



River Raisin

WATERSHED COUNCIL

Partner • Protect • Preserve

IN THIS ISSUE:

- Carley Kratz: Leading Environmental Stewardship | 1-2
- Executive Director Update | 2
- Can Native Plants Work in Your Garden? | 3
- Upcoming Events & Programs | 4
- RRWC Staff Information | 4

Carley Kratz: Leading Environmental Stewardship

Carley Kratz teaches Natural Resources at the Lenawee Intermediate School District Center for a Sustainable Future. She received her BS from the University of Michigan in the Program in the Environment, an MA from Michigan State University in Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources Education, and her Ph.D. from Michigan Technological University in Forest Science. She holds many certifications related to environmental science including a commercial drone license, pesticide applicator certification, professional GIS certification, wild-foraged mushroom certification, and basic wildlife rehabilitator certification. She has taught biology, chemistry, environmental science, and geology at the college level. Carley also enjoys teaching summer camps at the LISD TECH Center. She recently wrote a curriculum on fungi to help more people learn about their importance in our ecosystems and economy.

She has also been involved in the Adopt-A-Stream program since 2014. She trained with Dr. Jim Martin at Adrian College to learn to identify the macroinvertebrates that are found in the River Raisin Watershed. Teams go out to sample the "bugs" from the river at 13 different locations throughout the

area each spring and fall. Carley has helped to lead a team in sampling at least two sites each field season, but often samples additional locations. She also leads the Bug ID Days, which are held in her classroom at the LISD TECH Center for a Sustainable Future campus.

We are excited to announce that the program has received funding from the Michigan Clean Water Corps this year. A part of obtaining this funding included writing a quality assurance project plan to support thorough collection and data analysis protocols. The Adopt-A-Stream program spring stream search will take place the second week of May, weather permitting. This program relies on volunteers and could not occur without the support of our community. Please contact us to get more information and get involved.

The LISD TECH Center Natural Resources students are involved in many different environmental stewardship activities. They work with Legacy Land Conservancy to cut down invasive shrubs, remove invasives and plant native species on the school grounds, and learn to how to calculate the health of a stream based on the

(continued on the next page)



MISSION

To inspire behaviors that promote stewardship, improve water quality, and encourage public participation to protect, preserve, and enhance the River Raisin Watershed

Join the River Raisin Watershed Council & Make a Difference!

Ways to get involved:

Volunteer: Lend a hand in projects, restoration efforts, educational programs, and more!

Become a Member: Show your support and contribute to our ongoing efforts to safeguard the River Raisin.

Participate in Events: Join us for workshops, cleanups, and educational outings listed throughout our newsletter.

Your involvement is crucial to our success!

Contact us by phone:
(517) 662-8755

Contact us by email:
admin@riverraisin.org

Carley Kratz: Leading Environmental Stewardship

macroinvertebrates that are found. The class monitors a vernal pool behind the LISD TECH Center's main campus.

The classroom is located at the LISD TECH Center for a Sustainable Future campus on Tipton Highway in Adrian. The campus was recently recognized by the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy as a Michigan Green School with Emerald Status. There are over 75 acres at this land lab where students learn about Agriculture, Horticulture, and Natural Resources. In the Natural Resources classroom students raise salmon as a part of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Salmon in the Classroom program, and rehabilitate reptiles. The Horticulture and Natural Resources classes recently learned about the Master Rain Gardener program with the River Raisin Watershed Council. They are working on enhancing the rain garden, which was installed at the school in 2022 and was one of the first official rain gardens in Lenawee County.



From the Executive Director's Desk with Sean Dennis



I am thrilled to have joined the River Raisin Watershed Council team! I also want to take time to honor Steve May for his decade of service and commitment to the organization. He has left big shoes to fill! Thankfully, he has also left me with an amazing team of professionals who are dedicated to the cause of the organization. I am thankful to come alongside them and champion the work that they have been doing. We as an organization are extremely optimistic about the future of the River Raisin watershed. We believe that these times of transition and planning will equip us to better serve

the watershed and handle the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

Whether you are an individual, nonprofit, or corporate entity, I encourage you to get involved with the work of the RRWC. Become a member or partner! Volunteer with us and show your dedication to the greatest natural resource this region has to offer! Join us in the stewardship of what we've been given the opportunity to steward. It is up to each of us to do our part, whether that means giving of our time, talent, or treasure, to leave a legacy that our children and future generations will be proud of.

The River Raisin Watershed Council is delighted to have Sean Dennis join us as our Executive Director. We're eager to partner with him in advancing our mission and building a stronger future for our watershed.

Can Native Plants Work in Your Garden? by Sybil Kolon

Native plants are all the rage today. Whether you dabble in them or you are “all in,” native plants provide many options to add color and variety to your landscape. Gardeners rarely need an incentive to try something new. But why should you choose a native plant over some gorgeous exotic?

They range from being very picky about soil and growing conditions, to becoming invasive under some conditions. The internet provides many resources to find out which ones are best for your yard or landscape. If you have acreage to restore, you are also a gardener, but the scale and methods change. Starting small is the best approach.

Before you start planning it's a good idea to know what is available locally. There is a long list of incentives and benefits to gardening with native plants. In addition to needing much less maintenance, native plants don't need to be pampered. They don't need fertilizers or pesticides and, once established, they rarely need water.

