

# Battle Creek Nature Center Gardens

## 2021 Report

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**Project Leader:** Tania Gale [Tania.Gale@CalvertCountyMD.gov](mailto:Tania.Gale@CalvertCountyMD.gov) 410-535-5327

Volunteers: 10

Hours: 44

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 wildlife.

### 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 2021 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 the gardens 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
- Social – for our last meeting of the year, we did a shorter amount of time outside and held a social hour with a PowerPoint of the animals (and plants) who call the garden home.
- Staff met with the Baywise Garden organizers. Our garden is now a certified Baywise Garden.
- Get volunteers to use Galaxy Digital to register for opportunities (including the Chesapeake Garden Club – this didn't happen this year, although they did reach out to say when they were coming in the spring, but not in the fall)
- Schedule a stepping stone workshop – we didn't need stepping stones since visitors were not going to be allowed in the area by the lower pond
- Continue working on the patio area by the lower pond so that visitors can walk to the viewing area – it was decided that it would be better to keep visitors out of this area
- Make or purchase a bench to add to the lower pond patio and markers for the plants – see above

## FUTURE PLANS

- Be more proactive with reaching out to the Chesapeake Garden Club about when they will come and what they will do.
- Schedule work days throughout the growing season to continue to plant the garden beds.
- Incorporate some of the ideas from the Baywise Garden review.
- Make or buy interpretive signs to ID certain plants and promote the positives of native/natural gardens.
- Make a more permanent barrier to define the edges of the garden beds.
- Have another 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.

*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*

# 2021 Annual Report

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CALVERT STEWARDS VOLUNTEER PROGRAM  
c/o Natural Resources Division  
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Volunteer Portal: <https://calvertstewards.galaxydigital.com/>

Calvert Nature Society: [www.calvertparks.org](http://www.calvertparks.org)

Calvert County Natural Resources Division:  
[www.calvertcountymd.gov/NaturalResources](http://www.calvertcountymd.gov/NaturalResources)

