

## The Hoosier Heartland Resource Conservation & Development Council receives Grant Award



The Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust awarded \$2,334,500 to 27 Indiana nonprofit organizations Tuesday, July 24, 2007. The presentation was held at Fay Biccard Glick Neighborhood Center at Crooked Creek, 2990 W. 71st Street, Indianapolis, Indiana.

“Since the Trust began its grant-making in 1998, it has awarded more than \$67 million to 376 Indiana nonprofit organizations,” said Frank E Russell, Trustee chairman.

Hoosier Heartland RC& D received \$55,000 from the Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust. The funds will be used to support for a second year to continue the

**Plant A Million Trees Program** with the goal to plant one million trees by 2015. Paula Baldwin, HHRC& D President and Cindy Beckner, Co-Chair of the CYY Committee attended the Award Presentation.

“The Trust has continued to further the causes Nina Pulliam supported much of her life. As Trustees, we are pleased to continue her legacy of helping people in need, protecting animals and nature, and enriching community life,” said Russell.

“This is the second grant award this year and includes every area of the Trust’s interests,” said Harriet Ivey, president and CEO. “Grants range from \$10,000 to \$500,000, and eight of today’s recipients are first-time awardees,” Ivey added.



The Trust recognized 17 organizations helping people in need with grants totaling \$1,204,500; seven organizations protecting animals and nature with \$380,000 in commitments; and three organizations enriching community life with grants totaling \$750,000.

“Nina spent a lifetime helping others, and her Trust has evolved into a strong resource for nonprofit groups in her beloved Indiana. With a strong emphasis on encouraging self-sufficiency, the Trust serves individuals, including the elderly and disabled, women, children and their families,” Trustee Carol P. Schilling said. For more information check out:

<http://www.ninapulliamtrust.org/html/>.

## Make Your Backyard a Friendlier Place for Nature

By Shaena Smith

There are 92 million acres of developed land in the United States, and much of it is in the care of individual homeowners. The

Backyard Conservation Program, sponsored by the Hamilton County Soil and Water Conservation District, urges urban and suburban residents to adopt small-scale conservation practices to increase wildlife habitat, improve water quality, and reduce erosion. Tree planting, composting, terracing, nutrient management, backyard ponds, and rain gardens are just a few of the practices encouraged by the relatively new program.



Two demonstration sites are currently in development and will be used to showcase recommended conservation practices and hold public workshops.

Lake Forest Subdivision in Carmel has been working since last November to improve the health of their arborium, a 3.5 acre wooded common area. They have removed more than 30 undesirable trees, planted over 100 new native trees and shrubs, and spent several days pulling and cutting exotic invasive plants such as honeysuckle and garlic mustard. They are currently working to develop interpretive signage along a mulched trail meandering through the forested area.

Cool Creek Park in Carmel has been working since April to turn their greenhouse into a backyard demonstration area. They have designed a plan, built retaining walls inside the structure, and begun filling them with soil. By this fall, they plan to have finished the area, complete with a pond, native trees, shrubs, grasses, and wildflowers.



This fall, the Backyard Conservation Program plans to hold a workshop at each of these sites. The workshops will be open to the public and will focus on a few of the program's backyard conservation practices. These should be an exciting and interactive way for the public to become familiar and involved with the program. Individuals can then take these ideas home and apply them in their own backyards, creating a natural haven for humans and wildlife alike.



## TREE FACT SHEETS

Visit our website at [www.plantamillion.org](http://www.plantamillion.org) to learn more about trees that might fit your planting needs. The Plant a Million project has completed several fact sheets about trees native to Central Indiana and some that are not native but meet some of our landscaping needs. The fact sheets include the information you need to know about mature height and space requirements, fall leaf color, soil drainage, disease resistance, growth rates, sun requirements and other general information about the tree. Some of the fact sheets point out information that lets you know about trees that are not well suited to yard conditions. For example – the Black Walnut tree produces a chemical that affects the growth of herbaceous plants and should never be planted close to a garden area if you like to grow tomatoes and similar vegetables.

## What is a rain garden?

By Ron Lauster

What is a rain garden? A rain garden is a shallow, constructed depression, a bowl shaped garden planted with deep-rooted native plants, trees & grasses, designed to absorb stormwater runoff. It is located to receive runoff from hard impervious surfaces such as roofs via downspouts, sidewalks and driveways. Rain gardens slow down the rush of water from these surfaces, holds it for a short time, and allows it to naturally infiltrate into the ground. A rain garden can be a personal water quality system because it filters the runoff from your roof and lawn and recharges the groundwater. A rain garden also conserves municipal water resources by reducing the need for irrigation. Rain gardens are a beautiful and colorful way for homeowners, businesses and municipalities to help ease stormwater problems.

