



WEST CHESTER GREEN TEAM NEWS

October 2022

Mission: The West Chester Green Team is a civic organization in West Chester, PA, that works to educate the local public and to establish and nourish green initiatives in the community in harmony with nature and each other, promoting the health of all living things and of planet Earth.

Inside:

Plastics, the auction is coming, White Oaks, Saving seeds, Rain gardens, Summer 2023 planning . . . and cake!



WCGT Calendar of Upcoming Events

When – What – Where.



October 18 at 7 pm: Drew Anderson. WCU Professor and Fox News meteorologist. “Plastic: A Planetary Problem.” Introduction by Jonathan Sprout, Quaker educator. See flyer on page 3 for location and details.

October 19 at 3 pm: Education Committee Meeting at the home of Anna Sechrist. Planning family camp sessions for next summer in partnership with Bondsville Mill Park. Topic for 2023: Lenni Lenape life in Chester County. Email annaisechrist@gmail.com to rsvp. All welcome.

October 25 at 7 pm: West Chester Green Team board meeting at Ironworks Church, 312 W Union Street. Parking regulations are waived in the 300 block of Union St.

Related groups and committees:

4th Monday of every month: East Bradford Environmental Advisory Council (EAC), 7 – 8:30pm, East Bradford Township Bldg, 676 Copeland School Rd.

4th Monday of every month: East Goshen Sustainability Advisory Committee, 7 – 8:30pm, East Goshen Township Bldg, 1580 Paoli Pike

4th Tuesday of every month: West Goshen Sustainability Advisory Committee, 6 – 8 pm, West Goshen Township Bldg., 1025 Paoli Pike

4th Tuesday of every month: Westtown Environmental Advisory Council, 7 – 8:30pm, Westtown Township Bldg., 1039 Wilmington Pike (Rt. 202)

4th Thursday of every month: West Chester Sustainability Advisory Committee, 6:30 – 8 pm, Room 240, Borough Hall, E. Gay St.

Be sure to visit our Web site at <https://wcgreenteam.com/> and our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/WCGTeam/> (all are welcome to post environment- and sustainability-related items there). If you wish to support our work, please donate here: <https://wcgreenteam.com/contact-2/>

NOTE: Deadline for the November issue is October 31! We welcome contributions and suggestions from our readers for possible inclusion in a future issue. E-mail your ideas to Dianne Walsh at LDwalsh318@gmail.com.

This and That:

More Coming Attractions:

October 18:



October 25 at 6:30 PM - 8:00 pm: **Science Seminar: Nature's Best Hope**, Stroud Water Research Center 970 Spencer Road, Avondale, PA. Learn how to create landscapes that enhance local ecosystems rather than degrade them and how this Homegrown National Park will provide vital corridors connecting the few natural areas that remain. Featuring Doug Tallamy, PhD. Free. More details and required sign-up at stroudcenter.org/event/natures-best-hope/

November 15 at 7 pm: **Water in our Town-- Prof Megan Fork and student researchers, Dr. John Jackson of Stroud Water Research Center, and a representative of the Delaware Riverkeeper Network, moderated by George Seeds.** Starting with the First annual Philip Jamison Art and Nature Award presentation.

December 13 at 5 pm: **Celebrating a Green Holiday--Prof. Ashlie Delshad and Prof. Megan Schraedley.** Come and enjoy some holiday spirit and make an item to take home. More details coming soon!

As always, see updates and other events in our website calendar at the bottom of our homepage at <https://wcgreenteam.com>



It's Almost Auction Time!

Green Santa is here to remind you that November 24 – December 4 are the dates for our **Season's Greenings Online Auction**. The auction committee is already hard at work soliciting donations and assembling another exciting selection of baskets, experiences, and vacation homes for you. Buy for yourself or as holiday gifts for friends and family. You can still make donations to this year's auction, too. Please try to get your donations to us by October 15 so we'll have time to write-up and photograph everything. Contact Margaret (mhuddings@gmail.com) or Dianne (LDwalsh318@gmail.com) to donate items or baskets. (Yes, we can still use some baskets.)

Join the bidding fun! More details available in next month's issue!

Dark Sky Events

Marc Gagné will be hosting events promoting Dark Skies and the Webb Telescope at the West Chester University Mather Planetarium on these dates:

WCU Homecoming: Friday, October 7 at 6 PM.

The planetarium is located at 750 S. Church St., West Chester. Walk in from S. Church St.



AND SPEAKING OF DARK SKIES...



