



Shore Conserver

Eastern Shore Soil and Water Conservation District

promoting locally led conservation

22545 Center Parkway Accomac, VA 23301 (757)302-4431 www.esswcd.org

May 2025

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Lucy Early
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Benjamin Young
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rg

Julie Head
Education Director
julie.head@esswcd.org

**Natural Resources
Conservation Service**

Jenny Templeton
District Conservationist
(757)302-4435

2026 Cost Share Kick-Off Breakfast

Tuesday, June 24 @ 8:00 a.m.

SAGE DINER

**25558 LANKFORD HWY
ONLEY, VA 23418**

**Free Buffet
Breakfast**

**but space is
limited, please
register by June 18
by clicking below:**

<https://tinyurl.com/esswcdcostshare26>



Agenda...

- Welcome & Introductions
- NEW ES Soil & Water Cost Share Program Updates/ Changes
- VSU Small Farm Program
- NRCS Program Updates
- FSA Program/ Loan Updates
- VCE Updates for Accomack Co & Northampton Co
- VDACS Updates
- Discussion with local producers

Questions?



757-302-4431



carmie.savage@esswcd.org



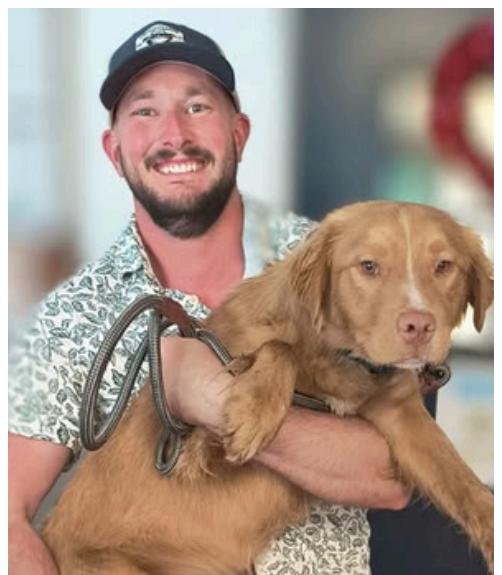
www.facebook.com/ESSWCD

New Employees

Lucy Jane Earl is a new Conservation Specialist with the Eastern Shore Soil and Water Conservation District. Lucy is passionate about living shorelines, green infrastructure, and innovations in environmental design. Outside of work, she can be found biking around Chincoteague, calling her sister, going for a swim, or trying to keep her indoor plants alive.

Before moving to the Eastern Shore, Lucy attended Dickinson College in Carlisle, PA, where she focused on her aquatic plant and living shoreline research while also exploring vocal performance. She used this time to tackle ecology, biology, agroecology, chemistry, and GIS. This resulted in the opportunity to present her year-long independent research "Stream Recovery and Aquatic Plant Growth: Investigating Patterns, Above, Below, and In Town," at the Northeast Natural History Conference.

In her hometown of Scranton, PA she interned with the Lackawanna County Conservation District verifying and building a GIS database for county-wide riparian buffers. This experience further developed her real world GIS work. In 2024, Lucy earned a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science with Honors and began the job search. After looking for the right fit with the help of a little coincidence she landed at the ESSWCD.



Ben Young is a new Conservation Specialist with the Eastern Shore Soil and Water Conservation District in Accomac Va. He is passionate about wildlife and cropland natural resources management. When he's not in the office, you can find Ben fishing, hunting or working in his garden.

Ben previously held the position of Soil Conservationist with NRCS in Accomac. Prior to his appointment with the NRCS, he owned and operated an invasive plant removal service in Vincennes and Bloomington, Indiana. His company worked closely with local SWCDs and non-profits to provide property surveys and invasive plant removal.

During his time studying at Indiana University, Ben interned with the Knox County SWCD in Vincennes Indiana under the Natural Resources Specialist, performing invasive species surveys and removal on county and private property within the county.

Ben holds a master's degree in environmental science, a master's degree in public affairs and a bachelor's degree in environmental management, all from Indiana University O'Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs.

Updates

Envirothon 2025

Broadwater Academy represented the Eastern Shore at the Area VI Envirothon Competition on April 9, 2025, at Pocahontas State Park in Petersburg, VA. They placed first in the oral presentation and 2nd overall.

They then moved on to the state level competition which was held in May. They placed 2nd in the Oral Presentation section and 8th overall for the state of Virginia.

Team members were Elise Adler, Bradley Carlsen, Virginia Cusis, Susanna Locklear, Sofia Rader, and Thomas Eno (not pictured).



2025 Scholarship Recipient

Leah Smith of Broadwater Academy was awarded the 2025 Fletcher Beasley Scholarship. Leah is a 2025 graduate of Broadwater Academy and plans to attend Washington and Lee in the fall with an emphasis on Environmental Studies. Leah was active in many activities during high school including participating in the Envirothon Competition. She also played volleyball, basketball, and ran track. Her parents are Philip and Lori Smith.

