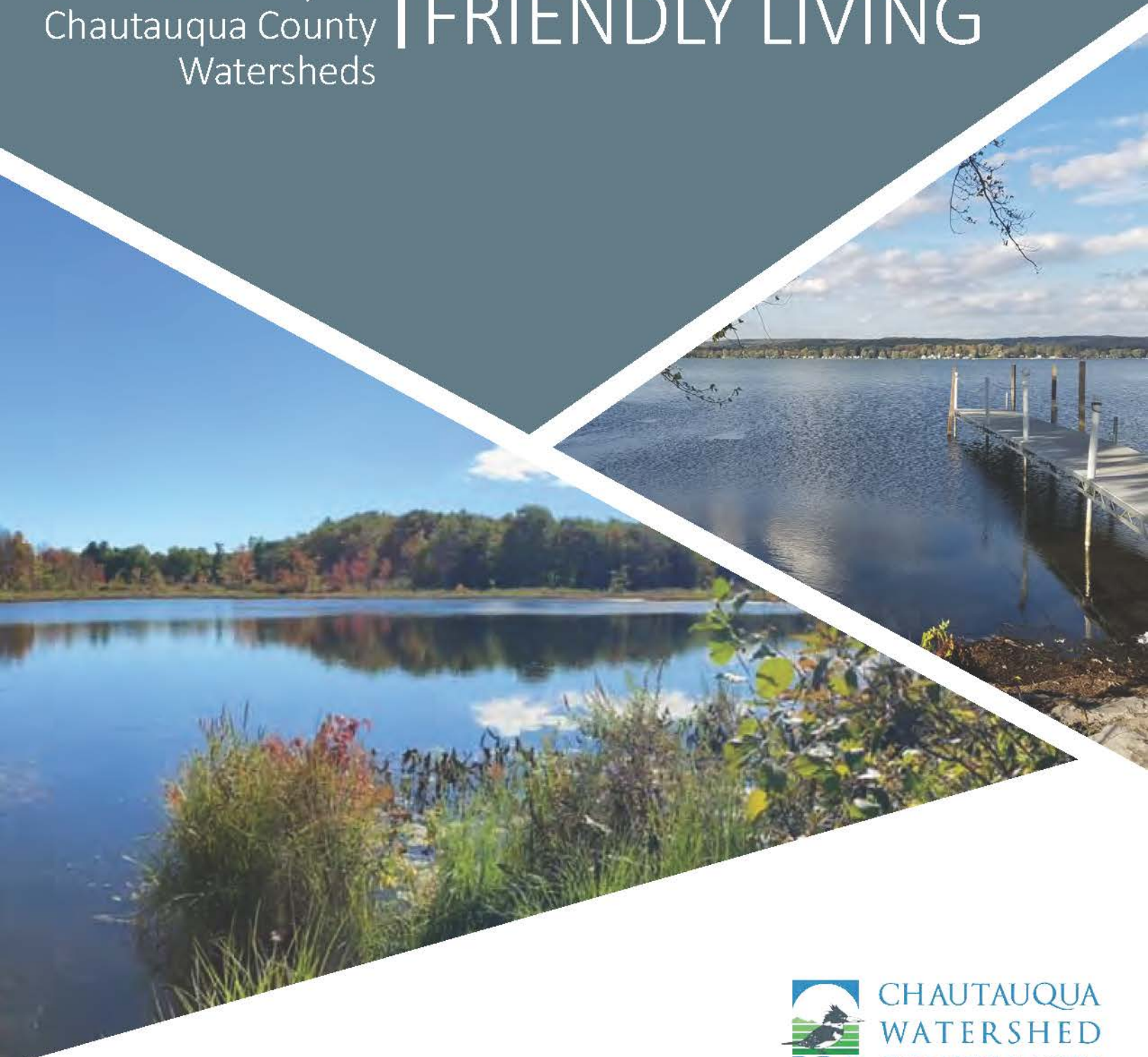


5 simple strategies
in your lawn and
landscape practices
that will preserve,
protect, and
enhance your
Chautauqua County
Watersheds

A HOMEOWNER'S GUIDE TO LAKE FRIENDLY LIVING



CHAUTAUQUA
WATERSHED
CONSERVANCY

"I am not separate from the ecology of my small yard – I am part and parcel of it. In many ways, I am its key player."

