

MASTER GARDENER
UF UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA
 IFAS Extension

107 Mehrhof Hall
 PO Box 110675
 Gainesville, FL 32611-0675
 Phone: (352) 273-4521
 Fax: (352) 392-1413
<http://mastergardener.ifas.ufl.edu>

Form 10

Florida Master Gardener Awards and Recognition Form Awards of Excellence

Each county is allowed **ONE ENTRY PER CATEGORY**. Although your Master Gardener Coordinator may have been heavily involved in this effort, only the efforts of the Master Gardeners themselves are to be evaluated. Points will be deducted if it is perceived that most of the effort or submission of entry forms came from the Master Gardener Coordinator.

Only efforts made since the last awards ceremony will be considered by the judges. Any new or re-certified active Florida Master Gardener(s) are eligible. In the event your entry does **not** take top honors in this category this year, we would encourage you to improve your submission and resubmit your entry next year should you *repeat or continue* this project. If your project has won in **ANY** year, it **CANNOT BE RE-ENTERED** again, despite any significant changes in format or participants.

Judges for the awards shall be appointed by the State Master Gardener Program Leader, University of Florida. Decisions by the judges will be final.

ALL APPLICATIONS MUST BE SUBMITTED IN ELECTRONIC FORMAT

SEE BELOW FOR APPLICATION CRITERIA:

The correct and completed award application forms including:

- A typed application form not to exceed 3 pages in length. Supporting materials (where requested may be additional pages)
 - The three pages must include the 150 word project summary.
- 12 point font
- No more than 8 photographs in addition to the three pages of text. (Photos no larger than 8 x 10)
- This form typed and completed including: appropriate category checked
- Name of MG Coordinator (The coordinator must approve application prior to admission)
- Application, photos and supporting materials must all be in PDF format and packaged into one document. Submissions are to be emailed to: twichman@ufl.edu

County: Orange County

Name of Project: Demonstration and Exploration Garden Project

Project start date: 2010 Project end date: On going

Name of person(s) typing application: Angel Sanchez, Paulette Smith

Name or names of Master Gardeners preparing application: Angel Sanchez, Paulette Smith

Name of Agent: Ed Thralls

CATEGORY: Indicate only one category per entry form. *You must assign your entry to a specific category to be considered for an award in that category.* **Entries are limited to the categories indicated below.**

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Form 11 Beautification | <input type="checkbox"/> Form 18 Personal Communications |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Form 12 Demonstration Garden | <input type="checkbox"/> Form 19 Service to 4-H and other youth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Form 13 Educational Materials Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Form 20 Special Audiences |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Form 14 Extension Awareness | <input type="checkbox"/> Form 22 Written or Verbal Mass Comm. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Form 15 County Displays/Exhibits | <input type="checkbox"/> Form 23 County Master Gardener Newsletter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Form 16 General Achievement | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Form 17 Outstanding Master Gardener | |

Email PDF Applications to:

Tom Wichman
twichman@ufl.edu

TO BE ELIGIBLE ALL ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY AUGUST 1, 2012

FLORIDA MASTER GARDENER DEMONSTRATION/ EDUCATIONAL GARDEN AWARD

Give a brief explanation of the scope of the demonstration garden. Please describe educational components of the garden and number of Master Gardeners involved and hours spent. Please provide a list of all Master Gardeners who participated in this project.

In 2007 the offices of the UF/IFAS Extension in Orange County were moved to our current site on Conway Road. This 14-acre site is home to our educational classrooms, auditorium, and offices. In 2010 the Garden was started using plans developed by a local landscape architect to build seven separate specialty gardens connected by main walkways through the gardens. In 2012 we were able to have the official Grand Opening of the Exploration Gardens. The site where the gardens and offices are located was the location where Orange County residents were instructed to bring hurricane debris in 2004. After the severity of that hurricane season, large equipment was continually running on our site, unknowingly drastically compacting the soil. Today, we are still facing many drainage challenges in the Exploration Gardens. To combat the poor drainage we have added French drainage tile lines, swales, and have used a large auger to penetrate the hardpan where new trees were being planted.

