

GEORGIA MASTER GARDENER EXTENSION VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Learn

Serve

Grow



Spotlight: Environmental Stewardship

The Pollinator Berm at Sparrow Field is a 150-yard-long garden on Skidaway Island that separates a meadow from a golf course green. The site was initially developed when the golf course sought certification as an Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary. Members of the Landings Garden Club assisted in selecting and planting "pollinator-friendly" plants on the berm that separates the meadow from the golf green. In 2013, a group of newly certified Master Gardener Extension Volunteers (MGEVs) adopted the project as a way to contribute to research about monarch butterflies as well as to educate the public about pollinators.

The site is a living laboratory for monarch butterfly research. MGEVs, acting as citizen scientists, collect and contribute data to Monarch Health, a program administered by UGA, and to the Monarch Larvae Monitoring Project led by the University of Minnesota. MGEVs record the number of eggs and numbers and stages of the caterpillars on the various species of the host plant. Data tracked for the Monarch Larva-Monitoring Project has contributed to information known about monarch preferences for certain types of milkweed. The project has received multiple recognitions, including designation as a Monarch Waystation and the Martha Miller Butterfly Award by the Oleander District Garden Club.

MGEVs have planted seven species of native milkweed and have worked to increase the total number and variety of plants. The berm is now planted with nearly 100 species of flowering plants, 63% of which are native. The garden is a floral magnet for butterflies, honey bees, solitary bees and wasps, hoverflies, and other wildlife species. An interpretative sign with the capability of an audio tour, funded by Landing Landlovers and Skidaway Audubon, will be installed this spring in time for a local garden tour.

Sparrow Field Pollinator Berm
Skidaway Island
Served by MGEVs from Chatham County



2015 Project Contributions:

Volunteer Hours: 673
Work Days: 64
Tours: 8
Presentations: 5

*Special thanks to MGEVs working at the Sparrow Field
Pollinator Berm!*

The pollinator berm is like an outdoor classroom for observing nature's interdependencies, including links among native plants, host plants, and insect life cycles. It offers opportunities to photographers, birders, citizen scientists, gardeners, and even home-schooled students.



The Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Program prepares volunteers to support UGA Cooperative Extension in delivering gardening information to Georgia's citizens and communities. Since 1979, Master Gardeners and UGA Extension have helped Georgians become healthier, more productive, financially independent and environmentally responsible.