2025 Billie Fitzgerald Spring Grants

Spring grants were awarded to three different groups.

The ESVA Master Gardeners maintain a native plant demonstration garden at the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge. They received money for maintenance and new signage.

For the last several years the Cape Charles Library has maintained a seed cart with free seeds for vegetables, herbs, and native plants. They also provide educational materials on the benefits of native plants. The grant will go towards continuing the library seed cart program.

The ESVA Master Gardeners also has an outdoor educational garden for 2nd grade classes at Pungoteague Elementary School. The grant will go towards continuing that program.



Eastern Shore Invasive Plant Highlight

Japanese stilt grass

Information from dcr.virginia.gov

Japanese stilt grass is an annual grass that forms dense mats. It has green leaves with a distinctive silvery midrib and the veins run parallel. The stems may be up to 40 inches long and may root at the stem nodes. It prefers moist soil and full shade. It is fine in low light levels and can grow and produce seed in only 5% of full sunlight. It is found in a wide variety of habitats including marshes, ditches, damp fields, woodland thickets, lawns, and roadsides to name a few.

Japanese stilt grass is native to Asia from India to Japan. It was first discovered in Tennessee in 1919 and has since spread to all states east of the Mississippi and south of and including Connecticut. It was used as a packing material for porcelain from China and it is believed that this is how it was introduced to the United States.

Within three to five years stilt grass can form dense stands that crowd out native vegetation. It grows from seed and a single plant will generally produce 100 to 1000 seeds in a year. Unfortunately, these seeds remain viable in the environment for three to five years so control measures must be carried out for a number of years. The only good thing about Japanese stilt grass is that it is an annual with limited roots.

The most effective control strategy for control is the removal of the plant by hand or mechanical means late in the growing season before seed production occurs in late summer and early fall. Chemical controls are also effective and the article listed below has details on effectiveness of different methods of control.

For more information see the following links:

[**Watch an informative video**](#) from the University of Wisconsin on identifying Japanese stilt grass.

[**Read an excellent article**](#) with extensive information about how to control Japanese stilt grass from the University of Wisconsin.

[**Share this fact sheet**](#) on identification, history and control methods for Japanese stilt grass from invasive.org.



Chuck Bargeron, University of Georgia, Bugwood.org



Leslie J. Mehrhoff, University of Connecticut, Bugwood.org

Upcoming Programs and Camps

CAPE CHARLES MEMORIAL LIBRARY



SUMMER READING REGISTRATION KICK-OFF

JUNE 18, 2025 10:00 A.M. TO 12:00 P.M.

**TALES OF THE DAIRY GODMOTHER
STORY AND ICE CREAM MAKING**

AUGUST 5, 2025, 10:00 A.M.



Ag Camp at the Barrier Islands Center Farm

Tuesday, August 12 - Wednesday, August 13, 2025

9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Ages 8 - 12, \$25 per camper

Campers will make their own butter and ice cream and interact with real sheep, goats, and calves.

Classroom. Campers should bring a lunch both days, wear closed toed shoes, and clothes that they can get dirty in. ESSWCD, BIC, and 4-H are partnering together for this educational fun on the farm camp.



Junior Ag Camp

Ages 5 - 7

Tuesday, July 1 - Wednesday, July 2, 2025

Ages 5 - 7, \$15 per camper

Registration at barrierislandscenter.org

Upcoming Camps

Eastern Shore Soil & Water, Eastern Shore National Wildlife Refuge and Northampton County 4-H present

ADVENTURES IN NATURE

Summer Day Camp

JUNE 25 & 26

9:00am - 3:00pm both days



Eastern Shore National Wildlife Refuge
32205 Seaside Rd
Cape Charles, VA 23310

Ages 9 - 13

Activities include:

Hiking, arts & crafts, drawing, games, science activities, and more!



**Cost is \$15 per child
Space is limited!**

1. Please register by emailing Erin Morgan at emorgan2@vt.edu
2. Once you receive confirmation, mail your payment by June 13th to PO Box 457, Eastville, VA 23347 or hand deliver to 16392 Courthouse Rd, Eastville
3. Follow instructions for enrolling your child in the 4-H Online system



For more info please contact:

4-H Agent Erin Morgan
emorgan2@vt.edu or 757-678-7946

Julie Head, Eastern Shore Soil & Water
julie.head@esswcd.org or 757-302-4433

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The Commonwealth of VA supports the Eastern Shore SWCD through financial and administrative assistance provided by the VA Soil and Water Conservation Board and the Department of Conservation and Recreation.

Eastern Shore SWCD programs, activities and employment opportunities are available to all people regardless of disability, race or color, national origin, traits historically associated with race or religion including traits associated with hair, religion or creed, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, pregnancy status, childbirth or related medical conditions, marital status, veteran status, whistleblower status or genetic information.