

Battle Creek Nature Center Gardens

2022 Annual Report

Project Leader: Tania Gale Tania.Gale@CalvertCountyMD.gov 410-535-5327

Volunteers: 1

Hours: 10

Volunteers assist with maintaining the areas around the Battle Creek Nature Center including: gardens, nature play space, and trails. Volunteers assist staff with weeding, watering, deadheading, preparing garden beds, mulching, and general clean-up. From invasive plant removal, to routine garden care, to maintaining the nature play space and trails - there is always something to be done.

SKILLS NEEDED

- Basic gardening skills & knowledge.
- Be able to work with minimal guidance or supervision.
- We can help train those with little experience.

Optional, but Preferred, Skills

- Be able to answer visitors' questions about Calvert County plants, animals, and ecosystems.
- Learn how to identify native species as well as non-native & invasive species.

VOLUNTEER DUTIES

- Weeding
- Watering
- Transplanting
- Composting & Mulching
- Identifying & Tagging Plants
- Preparing new garden beds
- Adding hardscaping like benches, stepping stones, pavers
- Cutting back plants from along trail edges
- Weed nature play space

REQUIREMENTS & EXPECTATIONS

- Volunteers must be able to perform moderately strenuous physical tasks.
- Work somewhat independently – after direction from naturalist staff.
- Volunteers must be able to perform moderately strenuous physical tasks.
- Be exposed to ticks, chiggers, mosquitoes, bees/wasps, poison ivy, bad weather, and other wild life

TRAININGS

- Attend new volunteer orientation with project leader
- Meet with project leader onsite for a work day

Seasonal Project duties

- **Spring:** prep beds, acquire new plants, work with Garden Club to get some plants for them to plant, plant new plants, water new plants, etc
- **Summer:** weed, water garden beds
- **Fall:** weed, water as needed, deadhead, mulch beds as available
- **Throughout the year:** weed, prune shrubs, clean up nature play space, prune along trails

Summary of 2022 Activities

Starting early in spring we had volunteers come out to help with the gardens. Sometimes it was only 1, but even that was a big help to staff in keeping things looking presentable. Here's some examples of projects we did:

- Weed – always, but especially early in the season which was a huge help in keeping things under control later in the season
- Fencing – putting up temporary boundaries to keep visitors out of the gardens and protect the plants
- Pruning – later in the season we worked on collecting woody material from the garden beds and pruning back the shrubs
- Get volunteers to use Galaxy Digital to register for opportunities – the spring opportunities were not put on Galaxy (not sure how that happened). It may be that my one volunteer did not record any (or not all) of her hours for this opportunity.
- A few new plants were planted – including some new Christmas ferns donated by Carol Russell
- After the November fire – a boardwalk was constructed over part of the garden to help workers to access the basement of the nature center where the worst of the fire damage happened. Some of our shrubs in the lower section of the garden close to the lower pond had to be cut back/taken out to help ease access.
- A list of interpretive signs to ID certain plants and promote the positives of native/natural gardens was collected and a PO was turned in
- Make a more permanent barrier to define the edges of the garden beds – a PO was turned in for these
- A map of the garden was created identifying planted areas and types of plants

Future Plans

- Schedule work days through the growing season to continue to plant the garden beds as access/construction allows.
- Incorporate some of the ideas from the Baywise Garden write-up
- Have an end-of-the-season appreciation event with a speaker (maybe someone from Baywise?)
- Continue to work on having something of interest in each season – as well as available for wildlife
- Re-plant the garden beds currently under the boardwalk-ed area
- While fire cleanup/construction are happening, meet monthly with volunteers to weed and maintain what we can and perhaps focus on the rectangular bed closest to the nature center and the small bed adjacent to the parking lot.

Supporting Calvert County's nature parks and natural spaces



CALVERT STEWARDS

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

A partnership between Calvert Nature Society and Calvert County Natural Resources Division

2022 Annual Report

Date of Issue March 2023

CALVERT STEWARDS VOLUNTEER PROGRAM
c/o Natural Resources Division
2880 Grays Road
Prince Frederick, MD 20678
(410) 535-5327

Volunteer Portal: <https://calvertstewards.galaxydigital.com/>

Calvert Nature Society: www.calvertparks.org

Calvert County Natural Resources Division:
www.calvertcountymd.gov/NaturalResources