5 Tips for Saving Vegetable Seeds for Next Year's Garden

BY AMANDA MACARTHUR As published by *Food Gardening Network*, September 19, 2022



Skip the seed store and harvest your own. Learn five tips for saving vegetable seeds that will make you and your garden self-reliant. And...it's a good opportunity for kids to learn how food makes food.

See the article at:

<https://foodgardening.mequoda.com/daily/seeds-seedlings/tips-for-saving-vegetable-seeds-for-next-years-garden/>

And another from Food Gardening Network. .

How to Make Self-Watering Plant Bulbs from Recycled Bottles

BY AMANDA MACARTHUR As published by *Food Gardening Network*, September 28, 2022

Keep forgetting to water your houseplants? Need a plant watering solution for when you go on vacation? Turn recycled bottles into self-watering plant bulbs! You can buy self-watering plant bulbs online or at your home and garden store. But with some recycled bottles and a couple of household items, you can make your own for free.

See the article at:

<https://foodgardening.mequoda.com/daily/watering-irrigation/how-to-make-self-watering-plant-bulbs-from-recycled-bottles>



Horticultural Speaker Series

This Fall the Chester County History Center presented a series of three talks in a special Humphry Marshall Horticultural Heritage Speaker Program. The talks are virtual Zoom presentations. One talk remains on the schedule. For time and more information, visit mycchc.org.

Oct. 14: Anthony Aiello of Longwood Gardens will speak on "Humphry Marshall's 19th-century Horticultural Heritage"

WCGT Officers Elected

At the September 27 Board meeting, the WCGT elected—and in some cases re-elected--the following slate of officers:

- President: Margaret Hudgings
 - Vice-president: Christi Marshall
 - Secretary: Rani Norley
 - Recording secretary: Cara Corridoni
 - Treasurer: David Wickard
-

Chester County's New Sustainability eNewsletter



The Chester County Planning Commission is launching a new Sustainability eNewsletter that will cover some of the great work that is happening throughout the county to make our world a greener, healthier and more resilient place. The first issue will be released quarterly starting this fall. Please use [this link](#) to sign up for the mailing list, and please share with your networks! Also, don't hesitate to reach out with ideas for content – whether it's a project or initiative your community or organization has been working on or a topic you'd like to know more about.

Let Us Eat Cake

Don't forget **Humphry Marshall Day** on October 8 in the Village of Marshallton. Time: 11 am – 5 pm. Historical displays, colonial food cooking, period beverages, music, and lectures throughout the day.

Then, on October 9, the **Humphry Marshall Birthday Bash** by the Friends of Marshall Square Park. A family-and kid-friendly birthday party from 2-3 pm at the gazebo in the park at Marshall & N. Walnut Sts, West Chester. There will be free birthday cake!



THE GREAT WHITE OAK

Pollinators Need You - You Need Pollinators

By Mike Dunn, Borough Arborist, West Chester

Birds, bats, butterflies, moths, flies, beetles, and most importantly bees are pollinators. This fertilization process is the first step in the process that produces seeds, fruits, vegetables and nuts. It is estimated that 35% of the world's food crops and 80% of the world's plants rely on pollinators.

Habitat loss, disease, parasites, and environmental contaminants have resulted in the steady decline of many species of pollinators. Currently there is a grassroots movement across the nation to increase the number of pollinators by increasing the number of pollinator plants. We can all play a role in increasing pollinator plants. You can start by planting pollinator plants in existing gardens or take a section of your unused lawn to start a pollinator garden. Visit the Homegrown National Parks website www.homegrownnationalpark.org to learn more about how you can play a role in this movement.

Pollinator nymphs and caterpillars feed on the leaves and stems of the plant. Because of the coevolution of plants and insects it is important to plant native plants that can be used as food by native pollinators. Plants that support many species of insects are more valuable. This is where the White Oak comes into play. The White Oak serves as a food source for 537 species of butterfly and moth caterpillars which is more than any other genus of plants in North America - not to mention all the animals that feed off the acorns. This is why it is called a "keystone plant". In addition, the leaf litter decomposes and returns nutrients to the soil and provides shelter for many insects over the winter. In comparison, the non-native, invasive Callery Pear which lines many streets and is seen in several yards and developments has been found to support only one.

It takes between 4000 to 6000 caterpillars to fledge one family of chickadees. A 2019 Cornell ornithology study found there are approximately 3 billion fewer songbirds in North America than there was 50 years ago. Less caterpillars means less birds. To support birds and other life on the planet we need insects, especially pollinators...and they need us.

By planting a white oak, you will be growing a tree that provides many benefits to our entire ecosystem.

