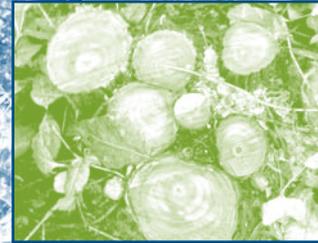


Information

FLOW



Photo courtesy Sherrill Massey



FLOW and City of Columbus Launch 2011 Honeysuckle Removal Program in City Parks

By Alice Waldhauer, Watershed Coordinator

Shrub honeysuckle is an ever growing problem around city parks, highways, and waterways because it tends to out-compete native species. It is one of the first plants to green up in the spring and the last to lose its leaves in fall, growing in dense stands resulting in a monoculture that provides inferior habitat for wildlife and crowds out native plant species. Birds do eat the seeds of honeysuckle, but studies show that it is a poor-quality avian food source, providing less nutrition and causing changes to the coloration of plumage. Birds spread honeysuckle seeds with their droppings, which leads to new stands of honeysuckle wherever they fly.

Shrub honeysuckle was introduced to this country first as an ornamental plant, but was also used to control erosion on slopes because of its vigorous nature. Nurseries sold honeysuckle because it was easy to grow, had an attractive flower, and a nice aroma. It wasn't until many years later that the more insidious nature of honeysuckle became apparent, but huge stands of honeysuckle were already established. There are several species of honeysuckle growing in Ohio, some are native species

and not all of them are invasive. An easy way to tell if shrub honeysuckle is invasive is to inspect a cut branch – if the stem is hollow it is likely one of the invasive types.

This summer, the City of Columbus Department of Recreation and Parks launched a pilot program to help neighborhood groups eradicate invasive shrub honeysuckle from city parks. Using community volunteers, the city provided the expertise of Urban Eco-Restoration Programmer Karl Hoessle and his assistant Tyrone to neighborhood groups wishing to remove honeysuckle. While city personnel used a chain saw to cut the bigger limbs, volunteers worked with loppers and saws and dragged brush to the chipper truck to be mulched. At the end of each honeysuckle removal event, city staff applies herbicides to the cut honeysuckle stumps to minimize the amount of regrowth from the cleared areas. Through the middle of October, an estimated 170 cubic yards of honeysuckle mulch (23 truckloads) had been removed from eight parks, opening up more than 11 acres of parkland that had been covered by dense growth.

(continued on page 3)

explore

Honeysuckle Removal *(continued from page 1)*

Over 230 volunteers assisted the removal events in 2011, and the results are easy to see.

Six of the eight parks targeted in the city program in 2011 are located within the Olentangy watershed. Several parks including Whetstone Park, Glen Echo Park, and Island View Park hosted multiple events with the program wrapping up the season in late October. Clinton-Como Park, along the Olentangy River in Clintonville, will have hosted half a dozen honeysuckle removal events this year with a goal of totally eradicating the plant from the park. This is a lofty goal, because honeysuckle easily resprouts from cut stumps and the seeds from seasons past and present are ready to germinate in cleared areas. Volunteer coordinator Julie Smiley says that the remaining honeysuckle stands along the Olentangy shoreline and bike path are dense stands of huge honeysuckle shrubs, so the chain saws used by city staff are critical to efficient removal. The shoreline path in Clinton-Como Park is only a few steps from the river, yet the view was completely blocked by the invasive growth. Work completed this year opened up the woods along the shoreline so the river is visible from the bike path. The City is seeking grant funding to keep the program going next year. It is hoped that the honeysuckle removal

program will also be able to find volunteers to spend their Saturdays in city parks to help tackle the problem. Karl Hoessle thinks the optimum number of volunteers for such an event is around 15 to 20 people. Fewer volunteers results in smaller areas of honeysuckle cleared, while larger turnouts result in a different problem. With larger groups, the volunteers tend to spread out more, leaving some honeysuckle behind and a less defined cleared area. It doesn't take long for the honeysuckle to regrow. Once removed, the cleared areas initially look pretty barren. As the seasons pass, however, native species that had lain dormant under the thick honeysuckle canopy start to sprout. Some volunteer groups are replanting cleared areas, while others are waiting for nature to take its course. Removal areas that encompass steep slopes or banks of waterways are good candidates for replanting to help native species gain a foothold and minimize the potential for erosion.

FLOW is interested in hearing from individuals and groups from our watershed that would like to sponsor a honeysuckle removal event in one of their local parks during the 2012 season. We can provide advice on how to organize an event to keep our parks looking great and providing a healthy environment for people and wildlife to enjoy. Contact us at info@olentangywatershed.org.

Events, Meetings, and Volunteer Opportunities: Winter 2011-2012

All times and dates are subject to change. Please confirm time, date, and location by calling our office at 614-267-3386 or on our website at www.olentangywatershed.org

DEC	<p>What: Central Ohio Greenways and Trails Forum When: December 5 from 10:30 to 2:00 PM Where: Genoa Township Hall at 5111 Old 3C Highway, Westerville, OH 43082</p> <p>RSVP to Amanda McEldowney at MORPC by Nov. 28 at (614) 233-3112 or amceldowney@morpc.org.</p>
JAN	<p>What: The Ohio Power Siting Board will hold a public meeting about the proposed Columbia Gas Pipeline Replacement Project. When: January 10, 2012 at 6:00 PM Where: The Whetstone Park of Roses Shelterhouse at 3901 N. High Street.</p> <p>The preferred route for the pipeline will take it under the Olentangy River and through the OSU Wetlands. For more information about the project, visit http://www.columbiagasohio.com/en/doing-more-for-you/improvement-projects/ackerman-road-project.aspx.</p>
MARCH	<p>What: The Ohio Environmental Council's annual Vernal Pool Workshop When: Saturday March 31, 2012.</p> <p>Details will be posted on the OEC's website at www.theoec.org. Early registration is strongly encouraged as these popular workshops fill up quickly.</p>



A Special Thank You!



