



Florida Master Gardener Awards of Excellence Entry Form

ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY AUGUST 1, 2015.

County	St Johns County	Project Name	St. Johns County Master Gardeners' Cultural Center Seaside Wildlife Garden
Project Start Date	October 15, 2014	Project End Date	on going
Project Master Gardener(s)	CJ McCartney (Project Coordinator, Design, Plant Selection, Carpentry); Ginna Allmond, Lynda Eidson, Giselle Thompson, Master Gardener Work Team: Pam Mirelson, Robert Mirelson, Nancy Henley, Sharon McIlhenney, Rosemary Holmquist, Kathy Luoma, Betsy McCoy, Michele Wiles, Gloria Hopkins, Nana Royer, Shirley Barber, Rosemary Baldwin		

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Beautification	<input type="checkbox"/>	Personal Communications
<input type="checkbox"/>	Demonstration Garden	<input type="checkbox"/>	Service to 4-H and Other Youth
<input type="checkbox"/>	Educational Materials Development	<input type="checkbox"/>	Diversity
<input type="checkbox"/>	County Displays/Exhibits	<input type="checkbox"/>	Communications
<input type="checkbox"/>	Newsletter	<input type="checkbox"/>	Outstanding Master Gardener Team
<input type="checkbox"/>	Outstanding Master Gardener**	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Review the applicable category entry form for exceptions to the general submittal rules above.

Below completed by the County Master Gardener

I approve the submittal of this project: St. Johns County Master Gardeners' Cultural Center Seaside Wildlife Garden		
Keith Fuller		7/28/15
Master Gardener Coordinator Printed Name	Master Gardener Coordinator Signature	Date

Please complete and return this entry form in PDF form by **August 1, 2015** to Wendy Wilber.

Florida Master Gardener Awards of Excellence Beautification and Enhancement

St. Johns County Master Gardeners' Cultural Center Seaside Wildlife Garden Nomination

Summary (5 points):

- In the midst of the St. Augustine Beach tourist area, St. Johns County Master Gardeners created a bird and butterfly stopover in the garden beds surrounding a small plaza behind the St. Johns Cultural Center. The historic building was a WPA project (1939 – 1940), previously housed the St. Augustine Beach government offices and now is home to dance and art studios. The Cultural Center is adjacent to bustling St. Augustine Beach, pier and recreation areas, and a popular weekly Farmers Market. The plaza features memorial pavers and benches but was essentially an undeveloped and unkempt space. Master Gardener volunteers designed and installed the new Seaside Wildlife Garden in November 2014, with recycled materials and plants that were almost entirely propagated and donated by the community.
- Participants: Keith Fuller, St. Johns County Horticulture Agent (Advisor); CJ McCartney (Project Coordinator, Design, Plant Selection, Carpentry); Ginna Allmond, Lynda Eidson, Giselle Thompson (Design, Carpentry, Project Execution); Master Gardener Work Team: Pam Mirelson, Robert Mirelson, Nancy Henley, Sharon McIlhenney, Rosemary Holmquist, Kathy Luoma, Betsy McCoy, Michele Wiles and Gloria Hopkins. Other Master Gardener Supporters (donations, secured materials): Nana Royer, Shirley Barber, Rosemary Baldwin; Joe Howell and Tom Large (City of St. Augustine Beach).

Scope of Landscaping Project (30 points): The overarching concept was to create a bird and wildlife refuge and enhance the existing space while respecting and maintaining the historical integrity of the building. The current use of the building as a Cultural Center demanded an underlying creative and artistic approach, which required turning recycled materials (pallets, planters) into imaginative landscape highlights to create community interest.