More importantly, native plants support our local pollinators, other beneficial insects and the birds that feed on them. It's all part of the cycle of

nature. The populations of birds and insects have decreased dramatically over the past fifty years. You can do your part to help support our local populations.

You will have a new opportunity to acquire native plants in the area at our *First Annual Native Plant Sale* at our Tecumseh location on *Friday, May 30*. See the box below for details. We will have three native plant vendors as well as displays and information with numerous nonprofit and environmental organizations with information and kids activities to round out your visit. Native plant experts will be on hand to advise you.

For the past few years the RRWC has been putting on Master Rain Gardener classes. Native plants are recommended for these areas, that can help decrease storm water runoff from roofs and other impermeable surfaces. Such gardens are much better able to absorb rainfall, with the added benefit of adding beauty, diversity and much needed habitat for birds and insects. We plan to hold additional Master Rain Gardener classes this year.



1st Annual River Raisin NATIVE PLANT Sale

Enjoy plant shopping with
LIV'S NATIVE NURSERY
WINDY ROCK FARMS
FERAL FLORA

Learn from
CONSERVATION GROUPS
and more:
PITA DELIGHT FOOD TRUCK
KIDS' ACTIVITIES
POLLINATOR GARDEN TOUR

FRIDAY, MAY 30

2:00 - 7:30 PM

RRWC HEADQUARTERS
804 N. EVANS ST. - TECUMSEH, MI

for more details go to:
riverraisin.org/plant-sale

questions or comments?
admin@riverraisin.org



Upcoming Events & Programs

Nature Exploration Events

May 1st	Spring Ephemerals in Manchester, MI
May 7th	Birds & Binoculars in Tecumseh, MI
May 9th	Tracks & Scat in Adrian, MI
May 21st	Tree Identification in Adrian, MI
May 23rd	Birds & Binoculars in Manchester, MI
May 23rd	Nocturnal Night Walk in Manchester, MI
June 6th	Knot Tying & Paracord Bracelet in Tecumseh, MI
June 12th	Plant Identification Walk in Saline, MI
June 13th	Nocturnal Night Walk in Monroe, MI
June 21st	Paddling Trip in Tecumseh, MI
June 25th	Soil & Composting in Tecumseh, MI
June 26th	Rock Identification - Kids in Tecumseh, MI
June 26th	Rock Identification - Adults in Tecumseh, MI
June 27th	Fish Anatomy Art in Tecumseh, MI
June 28th	Paddling Trip in Tecumseh, MI
July 16th	Mushroom Course in Adrian, MI
July 17th	Plant ID Walk in TBD
July 17th	Reptiles & Amphibians - Kids in Monroe/Dundee, MI
July 17th	Reptiles & Amphibians - Adults in Monroe/Dundee, MI
July 18th	Knot Tying & Paracord Bracelet in Saline MI
July 19th	Paddling Trip in Tecumseh, MI
July 24th	Tree ID in Blissfeild, MI

Volunteer Events

May 12th	Adopt-a-Stream in Clinton, MI
May 14th	Adopt-a-Stream in Saline, MI
May 15th	Adopt-a-Stream in Monroe, MI
May 15th	Adopt-a-Stream in Monroe, MI
May 17th	Adopt-a-Stream in Brooklyn, MI
June 3rd	Planting a Rain Garden in Tecumseh, MI
July 22nd	Evans Park Clean-Up in Tecumseh, MI

Other Events

April 9th	Spring Open House in Tecumseh, MI
May 13th	Spring Gathering in Tecumseh, MI
May 28th	Basics of Droning in Tecumseh, MI
May 30th	Native Plant Sale in Tecumseh, MI
May 31st	Women's Chainsaw Training in Tipton, MI

For more information, including times and specific locations and to register, please check out our website at riverraisin.org/upcoming-events

RRWC wants to extend a special thank you to our 2025 members!

Enhanced Members:

Matthew Albert, Sybil Kolon, David Malmquist, Kyler & Sarah Melmoth

Keepers of the River:

Michael & Therese Ayre, Stella Kirby, Harry Sheehan

Stewards of the River:

Anthony Palazzolo, John Calhoun

with special thanks to the Erb Foundation, and
Ad-Lib x Musgrove and Company

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE & STAFF

Harry Sheehan, Executive Committee Chair
*Chief Deputy | Water Resources Commissioner
Representative | Washtenaw County*

John Calhoun, Vice Chair
*Columbia Township Treasurer
& Columbia Township Representative*

Sybil Kolon, Secretary
*Manchester Township Representative
Washtenaw County*

Mike Ayre, Treasurer
Lenawee County Representative

David Hoffman, Member
*County Commissioner &
Monroe County Representative*

Phil Kittredge, Member
*Cambridge Township Representative,
Lenawee County*

Stella Kirby, Member
*Petersburg Representative,
Monroe County*

Sean Dennis, Executive Director
executivedirector@riverraisin.org

Lydia Lopez, Water Stewardship Coordinator
waterstewardship@riverraisin.org

Benny Woith, Administrative Coordinator
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Ivy McClelland, Administrative Assistant
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