

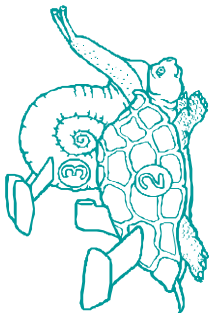
Summer  
2011



FRANKLIN SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

# SWIFT

Soil and Water Information for Teachers



## Spotlight on Resources: Composting: Improving Soils and Water Quality



Plants grow stronger and healthier in a good, rich soil. Decomposed organic material is a key component to soil health. If left alone, all organic material will eventually decompose, however, you may want to speed up this natural process by composting. You can place yard and kitchen trimmings in a bin or a pile in your backyard. The compost you create will be a dark, crumbly, earthy mixture of decayed organic matter. This compost can then be used as a fertilizer or soil conditioner that will enrich your garden soil in a natural and economical way.

Compost is created by decomposing organisms such as bacteria, fungi, worms, and sow bugs. These organisms need four elements to carry out their mission: nitrogen, carbon, water, and air. Be sure to provide them with a mix of “green” materials rich in nitrogen (like grass clippings and kitchen scraps ) and “brown” materials rich in carbon (like dried leaves and twigs). You may need to water your pile occasionally; the mixture should be barely damp, not soggy. Turning or mixing the pile provides air and distributes moisture. More frequent turning produces faster results.



Making compost at home has many benefits. Up to 25% of household trash can be composted and kept out of landfills. Using compost on your garden or in flower pots can reduce the need for added chemical fertilizers and pesticides, thus keeping them out of stormwater runoff and our streams. Organic matter can loosen heavy clay soils, add essential nutrients, diminish disease and pests and improve infiltration to reduce runoff volume. Topdressing with compost reduces weeding and water use and when incorporated into sandy soil, compost increases the soil’s water-holding ability.

### Things to remember when composting:

- Composting can be as simple or as complex as you want it to be. It all depends on how much material you have, how fast you want to see results and the amount of effort that you are willing to invest.
- DO NOT put meat, dairy or pet waste into your compost pile.
- You DO want to add yard and kitchen waste to your compost pile. This includes grass, leaves, weeds, egg shells, teabags, coffee grounds and filters, fruit & vegetable scraps, manure, and shredded paper.
- All organic material will turn to compost eventually without any help, but it will take longer to decompose on its own. Remember, “compost happens”!

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- \* For more information on composting visit <http://ohioline.osu.edu/hyg-fact/1000/1189.html>.
- \* For more information about soils go to <http://soils.usda.gov>.



# Fun Projects and Places to Visit



## Ohio Nature Education to open Nature Center

Ohio Nature Education (ONE) is a non-profit organization that provides a home to more than 50 permanently injured wild animals and incorporates them into environmental education programs. ONE has signed a lease with the Licking Park District to manage the William C. Kraner Nature Center after it opens this summer. This public facility is located at 10380 Fairview Road, located 5.5 miles east of Newark in Licking County. The plan is to eventually move all of their education animals to this facility which will provide ONE the opportunity to offer both on site and outreach programs. Please check out the website at [www.ohionature.org](http://www.ohionature.org) and look for an announcement for an open house this summer.

## Preservation Parks of Delaware County developing new Farmstead



Preservation Parks is in the process of constructing a 1930's-1940's period farmstead north of Delaware at Gallant Farm preserve on Buttermilk Hill Road. The farm will include a farmhouse replica from this time period, a large barn that will serve as a meeting facility and display space, gardens, fishing pond, and row crop field. The ground was broken this spring and construction is anticipated to be completed by September. The farmstead is slated to open toward the end of 2011. Interpretive displays and education programming is still being developed, but there will be field trip opportunities available. For more information please contact Rich Niccum at (740) 524-8600 x3 or at [rniccum@preservationparks.com](mailto:rniccum@preservationparks.com).

Preservation Parks of Delaware County offers free nature outreach programs, either in the classroom or at a park site within Delaware County. To schedule a classroom program or field trips please contact Rich Niccum at (740) 524-8600 x3 or at [rniccum@preservationparks.com](mailto:rniccum@preservationparks.com).

