



**Borough of Eatontown
Environmental Commission**
47 Broad Street
Eatontown, NJ. 07724
<http://eatontownnj.com/environmental/>

Laura Bagwell, Chair
Jessica Buck
Ken Kretsch
Mark Regan, Jr., Council Liaison
Mark Regan Sr., Planning Board Liaison
Aaron Stoler

Eatontown Environmental Commission 2022 Annual Report

Members / Meetings / Minutes

Members in 2022: Laura Bagwell, Chair; Jessica Buck; Ken Kretsch; Mark Regan, Jr., Council liaison; and Mark Regan, Sr., Planning Board liaison.

Steve Fratini retired from the EC this year and we want to thank and recognize him for his passionate work on behalf of Eatontown.

Meetings were held on the 4th Tuesday of each month via Zoom. No meetings were held in October and November due to lack of a quorum. Minutes were taken and approved for each meeting.

Committees & Regional Collaborations

- EC members also served on the Green Team, Shade Tree Commission, Ft. Monmouth Environmental Staff Advisory Committee, Community Garden, and Complete Streets committees.
- **Environmental Partnership:** In its second year after a many year hiatus, this committee of regional environmental commissioners met each month in 2022. The partnership has been a helpful collaboration on regional environmental issues.

Community Initiatives

Monmouth Invasive Species Strike Team (MISST) In its second year, MISST held 15 invasive plant species work parties at the F. Bliss Price Arboretum and Wildlife Sanctuary, totaling 130 volunteer hours involving over 40 volunteers. We added evening work parties in July, August and September in addition to those held on the first Saturday of the month.

- Sustainable Jersey featured our Monmouth Invasive Species Strike Team efforts in their Summer newsletter:

<https://www.sustainablejersey.com/news/newsletters/summer-2022/#c4857>

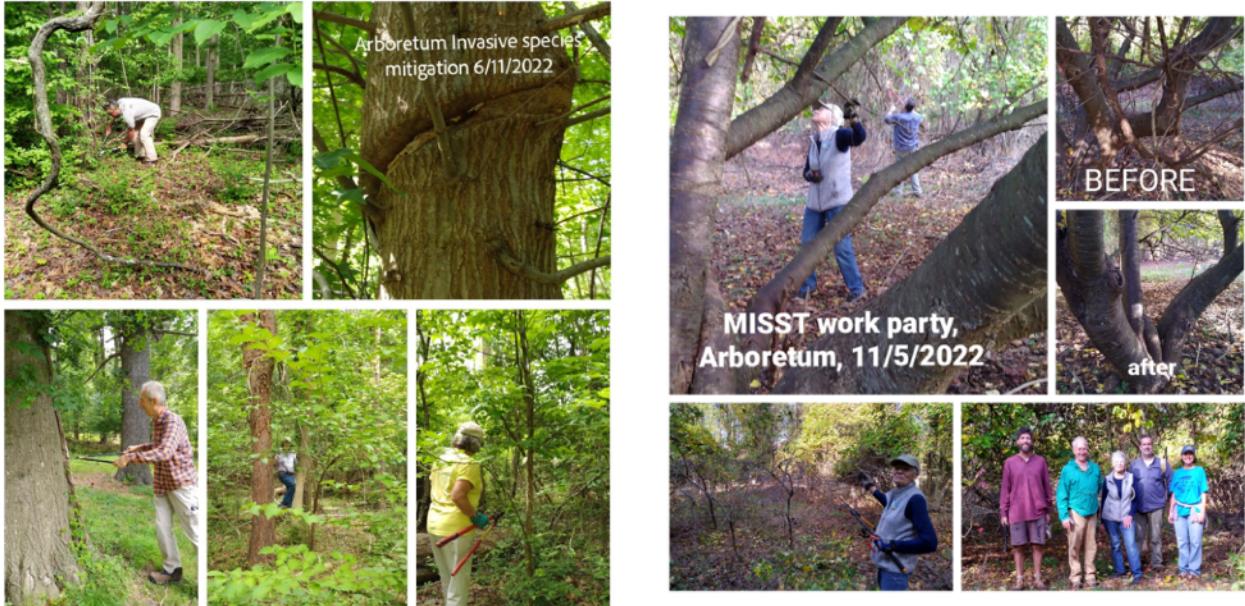
We work on different areas of the 47 acre park, mainly cutting invasive vines off of trees. The most common are English Ivy, Asiatic Bittersweet, and Porcelainberry. Volunteers also pulled garlic mustard and wineberry.