Overview of gardens: (Attachment 1)

The **Event Garden** (attachment 2) provides a formal layout and gives homeowners the opportunity to see a variety of plants for home landscapes. Plants feature small trees, formal hedges, and a rotating display of seasonal annual flowers.

A **Butterfly Garden** (Attachment 3) contains a collection of cool season, warm season and perennial plants that support the full life cycle of Florida's native butterflies. It provides nectar sources for adult butterflies, therefore, attracting the adults to visit the garden. Other plants provide food for the caterpillar stage of the butterfly's life, a key element to keeping the adults around to lay eggs and complete their life cycle.

The **Eco Garden** (Attachment 4) is designed to educate residents on turf alternatives, ground covers, edible landscaping, and native plants. This area include lawn grasses and beds that are planted with low maintenance grass plant alternatives like perennial peanut, confederate jasmine, sensitive plant, and others. This garden does not contain an irrigation system so what grows here survives on average rainfall and occasional hand watering.

A **Home and Small Farm Vegetable Garden** (Attachment 5) showcases various methods for homeowners to grow vegetables: raised vegetable garden beds that are ideal for limited space, poor soil; container vegetable gardens demonstrate the versatility and ability to grow vegetables in small areas; floating hydroponic beds demonstrate that no soil is needed at all to grow certain crops reliably and dependably. Composting demonstration area are included.

The **Bog Garden** (Attachment 6) collects much of the rainwater that falls on the site, and because of soil compaction it, creates a very wet, muddy area. The plants chosen for the Bog Garden are specifically suited to these conditions and include native bald cypress trees and a wide variety of grasses and other plants that can tolerate "wet feet" and grow in standing water.

An area for **Fruit Trees** (Attachment 7) showcases over thirty varieties of fruit trees for central Florida. Each tree is labeled with the variety and harvest season as well as any special cold protections or requirements.

In the **Succulent Garden** (Attachment 8), plants with low water needs are adapted to survive with very little water and receive no regular irrigation. Various succulents, agaves, and other xerophytic plants are chosen for different textures and colors.

In 2012 the following Master Gardeners volunteered over 460 hours, a value of **\$8,733**, to the Gardens.

Anderson, Marquita	Deere, Connie	Medina-Paz, Pablo	Rhoads, Sue
Berendzen, Ann	Dunay, Regina	Megill, Nancy	Rodeheffer, Jon
Bird, Carolyn	Engwall, Yvonne Mary	Nandwani, Tony	Sanchez, Angel
Bostrom, Sharon	Jespersen, Carol	Paisley, Pam	Sappington, Diane
Buckalew, Buck	Kocol, Rob	Panchal, Ramesh	Selch, Rodge
Case, Max	Lewis, Gary	Patz, Eric	Stopford, Phyllis L.
Christensen, John	Matzick, Cyndi	Polgar, Anna	Tellechea, Lisa
Davis, Jeanne	McDowell, Wendy	Potter, Penny	Webb-Walker, Doreen
de Nijs, Sandra	McKinney, Marianne	Radosevich, James	Wild, Dena
			Wilson, Pam
			Wint, Karen
			Winzig, Frank

What was the intended purpose of the demonstration garden and the actual or potential audience reached?

The primary purpose for creating and maintaining the Exploration Gardens is education. The Exploration Gardens serve as a key resource in providing basic environmentally friendly horticulture by teaching proper planting, maintenance, plant care, fertilizing, water management, pest control and key plant selection to Orange County residents. Orange County has more than 1,000,000 residents and a projected growth of 2% annually.

How was the site evaluated according to its effectiveness as an educational demonstration?