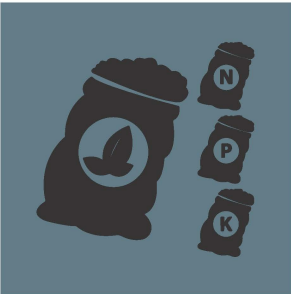
Welcome to Your Watershed!

You are part of a community of homeowners dedicated to protecting, improving and enhancing the health and water quality of our Chautauqua County lakes and waterways for your enjoyment and that of future generations!

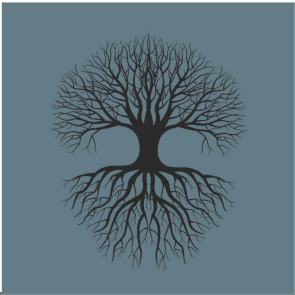
This guide addresses five best practices to help protect water quality, enhance your enjoyment of our lakes, and increase your investment in your property. So whether you are a full-time or seasonal resident, Chautauqua County depends on you to make responsible decisions and practice lake-friendly living. The real environmental power lies in the hands of committed landowners like you!

The natural areas that surround our lakes are vital to their existence. These areas protect our waterways and ensure a nice afternoon for boating, swimming, fishing, or simply enjoying the remarkable beauty and abundance of wildlife. Native trees, small shrubs and flowering plants are all designed by nature to protect our waters. The more natural areas we remove, the more our lakes will be negatively impacted by erosion and runoff. Eroded shorelines invite runoff carrying pollution into the water which can harm aquatic organisms including frogs and fish and promote the growth of aquatic weeds and harmful toxic algae. Simple acts such as keeping a healthy stand of shoreline vegetation, shrinking the size of your lawn, or reducing the amount of chemicals used in your landscape can go a long way to keeping our lakes healthy, clean and enjoyable year-round.

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Be Mindful of
Chemicals



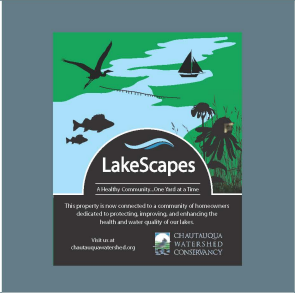
Capture & Filter
Nutrients



How You Mow
Matters



Be Wise With
Your Waste



CWC's LakeScapes
Program



Helpful Resources

Be Mindful of Chemicals



Misuse or overuse of fertilizers and pesticides can pollute our lakes through runoff and may lead to unhealthy conditions for your family and pets as well as our local birds and pollinators.

Limit pesticide and herbicide use and tolerate some weeds and insects in your yard. Skip the annual use of “weed and feed” products.

Try spot treating weeds with a vinegar, salt, and dish soap solution. It is a cheap and effective solution for weed control.

Don't be too quick to spray! Bugs are beneficial to many plants. Many also eat other insects and can provide the best natural pest control in your yard and gardens.

Plant natives! These plants are naturally disease-resistant, so you don't need chemicals. They are easy to grow and will instantly beautify your yard, attract pollinators, and help maintain a healthy landscape.

Fertilize once in the fall...if even at all!

If you must fertilize, focus on fall fertilization. It helps grass grow new roots and store nutrients for next year's growth. Spring fertilization can promote weeds in your lawn, and the extra nitrogen can lead to harmful algal blooms. Use slow-release or organic fertilizers. Their potential to negatively affect water quality is low compared to the normal weed-n-feed products.

