

Master Gardener Volunteer Opportunities

Master Gardener Office

If you enjoy learning, investigating and helping others then we invite you to come to the Master Gardener office and help homeowners with their landscape questions. You can volunteer at the main office in Fort Pierce or our south county office in Port St. Lucie. You can volunteer for an hour or all day if you would like there is not a time requirement.

Functions:

Answer any horticulture questions that come into the office either over the phone or in person

Perform soil tests (PH)

Research answers to questions using the internet or in resource books

Send out research based materials to homeowners if requested via email or occasionally by mail

Special skills desirable:

Desire to research answers to questions

Enjoy talking to members of the public

Shade House

Master Gardeners are at the Shade House on Monday and Thursday mornings.

Activities include:

Propagation of plant materials or seeds

Repotting plant materials

Plant identification and labeling

Weed, water and maintain the nursery

Sell plants to the public

Organize plant sales (twice a year)

 Pricing

 Weeding

 Grouping plants together as labeled

Monday mornings - 9:00 am to 12:00

in the Shade House behind the Extension office

Thursday mornings - 9:00 am to 12:00

in the Shade House behind the Extension office

Special skills desirable:

Ability to propagate and transplant (group members teach each other)

Interest in plant id

Nature Walk Garden

The Nature Walk Garden is one of our Demonstration Gardens. It is a beautiful quiet area located across the parking lot on the west side of the Extension property. You can be a part of the committee as well as helping to keep the

garden maintained.

Special skills desirable:

Ability to weed and maintain the garden on a regular basis

Plant / relocate plants after Anita and committees approval

Front Entrance / Court Yard Garden

The front entrance has a wonderful variety of plants and two ponds. It is the first area that visitors see when they come to the Extension office and is in need of some Master Gardener's to keep it looking good. The courtyard garden is a semi-shade garden

Special skills desirable:

Ability to weed and maintain the garden on a regular basis

Plant / relocate plants after discussion with Anita

Butterfly Garden

The Butterfly Garden is on the west side of the entrance between the building and parking lot / Nature Walk garden. Our butterfly garden is always in need of a few hands to keep it inviting to our flying friends.

Special skills desirable:

Ability to weed and maintain the garden on a regular basis

Plant / relocate plants after discussion with Anita

Discovery Garden

The Discovery Garden is located inside the chain-linked fenced area next to the shade house. It is home to a variety of plants including many that do well in our area. It also has an experimental area where we will discover which new plants will do well in our area. You can be a part of the committee as well as keeping the garden maintained.

Special skills desirable:

Ability to weed and maintain the garden on a regular basis

Plant / relocate plants after Anita and committees approval

Salt Tolerant

The Salt Tolerant garden is located on the east side of the entrance between the building and parking lot/ large pond. It is home to not only salt tolerant plants but coastal hardscapes and a 'beach' mural. Help is needed to keep the garden maintained.

Special skills desirable:

Ability to weed and maintain the garden on a regular basis

Plant / relocate plants after Anita and committees approval

Wind Tolerant

The wind Tolerant Garden is located outside the Hurricane House. It is home to a variety of plants that can be used in areas that might have a lot of wind exposure. Help is needed to keep the garden maintained.

Special skills desirable:

Ability to weed and maintain the garden on a regular basis

Plant / relocate plants after Anita and committees approval

Landscape Retrofit Program

Our Landscape Retrofit program is designed to help homeowners with specific problems in their landscape; a spot where nothing seems to grow, problem plants, unhealthy plants, help with right plant right place and more. We have a Port St. Lucie and Fort Pierce group of Master Gardeners available, a group of 2 to 3 volunteers go out to homeowner's properties for this service.

Functions:

Assist homeowners with plant identification

Offer a variety of suggested plant material that would work well in their yard

Write a follow-up letter for what was discussed / suggested; send the draft to Kate so it can be proofed and sent out on letterhead with any additional informational materials needed.

Special skills desirable:

Enjoy talking to members of the public

Desire to research answers to questions

Plant identification

Writing a short summary

Florida Friendly Landscaping™ Program (FFL), Homeowner Recognition

The Florida Friendly Landscaping™ homeowner recognition program is an educational outreach program informing homeowners how they can be more environmentally friendly with their landscape care practices and how this can help protect Florida's natural environment for future generations. A homeowner's landscape has to follow Florida Friendly Landscaping™ principles in order to have their yard recognized.

This is often done during a retrofit. Master Gardeners (2 to 3) will go out to the homeowner's property and recognize it using the FFL Yard recognition checklist. This checklist is broken up into the 9 FFL principles and the homeowner has to receive a certain number of "inches" (points) in each of the 9 categories in order to have their yard recognized.