The Gardens are evaluated through an online and a paper survey. The Facebook site, Garden Florida! UF/IFAS Orange County Extension was developed and opened to the public in December of 2011, available at www.facebook.com/gardenflorida and was viewed over 4,000 times per month. At the end of November 2012, this page was “Liked” by 256 followers and had average of three posts made weekly.

What were the results of this demonstration garden?

37 classes or educational tours were taught and 343 people attended Exploration Gardens programs in 2012. Florida's nursery industry and retailers supported the gardens by donating more than 800 plants with a value of \$10,720.

How has this demonstration garden helped the targeted audience?

- 37 classes or educational tours were taught.
- 343 people attended Exploration Gardens programs in 2012
- 89.5% of those attending the Micro-irrigation classes reported an increase in knowledge of the basics of micro-irrigation. Of this group, 33% had implemented micro-irrigation changes in their yard and 63% had changed their irrigation system to be more efficient (clock settings and over-spray).
- 68% of those in the Micro-irrigation class increased their knowledge of their current irrigation system and controller timing.

The Exploration Gardens provide experiential learning for horticulture and landscaping related classes. The Exploration Gardens are utilized for the Palm Care classes, Micro-Irrigation classes, Butterfly Gardening classes, Landscape Design classes, Fruit Tree classes, and many more.

Orange County 4-H Garden Explorers youth camp used the gardens as the home base for their week-long summer camp. Youth ages 9-12 planted flowers, weeded, and observed insects in this new environment.

The Residential Horticulture Agents use the Exploration Gardens as a place to show different plants and develop an appropriate plant palette for individuals, giving them the opportunity to see plants in person rather than just through photos. This type of hand-on learning reinforces the concepts and strategies learned in the classroom and are shown to increase information learned and knowledge retention. To reach visitors not enrolled in classes and workshops, small boxes have been installed throughout the gardens to distribute educational materials such as 2 part handouts (Attachments 9 and 10), self-guided tours, and county fact sheets relating to the specific garden and the season. A one-on-one teaching is used in the Exploration Gardens for homeowners and residents who come to the plant clinic seeking advice and recommendations for their home garden.

Newspaper articles, like the Master Gardener monthly PH News), are written containing photos and highlights from the Exploration Gardens thus helping to provide another avenue for information. (Attachment 11)

A 150 word (or less) summary of your project so that we can let others know of your accomplishments.

If a picture is worth a thousand words, then a real plant growing in a garden is worth a million words! As one garden in the University of Florida/IFAS Extension network of demonstration gardens throughout the state, we use the Exploration Gardens as a place to show Orange County residents the right plant in the right place, giving them the opportunity to see a plant rather than just looking at photos. This has been received well and these interactions left visitors very pleased and confident in their landscape selections.

The Exploration Gardens are a concrete example of how Master Gardeners “assist the county agent in delivering information to residents on how to design, plant and care for their plants and landscapes in a Florida-Friendly way”. Master Gardener Program Mission accomplished!

Orange County Demonstration and Exploration Garden



The Exploration Gardens provide a unique setting for Orange County residents and visitors to learn more about Central Florida gardening. Each of the themed gardens educates about a specific topic, from **Florida-Friendly Landscaping™** principles to home vegetable gardening, the learning opportunities are endless.

Through the combined efforts of the UF/IFAS Orange County Extension faculty, Orange County government, local businesses, residents, and countless volunteers, the Exploration Gardens began to take shape and develop in 2011



Event Garden

Our newest garden provides a more **formal layout** and gives homeowners the opportunity to see a variety of plants for home landscapes. Plants feature small trees, formal hedges, and a rotating display of seasonal annual flowers.



Butterfly Garden

This garden contains a collection of cool season and warm season perennial plants that support the full life cycle of Florida's **native butterflies**. It provides nectar sources for adult butterflies, therefore, attracting the adults to visit the garden.

Other plants provide **food for the caterpillar** stage of the butterfly's life, a key element to keeping the adults around to lay eggs. To have a successful butterfly garden both types of plants must be present and water must be provided.



