

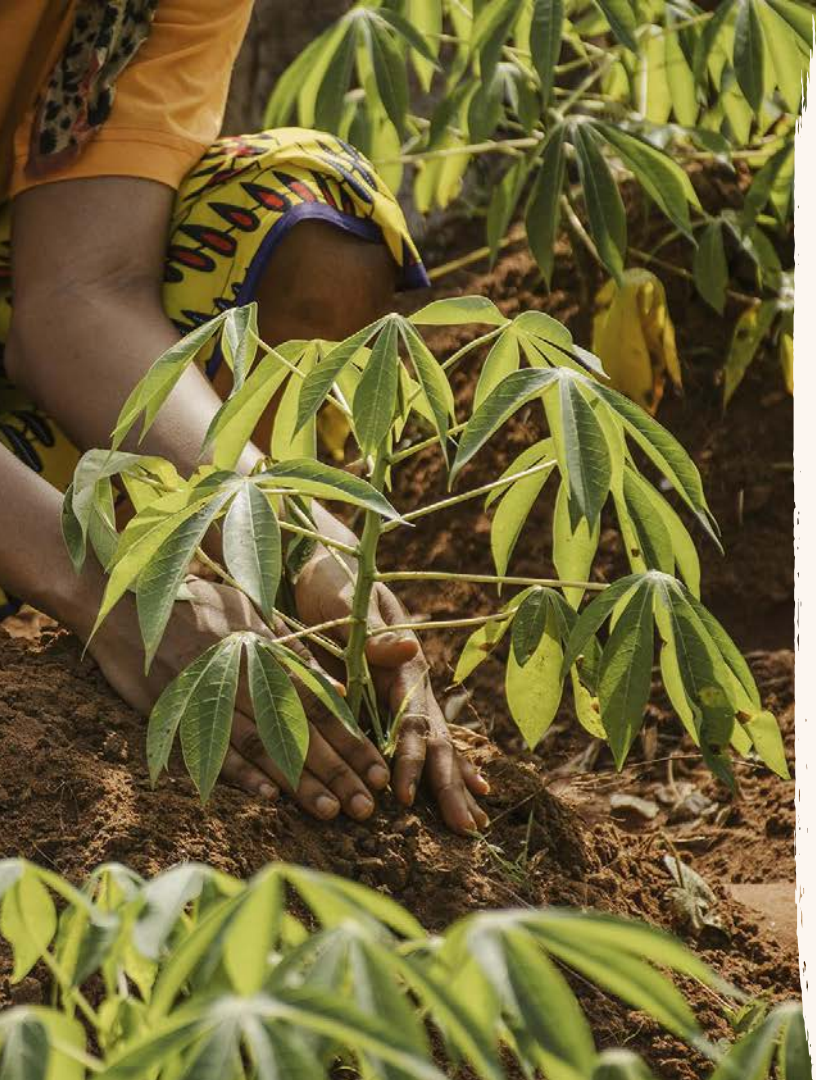
City of Evanston Sustainability Initiatives

Liam Engel and Ajiah Gilbert, Sustainability Fellows
City of Evanston, Office of Sustainability

Climate Resilient Communities Series

Collaboration with Evanston Public Library

- > Environmental Racism
and Community Gardens
- > Fire + Flood: Queer
Resilience in the Era of
Climate Change
- > Earth Month in Evanston



Environmental Racism and Community Gardens

Ajiah Gilbert

Goal

- Highlight Black voices doing work directly in their communities.
- Help Evanston residents understand the connection between sovereignty and gardening.
- Discuss the lost connection to land Black Americans suffer due to the negative impacts of slavery.



Participants

Dominique Edwards, M.A.: Black urban planner from Northwest Indiana. Vice-Chair of the Michigan City Sustainability Commission, Northern Region Representative of the American Planning Association's Indiana Chapter, and is a Board Member and founding member of the NWI Food Council

Maia Robinson & Nia Williams: Evanston natives and core members of the organization Evanston Fight For Black Lives.

Nia is studying bioengineering Biological Engineering at North Carolina A&T State University.

