



# VISTA MATTERS

-September 2024 Edition -



## Seedlings and Seeds!

Get ready to plant! The seedlings you ordered from the VISTA store will be available for you on **Saturday September 14 and Sunday September 15 9:00a - 1:00p and Monday September 16 4:30p - 6:30p**. Seeds will be available for purchase at these times as well. Cash or check preferred. If you aren't able to pick up your seedlings by Monday evening, they will be placed on your raised garden bed.

## We Met Our Match!

**Huge thanks and appreciation** to all of our members who in July and August helped us meet and exceed the donation match opportunity that was

so generously provided by *Diana and Mohan Rao and Jennifer Grebenschikoff and David Kirschman*. Our goal was to raise \$500 to meet the match. Twelve of our members donated \$760, which with the match gave us \$1260! Thank you very much for your kind and thoughtful support of VISTA Gardens!

## Look What's Coming...



The poster is set against a dark orange background with a scalloped top edge. It features a witch on the left and a scientist on the right. The title 'creepy crawlies in the garden' is written in a large, black, cursive font. A yellow speech bubble contains the text 'PRESENTED BY FIONA THE FOREST WITCH AND THE MAD BUG SCIENTISTS'. A white box on the left lists the date and time: 'SATURDAY OCTOBER 19TH 9 AM - 12 PM'. A yellow circle on the right says 'FREE EVENT FOR KIDS'. At the bottom, a black box contains the event details: 'A SPOOKY EDUCATIONAL EVENT', '9AM - CRAFTS, INSECT TASTING & BEETLE ENCOUNTER', '10AM - MAD SCIENTIST PRESENTATION & BUG HUNT', and 'VISTA GARDENS - 13572 S. VILLAGE DRIVE'. Various insects like a ladybug, a green bug, a spider, and ants are scattered around the text.

**creepy crawlies  
in the garden**

PRESENTED BY  
FIONA THE FOREST WITCH  
AND  
THE MAD BUG SCIENTISTS

**SATURDAY  
OCTOBER 19TH  
9 AM - 12 PM**

**FREE  
EVENT FOR  
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**A SPOOKY EDUCATIONAL EVENT**  
**9AM - CRAFTS, INSECT TASTING & BEETLE ENCOUNTER**  
**10AM - MAD SCIENTIST PRESENTATION & BUG HUNT**  
**VISTA GARDENS - 13572 S. VILLAGE DRIVE**

**Growing cucumbers or squash? A bee like this may pollinate your plants.**

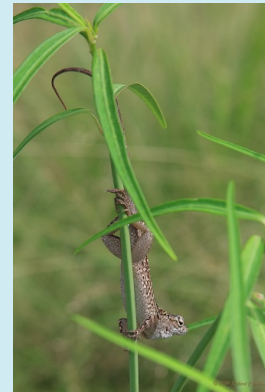
Rick Jackson photographed this solitary bee on the Blue flowered eryngo (*Eryngium aquaticum*) in VISTA's Wildflower Garden. This bee

carries golden pollen on her abdomen, some of which pollinates plants as it travels back and forth between its nest and plants. [Read more](#) about how their individual nests are created and you'll discover why this species (*Megachilidae*) of bees are nicknamed "leafcutting bees." Note: Leafcutter bees are rarely a stinging danger to people. Unlike honeybees, they do not aggressively defend their nests, but leave them be!



## VISTA Gardens Olympics!

No need to outrun, outclimb, or outswim fellow gardeners! Weed and shovel at your own pace, but do be sure to keep the pathways around your raised garden bed weed free and covered with 2-3 inches of mulch.



Mitch's first of three wagon loads of hardwood mulch that he spread on the pathway alongside his raised garden bed.

## Committee News

### **Volunteers in the Woodland**

A shout out to VISTA members, Ruchi, Elizabeth, and Azlee, who guided five energetic USF student volunteers August 11th, as well as to

Karen and Mitch Rose who brought snacks and hydrating drinks on ice on a hot morning. Here are the before and after photos showing their accomplishments.



VISTA Gardens is so proud of the work being done in the **Woodland**. Elizabeth Warner and her Woodland Committee lead the way, with help from VISTA gardeners and student volunteers. Take a look at this [short video](#) created by Tia Silvasy,

Hillsborough County UF/IFAS Extension Agent, about various invasive plants that have been removed and showing some of the 200+ Florida native trees, shrubs, grasses and wildflowers that have been planted. All of this activity is accomplished through a generous grant from the Tampa Bay Estuary Program.



### **VISTA Wants You...**

**...To join the Education Committee!** You do not need to be a gardening expert to participate. Nicole J needs help with event ideas, planning, prep, putting up flyers, social media promotion, and content research. Email [Nicole](#) for more information.

**...To chair the Volunteers Committee or the Marketing Committee:**

The **Volunteers Committee** is an opportunity to work with high school and college students who dedicate time and energy to VISTA. Experience the enthusiasm that these students have for the environment, as well as their cooperative work with VISTA gardeners and each other. Those who have participated with our student volunteers say that it gave them hope for the future. Email [Jennifer G](#) for more information.

The **Marketing Committee** works with the Social and Communications Committees to help get the word out about VISTA to our larger community, by reaching out to local businesses about sponsorship opportunities and arranging VISTA Nights at local restaurants. You can do this! Email [Jennifer G](#) for more information.