Eco Garden

The goal of the Eco-Garden is to educate residents on turf alternatives, ground covers, edible landscaping, and native plants. Designed and maintained by Florida Yards and Neighborhoods agent Jennifer Ramos, this area include lawn grasses and also beds that are planted with low maintenance grass alternatives like perennial peanut, confederate jasmine, sensitive plant, mimosa and others. This garden does not contain an irrigation system so what grows here survives on average rainfall and occasional hand watering.



Home and Small Farm Vegetable Garden

Florida gardeners enjoy three vegetable gardening seasons and this area helps show various methods for homeowners. Agents Ed Thralls and Richard Tyson maintain raised vegetable garden beds that are ideal for limited space, infertile or diseased soil, and include a display of the “square foot” gardens. Container vegetable gardens demonstrate the versatility and ability to grow vegetables in small areas and the floating hydroponic beds demonstrate that no soil is needed at all to grow certain crops reliably and dependably. The composting demonstration area shows a conventional 3 in-line bin composting system, a tumbler container and a plastic box like unit often available at local garden centers.



The Bog Garden

This garden was created in an area with heavily compacted soil and holds much of the rainwater that falls on the site, creating a very wet and muddy area. The plants chosen for the Bog Garden are specifically suited to these conditions. The area has native bald cypress trees and a wide variety of grasses and other plants that can tolerate “wet feet” and grow in standing water. As seasons change and the area receives less rain, the garden will actually become dry and these plants will adapt to the conditions for the drier months.



Fruit Trees Demonstration Garden

This area of the garden showcases over thirty varieties of fruit trees for central Florida. Each tree is labeled with the variety and harvest season as well as any special cold protections or requirements.



Succulent Garden

Plants with low water needs are gaining in popularity as watering restrictions become more rigid. The plants in this garden are adapted to survive with very little water and receive no regular irrigation. Various succulents, agaves, and other xerophytic plants are chosen for different textures and colors.

Fruit Tree Demonstration

This area of the garden showcases over thirty varieties of fruit trees for central Florida. Each tree is labeled with the variety and harvest season as well as any special cold protections or requirements.

These trees are planted on mounds of soil to increase the drainage for the root systems because of the very compact soil in our gardens.

Succulent Garden

Plants with low water needs are gaining in popularity as watering restrictions become more strict. These plants are adapted to survive with very little water and receive no regular irrigation.

Highlights include:

- Three large containers with small succulents that are best appreciated up close.
- A collection of different agave and yucca cultivars, each with unique coloration and varying sizes.
- Companion plants like Firecracker, Foxtail Ferns, and Devil's Backbone that will thrive in similar dry conditions.

Bog Garden

This garden collects much of the rainwater that falls on the site, creating a very wet, muddy area. The plants chosen for the Bog Garden are specifically suited to these conditions.

This garden features:

- Native bald cypress trees that grow well in very wet areas.
- A wide variety of grasses and other plants that can tolerate "wet feet" and grow in standing water.

As seasons change and we receive less rain, the garden will actually become dry and these plants will adapt to the conditions for the drier months.

The **Exploration Gardens** are an opportunity for Central Florida residents and guests to explore all that Florida offers in the landscape.

Each of the themed gardens educates about a specific topic, from Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ principles to home vegetable gardening, the learning opportunities are endless. We encourage you to be a part of the gardens where you can discover the beauty of native plants in the landscape, enjoy the color of our seasons, all while understanding what does best in our hot and often humid environments. Please return again soon to see the new plants, trees and displays that are being grown in the Exploration Gardens.

We invite you to look for places and gardens where you could make a difference. Our plans for the future need great volunteers and supporters to succeed.

After all, aren't we all looking for places to

Cultivate, Experience, Grow?

Exploration Gardens

Cultivate.
Experience.
Grow.