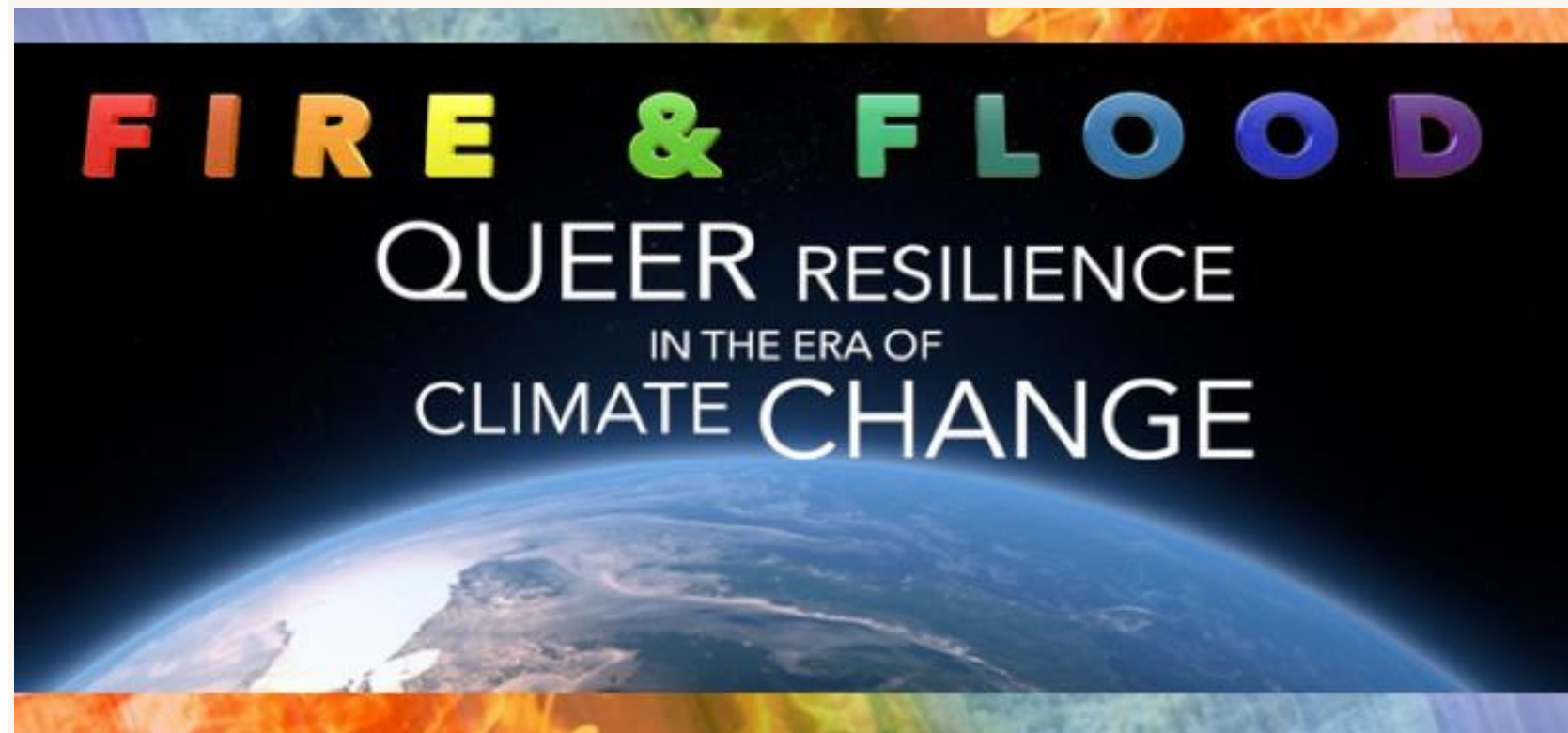
Maia is studying Sociology at Barnard College, Columbia University

Both are them are working towards creating a community garden in the 5th ward of Evanston, a predominantly Black neighborhood.