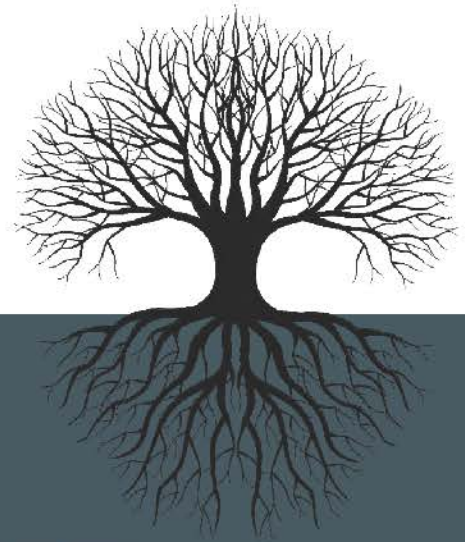
Always remember...The first two in the row should be low! (0-0-10)

Understand your fertilizer bag. Look for the three numbers, which represent the N-P-K nutrient analysis...Nitrogen (N), Phosphorus (P), and Potassium (K). A zero in the middle means it is phosphorus-free.

If you are considering using a lawn care service, these are all practices they can use on your lawn as well.

Capture & Filter Nutrients

Nutrient runoff and infiltration into our lakes can be greatly reduced by modifying a few simple landscape techniques.



Plant Natives!

Wildlife: they provide food and shelter for our local birds, butterflies, bees, and wildlife.

Low Maintenance: they're adapted to local soil, insects, and weather so that they need less water and have fewer pest problems!

Healthy Places for People: they don't need fertilizers or chemical pesticides and herbicides.

Helping the Climate: they don't need to be mowed, decreasing carbon exhaust. Our native trees are great at storing carbon dioxide and cleaning the air.

Slows Down Stormwater Flooding and Erosion: they thrive here and develop deep root systems that are better suited to absorb nutrients and runoff.

Re-seed Bare Spots

Rain runoff increases in thin, patchy lawns. Areas where grass struggles to grow are perfect locations for a shade-loving groundcover or a clover patch!

Water Less

Consider letting grass go dormant in the summer months. The tips may look brown, but the roots are still healthy. Less watering means less potential runoff. If you must water, do so in the morning. Cooler temperatures decrease evaporation, and the heat of the day allows grass to dry, minimizing disease.



How You Mow Matters

A few simple adjustments to your mowing routine can help keep our lakes free of excess nutrients AND actually give you a healthier, hardier yard!



Leave your bags and bagger behind!

Bagging grass and leaves is a waste of your time and money. Mulching your cut grass and leaves back into your lawn feeds the roots and beautifies and greens your grass. It also saves you money by not having to purchase fertilizer and not needing to rake, bag, and/or blow your leaves and grass.

Mow your grass 3" or higher.

Mowing too short or scalping stresses the grass plant, allowing weed seeds to get more sun and increase their growth and spread. Longer, taller grass slows the flow of water, shades out and prevents weeds, and creates stronger roots. Less fertilizer is required to keep the grass green, and deeper roots require less water.

Let's kick some grass!

Dandelions, clover, and other flowering plants in your lawn are wonderful habitat and food for early spring pollinators. Simply stop mowing a small chunk of your yard and transform the traditional manicured carpet of grass into something more ecologically beneficial. Avoid the use of pesticides and herbicides as they can be toxic to pollinators and other plant and animal species. It may also kill insects and caterpillars important for feeding baby birds. Enjoy the life in your lawn and leave it BEE!

Choose the best grass seed.

The key to a healthy lawn is seed and seed again. Overseeding is the most effective tool towards a lush green lawn and is easier, healthier, and cheaper than fertilizing. Tall fescue is best! It has the deepest root system of the cool-season grasses, does well in a variety of soil conditions, and grows in thick to shade out weeds.