Excess lawn & garden fertilizers, pesticides & herbicides, yard wastes, sediment, and animal wastes are forms of polluted runoff that drain into our storm sewers and endanger



water resources. These substances find their way into the state's waterways and groundwater and can produce a wide range of problems that negatively affect water quality. Despite efforts and progress being made to clean up pollution and control flooding, this runoff continues to degrade our lakes, rivers, and streams. Ultimately, it is our health and economic well being that is affected. Polluted runoff from rooftops, lawns, and driveways causes excessive weeds, turbid water, and sediment buildup. It can result in stream habitat loss, reduced base flows and negatively-impacted wetlands.

Rain gardens can be small, formal, home-owner style gardens, large complex bio-retention or bio-swale gardens, or anywhere in between. There is a growing trend by municipalities and homeowners to incorporate natural processes to help relieve flooding and pollution. Why are rain gardens needed? Rain is natural; stormwater isn't. Government studies have shown that up to 70% of the pollution in our streams, rivers and lakes is carried there by stormwater. Although most people never think about stormwater, about half of the pollution that stormwater carries comes from things we

do in our yards and gardens! Communities are seeking ways to educate their citizens about storm water pollution, due to an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Federal mandates. Rain garden projects are one of many excellent public education tools that can be used for this purpose. A rain garden project could help meet these needs in your neighborhood.

Planting a rain garden may seem like a small thing, but if you calculate the amount of rain that runs off your roof, you would be very surprised. That rain is supposed to soak into the ground, but instead heads down the street to the storm drain, carrying pollution with it. Keeping rain where it falls, by putting it into a beautiful rain garden, is a natural solution. You not only get a lovely garden out of it, you have the added benefit of helping protect our rivers, streams and lakes from stormwater pollution. You can be part of a beautiful solution!

To learn more about rain gardens visit the Rain Garden Network on the web at:  
[www.raingardennetwork.com/about.htm](http://www.raingardennetwork.com/about.htm).

## FALL TREE PLANTING

By Bob Eddleman

Fall is a great time to plant a tree or trees. It is more enjoyable to work outdoors and the tree benefits because the soil retains more moisture than during the hot and dry days of summer. This results in quicker establishment of the roots in their new location.

Soil drainage is one of the most important keys to successfully growing a healthy tree. Very few tree species do well if the roots are constantly saturated. Check soil drainage by digging a hole about 18 to 20 inches deep. That is the depth that most of the roots will be growing. Fill the hole with water and check it in 24 hours and again in 48 hours. If it has drained well in that amount of time, the soil drainage is good for almost all species of trees.

If your new tree or trees are to be a part of the landscaping for a new home, beware of soil compaction. New home construction requires a lot of heavy vehicle, tractor and other traffic during the construction process.

This means a lot of compaction has probably occurred and the air space and drainage of the soil has been affected. It is a good idea to till the soil several inches deep for a distance of 6 to 8 feet away from where the tree will be located. This will help the roots grow outward from the tree and help it become well anchored

in the soil. Compacted soil can cause the roots to grow in a circular fashion in the hole and not move out into the soil. This can cause “girdling” and eventual death of the tree.

Dig the hole for the tree at least 2 to 3 times wider and about the same depth – no deeper – as the root ball or container. It is important that the tree be planted not deeper than it grew in the nursery field or container. In fact, an inch or two higher is even better for the tree.

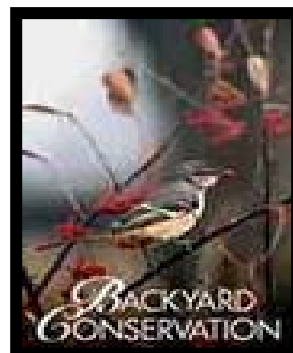
The old planter’s adage that it is better to plant a \$50.00 tree in a \$100.00 hole rather than planting a \$100.00 tree in a \$50.00 hole is good advice.