- Mature plantings were retained and pruned as landscape anchor elements: three Hollywood Junipers, two Holly trees, and three Sago Palms. The plant beds were cleared of weeds and overgrowth and enriched with donated manure and mulch.
- Structurally, donated recycled pallets were converted to trellis structures to mask mechanical elements and waste cans, and to create a vertical focal element for vining plants. Seven large recycled cement planters were donated, painted and placed around the plaza increasing plant growing areas. Five habitable birdhouses were constructed and installed on posts or trellis structures.
- The wood benches and backs of the memorial benches and landscape timbers were sanded and re-stained. In keeping with the seaside theme, planters and trellis materials were blue-washed in a blue/green shade. Cement areas were pressure washed to remove mold and built up staining. The clean-up provided a facelift that allowed the new features to be the focus.
- The Seaside Wildlife Garden is bounded on all sides by myriad populations: condo residents next door, Farmers' Market customers, proximate Kiddie Splash Park, Bocce Ball court, beach goers, dance studio clients, and fishermen at the pier. The garden provides a quiet refuge for all and is Americans with Disabilities accessible in the middle of a high traffic, intense activity space.
- The Cultural Center Board of Directors fully endorsed the project and was supportive throughout. Mayor Andrea Samuels, City of St. Augustine Beach (CSAB) was an early supporter and stopped by during garden installation to express support and gratitude for the effort. The CSAB Public Works department donated mulch, firecracker plants, planters and pallets. County Commission Chair

Rachel Bennett supported the project and donated plants. Residents and tourists alike have commented on the positive changes and inviting ambiance.

- A modest budget of \$200 was provided by St. Johns County Cultural Council to cover incidentals such as paint, a water hose and other small items for which a donation source could not be found. Master Gardeners stepped up to donate the rest of the materials needed to successfully complete the project.

Horticultural Accuracy (25 points): Adhering to the IFAS right plant, right place philosophy, plant selection targeted those attractive to hummingbirds and butterflies that are also amenable to a coastal setting. Overall design concept was to emphasize perennials and group plantings for a bold and dramatic design while also minimizing watering, maintenance and fertilizing.

- Nana Royer (MG) provided guidance on how to amend the sandy soil to produce organic fertile planting beds, multiple Master Gardeners provided plants, either through propagation or from their yards. Wildlife experts offered habitat suggestions.
- Plant selection included: Fire Spike, Passion Vine (Maypop), Blue Porter Weed, Firecracker, Fire Bush, Rudbeckia, Red Salvia, Cape Honeysuckle, and Coral Honeysuckle.

Maintenance (15 points)

- An unexpected benefit for the project was the discovery of a working irrigation system for the area and an easily accessible water source.
- Following initial installation volunteers were identified to check on the plantings daily and water and maintain as needed. Volunteer coordination is headed up by Lynda Eidson and scheduled support is provided by: Monday: Michele Wiles, Tuesday: Betsey McCoy, Wednesday: Rob and Pam Mirelson, Thursday: Lynda Eidsen, Friday: Sharon McIlhenney. As the plants have matured and established themselves over the last eight months, it was recently determined that the maintenance schedule could be trimmed to three days a week and will be on an as needed basis over the next couple months.
- A separate schedule was developed by CJ McCartney and implemented for periodic fertilization, weed elimination and plant refurbishment.

Outcome (15 points)

- The Seaside Wildlife Garden is an overwhelming success. In a matter of just six weeks the plaza area was transformed from a neglected eyesore to a lovely, quiet refuge for wildlife – and for people.
- The Community and local leaders have embraced the transformation and the St. Augustine Record newspaper publicized the project from concept to dedication. At the Wildlife Garden's official dedication, Mayor Andrea Samuels, City of St. Augustine Beach, lauded the project as an example of the positive results of volunteer/community collaboration. St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners Chair Rachael Bennett also cited it as an example of what can be accomplished through volunteer and community partnerships. The St. Johns County Cultural Council presented Certificates of Appreciation to all of the Master Gardener volunteers who participated. The City of St. Augustine Beach is presenting a proclamation to recognize the importance of the Master Gardener's Seaside Wildlife Garden to the community.
- The Seaside Wildlife Garden is now a gathering place for groups and beach goers. Meetings and parties are now held at the once dingy eyesore space and children play in the courtyard. Its establishment has demonstrated that significant results can be achieved without a lot of money, but with a lot of heart, creativity, dedication, and hard work. A simple, subtle, but

intelligent, enhancement reinstated the plaza as a fitting extension of the Cultural Council's mission to promote culture and the arts, and once again shows respect for the historic site on which it stands.