The FFL recognition forms get sent back to Kate after you complete the process so she can send them a certificate. They may choose to receive a yard recognition sign that may be placed after completion. A picture of the homeowner with their

sign can be taken.

Speakers Bureau

This is a great opportunity for Master Gardeners to get out into the community and speak with local organizations; Garden clubs, women's groups, home owners associations etc. If there is a topic you are passionate about or one that you would like to create a presentation about and enjoy talking to groups then being a part of the speaker's bureau is an ideal volunteer opportunity. There are usually 1-2 Master Gardener speakers that go out at a time for this program.

Equipment; laptop, LCD projector and screen are available for loan from the Extension office. All equipment needs to be signed out ahead of time.

You will be given a form that needs to be filled out to include demographic information from the presentation audience. This form should be returned to Kate upon completion.

Functions:

Provide researched based information to the group you are addressing

Provide materials online to your audience pertaining to the topic presented, send to Kate ahead of time so it can be put on the website

Special skills desirable:

Ability to speak in front of an audience

Ability to answer questions and the desire to research answers to questions

School Programs

School Gardens

Local school teachers often call upon Master Gardeners for help in starting a school garden. This is a great opportunity for you to assist them with any questions they may have and a chance for you to offer your expertise in starting an appropriate garden for their needs e.g. Vegetable or Butterfly garden.

The Junior Master Gardener Program curriculum is also offered to teachers.

This is filled with activities they can do in their school garden. They are loaned the curriculum and supplemental materials for a 2 month period.

Functions:

Provide educational information to students

Provide hands on activities pertaining to the topic area

Special skills desirable:

Enjoy working with youth

Fort Pierce Farmers Market

We have a plant clinic booth that is set up at the Farmers Market in down town Fort Pierce on the 1st and 3rd Saturday of the month from 8 – 12 noon during season. (October – April). Usually 2 – 3 Master Gardeners volunteer each time.

Activities:

Assist with set up, tear down table and display materials
Answer horticultural questions, or get contact information to later provide a response after the topic is researched
Provide printed information (hand outs) for upcoming events etc

Special skills desirable:

Enjoy talking to members of the public

Desire to research answers to questions – back at the office

Heathcote Botanical Garden

Located at 210 Savannah Road, Fort Pierce, Fl 34982

(772) 464 – 4672

Heathcote is home to a botanical garden displaying many subtropical plants with themed gardens and plant collections, including an extensive collection of Bonsai. We do joint programming with them on a regular basis and they appreciate the Master Gardeners help whenever possible.

Functions:

Assist with maintenance and upgrading the garden

Possibly lead tours

Activities:

Pull weeds

Pruning

Plant new areas

Participate in some aspect of the tours, as guide or helper

Special skills desirable:

Knowledge of Heathcote plants (for tour guide)

Port St. Lucie Botanical Garden

Located at 2410 Westmoreland Blvd, Port St. Lucie Fl 34952

(772) 337-1959 Contact: pslgardens@att.net

This botanical garden has a number of garden rooms, including a large butterfly garden. We do joint programming with them and they would appreciate Master Gardener help whenever possible

Functions:

Assist with maintenance and upgrading the garden

Possibly lead tours

Activities:

Pull weeds

Pruning

Plant new areas

Participate in some aspect of the tours, as guide or helper

Special skills desirable:
Knowledge of the plants (for tour guide)

Oxbow Eco Learning Center

Located at 5400 St. James Dr. Port St. Lucie, FL 34983

(772) 785-5842

The Oxbow is an Environmental Learning Center. They have a large area of native plants, walking trails and wildlife.

Activities:

Under the direction of the volunteer coordinator

Pull weeds

Pruning

Plant new areas

Savannas Preserve State Park

Located at 2541 Walton Road, Port St. Lucie, 34952

772-398-2779

<http://www.floridastateparks.org/savannas/default.cfm>

Volunteers can assist in maintaining the education center demonstration gardens.

Activities:

Under the direction of the Savannas staff

Pull weeds

Pruning

Plant new areas

Master Gardener Mentor

This is an opportunity to mentor trainee Master Gardeners throughout their 12 weeks of training.

Functions:

To be available to answer any questions related to the training materials, tests and assignments

To be able to direct trainee to the appropriate resources in order to get the information they need

To increase the comfort level of the trainee to feel more a part of the program by including them in volunteer opportunities

Outreach Committee

The marketing committee is responsible for creating ideas that inform the public about the Master Gardener Program and what Extension offers; to include:

Garden Tours/Programs
Displays for fairs
Informational materials
Advertising sub committee

All forms from any programs need to be given to Kate O'Neill upon completion.
If you have any questions regarding any of the volunteer opportunities please
don't hesitate to call Kate @ (772) 462-1660 or email: Kasmi@ufl.edu
Thank you for volunteering!