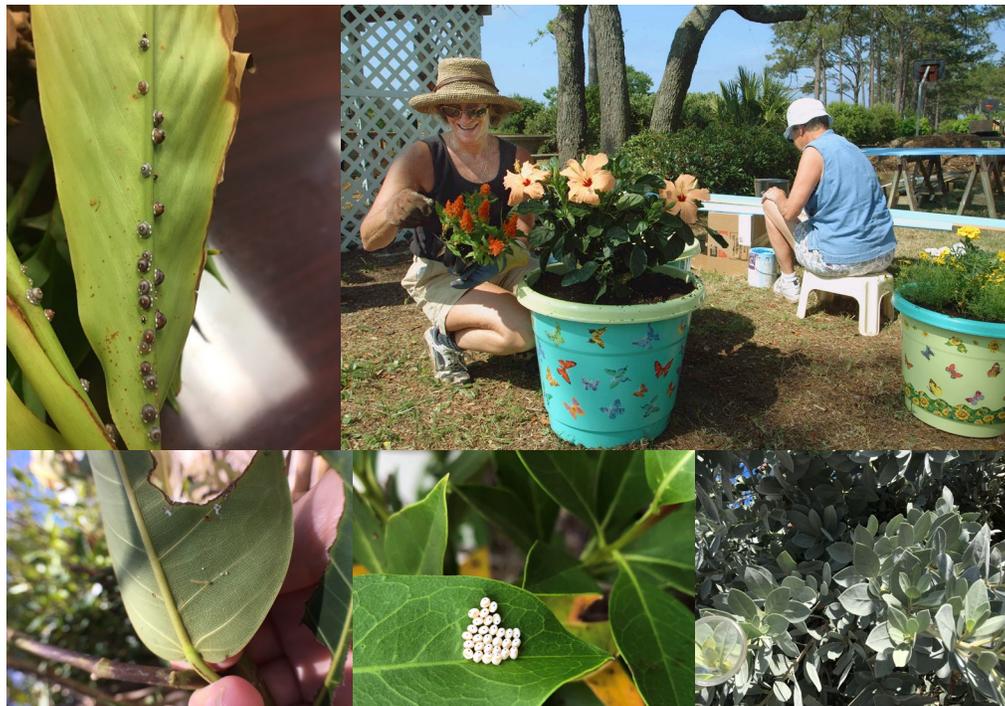


2019 Master Gardener Preview Packet



UF | **IFAS Extension**
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA



An Equal Opportunity Institution. UF/IFAS Extension, University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, Nick T. Place, dean for UF/IFAS Extension. Single copies of UF/IFAS Extension publications (excluding 4-H and youth publications) are available free to Florida residents from county UF/IFAS Extension offices.

Dear Master Gardener Applicant:

Thank you for expressing an interest in becoming a Master Gardener volunteer. Training dates have been established and classes are scheduled to begin on Friday, February 15, 2019. These training classes will meet every Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., through April 12, 2019, on the 2nd floor of the Marathon Government Center, located at 2798 Overseas Highway, Marathon. The fee for the 2019 Master Gardener class is \$150.00 per person. This fee covers your Master Gardener course materials. There is also a one-time \$50 deposit required, which will be returned upon completion of the required initial 75 volunteer hours.

This packet contains information that will be useful to you in understanding the Florida Master Gardener program, how it functions, and how Master Gardeners operate as a part of the University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS), Monroe County Extension Service. You will also find insights into the roles and responsibilities of a Master Gardener volunteer. In order to be considered for the program, it will be necessary for you to do the following things:

1. Attend a regional preview session.
2. Complete and return an application at the end of preview session.
3. Interviews for the Monroe County Master Gardener volunteer position will be held in January 2019.

Enthusiasm and a willingness to do volunteer work are important traits for participants of our program. The selection process will be based on attending the preview session, then a follow-up interview. Final intern selections and notification will be via e-mail by January 14, 2019. The class is limited to 24 participants. If selected, your class fees are due in total by February 1, 2019. Fees may be paid by check or money order only, made payable to *University of Florida*.

I am truly excited about the upcoming Master Gardener class and want to thank you for expressing an interest in the University of Florida, IFAS, Monroe County Master Gardener horticulture education and volunteer program.