Be Wise With Your Waste

Even natural, biodegradable materials – such as grass clippings, leaves, and pet poop – are high in nutrients and phosphorus. When disposed of improperly, they can find their way to our drinking water as well our local waterways.



Don't dump or blow yard waste!

Throwing or blowing your leaves and grass clippings into nearby waterways or over stream banks is considered littering. When leaf litter or yard waste is dumped into our lakes, streams, or ravines, it directly adds excess nutrients to the water and harms water quality. Instead, consider re-purposing and/or chipping your yard waste and fallen branches as mulch for your garden beds and other open spaces. Mow and mulch your grass and leaves right into your lawn to recycle and reuse free fertilizer.

Scoop pet poop properly!

Animal waste is one of the many seemingly small sources of pollution that can add up to big problems for water quality. It also carries disease and bacteria that can be detrimental to human health. Avoid these problems by scooping your pet's poop every time, using a biodegradable bag, and throwing it in the trash.

Maintain your septic system.

Pump out your septic system every 3-5 years. Cleaning and maintaining your septic system needs to be done on a regular basis or it is very unhealthy for your system, our local drinking water, and the health and safety of our nearby creeks and lakes.

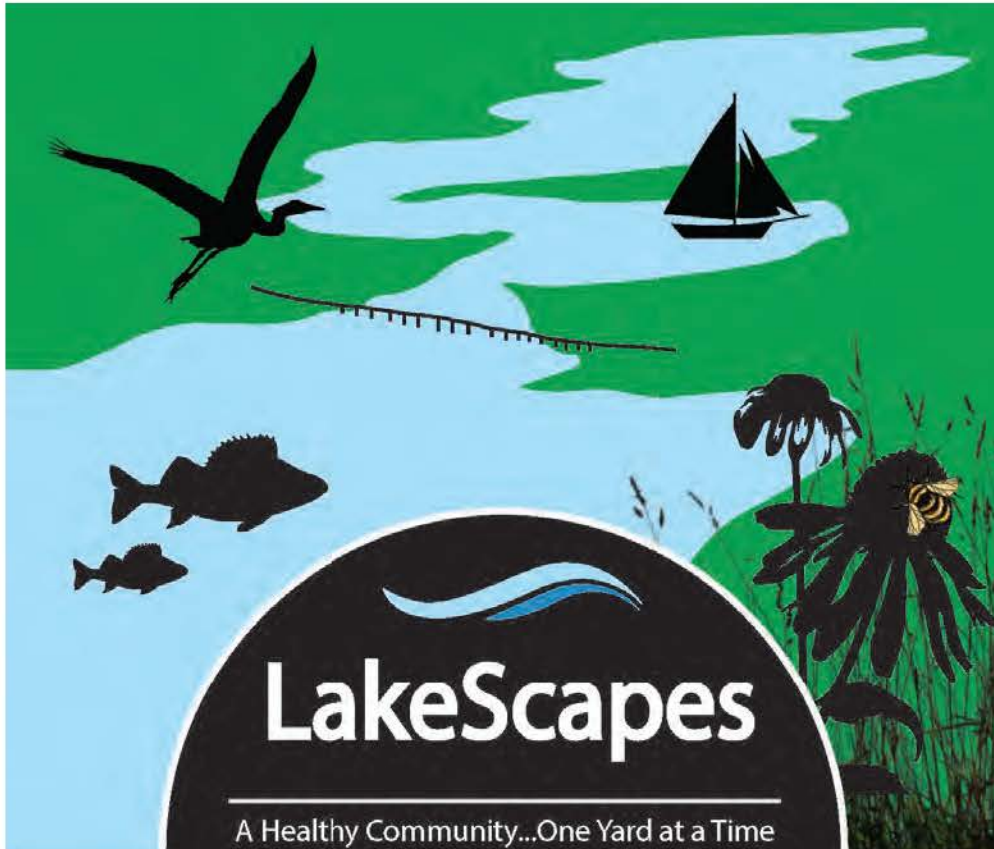
Need help implementing these lake-friendly practices in your yard?

