those contributing

Diamond Membership	\$500 or more
Platinum Membership	\$250 - \$499
Gold Membership	\$100 - \$249
Silver Membership	\$50 - \$99

As an Affiliate Member, your name and / or business name will be listed in our 2024 quarterly newsletters, in the Annual Report, in Annual Meeting Program, and on our website.

If you choose to become an affiliate member, please send your contribution to 18000 State Route 4, Suite D, Marysville, OH 43040. If you have any questions contact Sherry Maisenbacher at (937) 642-5871 x2221 or email at smaisenbacher@unioncountyohio.gov.

www.unioncountyohio.gov/departments/USWCD/affiliate-members--donors

Union SWCD Affiliate Member Application

<https://www.unioncountyohio.gov/departments/USWCD/affiliate-members--donors>

Affiliate membership dollars are used to help contribute to a variety of natural resource education efforts for Union County residents. Such efforts include field days, pond clinics, displays, tours, camp scholarships and presentations to schools and civic groups.

Membership Benefits:

Annual Meeting Tickets (2)

Listed in our Annual Meeting Program

Listed in our Annual Report

Listed on our website

Recognized in our quarterly newsletter

Recognized on Annual Meeting PowerPoint

Please complete the form below:

Business Name: _____

Contact Name: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Website: _____

Choose one of the following Affiliate memberships available:

_____ Diamond Membership	\$500 or more
_____ Platinum Membership	\$250 - \$499
_____ Gold Membership	\$100 - \$249
_____ Silver Membership	\$50 - \$99

Send this form along with a check payable to:

Union SWCD
18000 State Route 4, Suite D
Maryville, OH 43040

If you have any questions please contact Sherry Maisenbacher at
(937) 642-5871 x2221 or smaisenbacher@unioncountyohio.gov

Upcoming Events / Office Closures:

January 1 2024	Holiday: New Year's Day - Office Closed
January 11, 2024	Union SWCD Board Meeting, 6:00 pm in the Ag Center - Buckeye Mtg Room
January 15, 2024	Holiday: Martin Luther King Day - Office Closed
February 8, 2024	Union SWCD Board Meeting, 6:00 pm in the Ag Center - Buckeye Mtg Room
February 19, 2024	Holiday: President's Day - Office Closed
March 14, 2024	Union SWCD Board Meeting, 6:00 pm in the Ag Center - Buckeye Mtg Room
April 8, 2024	Solar Eclipse - Office Closed
April 11, 2024	Union SWCD Board Meeting, 6:00 pm in the Ag Center - Buckeye Mtg Room
April 20, 2024	Union SWCD Annual Tree Sale, :30 a.m. - Noon or until SOLD OUT
May 9, 2024	Union SWCD Board Meeting, 6:00 pm in the Ag Center - Buckeye Mtg Room
May 27, 2024	Holiday: Memorial Day - Office Closed

**Would you like to receive our Conservation News by email quarterly?
Email bnickel@unioncountyohio.gov to be included on our list.**

Union Soil and Water Conservation District and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibit discrimination in their programs based on race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs and marital or familial status.

Mailing Address Goes Here

STANDARD RATE
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Marysville, OH 43040

Conservation News

Union Soil & Water Conservation District
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Marysville, Ohio 43040
(937) 642-5871 option 4
<https://www.unioncountyohio.gov/USWCD>