Kindly,

Michelle Leonard-Mularz

Michelle Leonard-Mularz,
Environmental Horticulture Agent
UF/IFAS/Monroe County Extension

HISTORY OF THE MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM

The rapid urban growth in many areas of the United States coupled with increased interest in the environment and home gardening have prompted ever-increasing numbers of homeowner questions to County Extension Agents. Many of these questions are seasonal in nature and are relatively easily answered, assuming that one has horticultural training.

In 1972, an innovative Extension Service Agent in the State of Washington reasoned that well-trained volunteers could respond to many of the everyday homeowner questions, freeing him and his colleagues for more technical and difficult problems and educational programming. Volunteers such as Extension Homemakers and 4-H leaders had always been a part of the Extension Service, but never in the area of backyard horticulture. With this in mind, the Extension Agent selected, trained and certified volunteers as Master Gardeners. They soon succeeded in meeting his desired objectives - in fact they exceeded his expectations. And so it was, the Master Gardener Program began. To learn more about the history of the Master Gardener program: <http://mastergardener.wsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/MasterGardenerProgramHistoryrev2009.8.pdf>

Since that time, the Master Gardener Program has grown and is now active in over 30 states. Florida adopted the Master Gardener concept in 1979. The program has been a tremendous success and is now active in 60 of Florida's 67 counties. The University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS), of which the Extension Service is a part, sponsors the Florida Master Gardener Program.

WHAT IS THE EXTENSION SERVICE

For a more complete understanding of this unique organization, we must go back to 1862, when U.S. Congress passed the Morrill Act that established one college in each state to be

financed through grants of land from the Federal government. They became known as "Land Grant Colleges," a name that persists today. These colleges would emphasize teaching practical subjects such as agriculture and home economics. The 1887 Hatch Act provided for experimental stations at Land Grant Colleges to conduct research for those colleges' agricultural problems.

Then in 1914, the Smith-Lever Act created the Extension Service as a part of these colleges as a means of disseminating the practical knowledge gained through agricultural research. The University of Florida in Gainesville is Florida's Land Grant College. The Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences is the part of the university which has responsibility for the Extension Service. Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU) is one of seventeen 1890's colleges for African Americans that was designated a land-grant institution under the passage of the Second Morrill Act in 1890. However, resources for research and extension were not provided until 1966.

The Extension Service is cooperatively funded by three sources: the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the State of Florida (through legislative appropriations), and Counties, (through appropriations by County governments). The Extension Service is also a cooperative because of the sharing of information generated through research programs at the Federal and State levels.

The term "extension" defines this organization's purpose - to extend the information generated at the State and Federal level to people at the County level in the form of a "service." The Extension Service is a nonformal educational organization which provides information in three main areas: Agriculture & Horticulture; Family and Consumer Sciences; and 4-H and Youth education. Other associated programs include Community Development, Marine Biology, and Energy. The motto & goal of the Extension Service is "Helping People Help Themselves." Thus, you can see how well the Master Gardener concept fits into the ultimate objectives and goals of Extension Services.

THE MONROE COUNTY MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM

In Monroe County, the Master Gardener (MG) Program started in 1992. To date, the MG training program has qualified hundreds of horticultural volunteers enabling them to become certified Master Gardeners. Individuals are selected and attend a 60-hour training course and complete their initial 75 volunteer hours in their first year. Active MGs volunteer a minimum of 35 volunteer service hours and complete 10 continuing education hours. Currently, there are 37 active Master Gardeners throughout the Florida Keys.

The Master Gardeners of Monroe County have been involved with community projects such as: native tree giveaways, Florida Friendly-Landscaping™ (FFL) education, FFL yard advisors, as well as horticultural educational programs. Master Gardeners also assist the Agent by providing residents with horticulture information through the MG Help Desk, office walk-ins, regional plant clinics, or staffing educational booths at various community events throughout the Keys.

Selection to become a candidate for the Monroe County Master Gardener Training Program is not predicated on prior training, education, knowledge, or experience. Neither does age, race, sex, nor physical handicap dictate selection.

A sincere desire to help others, an aspiration to learn, and a personal commitment to volunteer service are the major selection criteria involved. Gardening experience and knowledge are always helpful, but they are by no means a requirement for selection for the Master Gardener Program.

HORTICULTURAL TRAINING

Training never ceases for the certified and active Master Gardener. Throughout the year, Master Gardener meetings are held. Field trips are also scheduled to visit Master Gardener homes, botanical gardens, parks, and nurseries.