The Chautauqua Watershed Conservancy is here to help with our FREE LakeScapes program!



Our Conservationist is excited to work with you to transform your yard into a healthy, beautiful and functional nutrient filter!

Even if your yard is small or not lakefront, our FREE yard consultation will make a difference to you and our lakes' water quality!




LakeScapes

A Healthy Community...One Yard at a Time

This property is now connected to a community of homeowners dedicated to protecting, improving, and enhancing the health and water quality of our lakes.

Visit us at
chautauquawatershed.org



**CHAUTAUQUA
WATERSHED
CONSERVANCY**

LakeScapes is a one-on-one educational program that provides a FREE personal at-home yard consultation to local homeowners and landowners and gives knowledge and guidance on easy ways to add lake-friendly landscaping and lawn care practices into your own yard!

We help guide you on ways to dry up wet areas in your yard, filter and clean water to help keep our waterways and your drinking water safe and healthy, and provide bees, birds, and other wildlife with food and places to live. We also discuss the importance of growing waterfront buffers, shrinking your lawn, and naturalizing your landscape. This all can be done by just making a few small changes in the way you landscape and maintain your lawn.

Our recommendations not only beautify your yard but also protect water quality, enhance your way of life and the wildlife that live and thrive within it! For more information or to schedule a free visit call 716.664.2166 ext. 1005, or email info@chautauquawatershed.org today!

Helpful Resources

LakeScapes Information & Education

Chautauqua Watershed Conservancy

716.664.2166 ext. 1005

info@chautauquawatershed.org

www.chautauquawatershed.org

Shoreline & Streambank Erosion Issues/Projects

Chautauqua County Soil & Water
Conservation District

716.664.2351 ext.5

chaut-co@soilwater.org

www.soilwater.org

Native Plant Lists

[Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper](https://bnwaterkeeper.org/projects/nativeplantguide/)

<https://bnwaterkeeper.org/projects/nativeplantguide/>

[Western NY Native Plants Collaborative](http://www.wnynativeplants.org/native-plants.html)

www.wnynativeplants.org/native-plants.html

[NYFA: NY Flora Atlas](https://newyork.plantatlas.usf.edu)

<https://newyork.plantatlas.usf.edu>

[Native Plant Finder](https://www.nwf.org/NativePlantFinder/)

