

Battle Creek Nature Center Gardens 2023

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

Volunteers: 2

Hours: 17

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
- Weeding 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 2023 ACTIVITIES

Starting early in spring we had volunteers come out to help with the gardens. Even though we only had one primary volunteer, that was a big help to staff in keeping things looking presentable even though the nature center remains closed due to the 2022 fire. Here's some examples of projects we did:

- Weeding – always, but especially early in the season which was a huge help in keeping things under control later in the season.
- Pruning – later in the season we worked on collecting woody material from the garden beds and pruning back the shrubs.
- After the November 2022 fire – a boardwalk was constructed over part of the garden to help workers to access the basement of the nature center. This remained in place for much of the year. It has now been removed.
- Plants were transplanted from areas we feared would be disturbed by construction out to the little square bed by the parking lot. These plants are doing well in their new area.

FUTURE PLANS

- Schedule workdays through the year to maintain what we currently have in the garden beds as access/construction allows.
- An end-of-the-season appreciation event with a speaker (maybe someone from Baywise?) that would be open to all volunteers and the public.
- While fire cleanup/construction are happening, meet monthly with volunteers to weed and maintain what we can and perhaps focus on the rectangular bed closet to the nature center and the small bed adjacent to the parking lot focusing on maintaining what we have.
- Get volunteers to use Galaxy Digital to register for opportunities and record their hours; this continues to be an issue, even with my repeat volunteer.

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

2023 Annual Report

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CALVERT STEWARDS VOLUNTEER PROGRAM
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Volunteer Portal: <https://calvertstewards.galaxydigital.com/>

Calvert Nature Society: www.calvertparks.org

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