Specialized knowledge is gained to better enable Master Gardeners to work effectively on their gardening projects as well as provide research-based horticultural advice.

Annually, the University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS), conducts a Master Gardener Conference at the University of Florida or other locations throughout Florida. This voluntary three-day session serves to acquaint Master Gardeners with diagnostic and research facilities that respond to requests for assistance from the Extension Agents. This program is presented by State Extension Specialists who strive to bring all Master Gardeners into contact with the latest horticultural developments and provide a look into the future of horticulture research. It is also a great opportunity to meet Master Gardeners from around the state of Florida and share in the joys and even the frustrations of being a Florida Master Gardener.

Most of the Master Gardener training classes will present information on how to garden in Florida and the Florida Keys in a sustainable manner, focusing on Integrated Pest Management and is referred to as Florida-Friendly Landscaping™. The information presented in this program is based on the knowledge and research done by the UF/IFAS. You will be expected to understand the nine principles of FFL and how they are used to create a Florida Keys friendly landscape.

Remember that only after successfully completing the formal training and the required initial 75 hours of volunteer service will the intern become certified and be awarded the title of Master Gardener.

Master Gardeners must abide by a set of policies set forth by Monroe County, the Extension Service, and UF/IFAS. Policies regarding Florida Master Gardeners are included as a part of this packet and should be carefully studied.

MASTER GARDENER FEES

There is a **\$150** fee for the Monroe County Master Gardener training program. This fee is non-refundable and covers the costs of printed materials and classroom supplies purchased for the program. Part of the fee covers the cost of the UF/IFAS Extension publications. These materials are updated frequently so that Master Gardeners always provide the most current recommendations approved by UF/IFAS. Additionally, there will be a **\$50 deposit**, which will be refunded upon completion of the initial 75 volunteer hours.

POLICIES REGARDING FLORIDA MASTER GARDENERS

There are several policies regarding the Master Gardener program. It is important that all participants understand and adhere to them.

Florida Master Gardener Interns must:

- Attend the prescribed hours of instruction.
- Pass an examination administered by UF/IFAS, Monroe County Extension.
- Contribute 75 volunteer hours before becoming a certified Master Gardener.

This certification is restrictive in nature. It is valid only as follows:

- When the individual is actively participating in the Monroe County Extension program.
- Master Gardener certification is good for one-year only. If an individual ceases active participation, then the certification as Master Gardener becomes void.
- Each year active Master Gardeners must provide 35 hours of volunteer service and attend 10 hours of additional horticultural training.
- Those choosing not to continue in the program will become inactive Master Gardeners.
- An inactive MG can become active again, at the discretion of the Extension Agent and after exhibiting proficient horticultural knowledge.

The title "Florida Master Gardener" is to be used as follows:

- *Only and exclusively* in the Florida Extension Master Gardener program in which the trained and certified Master Gardener answers gardening questions or works on approved landscape demonstration projects.
- Only when doing unpaid volunteer or educational work in the Monroe County Master Gardener program.

Master Gardeners should never rely solely on their personal knowledge, as the Extension Service provides the following support:

- Ongoing training to keep active participants abreast of current trends, recommendations, practices, procedures, and legal issues.
- Master Gardeners have diagnostic support via county Extension horticulturists and state Extension Specialists and the Distance Diagnostic Identification System (DDIS).
- Master Gardeners are also provided with UF/IFAS and Extension Service publications that discuss a variety of horticultural plants and pest problems.

Experienced Master Gardeners are likely to receive invitations to speak to groups or organizations. Therefore, the Master Gardener should understand the following:

Please do not seek payment for speaking appearances that involve the presentation of Extension information. Your work is much appreciated by the UF/IFAS, Monroe County Extension Service and your local area gardeners who have received or will receive your counsel.

- Florida Keys Master Gardeners are advised not to advertise their name or their place of business, nor to be listed on the advertisements of business places as Master Gardeners. This is a UF/IFAS, Monroe County Extension Service public service program providing unbiased information.
- Appearing as a commercial activity, having association with commercial products, or giving implied University/Extension Service endorsement of any product or place of

business is not acceptable.

- Master Gardeners deal only with homeowner-type questions. The Extension Service Horticulture Agent responds to all commercial or professional landscapers and retail nursery problems.