Place the tree in the hole and refill it with the soil you removed. It is best not to add peat moss or other organic matter because the roots need to become acclimated to the soil outside the hole area where most of them will be growing. As you refill the hole, gently tamp it to remove air pockets but be careful not to compact the soil. This establishes con contact between the roots and the soil. Water deeply and continue to water about once a week if natural rainfall is less that one inch per week. Deep watering on a weekly basis is much better that squirting a little water at it every day.

Finally it is best to wait till spring to add any fertilizer. In fact, most tree specialists will say that regular lawn fertilization provides all the nutrition need by yard trees.

Contact your local Soil and Water Conservation District for copies of publications like *“Backyard Conservation”* or *“Your Yard, Your Trees, a Homeowner’s Guide”* that can help you plan a great farmyard or backyard.

Clickable map of SWCD office information:  
<http://www.in.gov/isda/soil/contacts/map.html>





## Habitat Areas

By Indiana Wildlife Federation

The Indiana Wildlife Federation promotes the establishment of habitat areas at schools, businesses and on private property. These areas provide habitat for a variety of wildlife and they offer excellent venues for teaching young people about the need for environmental stewardship. IWF also offers training to teachers and people interested in helping establish, use and maintain these areas. Each habitat area is unique, dependent upon the space available and the needs and desires of the owner. Schools utilize the areas as outdoor learning laboratories, teaching virtually every subject and using nature in hands-on activities. Outdoor learning reconnects young people with nature and develops a sense of environmental stewardship. Some schools confine their habitats to bird and butterfly gardens placed in enclosed courtyards while others expand them to woods, ponds, and prairies.

Homeowners likewise construct their habitats to fit their situations. Urban dwellers with small lots can assist flying migratory species, and those with larger space can add features for mammals and reptiles. Commercial property owners are converting mowed areas into habitat as a benefit to the environment and as a cost saver for the business. Each habitat, big or small, helps wildlife. Each provides food, water, and cover for protection and raising young. The wildlife federation ensures the maximum benefit of these habitats. Each year IWF trains volunteer Habitat Stewards to properly establish and maintain habitat areas. The organization also trains teachers to expand instruction in the outdoor labs, and to incorporate local citizens in habitat projects. Habitat loss is the primary threat to wildlife in the Hoosier state and across the globe. The Indiana Wildlife Federation is

addressing this threat by helping Hoosiers create habitat areas and by educating young people and the public about the need for setting aside areas specifically for wildlife. If you would like to join in this effort, please contact the Indiana Wildlife Federation at 1-800-347-3445 or [info@indiawildlife.org](mailto:info@indiawildlife.org).

# SWCD

## Fall Native

SWCD  
Fall Native  
Tree Sales

Trees are a valuable part of the landscape whether you live in town or in the country. Just three well-placed trees around a home can reduce air conditioning costs by 15 to 35 percent. A windbreak can lower heating costs by 10 to 20 percent. On a warm summer day, the air in a treeless city area can be 6-8 degrees hotter than surrounding areas with trees.

Trees intercept solar radiation and transpire water providing the cooling effect. Properly placed trees can create a 9-degree reduction in temperature. Trees are often referred to as nature's air conditioners and they truly perform that role.

If you are interested in adding trees to your property, many of the central Indiana Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD) can help you. The SWCD's are sponsoring container grown tree and shrub sales just in time to meet your fall planting needs. Container grown trees are easy to plant, have high survival rates and give quick results. They have a well-developed root system that virtually begins growing immediately after planting. The trees are 3 to 6 feet tall and come in three, five and 15 gallon containers.

Contact your local SWCD to find out if they are having a sale. If they are not having a sale this fall contact one of the adjoining Districts. Phone numbers are:

**Boone County SWCD – (765) 482-6355 ext. 3**  
**Brown County SWCD - (812) 988-2211**  
**Hamilton County SWCD - (317) 773-2181 ext. 101**  
**Hancock County SWCD - (317) 462-2283 ext. 3**  
**Hendricks County SWCD - (317) 745-2555 ext. 3**  
**Johnson County SWCD - (317) 736-9540**  
**Marion County SWCD - (317) 780-1765**  
**Monroe County SWCD - (812) 349-2046**  
**Morgan County SWCD - (765) 342-5594 ext. 3**  
**Shelby County SWCD - (317) 392-1394 ext. 3**

## Fall is a good time to plant trees and shrubs!

By Ron Lauster

When you mention tree planting to most people, they thing Spring is the only time to plant trees and shrubs. However, fall is an excellent time as well, if not a better time to plant trees. Fall planting season is generally, September through November through most of the Midwest,

Roots are the reason, that fall planting is desirable. Root growth is most rapid in the mild temperatures of fall and spring, reduced or stopping in the extreme heat of summer and cold of winter. Roots are busy growing after leaf drop in the fall and before top growth in the spring. However, as with most planting efforts ideal conditions can always be impacted by extreme variations in temperature and moisture. So before planting proceeds existing and projected weather conditions need to be considered.