Thanks to all who donated to FLOW as part of The Columbus Foundation's "The Big Give." FLOW will be receiving about \$1,600 as a result of this special event.

FLOW was honored to host a Silent Auction at the Ohio Stormwater Conference in May 2011 at the Ohio State Student Union. FLOW would like to thank all of our generous benefactors listed below which helped us raise \$968. Also thanks to all of our generous bidders. Your money is being spent on projects to improve the watershed.

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|---|---------------------------------|
| Columbus Clippers | Laura Hollingsworth |
| Columbus Crew | Newport Aquarium |
| Columbus Zoo & Aquarium | Northland Cycling & Fitness |
| COSI | Ohio Environmental Council |
| Delaware County Soil & Water District | ODNR Soil & Water Resources |
| Dr. Andy Ward | Ohio State University Stone Lab |
| Franklin County Soil and Water District | Panera Bread |
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| Greif Brothers | The Flag Lady's Store |
| Half Price Books | Tracy Bleim |
| Jenny Greber | Urban Coffee |
| John Eagle Candies | Urban Wild, Ltd. |
| Kari Mackenbach | With Nature In Mind |

Thanks also to the participants in the Olentangy Watershed Forum that was held at the Del-Co Water Company Water Treatment Facility on Olentangy River Road in Delaware. The November 4 event featured two keynote speakers on shale gas extraction: Ralph Haefner of U.S. Geological Survey, and Steve Schumacher of the Belmont County Soil & Water Conservation District. Other talks were presented by David Celebrezze of the Ohio Environmental Council (Salamanders of the Olentangy), Amy Dutt of Urban Wild Ltd. (Protecting Olentangy Riparian Corridors), Erin Grushon of MORPC (Update on the Olentangy Balanced Growth Plan), and Bryon Ringley of Stantec (Fifth Avenue Dam Removal and Lower Olentangy River Ecosystem Restoration). FLOW would like to thank P.K. Tudor of Del-Co water for generously supporting and hosting the Forum, and members of the planning team including Traci Aquara of RC & D Heart of Ohio, Brian McCombs of the Olentangy Watershed Alliance, and Vince Mazeika of FLOW. Vince was presented with the 2011 Voice of the Olentangy award for his longstanding work as a founding member of FLOW, making the Forum a success each year, and for his long-term efforts to ensure the Olentangy Watershed is a better place for everyone to enjoy.

FLOW wants to thank hundreds of volunteers that signed up to plant trees, clean up litter, and remove invasive honeysuckle over the 2011 season. FLOW would like to offer a special thanks to volunteers John Gable and Gerald Greer, who came out to help at multiple events over the summer at locations across Columbus. Rumor has it that Gerald found a novel use for honeysuckle branches – his volunteer work at the Columbus Zoo helped him discover that some zoo animals like to eat honeysuckle!

FLOW would also like to recognize Ellie Nowels as our top contributor through our **Kroger Rewards donation program** for May through July 2011. Under the Kroger Rewards program, the grocer makes a donation of 5% of qualified purchases to FLOW at no cost to the shopper. If you haven't signed up this year and would like to participate in the Kroger Rewards program you will need our "NPO Number", which is 84562. Directions on how to sign up can be found on our website at www.olentangywatershed.org.

Thanks also to Phia Salon, who donated **gift certificates** that FLOW offered to volunteers that helped us on a variety of service projects over the summer.

Kroger Community Rewards Registration Falling Short in 2011



Attention Kroger shoppers! Donations from the Kroger Community Rewards Program are falling short of the participation rate last year. Under the program, Kroger donates 5% of qualified purchases for shoppers registered in the program at no cost to the shopper and no sacrifice of fuel points. On-line registration is easy, and donations are automatically sent to FLOW each quarter. To sign up, go to krogercommunityrewards.com and enter FLOW's NPO number, which is 84562. Participants must re-register each May, so if you were signed up last year, you may need to renew your registration. You can tell if you are registered by checking the bottom of your receipts. Please help FLOW take advantage of this program as it makes charitable giving a breeze. For further instructions, visit the FLOW website at olentangywatershed.org

Understand

YES! I want to support FLOW for cleaner water!

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By providing your email, you will save resources and stay up-to-date on news and events.

Return this form to:

FLOW
3528 N. High St., Suite F, Columbus, OH 43214

Or give securely online at: www.olentangywatershed.org



Explore. Discover. Understand.

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Friends of the Lower Olentangy Watershed is a non-profit organization dedicated to keeping the Olentangy River clean and safe for all to enjoy through public education, volunteer activities, and coordination with local decision makers. FLOW is registered with the IRS as a tax-exempt, nonprofit charitable organization under Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code. Donations are tax-deductible.

Because FLOW is a small organization, we rely heavily on volunteer participation to create positive change in our watershed. Please contact us for more information about how you can volunteer. We have a wide variety of opportunities to fit your schedule that will match your skills and interests.

FLOW is a member of Earth Share Ohio. You may donate to FLOW through Earth Share's workplace giving campaign, available at numerous private companies, state and municipal government agencies, and Combined Federal Campaigns. For more information about workplace giving, please contact us.



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