PLANTING INSTRUCTIONS:

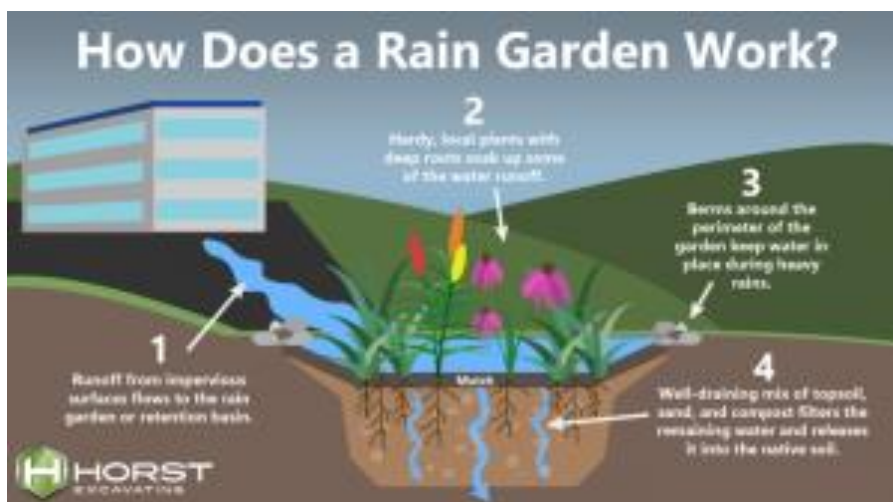
1. Select a good location. A white oak can grow to a height of 50-80 feet, and a spread of 50-80 feet. Keep away from sidewalks, driveways, and sewer lines
2. Untangle the roots and soak in water for two hours
3. Dig a hole twice the size of the root width and a few inches deeper. The root should fit passively into the hole.
4. Place soil firmly around the root
5. Remove a 3-foot diameter of vegetation around the tree
6. Water until the soil in the hole is saturated
7. Place 2 inches of mulch in the 3-foot diameter. Do not let the mulch touch the tree.
8. Water the tree once a week for 6 weeks and thereafter as needed



What Is a Rain Garden? How Does it Work?

A Rain Garden receives water from impervious (hard) surfaces such as rooftops, sidewalks, driveways and patios. The shallow depression of the garden holds the water so it can slowly infiltrate back into the soil as the plants, mulch and soil naturally remove pollutants from the runoff.

Did you know we have rain gardens in West Chester? You can see some on S. Everhart St. as shown in the following photos. The *left* and *center* photos show rainwater from the recent passage of the remnants of Hurricane Ian flowing properly into a well-functioning rain garden.



However, the *right* photo shows a rain garden that is not receiving any water from the street because the cement strip under the metal entryway arch is too high. You can see all the water, even in such heavy rain, flowing down the street toward the already overloaded Plum Run, which would benefit from receiving less runoff. The Borough has recently put a lot of effort into protecting and reinforcing its banks, and any such remediation is tenuous.

For more information, see our posts at <https://wcgreenteam.com/2020/04/14/an-introduction-to-rain-gardens/> and <https://wcgreenteam.com/2019/06/28/rain-gardens/>. Just to review two important points: 1) The Borough is legally obliged to reduce the pollutants its street runoff has been depositing into streams; and 2) The Borough's rain gardens are paid for by a dedicated Stream Protection Fee that affects all property owners, including the one-third of Borough property owned by non-profits, which of course contribute to the problem and should help pay for the solution.

Planning Ahead: Green Team Summer Programs for 2023

An enthusiastic committee of 7 has started work on planning for family programs in summer '23. We chose a theme that we are all excited about: Lenni Lenape in Chester County, PA and are calling it LIFE AMONG THE LENAPE. Books and craft ideas are being assembled and lesson planning has begun.

We have mapped out fundraising goals and reached out to community partners. Especially exciting this year is our work with a new partner, Bondsville Mill Park in Guthriesville. Some of our activities may be best done at their site such as fire-building, outdoor cooking and stream work. They have a well-established Monarch butterfly nursery program which families will enjoy.

We will learn about Three sisters gardening which is planting corn, beans and squash together. We will hear stories about William Penn and early Quakers, maybe a bit on Swedish settlement in the area, and everyone will have chances to make pottery, Lenape style, and do beadwork which the Lenape were famous for. We also want to learn about the Lenape today.

Nora Ziegler, retired elementary school teacher and education committee member, will attend an event near Honeybrook this month featuring Lenape people, their crafts, foods and traditions. We have invited the Chester County History Center to join us for these eight programs next summer and hope that our partnership with the history center which has featured gardening and Santa and art on the front porch and a dinner reception in honor of Doug Tallamy this past year, will grow with the addition of children's environmental and history programs.

