

Garden Report: March 2021

- **Red Oak Health:**
 - Extension Horticulture Educator Ryan Pankau has finalized plans to apply mycorrhizae and Cambistat around the Red Oak and is working with F&S. These will be applied in the next few weeks and will be followed by a guest blog to explain the importance of these practices.
- **Bridge Update:**
 - RORG Director Eliana Brown and volunteer Shannon Tucker report that we're on track to build the boardwalk bridge late-May/early-June. Micah Putman of Allerton Park has delivered Black Locust trees to The Woodshop, a local lumber mill, where they're being cut into lumber.
- **RORG Student Team:**
 - Sandra Bjerga has been helping to run the 2021 Mulch Madness native plant competition.
- **Monitoring:**
 - **CoCoRaHS** rain gauge watchers reported 4.01 inches of precipitation.
- **Observations of note:**
 - **March interest:** Spring ephemerals installed last year, including hundreds of Virginia Bluebells, Shooting Star, Wild Hyacinth, and tulips, have emerged and will begin to bloom over the next few weeks. Sedges have begun to flower and green up.
- **Social Media Highlights:**
 - Celebrated World Wildlife Day and St. Patrick's Day.
 - The annual Mulch Madness native plant competition began March 16 and will wrap up with the championship game on April 2. Participation has been slightly lower than last year, but still nearing 50,000 people reached across our website and Facebook, Instagram, & Twitter accounts.
- **Volunteer Highlights:**
 - Ten volunteers from the Champaign County Master Gardeners, East Central Illinois Master Naturalists, and University of Illinois worked March 22, 23, and 31 for spring care at the rain garden, logging 35 hours of volunteer work.
- **Presentations:**
 - RORG Director Eliana Brown and RORG Landscape Designer Layne Knoche gave RORG presentations:
 - March 13: Vermillion County Master Gardener Garden Day Workshop
 - March 18: Think Spring Gardening Series
 - March 23: Allerton Park and Retreat Center Rain Garden Workshop
 - March 30: Leadership Illinois
 - RORG Director Eliana Brown presented at the Indiana Master Watershed Steward Program.
- **Published Blogs:**
 - In the Garden: March
 - Mulch Madness 2021: Hold on to your gardening hats, sports fans!
- **Progress toward Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation Grant (as of 02/28/21):**
 - **Volunteer Stewardship to be completed by 8/31/21.**
 - Physical: 307.5 hours. [Need 400 hours to receive \$4,000.]
 - Social Media: **Completed in December 2020.**
 - **Donation Match**
 - Goal of \$7,000 was completed in January 2021.**