Learnings (10 points)

- The Master Gardener Volunteer Management System was integral to initiating the project. An initial e-mail blast garnered a listing of interested potential participants that facilitated communication and coordination as the project progressed.
- Project management was critical to success as the timing of material delivery and volunteer support underpinned the team's ability to execute the project. Obtaining the right materials paired with the right work teams allowed this major transformation to occur in less than six weeks – from concept to implementation.
- The right place, right plant concept, keeping plant selection simple, and focusing primarily on butterflies and hummingbirds provided focus and made the project manageable.
- Community leader buy-in and public support enabled the entire effort; the CSAB Mayor, Cultural Council Board of Directors, and County Commissioners provided strong interface and supported creative collaboration.
- As with any garden, there needs to be a continuing, creative evolution and this space provides for that. There remains the prospect for additional enhancements such as bird feeders and perhaps water elements. The Master Gardener Team's desire is that the Seaside Wildlife Garden continues to grow and mature in harmony with its rich surroundings.



A blank slate was given to the St. Johns County Master Gardener volunteers to create the Seaside Wildlife Garden.



St. Johns County Master Gardener volunteers vigorously work on the cleaning, designing painting and planting for the Seaside Wildlife Garden.



The Seaside Wildlife Garden building phrase is complete. Now visitors walk through the garden observing the right place, right plant concept.



The Florida Friendly Attracting Wildlife principle is evident in the plant selection. On lookers can enjoy the humming birds and butterflies that stop by to dine.



By using another Florida Friendly principal, re-cycling, with items such as pallets and pots, the St. Johns County Master Gardener volunteers show visitors the benefit of repurposing items in the garden.



St. Johns County Master Gardeners Seaside Wildlife Project Team, Ginna Allmond, CJ McCartney, Giselle Thompson, and Lynda Eidson proudly pose at the Seaside Wildlife Garden.



The St. Johns County Master Gardener volunteers are enjoying the Dedication Ceremony with Mayor Andrea Samuels, County Commission Chair Rachel Bennett, Cultural Council Board of Directors, and others. Projects like this are demonstrating to the public the benefits of Florida Friendly



The St. Johns County Master Gardener volunteers were given Certificates of Appreciation by the Cultural Council. A thank you for all the hard work and bring the Florida Friendly Landscape to St. Augustine Beach.

Proclamation

WHEREAS, the Seaside Wildlife Garden was designed and installed by the St. Johns County Master Gardeners to foster wildlife habitat in the midst of a bustling beach-front setting near Pier Park, and;

WHEREAS, the Seaside Wildlife Garden was created and installed in less than six weeks by a dedicated core of master Gardener volunteers, this garden serves as a demonstration garden to educate the community about recycling materials and creating wildlife habitats in a beachside community, and;

WHEREAS, the Seaside Wildlife Garden is an example of the innovation and partnerships that can be created when neighbors, cities and volunteers work together using their unique talents to create a positive outcome. St Johns County Master Gardeners dug up plants from their yard or propagated plants while others secured materials to build this organic wildlife habitat on a shoestring budget, and;

WHEREAS, the Seaside Wildlife Garden strengthens the community by providing a peaceful oasis in the heart of the busy beach community for interaction, community meetings and a quiet setting where adults can read a book in the courtyard and observe butterflies and caterpillars on the plantings while children play hopscotch in the courtyard, and;

WHEREAS, Long term the Seaside Garden will continue to be a catalyst for the community to learn about the history of the area and observe a wildlife habitat as it evolves and attracts a wide variety of butterflies and hummingbirds.

