

Gardening Volunteers and Master Gardeners

05- 23-2019

Look at this checklist and see if any of the issues describe you.

1. I want to learn more about gardening in Central Texas.
2. I want to spend more time with and make new friends that share my interest in gardening and the environment.
3. I want to contribute to the needs of the community such as water conservation, youth education, and environmental issues while I am having fun with gardening projects.
4. I am interested in obtaining exercise while I am participating in gardening projects.

If so, then you have an opportunity to fulfill one or all of those interests by participating in the Gardening Volunteers of South Texas or the Bexar County Master Gardeners.

To explore joining the Gardening Volunteers of South Texas attend their third Monday gathering from noon until 3 PM at the "San Antonio Garden Center" at 3310 N New Braunfels. The 3rd Monday event usually includes 2 speakers on pertinent gardening topics and information on all the projects that are available for your participation.

If you went to the session in May the lecture topic would have been Honeybees. The lecture covered their importance as pollinators, the challenges they have faced in surviving and how they organize themselves and produce honey.

Some of the volunteer opportunities available were helping me plant a butterfly garden for the winner of a fundraising raffle; helping the GVST staff a landscape design school sponsored by the San Antonio Water System; and working on Dr Jerry Parsons landscape plant research team on bluebonnet seed selection.

The GVST does not require that you have a minimum gardening skill level. They allow you to join the team if you have interest in gardening and the projects available. For more information visit the GVST website at www.gardeningvolunteers.org.

If you are interested in a formal training situation and volunteer commitment structure, consider the Bexar County Master Gardeners (BCMG)

The BCMG is recruiting for its fall 2019 class that will begin on August 21 and run for every Wednesday afternoon 1-5PM through November 13th. You must apply for a place in the class and candidates are selected based on their commitment to use their training in volunteer service on identified Master Gardener Projects. There is an initial fee of \$260 to attend the training. Some scholarships are available. You must apply by June 17, 2019.

The Master Gardener Training is wonderful. It includes Earth Kind Landscaping, Plant Growth, Soils, Integrated Pest Management, Home Orchards, Water Conservation, Rainwater Catchment, Vegetable Gardening, Garden Design, and Plant Disease. There are field trips scheduled for Oct. 23 and Nov 22.

Many of the Projects involve environmental and gardening education for residents of the Bexar County area. The youth gardening program at the Botanical Gardens and the extensive classroom garden effort utilize the skills of many Master Gardeners. For more information on the Master Gardener volunteer projects and the specifics of the 2019 Training Class visit the Bexar County Master Gardener website. You may also call Denice at 210 631 0400.

The Texas Master Gardener structure is sponsored by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. In addition to the Bexar County Chapter many other Counties sponsor Master Gardener Chapter. Check out the websites of the Comal, Gonzales, Guadalupe, and Hayes County Chapters to see when their next class will be enrolled.