Discussion Questions

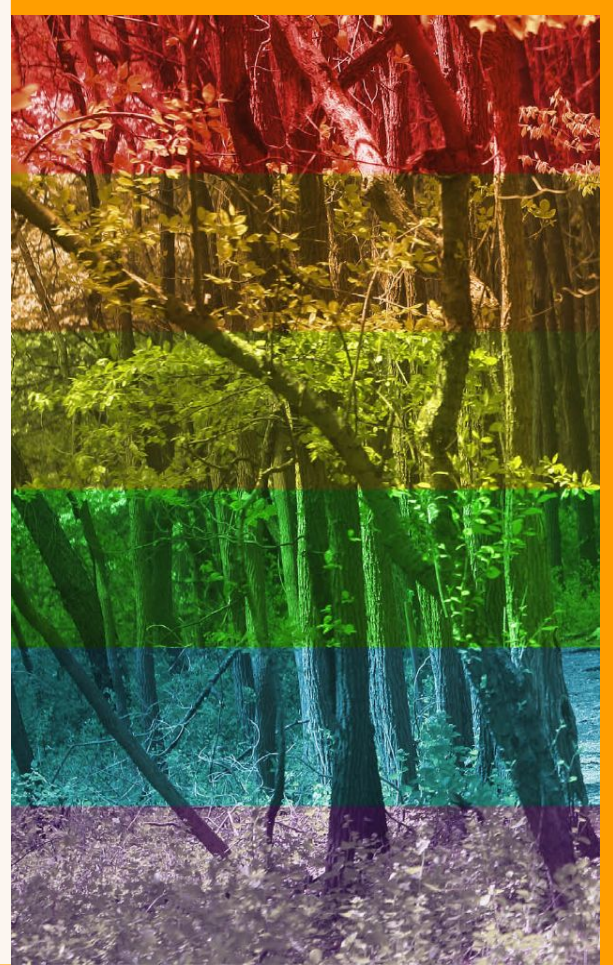
- As a child what was your impression of gardening and the manual labor that comes with it? Did you grow up in a household that encouraged gardening/outdoor labor?
- Do you think the community gardens already established in Evanston are accessible to the Black population? Why or why not?
- What would complete food sovereignty look like in your community? Do you think that it is achievable?
- What other things have Black/Brown people in your neighborhood reclaimed once lost to them?
- What other systemic environmental issues impact your community? What are ways the community is working to improve those issues?



Liam Engel

Goals

- Focus on queer indigenous perspectives.
- Discuss intersections of climate change and marginalized communities.
- Connect Evanston more closely to its indigenous history.



Outline

- Collaborated with Mitchell Museum of the American Indian to create discussion questions
- Contacted environmental organizations and promoted in City Sustainability newsletter



- Watched “Queer Resilience” film
- Discussed film’s indigenous, queer perspective
- Shared resources document and brief survey

Outcomes

- “More time!! This could have been a week long discussion!”
- “The discussion afterward was humbling for an older person like me. The level of discourse was superior..I’m inspired to learn more and grateful for exposure to more angles of environmental justice.”
- “I would love to discuss LGBTQ topics more often and also to connect with other evanstonians.”



Earth Month in Evanston

Liam Engel & Ajiah Gilbert

Reduce Waste Challenge

During the first week of Earth Month, residents were encouraged to focus on reducing their personal waste:

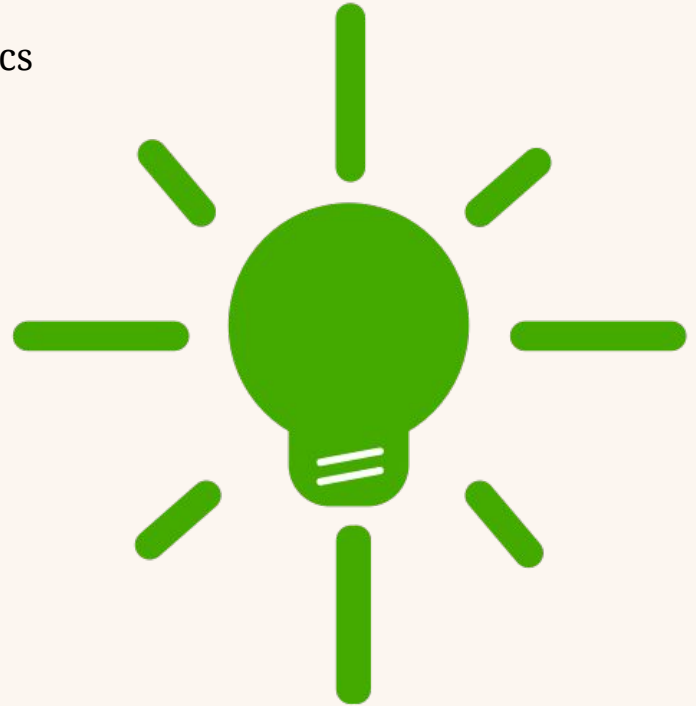
- Sign up to compost your food and yard waste or make a backyard compost to substantially reduce your garbage
- Look into changing waste service options to fit your needs
- Reduce garbage to a 65-gallon bin, or get another recycling bin for no extra charge
- Recycle the special items left around your home (electronics, plastic bags, light bulbs)
- Find a donation site for almost anything from your Spring Clean
- Check on your home's water usage
- Remove yourself from some pesky junk mailing lists
- Make sure to dispose of all PPE in the garbage



Energy Week Challenge

During the second week of Earth Month, residents are encouraged to participate in the following activities in order to help save energy:

- Turn off lights and unplugging all inactive electronics
- Turn down the thermostat
- Spend time outside and away from digital screens
- Sign up for the ComEd At Home Energy Assessment