Orange County Extension UF/IFAS
6021 S. Conway Road
Orlando FL 32812

Phone: 407-254-9200
Fax: 407-850-5125
<http://orange.ifas.ufl.edu>



'Like' us on Facebook



"The Foundation for the Gator Nation"



Exploration
Gardens:

Self-Guided
Tour

Orange County
Extension Education
Center UF/IFAS

6021 S. Conway Rd.
Orlando, FL 32812
Phone: 407. 254. 9200
<http://orange.ifas.ufl.edu>



EXPLORATION GARDENS

Cultivate. Experience. Grow.

Event Garden

Our newest garden provides a more formal layout and gives homeowners the opportunity to see a variety of plants for home landscapes.

The plants selected feature:

- Good small tree examples such as Loquats, Chinese Fringe Trees, and small palms.
- Formal hedges using Florida Anise, Viburnums, Jasmines, and others.
- Small plants for edges such as Lantana, Juniper, Liriope, or Coontie plants.

The center area is planted with Celebration Bermuda and was chosen for its dense habit and short mowing height.

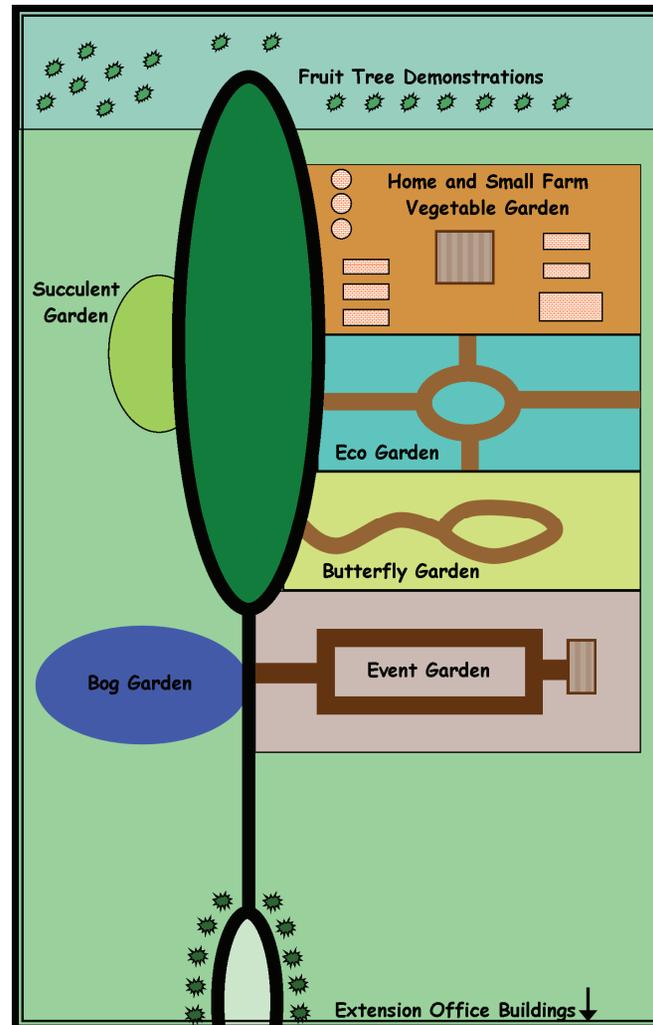
Butterfly Garden

This garden contains a collection of cool season and warm season perennial plants that support the full life cycle of Florida's native butterflies.

The plants used in the butterfly garden are selected for two main reasons:

- They are a nectar source or provide food for adult butterflies, therefore, attracting the adults to visit the garden.
- Other plants provide food for the caterpillar stage of the butterfly's life.

The butterfly will visit the garden, but if she doesn't see any caterpillar food plants in the area, she will not lay eggs. To have a successful butterfly garden both types of plants must be present and water must be provided.



Eco Garden

The goal of the Eco-Garden is to educate residents on turf alternatives, ground covers, edible landscaping, native plants and other low maintenance plants.