NOW, THEREFORE, the City Commission of the City of St. Augustine Beach, Florida does hereby proclaim August 3, 2015 as

MASTER GARDENER SEASIDE WILDLIFE GARDEN DAY

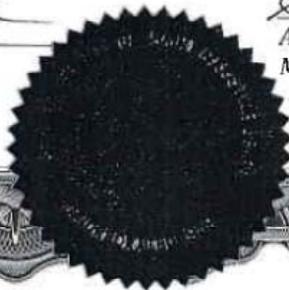
in the City of St. Augustine Beach and calls upon all citizens to recognize the combined efforts of the St. Johns County Master Gardeners, Cultural Council and the City of St. Augustine Beach, and encourages all residents and visitors to enjoy this beachfront wildlife habitat.

PASSED AND ADOPTED in regular session this 3rd day of August, 2015

ATTEST:


City Manager


Andrea Samuels
Mayor - Commissioner



Media



Seaside Wildlife Garden dedicated

Posted: December 14, 2014 - 10:59pm

By KIMEKO MCCOY

kimeko.mccoy@staugustine.com

St. Johns County Master Gardeners, members of the Cultural Council and others gathered at St. Augustine Beach for the dedication of the new completed Seaside Wildlife Garden.

The dedication's first speaker was David Rice, Ph.D., president of the St. Johns County Cultural Center, who welcomed visitors and blessed the garden.

Other speakers included St. Augustine Beach Mayor Andrea Samuels, CJ McCartney, Commissioner Rachael Bennett and Andrew Witt.

After the speakers finished, light refreshments were provided by the Cultural Council.

CJ McCartney, a member of the master gardeners program and organize of the event, said, "It was a nice ceremony."

According to McCartney, the idea behind the project stemmed from the Cultural Council feeling the need to create a space for butterflies, birds, plants and other wildlife by the sea.

McCartney, Giselle Thompson, Ginna Allmond and Lynda Edison were the master gardeners that spearheaded the project, McCartney said.

The University of Florida/Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences Master Gardeners are a group of volunteers that provide leadership and service to the community through gardening activities as well as other extension related activities, according to the University of Florida website.

The gardeners made sure that everything in the garden is made of recycled material even down to the plants.

"We did the whole thing soup to nuts," McCartney said.

Recycled materials included the pallets and timbers that were used to create the trellises and many of the plants which were propagated.

In total, the entire project was a lot to do but McCartney said it was done within three days with the helping hands of over 30 master gardeners.

“Over 30 master gardeners got together and stepped up,” she said.

In order to keep the garden up, Pam and Rob Mirelson will dedicate their time and efforts to maintaining the new wildlife garden.

The garden is just south of the St. Johns County Ocean Pier and right behind The Dance Company building at 370 A1A Beach Blvd.



St. Augustine Beach gets new birding hotspot

Posted: November 19, 2014 - 12:10pm

By THE RECORD

The St. Johns Cultural Council has announced a new birding hotspot emerging at St. Augustine Beach. As of last weekend, St. Johns Master Gardeners installed a Seaside Wildlife Garden at the Cultural Center, located at St. Augustine Pier. All installed plants attract butterflies and birds while following the principles of right plant, right place.

Melding their expertise at creating wildlife gardens with their knowledge of selecting plants for butterflies and hummingbirds, the St. Johns UF/IFAS Master Gardeners went to work. Starting three weeks ago designing, planting and building a wildlife garden, they wrapped it up last weekend. Recycling and repurposing materials went hand-in-hand with planting the right plant in the right place. Recycled pallets and timbers were used to build trellises and many of the plants were propagated to create this haven. All plants were donated as were most of the materials; the community stepped up to make this a successful project.