Fall is an excellent time to plant trees and shrubs, particularly on plants that have been grown in containers prior to planting as their roots are ready to shoot out into the surrounding soil. A balled and burlapped tree in the fall, that was either dug in the Spring and held, or Fall dug, and all its root tips cut off by the digging, is less prepared to extend new roots before winter.

Fall planting is as good as or better than spring planting in certain situations. River bottoms and drainage areas are less prone to fall flooding than they are in the spring. Fall planting allows trees to establish and withstand high water flooding conditions in spring. Wet weather in the spring can often delay planting schedules into the dry heat of summer. Getting a tree planted in the fall means it is already in the ground and set to grow as soon as spring temperatures are favorable. So don't wait for spring to do all your tree and shrub planting, consider planting them in the fall and get a jump on spring.

For more information on tree and shrub planting contact one of the following contacts: your Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), State Division of Forestry, your local (SWCD), or your local Purdue Cooperative Extensions Service (CES) Office. Your nearest State Division of Forestry forester can be contacted via the web by going to [www.in.gov/dnr/forestry/](http://www.in.gov/dnr/forestry/) or you can call 317-232-4105 for contact information for your county. CES office can be found at [www.ces.purdue.edu/counties.htm](http://www.ces.purdue.edu/counties.htm) or reached by calling 1-888-398-4636.

## Soils Info Can Save Money & Help Identify

Concerns By Ron Lauster

Soil is a dirty topic, but everyone needs to learn more about it! Knowing about soils on your property or land you intend to purchase may not sound exciting at first. But ask those who bought land, built a home, and then later found they had soils with water drainage problems; if they had wished they had been more excited about learning more about the soils on their land. Often many sites in central Indiana have wet soil issues that may be difficult to solve. And when you have spent all of your available dollars to buy a place, finding more money to improve the drainage for the land later might be a really difficult task. Soil maps and related soil data can provide information for a variety of land users including homeowners, gardeners, farmers, developers, home builders, engineers, community planners and others. The USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), working cooperatively with their conservation partners such as the Hoosier Heartland Resource Conservation & Development (HH-RC&D) Council and local county SWCD's across the nation, has recently launched a new improved web site to help people identify the soils on their property as well as provide additional soil information for the that site. The web site is called the "Web Soil Survey" and it allows land users to find soils information for most locations in the United States.

NRCS has recently enhanced its earlier version of the Web Soil Survey, a web-based program that provides the public with soil maps, soil properties and soil usage needed for making wise land use decisions. The latest update can be accessed at <http://websoilssurvey.nrcs.usda.gov>. Key improvements included in the new version of the Web Soil Survey include: the homepage has been redesigned to make navigation easier and more intuitive for the visitor; a feature has been added, enabling the customer to accumulate content, then download and/or print one composite PDF file with selected thematic maps and soil reports, basic soil maps, map unit legends and map unit descriptions; customers now have access to the Public Land Survey System Section data to ease navigating to specific areas of interest; and Federal land ownership boundaries for United States Forest Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management and Department of Defense also have been added.

The Web Soil Survey site has many help screens and "Web Soil Survey- How to use it" files in PDF format that offers help and support on using the site. Like most new concepts, a little patience is needed to learn the ins and outs of the system, but with a little effort most people become masters of the site with a few brief trial runs. Those interested in learning more about soils in their neighborhood and community are encouraged to use the Web Soil Survey site or contact their local Soil and Water Conservation District Office.



# Plant A Million

## 80,000

*Counted number of trees planted in central Indiana since March 2004*

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

*A project of the Hoosier Heartland RC&D Council Serving Boone, Brown, Hamilton, Hancock, Hendricks, Johnson, Marion, Monroe, Morgan, and Shelby Counties*

## JOIN US

**You can help** make good things happen in your community! Many dedicated volunteers, organizations, and businesses make Hoosier Heartland successful. To join our highly successful organization, or to donate to our cause; please contact us at 317-290-3250 or

**Contact** your county's local Soil & Water Conservation District to get involved.

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