Special features include:

- Grass beds of Bahia, Zoysia, and Bermuda grasses.
- Beds that are planted with grass alternatives like Perennial Peanut, Confederate Jasmine, Liriope and many others.
- A hedge of Pineapple Guavas shrubs on the East side produces edible fruit and flowers.

This garden does not contain an irrigation system so what grows here survives on average rainfall and occasional hand watering.

Home and Small Farm Vegetable Garden

Florida gardeners enjoy three vegetable gardening seasons. Warm season vegetables are planted in both the spring and early fall of the year, while cool season vegetables are planted in late fall and winter.

The demonstration vegetable garden highlights:

- The "square foot" gardens, using 4 foot by 4 foot frames filled with compost, provide a bountiful harvest.
- Raised vegetable garden beds are ideal for limited space, infertile or diseased soil.
- Container vegetable gardens demonstrate the versatility and ability to grow vegetables in small areas.
- Floating hydroponic beds demonstrate that no soil is needed at all to grow certain crops reliably and dependably.

Purpose:

The Exploration Gardens serve as a living classroom to teach residents about gardening related topics. These gardens demonstrate the best in environmentally safe practices, plants, and design.

Garden Coordinators:

Liz Felter at lfelter@ufl.edu,
or Keri Leymaster at
kleymaster@ufl.edu

Volunteers:

We invite you to look for places and gardens where you could make a difference. Our plans for the future need great volunteers and supporters to succeed.

Location:

Conveniently located behind the Extension Education Center, the garden is just steps away from classrooms and meeting spaces.

Address:

Orange County Extension Center
6021 S. Conway Rd
Orlando, FL 32812

Telephone:

(407) 254-9200

Website:

<http://orange.ifas.ufl.edu>

Facebook:

[facebook.com/GardenFlorida](https://www.facebook.com/GardenFlorida)



Exploration Gardens: An Overview

The Exploration Gardens provide a unique setting for Orange County residents and visitors to learn more about Central Florida gardening. Each of the themed gardens educates about a specific topic, from Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ principles to home vegetable gardening, the learning opportunities are endless.

Through the combined efforts of the UF/IFAS Orange County Extension faculty, Orange County government, local businesses, residents, and countless volunteers, the Exploration Gardens began to take shape and develop in 2011.

Garden Spotlights:

Butterfly Garden

This garden contains a collection of cool season and warm season perennial plants that support the full life cycle of Florida's **native butterflies**. It provides nectar sources for adult butterflies, therefore, attracting the adults to visit the garden.

Other plants provide **food for the caterpillar** stage of the butterfly's life, a key element to keeping the adults around to lay eggs. To have a successful butterfly garden both types of plants must be present and water must be provided.

Eco Garden

The goal of the Eco-Garden is to educate residents on **turf alternatives**, ground covers, edible landscaping, and native plants. Designed and maintained by Florida Yards and Neighborhoods agent Jennifer Ramos, this area include lawn grasses and also beds that are planted with **low maintenance** grass alternatives like perennial peanut, confederate jasmine, sensitive plant, and others. This garden does not contain an irrigation system so what grows here survives on average rainfall and occasional hand watering.

Home and Small Farm Vegetable Garden

Florida gardeners enjoy three vegetable gardening seasons and this area helps show various methods for homeowners. Agents Ed Thralls and Richard Tyson maintain raised vegetable garden beds that are ideal for limited space, infertile or diseased soil, and include a display of the "square foot" gardens. **Container vegetable gardens** demonstrate the versatility and ability to grow vegetables in small areas and the floating hydroponic beds demonstrate that no soil is needed at all to grow certain crops reliably and dependably.

Bog Garden

This garden collects much of the **rainwater** that falls on the site, and creates a very wet, muddy area. The plants chosen for the Bog Garden are specifically suited to these conditions. The area has **native bald cypress trees** and a wide variety of grasses and other plants that can tolerate "wet feet" and grow in standing water. As seasons change and the area receives less rain, the garden will actually become dry and these plants will adapt to the conditions for the drier months.

