



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 2026

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2027 Cost Share Sign-Ups

**Sign-ups begin July 15th
Sign-ups end on August 23rd
by appointment only**

Call:

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Multiflora Disaster

This nightmare of a plant is a perennial thorny shrub with long, stout, arching stems that climb over native vegetation and disrupt the natural ecosystem. Growing as much as 1 to 2 feet per week, multiflora rose forms impenetrable thorny thickets in pastures, roadsides, forest edges, and open woods. The plant has compound leaves and abundant clusters of white to light pink flowers from April to June.

Multiflora rose aggressively colonizes natural areas via seeds and vegetative reproduction. One plant can produce up to 500,000 seeds which are distributed over long distances when birds such as robins, cedar waxwings, and cardinals consume the fruit. The seeds remain viable in the soil for 10 to 20 years. The shrub can also spread through layering which occurs when the cane tips touch the ground and grow roots to form new plants. The plant's early leafing in the spring and its vigorous root system that can persist for many years wreak havoc on the native plants.

Multiflora rose was introduced to the United States from Asia in the 1886 as rootstock. Because of its robust nature, in the 1930's it was advertised as a "living fence" to contain livestock and as wildlife cover. Because of its dense root system it was also promoted for erosion control. However, it has since escaped from these plantings and poses a serious threat to natural ecosystems throughout the eastern half of the United States.

This invasive plant can be difficult to control. Light infestations may be controlled mechanically with a shovel or grubbing hoe, but the entire root must be removed. Severe infestations can be controlled by mowing or cutting but it must be repeated 3 to 6 times per year for 2 to 4 years. Herbicides may also be used. More information on herbicide use can be found at the [Maryland Department of Natural Resources](#).



Eastern Shore Regional Science Fair

On April 18, 2026, the Eastern Shore Regional Science Fair and STEM Day took place at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science in Wachapreague. Julie Head, Education Director, and Erin Morgan, the 4-H Agent with Northampton Cooperative Extension, spearheaded the event.

To be eligible for the regional science fair, students had to follow the scientific method, participate in their school's science fair, and be one of the top five exhibits at the school. The students who participated in the regional science fair had a wide range of topics including testing the salinity of water, which cleaner works best on horse tails, which fruits contain the most bacteria, and investigating solar energy systems, to name a few.

This year's competition had 48 students participate representing the following schools: Accawmacke Elementary, homeschool groups, Kegotank Elementary, Kiptopeke Elementary, Nandua Middle, Northampton Middle, Occohannock Elementary, and Pungoteague Elementary.

The winners in the middle school division (grades 6 - 8) were:

- 1st place - Rolan Rono, Kiptopeke Elementary
- 2nd place - Camdyn Edwards, Occohannock Elementary
- 3rd place - tie - Nathaniel Higgins and Walter Higgins, Broadwater Academy

The winners in the elementary school division (grades 3 - 5) were:

- 1st place - Caroline Marshal, Broadwater Academy
- 2nd place - Oliver Diamond, Kiptopeke Elementary
- 3rd place - Noah Bowman, Pungoteague Elementary

A special thank you to the judges, volunteer and community organizations who set up activities for the STEM day, the Nature Conservancy for providing free boat rides, C.D. Marsh Jewelers in Onancock for providing trophies for the winners, VIMS for serving as the host site, and all the teachers, school administrators, and parents who supported the students in making it to this event.



Eastern Shore Envirothon

On March 17, 2026, students from across the Eastern Shore convened at Eastern Shore AREC to participate in the 2026 Envirothon. This annual event attracted three high school teams and three middle school teams. Students compete in teams of five to show their knowledge of Forestry, Wildlife, Soils, and Aquatics. High school teams are also required to do an oral presentation on a special topic. This year's special topic was non-point source pollution.

Prior to competition day, students spend many hours studying the various topics and preparing their oral presentation. They also attended a training day on February 17, 2026, where they received instruction from various professionals on each of the topics.



1st Place High School Team

Broadwater Academy

Coach Sandra Thornton

Team Members: Elise Adler, Bradley Carlsen, Virginia Custis, Thomas Eno, Susanna Long, Sofia Rader, and Noah Rudmin

1st Place High School Team

Arcadia High School

Coach Joseph Pentason

Team Members: Emily Grimm, Jacob Hughes, Kendell Fisher Jr., Laura Wenzel, and Juan Gonzalez-Miranda



In the high school division, Broadwater Academy placed 1st, Arcadia High School Team A placed 2nd, and Arcadia High School Team B was 3rd. In the middle school division, Broadwater Academy was 1st, Cape Charles Christian Team A was 2nd and Cape Charles Christian Team B was 3rd.

The top two high school teams advanced to the Area VI Envirothon where Broadwater Academy placed 3rd. Broadwater then advanced to the Virginia State Envirothon where they placed second in Oral Presentation.

Arbor Day 2026

An Arbor Day celebration was held on April 25, 2026, at the ANEC facilities in Tasley. Continuing the ESSWCD tradition of the last several years, the district focused on raising awareness of native plants and their benefit to our local ecosystem. With the help of Eastern Shore Master Gardeners Phil Goetkin and Christine Williams, the district handed out 650 plugs of native plants.



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.