



2023 annual report



English Ivy Removal Demonstration Project

Invasive vines such as English Ivy can kill local plants and trees by quickly outcompeting for space. Invasive plants can be very difficult to control. This past fall ACWA volunteers conducted an eradication method on English Ivy growing on several trees in Hagerstown City Park to determine its potential success. We will return to these same trees in 2024 to determine if the methodology was successful. Supplies for this project were provided by a “Keep MD Beautiful” Grant.



ACWA's First Intern

Emma Flint, Smithsburg native and University of Maryland undergraduate, served as our first summer intern under the Community Science program. Emma conducted water monitoring, completed sample analysis, and data entry. She also assisted with the bacteria monitoring in collaboration with the Potomac Riverkeeper Network. Emma also attended the Volunteer Monitoring Conference held at Dickinson College and represented ACWA at our organization's table highlighting our monitoring activities.



Tree Planting \ Seed Collection

This year, ACWA coordinated the last phase of urban tree plantings funded by a Chesapeake Bay Trust grant awarded in 2022. With these funds, a total of 211 larger caliper trees were planted, secured, and maintained. In total, Maugansville Ruritan Park received 15 trees, Williamsport Byron Memorial & Riverbottom Parks received 76 trees, and HCC's campus received 120 trees. Watering and maintenance will continue for these trees into 2024. ACWA volunteers also provided support to the Smithsburg Park Tree Planting and HAYSL Soccer Club Tree Planting.

An ACWA and MD-DNR partnership to collect native seeds was successful in the fall. Walnuts, acorns, pawpaw and serviceberry seeds were among the collected specimens. Seeds collected will help booster the Maryland native seed bank.

Educational Outreach

- ACWA hosted a table at the Washington County Master Gardener's Pollinator Palooza event in September.
- A Community Science data outreach event was hosted in February.
- A workshop entitled “Coexisting with Beavers” was hosted in October.
- ACWA's President, Susan Simonson offered presentations at the MD-DNR Backyard Buffer Workshop and to the Master Gardeners.



First Student Board Member

Zander Hine became our first Student Board Member in 2023. He is a sophomore at North Hagerstown High School and often volunteers with ACWA's many tree plantings and trash cleanups. Zander first started in the organization when his brother Logan did a tree survey of Hagerstown, and has been volunteering with us ever since. He provides a youth perspective at the BOD meetings and gets other volunteers his age involved. He also writes the Wildlife Wednesday entries every week for the ACWA blog.



Community Science:

Volunteers conducted benthic macroinvertebrate sampling at 9 sites in early 2023 with over 1937 individual "macros" collected. Results were very encouraging in a tributary at Dog Creek, located in lower Antietam watershed where cold-water obligate aquatic insects were identified (indicating good habitat & water quality). Other samples appeared to be heavily impacted by development and Agricultural practices (Grove Creek and Rush Run). Volunteers also routinely collected monthly water quality samples, including bacteria April through August. Over 30 temperature loggers were deployed in streams around the Antietam and Conococheague watershed for summer temperature tracking.



Reporting Stickers

To be good stewards of our local watersheds, we need many eyes on lookout for problems on the land and waters. In order to help the community report issues, ACWA created a sticker with a QR code and link to commonly used reporting sites. These stickers are waterproof, and are available for free. Get yours today for your water bottle or your boat.



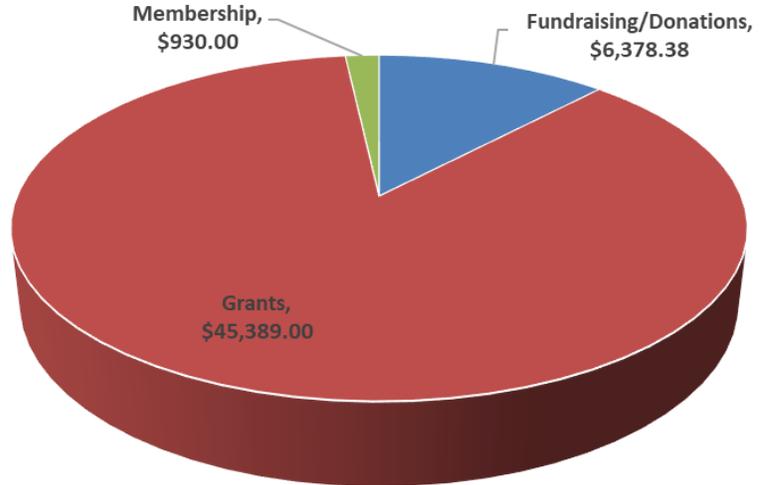
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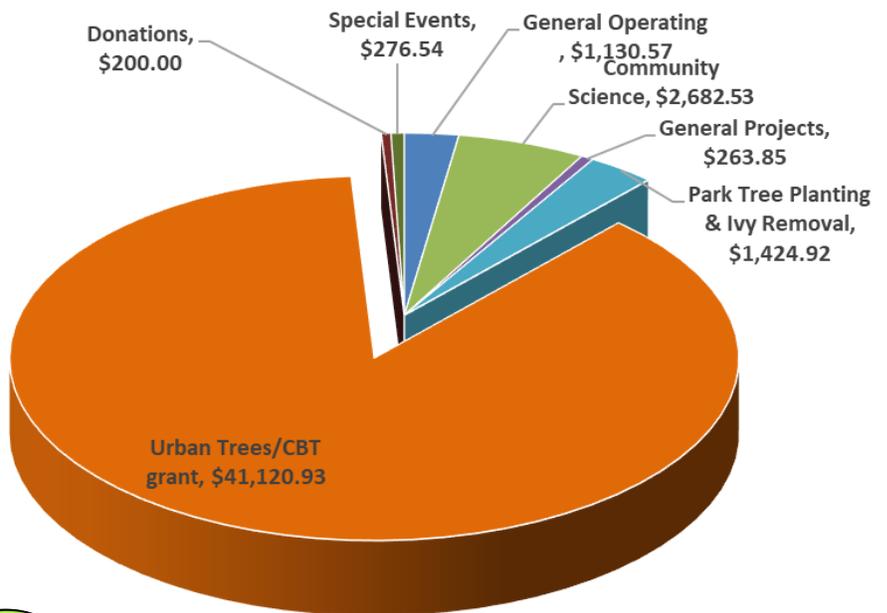
Upcoming ACWA Events

- Speaker presentation:
 “Warmer Wetter Woods: How climate change impacts Mid-Atlantic forests” Bob Schwartz
 February 22, 6:30 pm, Mt Aetna Nature Center
- Tree sale slated for late February with delivery in late March/early April
- Speaker presentation:
 “Wildlife Corridors: A Response to Climate Change & Biodiversity Loss in Maryland’s Appalachian Heart
 Karen Russell, March 2nd, River Bottom Roaster Cafe

ACWA Income 2023



ACWA Expenses 2023



2023 MISSION STATS