### **VISTA's Herb Garden**

Is that a cooler breeze in the air? Are we nearing the end of this hot weather? September is here and the kids are back at school. As we start the academic year, the Herb Garden Committee is getting into gear and planning our Fall planting efforts. The aim will be to replace the more delicate herbs that have bolted and dried up as a result of the



long, brutal summer. Now, more than ever, we'd like to hear your suggestions! We have plenty of space for planting, and we want to hear what herbs you like using and what you're interested in trying. Please reach out to the [Herb Garden Committee](#) with any suggestions for herbs you'd like to see growing this year!

In the meantime, you can still find plenty of lemongrass and lemon balm growing happily in the full-sun zone. Unlike the rest of us, these two thrive in the hot, humid weather!

Herb Garden committee chair Rita M welcomes Marcy B as co-chair and Vivian F as member. Thank you!



## Mark Your Calendars

### September Events



#### **Wednesday, September 4 4p.**

New Member Orientation - Reserve with **Beverly S.**

**Friday, September 6 8-10a.** Join volunteers maintaining the new native plant garden at Carrollwood Village Park.

#### **Sunday, September 8 9-11a**

Volunteer to work alongside USF Rotaract members as they complete planned projects at VISTA.

**Saturday and Sunday, September 14th and 15th 9a-1p:** Pick up seedlings ordered in advance. Seeds available for purchase.

**Saturday, September 14 9am:** Getting the Most Out of Your Plot. This session focuses on plant spacing, companion planting, watering and fertilizing. Learn about optimizing yield and minimizing pests.

**Saturday, September 14 10a-noon:** Community Open House to welcome visitors to tour and learn about VISTA.

**Monday, September 16 4:30-6:30p:** Pick up seedlings ordered in advance. Seeds available for purchase.

**Saturday, September 21 10a**

New Member Orientation - Reserve with **Beverly S.**

**Sunday, September 22 9-11a**

Volunteer to work alongside USF Rotaract members as they complete planned projects at VISTA.

**SAVE these October dates:**

**October 19 9a.**

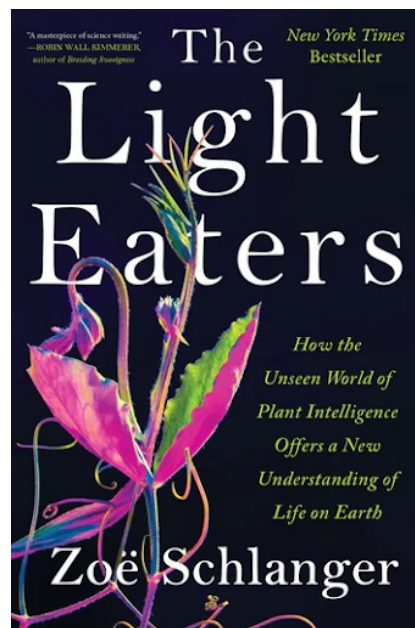
Creepy Crawlies in the Garden

**October 23 5:30p.**

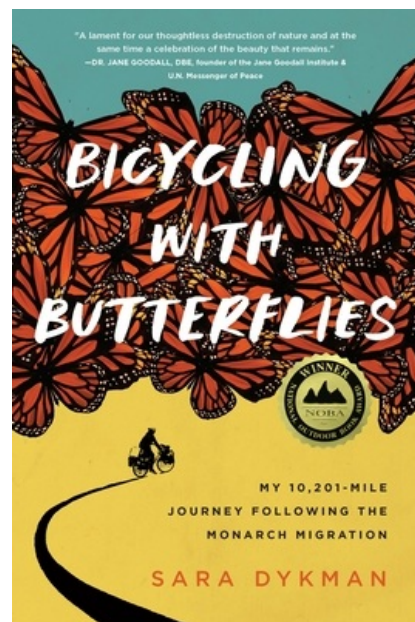
The “arms race” of 450 million years between insects and plants! Come and learn about how they have coevolved over time.

## New in the Little Free Library

Both VISTA and our community appreciate  
**Forever Friends**  
for the grant to purchase books for the Little Free Library



What can we learn about life on Earth from the living things that thrive, adapt, consume, and accommodate simultaneously? [READ MORE](#)



Science, nature, and adventure come together in this riveting account of a solo bike trip along the migratory path of the monarch butterfly. [READ MORE](#)

### **Maria Barros**

gardens in CW5 and volunteers with the Wildflower Garden Committee. VISTA thanks Maria for tending the Dune Sunflower and Beach Verbena plantings. Ask her about growing them in your home landscape.



#### **What is your favorite crop?**

My favorite crop is broccolini.

#### **How does your time at VISTA feed your soul?**

My time at VISTA allows me to enjoy the outdoors and get my hands dirty.

#### **What do you cook up with your harvest?**

I love to pan-fry the broccolini with onions and garlic and squeeze some lemon juice on top. It serves as a great side dish.

#### **What new information/learning have you acquired as a result of gardening at VISTA?**

I have learned so much from VISTA. To name a few, I have learned how to plant vegetables, trim my plants, and grow cover crops.

#### **What is your favorite social, exercise, or other non-gardening activity?**

When I'm not gardening, I enjoy all forms of crafts.

## Q&A

**Q:** Where can I get information about an irrigation system for my plot?

**A:** VISTA's website *Learn* and *Blog* pages are full of helpful garden information. Nicole J created a [video](#) about installing irrigation systems and a follow-up [blog](#) post. Marty K wrote a blog on which [irrigation timers](#) to buy. You can also email Nicole, Education Chair, at [Nicole](#) with questions.

Why not go out on a limb? That's where the fruit is.  
-Mark Twain

**Click here** to submit your photos and stories for future editions of VISTA Matters.



VISTA Gardens | 13572 South Village Drive | Tampa, FL 33618 US

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