“This new Seaside Wildlife Garden is just another example of Master Gardeners’ focus on community service and applying their training from the University of Florida,” stated Keith Fuller, director of the local Master Gardeners program, “Through our volunteers’ outreach, residents learn about being a steward to our natural environment.”

A dedication ceremony is planned to officially launch this wildlife garden. The St. Johns Cultural Council’s Cultural Center at St. Augustine Beach is located south of the Pier in landmark historical buildings that originally housed the city of St. Augustine Beach’s government offices. St. Johns Cultural Council mission is to promote and enhance the local arts, heritage and cultural programs throughout the County.



Birds and butterflies attend garden dedication

Posted on [December 15, 2014](#) by [St Augustine](#)

The Seaside Wildlife Garden received an official welcome to St Augustine Beach yesterday when master gardeners from the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences dedicated the volunteer community project, located at the Beach Cultural Center.

St Johns County University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences Master Gardeners designed and installed the garden; which focuses on attracting butterflies, hummingbirds, and other local birds.

“What a day to be a Master Gardener. It was so exciting to work on a project where so many smart and talented Master Gardeners stepped up to make a difference in their community,” said St Johns Cultural Council Board member, CJ McCartney, who spearheaded the project. “Everyone brought their best to make this community service project a success.”

Mayor Andrea Samuels, representing the City of St Augustine Beach who owns the post-depression era landmark building, commented on how the Master Gardeners made a difference by creating this wildlife garden at the Pier. Samuels cited “collaboration and communication between groups” as the creative forces behind positive community projects like this one.

Over 30 volunteers offered to help in a variety of ways – from building trellis out of recycled shipping pallets, to hauling materials and mulch, to digging plants out of their own yards. Some weeded and cleared the beds while others prepped and mulched the soil.

Certificates of appreciation recognized the work of the following Master Gardeners who helped create the garden:

CJ McCartney, Ginna Allmond, Lynda Eidson, Giselle Thompson, Pam Mirelson, Robert Mirelson, Nana Royer, Nancy Henley, Shirley Barber, Sharon McIlhenney, Rosemary Holmquist, Rosemary Baldwin, Michelle Wiles, Kathy Luoma, Betsy McCoy, Sylvia Brunet, Karen Matulina, CJ Jacobs,

Gayle Prevatt, Gloria Hopkins, and to the St Johns County leader of the Master Gardeners, Keith Fuller.

Cultural Council employees Kathe O'Donnely and Melinda Bergbom were also recognized.

St Johns County Commission chair, Rachel Bennett, who represents District 5 and who is also a St Augustine Beach resident, congratulated the Master Gardeners. She acknowledged how vital volunteers are in our community and offered the Seaside Wildlife Garden as an example of what volunteers can accomplish.

Most of the donated plants were Florida natives and are specific plants that attract hummingbirds and butterflies. Maypop passion vine and coral honeysuckle will cover the trellises. By planting in the late fall, McCartney said the plants will use "the dormant period" to get settled and acclimated to their new environment.

"This county has a large resource of professional Master Gardeners who know how to turn an idea into a reality. And here's the proof," Dr. David Rice, president of the Board of Directors of the St Johns Cultural Council said during his remarks. "This was a volunteer effort where diverse talents came together to make the garden a reality."

At the conclusion of the ceremony, the group made a toast with mulled apple cider to the spirit of cooperation, collaboration and camaraderie.

For Immediate Release: December 15, 2014

For Additional Information,
contact: CJ McCartney, 305-896-2700
Two pages, photographs

Birds and Butterflies Get the Official Green Light to Enjoy New Seaside Wildlife Garden

Dedication Ceremony Held at Beach Cultural Center Sunday Afternoon

St. Augustine Beach, Florida... The Seaside Wildlife Garden received an official welcome to St. Augustine Beach on Sunday, December 14th. Kicking off the dedication ceremony, Dr. David Rice, president, St. Johns Cultural Council (SJCC) Board of Directors, welcomed and blessed the garden located at the Cultural Center on St. Augustine Beach. Dr. Rice discussed that this was an "...all volunteer effort where diverse talents came together to make this garden a reality. This county has a large resource of professional Master Gardeners who know how to turn an idea into a reality. And here's the proof."