In making recommendations that include the use of chemicals (e.g., insecticides, herbicides, and fungicides), Florida Master Gardeners are to:

- Follow the most up-to-date published Extension Service recommendations and/or label recommendations.
- Please do not give recommendations based on personal experience.
- Do not answer questions concerning commercial horticultural recommendations. These are to be referred to the Extension Horticulture Agent.

POLICIES REGARDING MONROE COUNTY MASTER GARDENER RULES

Most States and many Counties have Master Gardener programs. Each is different according to their needs. In Monroe County, our objective and focus is mainly with providing the Monroe County residents with sustainable gardening and landscaping advice for the protection of our natural resources.

It would be impossible for the Monroe County Extension Service to supply all the help needed to meet all community horticultural needs. However, if there are special projects that meet our program objectives, mission, and goals of the Monroe County Extension Service, then you may use these opportunities to fulfill part of your volunteer hours. All community projects must have prior approval from the Master Gardener Coordinator.

You will be asked to start volunteering during your training by spending a few hours in several selected areas to give you an idea of the activities available. The first 50 hours must be spent at the plant clinics, MG help desk, and assisting with the

Florida Yards and Neighborhood Program, the remaining 25 hours may be used by working on community-based horticulture projects upon approval. All 75 volunteer hours must be completed by February 29, 2020. To maintain an active Monroe County Master Gardener status, you must annually complete 35 volunteer hours and attend 10 hours of approved educational programs. All MG volunteers' hours must be logged into the Florida MG Volunteer Management System.

MONROE COUNTY MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

The Monroe County Master Gardener program is focused on education and the most experience and education is gained by volunteering at the Help Desk and Plant Clinic positions. Other approved MG volunteer projects will be considered on an individual basis and will be based on the needs of the program and the skill of the Master Gardener. Additional projects are described on a separate handout.

As Master Gardeners assist the Extension Agent, they are in effect, "extending the reach of the Monroe County Extension Service." As such, they provide advice and recommendations which have been well documented as a result of experimentation and research and are approved by the University of Florida. There is something for Master Gardeners to do no matter the skill or the ability.

2019 Monroe County Master Gardener Program

SECTION 1: *Please give us this basic information about how to contact you.*

Mr. Mrs. Ms. Miss (Please circle one)

First Name _____ Last Name _____

Address _____

City / Key _____ Zip Code _____

Home Phone (____) _____ Cell Phone (____) _____

Work Phone (____) _____ E-mail _____

Please circle: Full time resident Part time resident (which months?) _____

SECTION 2: *Please complete the following questions.*

1. Have you participated in Master Gardener training before? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, when? _____ Where? _____

2. List any training and/or practical experience you have had in gardening, horticulture, farming, or related fields.

3. List any specialized gardening interests or hobbies you have.

4. What gardening affiliations do you have (e.g., garden clubs, horticulture societies, etc.)?

5. Are you currently active in other types of organizations (e.g., Cancer Society, Kiwanis Club, PTA)?

Yes _____ No _____ If yes, which ones? _____

6. How did you learn about the Master Gardener Program? _____

7. Why would you be a good candidate for becoming a Monroe County Master Gardener? _____

SECTION 3 : Please complete the following questions.

1. What are the best days for you to do volunteer work, e.g., every Friday afternoon, first Thursday of each month, etc.? _____

2. Please list any allergies or limitations that you would like us to know about. (This does not exclude you from the program.)

3. Which projects (Horticulture Help Desk, Regional Plant Clinic, FFL volunteer, Horticulture Worker) would you like to do your volunteer service hours?

1st choice # _____

2nd choice # _____

3rd choice # _____

SECTION 4 : Please read carefully the following statement before you sign and return this application.

I would like to submit this application for the 2019 MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM. I understand that this program is designed to make me a better gardener/landscaper and is not to be used for commercial gain. I wish to become a Florida Master Gardener and would like to be accepted into the program. I understand that I agree to donate a minimum of 75 hours of public service before February 29, 2020, through the UF/IFAS, Monroe County Master Gardener Program. I understand that 50 of these hours will be spent assisting with the Florida-Friendly Landscape Program™ and the Regional Plant Clinics. I understand the remaining 25 hours may be used on working on community-based projects of my choice that are approved by the Monroe County Extension Environmental Horticulture Agent.

Date

Signature