<https://www.nwf.org/NativePlantFinder/>

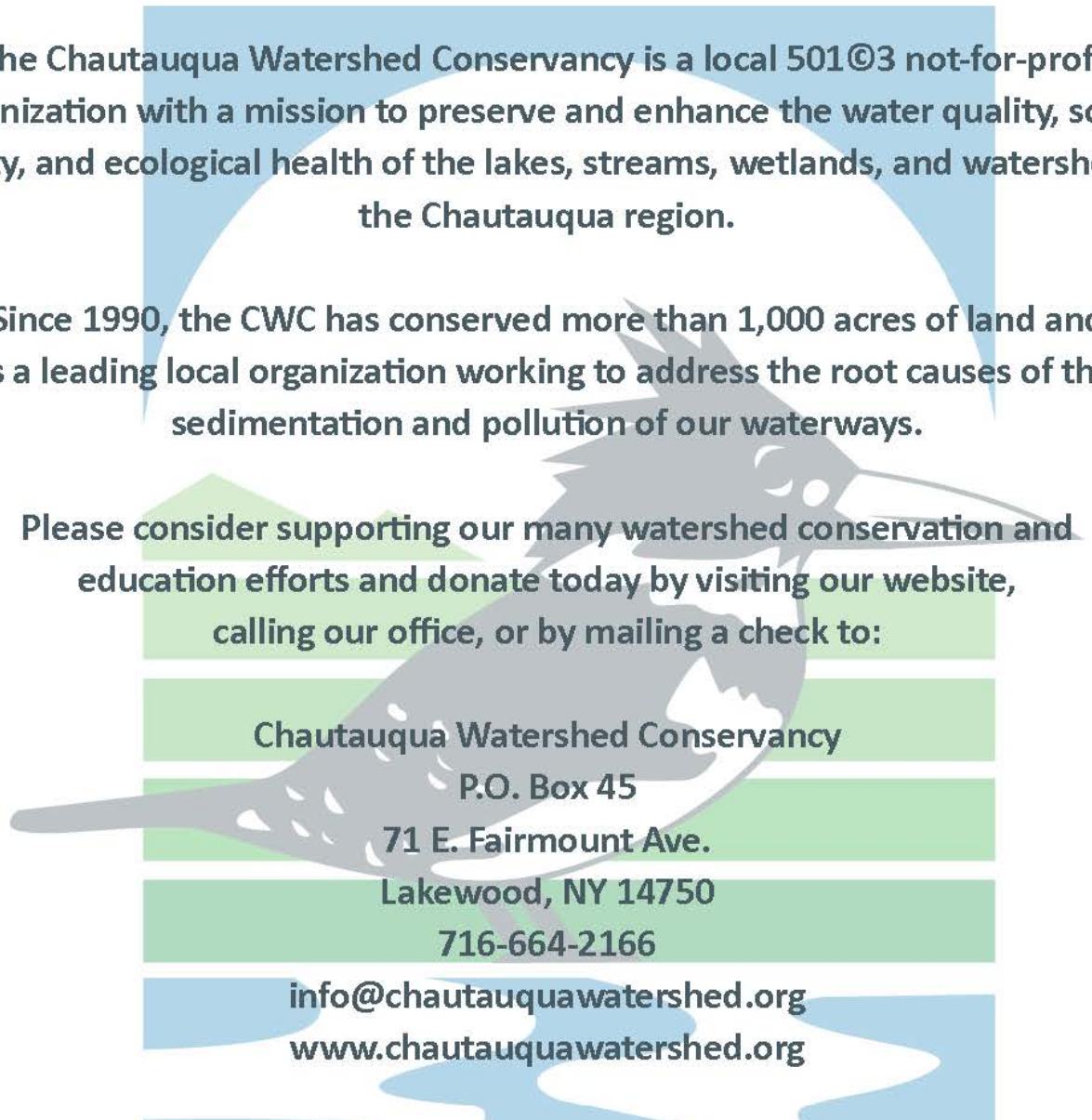
Local Soil Tests & Gardening Tips

Chautauqua County Master Gardeners

<http://chautauqua.cce.cornell.edu/gardening>

chautauquamg@cornell.edu 716.664.9502 ext. 224



The background features a stylized sun in the upper half, a bird in flight in the center, and wavy lines representing water at the bottom. The sun is a light blue circle with rays extending outwards. The bird is a dark grey silhouette with white highlights on its wings and tail. The water is represented by light blue wavy lines.

The Chautauqua Watershed Conservancy is a local 501©3 not-for-profit organization with a mission to preserve and enhance the water quality, scenic beauty, and ecological health of the lakes, streams, wetlands, and watersheds of the Chautauqua region.

Since 1990, the CWC has conserved more than 1,000 acres of land and is a leading local organization working to address the root causes of the sedimentation and pollution of our waterways.

Please consider supporting our many watershed conservation and education efforts and donate today by visiting our website, calling our office, or by mailing a check to:

Chautauqua Watershed Conservancy

P.O. Box 45

71 E. Fairmount Ave.

Lakewood, NY 14750

716-664-2166

info@chautauquawatershed.org

www.chautauquawatershed.org

The Education, Outreach, and Technical Assistance on Lake Friendly Lawncare and Landscaping for Homeowners on Bear, Cassadaga, and Findley Lakes Program supporting this mailing has been funded by a grant awarded by the Chautauqua County 2022 Occupancy Tax for Lakes and Waterways Grant Program.