Mayor Andrea Samuels, city of St. Augustine Beach, mentioned how the Master Gardener made a difference by creating this wildlife garden at the Pier and discussed how collaboration and communication between groups create such positive community projects like this one. Commissioner Rachael Bennett, chair of the St. Johns County Commission, congratulated the Master Gardeners and stated how volunteers are so vital in our community and this garden is an example of what they can accomplish.

St. Johns County UF/IFAS Master Gardeners designed and installed the Seaside Wildlife Garden, which focuses on attracting butterflies, hummingbirds and other local birds. Spearheading the project was SJC Cultural Council Board member, CJ McCartney, who said, "What a day to be a Master Gardener. It was so exciting to work on a project where so many smart and talented Master Gardeners stepped up to make a difference in their community. Everyone brought their best to make this community service project a success."

Over 30 volunteers offered to help in a variety of ways - from building trellis out of recycled pallets to hauling materials and mulch to digging plants out of their yard. Some weeded and cleared the beds while others prepped and mulched the soil. Most of the donated plants were Florida natives and are specific plants that attract hummingbirds and butterflies. Maypop passion vine and coral honeysuckle will cover the trellises. By planting in the late fall, plants are given a dormant period to get settled and acclimated to their environment.

At the close of the ceremony, Andrew Witt, executive director of the SJCC, gave out certificates of appreciation to the following Master Gardeners who helped create this wildlife garden: CJ McCartney, Ginna Allmond, Lynda Eidson, Giselle Thompson, Pam Mirelson, Robert Mirelson, Nana Royer, Nancy Henley, Shirley Barber, Sharon McIlhenney, Rosemary Holmquist, Rosemary Baldwin, Michelle Wiles, Kathy Luoma, Betsy McCoy, Sylvia Brunet, Karen Matulina, CJ Jacobs, Gayle Prevatt, Gloria Hopkins plus Kathe O'Donnelly and Melinda Bergbom from the SJCC and of course, to the intrepid leader of the SJC Master Gardeners, Keith Fuller.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, the group made a toast with mulled apple cider to the spirit of cooperation, collaboration and camaraderie.

St. Johns Cultural Council Board of Directors manages the Cultural Center located south of the Pier in a landmark historical building that previously housed the city of St. Augustine Beach's government offices. St. Johns Cultural Council mission is to promote and enhance the local arts, heritage and cultural programs throughout the County. St. Johns County UF/IFAS Master Gardeners is a volunteer-driven program that benefits the citizens of Florida. It relies on dedicated volunteers who have an interest in gardening and in giving back to their communities. UF/IFAS is an acronym for University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences.

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>Historical Background on the Cultural Center at St. Augustine Beach

The Cultural Center at St. Augustine Beach

Starting as a WPA project, the St. Augustine Beach Hotel (1939-1940) is the last ocean-front structure still serving reminder of the local impact of the Great Depression and the New Deal. Noted architect Francis A. Hollingsworth (1885-1974) designed the hotel in the Mediterranean Revival style. This structure was one the twin edifices facing ocean and survived due to its conversion in the 1960s for use as the city of St. Augustine Beach's City Hall. The most recent transformation is into a Cultural Center for the purposes of serving the community's cultural needs; it now houses a dance company and an art studio, managed by the St. Johns Cultural Council Board of Directors.

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Other Media Articles

staugustine.com/compass/2014-12-12/events-calendar-dec-5-11

staugustine.com/.../garden/.../improving-environment-good-thing-do-new-year

staugustine.com/social-tags/greater-jacksonville?page=0%2C221

staugustine.com/social-tags/st-augustine-florida?page=0%2C58

staugustine.com/news/local-news?page=204%2C64...1...