## The Columbus Department of Public Utilities

### Your classroom can be a GreenSpot!

Students play a unique role in making our community a greener place and their commitment can be acknowledged through the GreenSpot program. It's easy. Go to [www.columbusgreenspot.org](http://www.columbusgreenspot.org), click the Join tab, register as a community group and submit your commitments through the online application. Just let us know what three things your students will do within the next year to protect our air, soil or water. Once approved, your classroom will receive a GreenSpot decal in recognition of your substantial contribution to our community.



Help raise awareness on water pollution prevention by participating in the City of Columbus "No Dumping, Drains to Rivers" storm drain marking project, part of the Department of Public Utilities' "We All Live Downstream" public education program. It's an easy community service activity that can be done by your class. You choose the Columbus neighborhood, the city supplies the markers, adhesive and instructions. For more information please call 645-2926 or visit <http://utilities.columbus.gov>. To obtain markers outside Columbus, please contact that jurisdiction's public service or utilities department.



## Stratford Ecological Center's Programs Filling Fast

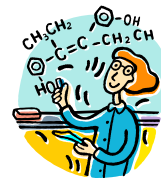


Now is the time to make your reservations for the Stratford Ecological Center's fall education programs. Farm and field trips are 1-4 hour adventures of discovery around the farm, forest fields and wetlands. Suitable for all grade levels. Contact April Hoy, Field Trip Coordinator at [secearth-share@aol.com](mailto:secearth-share@aol.com) to reserve a Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday morning program.

Sunship Earth is a 5th grade program that addresses 80% of the state's science standards through an engaging and unforgettable week of day-programs. This can be the foundation to your annual science curriculum! Only 2 weeks remaining! Contact Christa Hein, Education Director, at [treebing@aol.com](mailto:treebing@aol.com) for more information or to schedule a presentation of the program at your location.

Stratford Ecological Center is a 256 acre farm and State Nature Preserve just south of the city of Delaware. For more information, visit [www.stratfordecologicalcenter.org](http://www.stratfordecologicalcenter.org) or call (740)363-2548.

# Upcoming Events for Educators



## Summer Teacher Workshops at Your Metro Parks



Metro Parks will offer 4 teacher training workshops during the months of June and July. Workshops support Academic Content Standards and process skills for several grade levels. Workshops are conducted by various state and local agencies and school district representatives. These workshops are presented at a Metro Park or other Central Ohio Agency site. Teachers work mostly in an outdoor setting to find ways to develop meaningful field trips and hands-on activities with little or no funding.

Workshops and Dates:

1. **Bridging the Gap: Classroom to Field Trip,**  
June 22 & 23, \$50
2. **Physical Education in an Outdoor Setting,**  
June 28 & 29, \$50
3. **Teaching Nature through the Senses,**  
July 20 & 21, \$50
4. **Analyzing Human Impact on Water,**  
July 27 & 29, \$50

You may register for these workshops online at [www.metroparks.net](http://www.metroparks.net) starting April 4th. You may only register online using a credit card.

If you must use another type of payment method, please mail it along with a completed registration form to Metro Parks, 1069 W. Main St., Westerville, OH 43081. Registration forms can be downloaded at [www.metroparks.net](http://www.metroparks.net).

One semester hour of credit will be offered through Ashland University for each 2-day workshop completed. Registration for credit is separate and can be done at the workshop.

Metro Parks will also host the **Science Resources within Your Reach** workshop and resource fair for school principals, administrators and teachers on June 16th at Highbanks Metro Park. During this free, one-day workshop participants will be introduced to a variety of environmental education resources and field trip funding sources available in Central Ohio. Advance registration is required.

For more information about the workshops, please contact Susan Boggs at 614-895-6211 or [sboggs@metroparks.net](mailto:sboggs@metroparks.net).



## Columbus Zoo and Aquarium Teacher Workshops

Join the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium for teacher workshops this summer! Interdisciplinary classroom activities, guest speakers and Zoo tours will provide content knowledge as well as hands-on ways to explore life science topics with your students. Participants must be prepared for the weather and are expected to walk short distances. Graduate level credit is available through Ashland University for an additional fee.

### Exploring Adaptations and Behavior

June 21st and 22nd, 2011

8:30 AM - 4:30 PM

\$100 per participant (additional fee of \$175.00 for Ashland University credit).