We have not used any chemicals as of this time.

We have been extremely fortunate to have volunteers from not only Eatontown, but also Colts Neck, Shrewsbury, Middletown, Fair Haven, Red Bank, Long Branch, Tinton Falls, Ocean Township, and Oceanport join us! This project is a partnership with Eatontown's Shade Tree Commission, Department of Public Works, Abuzz for Wildlife in Eatontown, Beautify Eatontown, and Green Team. We appreciate the collaboration amidst all of these groups. We look forward to working with additional groups in the future.



2022 EEC Annual Report / Page 3



Abuzz for Wildlife In Eatontown (AWE) NEW!

Facing the drastic reduction in pollinator and bird populations, the EC and Green Team created Abuzz for Wildlife in Eatontown, a group that will specifically focus on helping Eatontown become a Certified Wildlife Community.

In expanding the Pollinator Garden Challenge, we transitioned to the National Wildlife Federation's (TAKE INFO ALREADY WRITTEN) to expand their habitat, which has been drastically reduced.

Kick off at Eatontown Day on October 8th. We had a display with the pesticide free zone sign, the National Wildlife Federation garden sign, information on how to garden with natives. We had a make your own native plant "seed ball" - a fun and easy way to help be part of the solution by putting the seed balls in a sunny spot in your garden to create pollinator habitat.



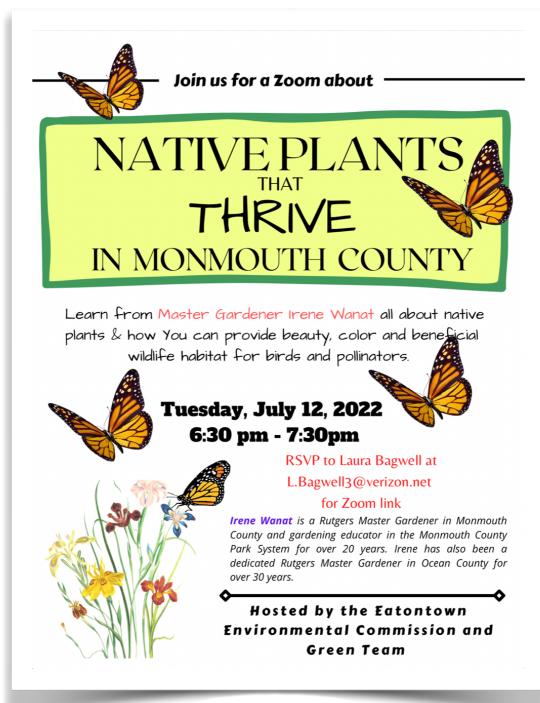
Education and Outreach

“Monitoring Water Quality through Biological Assessments”:

On March 26th, the EC hosted a hands-on workshop led by Americorps NJ Watershed Ambassador from WMA12, Samantha LaRocca. It was held at the F. Bliss Price Arboretum, on the banks of the Husky Brook, a muddy bottom stream. We found scuds, damselflies, net spinning caddisflies, midges and worms which identified the stream as semi-polluted with room for improvement. We were all very interested in looking for the macro invertebrates, and felt a sense of accomplishment when we found them. Everyone had a great time; it was educational and fun. There were 9 attendees.



Zoom Talk: “Native Plants that Thrive in Monmouth County”: On July 12, 2022, the EC & Green Team hosted a Zoom presented by Irene Wanat, Rutgers Master Gardener of Monmouth County. Over 40 people attended this very informative and interesting talk.



Eatontown Day 2022

In partnership with the Green Team, on October 8th we tabled at Eatontown Day. We distributed information on planting native plants and had a display of two invasive vines that are commonly found in Eatontown and Monmouth County - Asian bittersweet and porcelainberry.



Grant Avenue and Route 36 Intersection:

The EC adopted this spot given the lack of sidewalks and mowing in this NW corner of the intersection. It was cleared of vegetation, but the sidewalk continues to be missing and the intersection remains unsafe to cross, with no signal as to when it is safe to cross, no countdown to alert pedestrians when the light will change, and no curb cuts in the middle of the divided highway. We are very happy that the Borough is championing and supportive of creating a safe circulation for everyone

Pollinator Garden:

(location: community garden) August 2021 was the garden's first full year. Made up of mostly native perennial flowers, we continued to cultivate, weed and partially expand the garden. A bench was donated. We are in the works to obtain an educational sign for it.



