

# RUTGERS

New Jersey Agricultural  
Experiment Station



SEPTEMBER 2023

WATER PAGES eNEWSLETTER

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## **1st Annual EcoFair – A Great Success!**

The first Annual Rutgers EcoFair was held on September 13th on the front lawn of the Environmental Sciences Building on Cook Campus. Over 200 students attended to meet New Jersey's non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that focus on environmental issues. The NGOs were excited to engage undergraduate students to help cultivate interest in community involvement and work towards integrative solutions for modern day obstacles to a greener future. While students have classes that introduce them to possible future employment opportunities, NGOs often take a backseat in these discussions. As a result, some students don't know where to start when it comes to establishing a trajectory towards a career that aligns with their values. To this end, the EcoFair was organized to bring students and NGOs together.

It is never too early to start thinking about giving back to the community. As young STEM professionals, many students believe it is their obligation to help make the world a better place. The EcoFair provided them with an opportunity to mingle with likeminded individuals and learn what these altruistic groups are all about and how they can work with them to improve the quality of life for all people and protect the planet for generations. They learned about volunteer opportunities and paid internships that are available from many of the NGOs.

The goal of this event was to connect students to NGOs so they can expand their environmental awareness. This was meant to be an opportunity for NGOs to engage young adults that can help grow their organizations. The students explored opportunities to get involved. The first Annual EcoFair achieved its goal and was a great success.



*Raritan Headwaters Association sharing current research about the Raritan River with students interested in internship opportunities [Photo Credit: Christopher Obropta]*

## **Green Infrastructure Champion's Vision to Create an Outdoor Learning Space for a Local School**

Thanks to the help of our local Green Infrastructure Champion, Lorraine Prince, we were able to provide Thomas Edison Elementary School in Haddon Township, NJ with a rain garden to manage stormwater runoff and create wildlife habitat. The rain garden, 125 square feet, was installed in the side courtyard of the elementary school. This rain garden manages runoff from the rooftop drainage area which is 455 square feet and has the potential to manage 6,140 gallons of runoff annually. The Water Resources Program provided the engineering design and the labor for constructing the rain garden. In total about 60 native pollinator species were planted in the rain garden with help from Water Resources Program Interns.



Funding for this project was provided by the New Jersey Sea Grant Consortium.



*Before installation*



*After installation*



## **Incorporating Green Infrastructure into the Existing Landscape**

Hainesport Township, NJ is the latest municipality to install a rain garden to create wildlife habitat and to manage stormwater runoff. A 165 square foot rain garden was installed off the southwest corner of the gazebo at the municipal building. This rain garden manages runoff from a quarter of the gazebo rooftop, which has a drainage area of 305 square feet, and manages 6,651 gallons of runoff annually. The Water Resources Program provided the design and construction oversight, and the Hainesport Department of Public Works staff constructed the rain garden. The Water Resources Program, Pinelands Preservation Alliance, and councilman Bruce Levinson planted over 60 native perennials and shrubs, beautifying the area and creating a new habitat for pollinator species.



Funding for the project was provided by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.



*Hainesport Township, Municipal Building Rain Garden, September 2023*

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Rutgers Cooperative Extension

# Fall Native Plant Sale



Online only

[go.rutgers.edu/nativeplantsale](https://go.rutgers.edu/nativeplantsale)

Our native plant sale is open! Limited supply available. Plant pickup will be Saturday, September 30th and the sale will end on September 28 or while supplies last.

Fall is a great time to get started on native plant gardening and give them a head start on next year. These preplanned gardens are designed to provide flowers from spring through fall and to attract butterflies and birds.

"Gardens" contain 8 plants in 3.5" square pots and cover 32 square feet.

#### **PAYMENT**

Gardens: \$30 plus tax

Credit card or digital checks only. Payment must be made online before pickup. All sales are final. To make your purchase, you must first create an account or login to your existing account with the Division of Continuing Studies.

#### **PLANT PICKUP**

Saturday, September 30th from 9:30 am to noon at Davidson Mill Pond Park, 42 Riva Avenue in North Brunswick, New Jersey.

NOTE: No plant replacements. For questions please contact Michele Bakacs at [bakacs@njaes.rutgers.edu](mailto:bakacs@njaes.rutgers.edu).



Scan here  
for the sale



Cooperating Agencies: Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Boards of County Commissioners. Rutgers Cooperative Extension, a unit of the Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, is an equal opportunity program provider and employer.

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## Calling all Green Infrastructure Champions!

### Green Infrastructure Champion Continuing Education Opportunities

#### Event Date:

September 28, 2023: Native Plants for Green Infrastructure Projects (Susan Tarr)

October 12, 2023: Floating Treatment Wetlands: Community-Based Crandon Lake Restoration Project (Nathaniel Sajdak)

October 19, 2023: Living Shorelines for New Jersey (Dr. Thomas Herrington)

**Event Time:**

Each class will be held from noon to 1:30 pm

**Event Location:**

Via Zoom (A zoom link will be provided the week before the class)

**CLICK HERE TO REGISTER!**

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## **Rain Garden Native Plant Spotlight ~ Blue Mistflower (*Conoclinium coelestinum*)**

Blue Mistflower is a pollinator-friendly flowering perennial covered in vibrant purple flowers from late summer and long into the fall season. This aster-family perennial spreads easily, but has a compact form, typically reaching 1-3 feet in height. Although it can be considered aggressive in the garden, it is effective in naturalized areas or planted in masses or edging in less formal plantings. Preferring moist sites, Blue Mistflower is relatively tolerant of a wide range of light and soil conditions, making it a reliable choice for rain gardens.

For more information:

<https://www.jerseyyards.org/plant/conoclinium-coelestinum/>

<https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/conoclinium-coelestinum/>



*Conoclinium coelestinum*, Blue Mistflower  
[Photo credit: Tekla Pontius-Courtney]



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