### Endangered Species and Conservation

August 3rd and 4th, 2011

8:30 AM - 4:30 PM

\$100 per participant (additional fee of \$175.00 for Ashland University credit).

To register for these workshops, please visit <https://reservations.columbuszoo.org/info.aspx?eventid=22>

## COSI's Free Teacher Resource Fair

Tuesday, August 2nd, 2011, 10am - 2pm

333 West Broad Street, Columbus OH, 43215

Visit COSI's permanent exhibitions and meet representatives from central Ohio organizations that support teachers. This free fair covers all grade levels and assists teachers in teaching educational standards in the classroom. The event includes a free film on COSI's Extreme Screen! For details and to complete the online registration form, visit: <http://www.cosi.org/educators/professional-development/teacher-fair/>



October 2012

**June: National Strawberry Month, Perennial Gardening Month**

- June 4: Change Your Mind Day
- June 18: International Picnic Day
- June 19-25: National Pollinator Week



**July: National Peach Month, National Ice Cream Month**

- June 27-July 2: Independence from Stuff Week
- July 11: Cheer Up the Lonely Day
- July 24-30: National Salad Week



**August: National Water Quality Month**

- August 7: Friendship Day
- August 20-26: Children's Book Week

**Hold the Date:** Wednesday October 3, 2012 for EcoSummit 2012. EcoSummit 2012 will bring together the world's most respected minds in ecological science to discuss restoring the planet's ecosystems. On October 3rd, school groups will be invited to tour the EcoExperience exhibit hall. We will bring you additional opportunities as they are finalized. The conference Web site is [www.ecosummit2012.org](http://www.ecosummit2012.org).



**Congratulations Envirothon Teams**

Forty-nine teams from central and southern Ohio competed at the Area 5 Envirothon Competition on Tuesday, May 3rd at Lake Vesuvius of Wayne National Forest in Lawrence County. This competition, sponsored by the Ohio Federation of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, challenges students in the areas of aquatic ecology, current environmental issues, forestry, soils and wildlife. Franklin County teams from Bexley, Dublin Coffman and New Albany survived the rain and the cold by placing in the top third of all the teams that participated. Thank you to **Mark Dilley** of MAD Scientist and **Scott Sonnenberg** of Eco Design and Engineering for sponsoring the New Albany and Dublin teams. If you are interested in learning more about this high school competition, visit [www.envirothon.org](http://www.envirothon.org) or contact Linda Pettit at Franklin Soil and Water, (614) 486-9613 or [Linda-pettit@franklinswcd.org](mailto:Linda-pettit@franklinswcd.org).

**Congratulations Poster Contest Winners**



Once again Franklin Soil and Water has teamed up with Oakland Nurseries to sponsor a Conservation Poster Contest. The theme of the contest this year was "Forests for the People: More than you can Imagine" focusing on our connection with and dependence on trees. Thirteen schools participated, involving approximately 1000 students in grades K-12. The students created their posters on the back side of previously used paper. Great job to all those who participated and thank you to Oakland Nurseries and the teachers who made this year's contest a success.



**Congratulations to our first place winners:**

- K-3: Morgan Meissner, Fouse Elementary
- 4: Isabella Vegas, St. Matthew School
- 5-6: Pritam Sharma, Valley Forge Elementary
- 7-12: Diviya Jacob, John Sells Middle School

District programs and services are offered on a non-discriminatory basis.

FRANKLIN SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT --- A Federal/State/Local partnership funded by: Franklin County Commissioners; State of Ohio; Columbus; Gahanna; Hilliard; Reynoldsburg; Upper Arlington; Westerville; Worthington; Villages of Canal Winchester, New Albany and Obetz; Blendon, Brown, Franklin, Hamilton, Jackson, Jefferson, Madison, Norwich, Plain, Pleasant and Prairie Townships; The Nature Conservancy; Columbus and Franklin County Metro Parks; Darby Creek Association; Franklin County Board of Health, Engineer, Sanitary Engineer and Development Dept.; Ohio Environmental Education Fund; Clean Ohio Fund; Nature Work; and resource assistance from the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources.