



Eastern Bluebird photo by Rebecca Field



## April 2015 Newsletter

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See Attached Tree Sale Order Form!

### APRIL Events Calendar

4/15: **Tree Sale Packing Party**, Urka Farm in Brethren, 9-3 pm

4/17 & 18: **Tree Sale at Urka Farm** in Brethren, 9-3 pm

4/22 **Earth Day Celebration** and tree planting in Kaleva: Tree Planting and program, 4-6 pm. Call the district if you'd like to plant a tree.

4/13 **MCD Board of Directors meeting** in Kaleva (at 40-acre parcel on 9-Mile and Puustinen Road).

See what's planned for spring/summer 2015 by clicking here to go to [Plant It Wild!](#)

### EARTH DAY CELEBRATION AND TREE PLANTING



Attend our **Earth Day Celebration**, and learn about the history of conservation in **Manistee County**.

Earth Day falls on Wednesday, April 22nd this year. But this particular Earth Day is a special one for the MCD, as we will be inaugurating new signage for our **Outdoor Classroom** on our 40-acre parcel on the corner of 9 Mile and Puustinen Road in Kaleva, MI.

The 40-acre woodlot has been the property of the district since 1948, and is a little recognized, yet important part of Manistee history, particularly for its role in showing how conservation practices significantly control soil erosion on the landscape. A series of short activities are planned, with the sign dedication and tree-planting ceremony occurring on the property at 4 pm. Members from the community will be given a space and shovel to plant seedlings. Parking and restroom facilities will be provided by the Big Bear Sportsman's Club, located just across the street from the parcel.

### NO-TILL DRILL COMES TO THE MCD NRCS Corner by Scott Hughey



It's all about soil health, erosion control, increased crop yields, pesticide reduction, and more.

For the first time ever, the Manistee Conservation District will be making a no-till drill available for rent from our district office. Why use a no-till method for planting crops? The short answer is that no-

till technology allows soil biology to build up organic matter, which is capable of holding water and transferring nutrients.

Given its contribution to successful, sustainable agricultural practices, we are very excited about being able to offer the no-till drill to private landowners for only \$10 per acre, with an \$80 minimum. Please call the Manistee CD (231-889-9666) after May 1, 2015 to schedule your rental.

## MAY DAY Cleanup!

On May 1, members of the Portage Lake Watershed Forever Council and the Manistee CD will be teaming up for some serious spring cleaning! Please volunteer.

We'll meet at Village Park at 10 am Friday, May 1. Bring garbage bags and some muscle, and we'll spend the morning getting neglected recreation areas cleaned up for the summer season! Join us and share a cup of coffee and a donut on us!

## Join Us for the MCD ANNUAL Garlic Mustard Pull May 16th at Magoon Creek!!

Join us May 16, for a morning of vigorous garlic mustard pulling followed by a gourmet luncheon to celebrate our hard work. The luncheon will be a variety of tasty courses featuring garlic mustard--an incredibly delicious and edible invasive! Lunch is free to volunteers and there will be presentations by Katie Grzesiak, Invasive Species coordinator of Grand Traverse Conservation District and our own forester at the MCD, Josh Shields.

## Join Our Mailing List

We'd love to hear from you. Please don't hesitate to call the district with questions or if you need technical assistance with forestland, cropland, or just your backyard garden. Send phone inquiries or emails inquiries to [susan.spencer@macd.org](mailto:susan.spencer@macd.org) (231-889-9666, ext. 3).

## SMALL PLANT; BIG PROBLEM

## Forester's Corner

by Josh Shields

Though it may sound like gourmet sauce at an upscale restaurant, garlic mustard is actually the name of an invasive species which has spread and replaced native species in many ecosystems, becoming one of the most troublesome exotics in Michigan and other parts of the U.S.

The small, seemingly harmless herbaceous plant was introduced to the U.S. in the late 1800s, likely as a source of food or medicine. One may wonder, then, how such a small plant could become such a big problem. There are several reasons.

First, Garlic Mustard produces many seeds that are carried on the fur of small mammals and the shoes and clothing of people, allowing it to rapidly colonize new areas. The leaves are not edible to many herbivores; for example, white-tailed deer will eat native plant species before they eat garlic mustard, which in turn helps garlic mustard become more prevalent. Finally, and equally important, garlic mustard produces a chemical that is toxic to some native butterflies and disrupts the association between native plant roots and mycorrhizal fungi that are essential to the nutrient-gathering abilities of native plants. The spread of Garlic Mustard brings about the displacement of healthy native ecosystems by destroying the rich diversity of herbaceous species and tree seedlings and leaving a monoculture of garlic mustard on the forest floor.



Native plant understory (on the left) compared to a heavy garlic mustard infestation (on the right). Photos were taken by Dr. Michael Jenkins, Purdue University, Department of Forestry and Natural Resources.

For more information about garlic mustard, contact the Manistee CD at 231-889-9666. And please join us for our upcoming Annual Garlic Mustard Pull, held at Magoon Creek on Saturday, May 16th, 2015.

## THE INCREDIBLE SASKATOON



The Saskatoon berry, cultivated from the wilder, native Serviceberry, has been missing from the MCD's last couple of tree sales. But it's *back* this year, with all its juicy sweetness and it comes in two delicious varieties, Northline & Smokey, each with their own distinctive flavors. Please see our [Tree Sale Order Form](#) or visit our [Website Store](#) to learn more.

[www.manisteed2.org](http://www.manisteed2.org)

*Have a safe, joyful Easter!*