Logo:

After being in existence since 1974, the Environmental Commission finally has a logo! Thanks to Eatontown's Recreation Department for the modified logo that creates some consistency for the Borough. We like having a logo after almost 50 years of not having one.



Clean up Grant / Route 36:

On 10/16/22, the EC and Green Team participated in a clean up organized by Beautify Eatontown.



Native Plant Ordinance

- Council passed a Native Plant ordinance that the EC had started working on since 2020. It requires developers to plant native species in all new developments. Thanks to the Council who passed this unanimously.
- ANJEC featured the native plant ordinance in their Summer issue:
<https://anjec.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Summer2022ANJECReport.pdf>

Sustainable Jersey

- The Environmental Commission, along with the Green Team, contributed countless hours working to achieve Sustainable Jersey Silver certification. We are very happy that Borough officials have assisted and promoted this certification. We look forward to keeping Silver certification, and hopefully a Gold certification in the future.
- Sustainable Jersey named Laura a Sustainability Hero for November

Volunteer Hours

Volunteers weeded and mulched the pollinator garden & raised bed at Wampum, participated in clean ups, scouted sites and lead invasive plant work parties, resulting in at least 160* volunteer work hours. The EC acknowledges and thanks DPW, Borough Administrator, Mayor and Council for their support and dedication in helping the EC further the goals of protecting habitat and lands in the Borough.

* *(This number does not include attending meetings, site plan review, research, drafting minutes/reports, tabling, organizing & hosting trainings, as well as reading, documenting and uploading points to Sustainable Jersey).*

Site Plans Reviewed

1. 260 Industrial Way, February 2022
2. Monmouth Mall Partners, February 2022
3. Monmouth Plaza Enterprises, February 2022
4. Caradem (Lube It All), April 2022
5. Garden State Veterinary Hospital, April 2022
6. PQ B-Tach (Hobbie), July 2022
7. Eatontown Investors LLC, August 2022
8. 373 South Holdings (B&B Tent), October 2022
9. A&P Pork Store (Simply Sofrito), October 2022
10. Pumo Real Estate (215 Broad Street), October 2022

Seminars / Meetings attended

- 2/27/22 Native Plants (Xerces Society)
- 3/5/22 Native Plant Society Annual Conference
- 3/9/22 Master Plans (ANJEC)
- 3/22/22 Site Plan Review and Stormwater Law (ANJEC)
- 3/22/22 The Nature of Oaks, by Doug Tallamy (Native Plant Society)
- 3/23/22 Weeds Ordinances, Roseanne Plante, Esq. (Wild Ones)
- 4/4/22 Essex County Environmental Commission Roundtable (ANJEC)
- 4/7/22 Native Plants for Stormwater (Wild Ones)
- 5/10/22 Fertilize Less- Rely More on Nature (Jersey Yards)
- 6/7/22 Pesticides 101 (American Bird Conservancy, Center for Biological Diversity)
- 7/7/22 Extended Producer Responsibility (Beyond Plastics)
- 7/12/22 Lose the Lawn: Plant a Meadow Instead (Pat Sutton)
- 8/8/22 National Wildlife Federation Community Meeting
- 8/9/22 Rutgers Native Wildlife Habitat (Jersey Yards)
- 10/14/22 ANJEC Congress

2022 EEC Annual Report / Page 9

- 10/27/22 Build or Not to Build (Urban Coast Institute)
- 11/13/22 New Jersey's Changing Climate, David Robinson, NJ State Climatologist
- 11/16/22 MS4 Learning Session (The Watershed Institute)

Presentations

Laura presented at the annual ANJEC Congress regarding Highly Effective Environmental Commissions, October 2022

Goals for 2023

1. Finalize a Green Development Checklist.
2. Continue to work to add 20 acres to the ROSI.
3. Hold an educational event about the benefits of wetlands.
4. Access to Parks: In conjunction with Complete Streets, hold an event to highlight the need for Grant Avenue and Route 36 intersection improvements.
5. Invasive species: Expand Monmouth Invasive Species Strike Team (MISST) invasive plant mitigation efforts to include other parks.
6. Work on Eatontown becoming a Certified Wildlife Community
7. Pass a stronger Lighting Ordinance.
8. Pass a Solar friendly ordinance.
9. Host tree walks / nature walks
10. Have a Shade Tree Commission liaison
11. Promote Energy Efficiency incentives / BPU / EV's, etc.