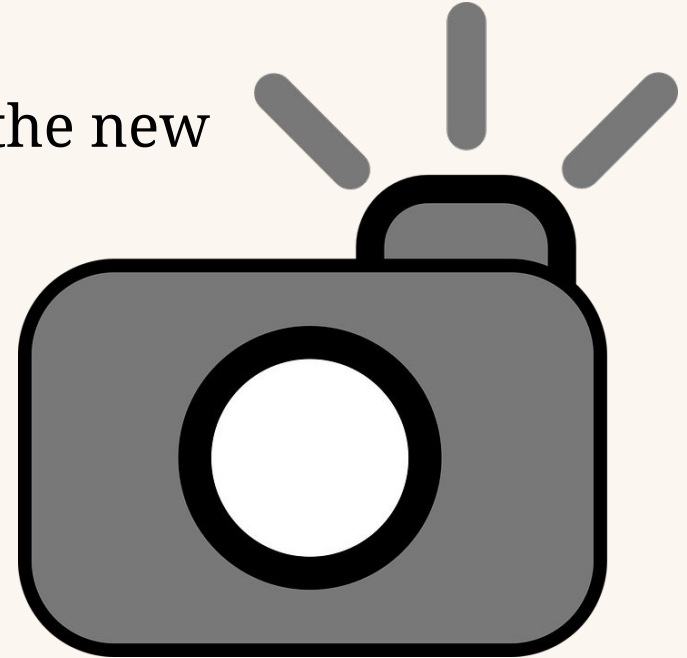


Nature Photo Challenge

Urban Wildlife - Capture a local Evanston species

Spring Arrival - Find the essence of the new season

Abstract Environment - Look at the environment in a new light



Urban Wildlife by Mike Roche



Spring Arrival by Jadon Brammer

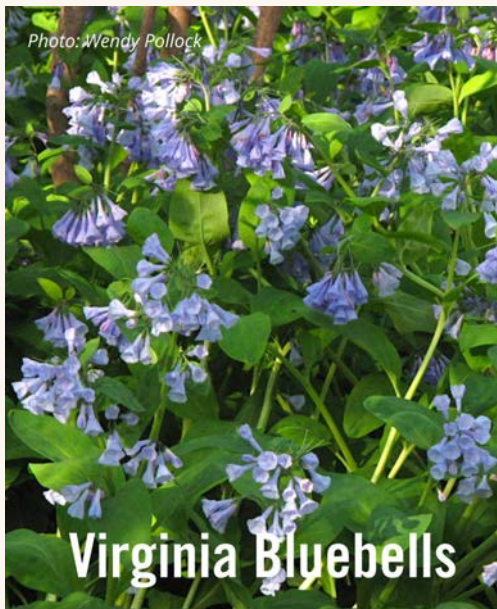


Abstract Environment by Vandell Cobb



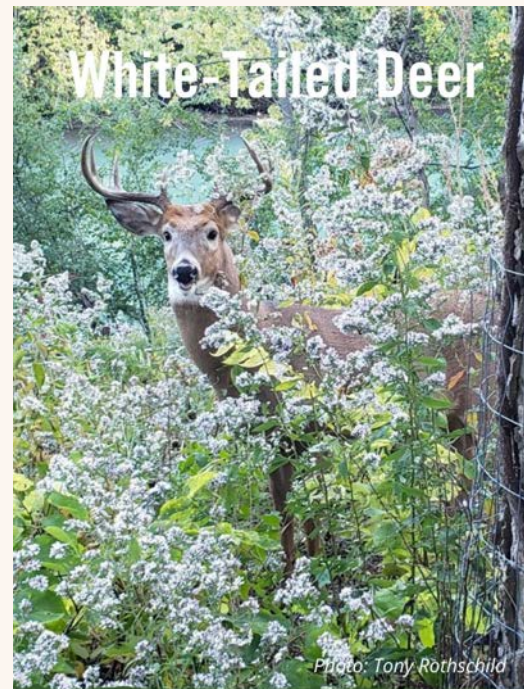
Nature Week

During the fourth week of Earth Month, residents were encouraged to visit the City of Evanston's Instagram story daily for pictures and fun facts about different flora and fauna living throughout Evanston.



Virginia Bluebells

Bluebells thrive and spread in moist areas. Their thick roots are good at holding water in rain gardens, even after they have died down for the season. Bluebells are thriving in this rain garden behind the Ecology Center.



White-Tailed Deer

This commonly found deer species is frequently spotted along the North Shore Channel. This 8-point buck was seen last fall in the Ladd Arboretum.

Community Wide Events





Thank you