2011 Garden Highlights

- The main pathway of the garden was installed with pervious pavement, creating a demonstration for water retention options.
- 78 trees and palms were planted in the garden areas.
- The Home and Small Farm Vegetable Garden was installed, showing homeowners more than ten ways to grow their own food crops.
- The Eco Garden was planted showing turf options as well as twelve types of plants for groundcovers and turf alternatives, edible landscaping, and native plants for the home landscape.
- The Exploration Gardens partnered with the City of Orlando and the City Beautiful program to install the Eco Garden with volunteers from outside organizations and the community.
- An 860 square foot greenhouse was installed to educate visitors on plant propagation and home aquaponics demonstration. The aquaponic system will feature koi fish in combination with vegetables for a self-sustaining system.
- Orange County 4-H Horticulture camp for kids used the gardens as the home base for their week-long summer camp. Youth ages 9-12 planted flowers, weeded, and observed insects in this new environment.

What is next?

2012 looks to be a very exciting year in the Exploration Gardens as work continues to improve the site and develop new educational displays for homeowners. Look for big changes in the front of the garden as the Event and Trial garden gets planted and creates a meeting space for groups and organizations. In addition, new plantings of fruit trees will feature fruit crops for Central Florida gardeners and the established gardens will begin to mature and evolve.

2011 by the Numbers:



Florida's nursery industry and retailers supported the gardens by donating more than **550 plants**, of **\$13,700** in value.



78 trees and palms were planted in the Exploration Gardens.



More than **\$6,180** worth of in-kind donations and materials.



Volunteers worked for more than **517 hours** in 2011, a value of **\$9,409**.



Garden Florida! was established on Facebook and ended 2011 with **121 'Likes'**.



Sometimes it seems as though crapemyrtles are the only flowering trees that grow in Orange County. Crapemyrtles are everywhere you look! If you take a walk in the newest addition to the Exploration Gardens, you will see nine types of small flowering trees and not one is a crapemyrtle! This garden was added to showcase some underused flowering trees for Central Florida and designed by Master Gardener and Landscape Architect, Gary Lewis.

Tabebuia 'Ipe'	<i>Tabebuia impetiginosa</i>
Desert Cassia	<i>Senna polyphylla</i>
Wild Olive	<i>Cordia boissierii</i>
Bottlebrush	<i>Callistemon citrinus</i>
	<i>Callistemon viminalis</i>
Champaca	<i>Michelia champaca</i>
Horseradish Tree	<i>Moringa oleifera</i>
Tipuana	<i>Tipuana tipu</i>
Flatwood Plum	<i>Prunus umbellata</i>
Gordlinia	<i>Gordlinia grandiflora</i>



In the Flowering Tree Garden two large raised beds add interest as well as drainage. All of the beds are planted with large masses of a variety of ground covers and connected by grassy paths. Ornamental grasses have been added to provide fall color and interest.

Two of the ground covers were "free": Master Gardeners Regina Dunay and Penny Potter painstakingly dug up, divided, and replanted Blue-eyed Grass; the Propagation Team, Master Gardeners Jeanne Davis, Lisa Tellechea, and Pam Wilson have grown enough bulbine to cover a large bed.

On the nuts and bolts of the new garden: a drainage tile ditch to carry off excess rain was dug between the Home and Small Farm Vegetable Garden and the new Flowering Tree Garden in December 2012. After covering the plastic pipe with gravel and mulch, the drainage area is not noticeable but carries off excess rainfall.

Two kinds of irrigation are being used in the Flowering Tree Garden; adjustable bubblers deliver lots of water to the new trees, and waterwise MP Rotators® use low volume outputs to allow water to soak into the soil around the landscape plants.

Are you ready to add a (non-crapemyrtle) flowering tree to your landscape or expand your recommendations to homeowners? I hope so!



By Paulette Smith
Attachment 11