



# Jennings County Soil & Water Conservation District

2600 N State Highway 7 · North Vernon, Indiana 47265-9109  
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## Late Summer Edition Newsletter August 2018

Several Native Flowers are in bloom around our county



Viceroy on Marsh Milkweed



Yellow Swallowtail on a Blazing Star



Rosinweed



Grey Headed Cone Flower

Butterfly Weed

Purple Coneflower



Bee on Milkweed



# Is Your Woods being Invaded by Invasive Plants?

It is so easy to see a weed such as Cockle bur growing in a soybean field or Johnson grass in between the corn rows, but as you walk through your woods, it's easy not to notice the invasive plants mixed with all the other leafy native trees.

Ok, so you're asking for examples: Autumn Olive, Honeysuckle, Japanese silt grass, multiflora rose  
**Why are invasive plants a problem?** An invasive plant is one that is not native to the area, but has been introduced, is starting to spread, and is causing damage to the natural environment. Since these plants are in a new environment, free of natural predators, parasites, or competitors, they often spread quickly. These large populations can out-compete and displace native species, or can reduce wildlife food and habitat. Some species can also disrupt vital ecosystem functions like nutrient cycling or soil decomposition. Other invasive plants cause economic damage to agriculture. They can harm or kill crops, clog equipment, and contaminate produce. Some invasive plants can even cause direct harm to humans or domestic animals.

So, if left untreated, in time it's like having a crop field full of one type of weed that is undesirable to humans, insects, and wildlife. After a timber harvest, these invasives get more sunlight and more opportunity to take over.

There are some management solutions such as chemical and/or mechanical treatments, but it's a process and not a one time application. There are some cost share programs through USDA –NRCS like EQIP, and technical assistance from both NRCS and Rob McGriff, our district forester.

The SWCD has decided to start an education process about woodland invasives through workshops, news articles, and other means.

Japanese Honey Suckle - Invasive



Grape Vines are an invasive plant that grows up and eventually covers the tree canopy which stops sunlight from getting to the tree leaves. Eventually, the tree dies



Dead Multi Flora Rose plant after a chemical treatment.

# Did you know?

Bee Facts: Bees have been around pollinating plants and haven't changed much since the time of the dinosaurs dating back some 40 million years ago.

Bee Facts: The value of pollination by bees is estimated at around \$16 billion in the United States.

## Liming your soils

The majority of our soils require regular liming in order to maintain pH levels that are within the appropriate range to maximize crop growth and productivity. The pH scale measures how acidic or basic a substance is. It ranges from **0 to 14**. A pH of 7 is neutral. A pH less than 7 is acidic, and a pH greater than 7 is basic.

A number of materials can be used to increase the pH of the soil, but historically the most common material is ground limestone, commonly referred to as ag lime. Ag lime is finely ground rock containing high levels of calcium carbonate ( $\text{CaCO}_3$ ) and magnesium carbonate ( $\text{MgCO}_3$ ). It is actually the carbonate ( $\text{CO}_3^-$ ) in lime that reacts with acidity (hydrogen) to increase soil pH.

Calcium and magnesium in lime, in addition to being essential plant nutrients, exchange with hydrogen ( $\text{H}^+$ ) held on cation exchange sites, moving  $\text{H}^+$  into soil solution where it can be neutralized by carbonate.

Particle size determines how quickly lime will dissolve and react in the soil, so if the particle is more like powder, than a small pebble, it soil pH will change quicker. (source: A&L Great Lakes Laboratories)

## Thanks to our Newsletter Sponsor



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**Jennings County SWCD**  
**2600 N. State Hwy 7**  
**North Vernon, IN 47265**

**YOUR JENNINGS COUNTY  
CONSERVATION TEAM**

**SWCD Staff**

*Andy Ertel, Executive Director*  
*Kelly Kent, Administrative Assistant*

**SWCD Supervisors**

*Brad Ponsler, Chairman*  
*Dan Megel, Vice-Chairman*  
*Jerry St. John*  
*Matt Branham*  
*Tom Schneider*

**Associate Supervisor**

*Don Biehle*  
*Rob McGriff*  
*Bob Steiner*  
**NRCS STAFF**  
*Jenny Vogel, District Conservationist*

**Calendar of Events**

**Sep. 25, 2018 Board Meeting 6:30 pm @  
USDA Service Center**  
**Oct. 23, 2018 Board Meeting 6:30 pm @  
USDA Service Center**  
**Nov. 27, 2018 Board Meeting 6:30 pm @  
USDA Service Center**

**The SWCD Office will be CLOSED for  
the following dates: Sep. 3, Oct. 8, Nov. 6,  
9, 22, 23 and Dec. 24, 25, 31**  
Check out our website for added events  
[www.jenningswcd.org](http://www.jenningswcd.org)

*Jennings County Soil and Water  
Conservation District*

*Office Hours*

*Monday—Friday*

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