



## VISTA MATTERS: June Edition

### A message from Bill West

Many thanks to the members who participated in Barb's seminar last Sunday on how to cover your plot for the summer and what to do while your plot rests. For those who could not attend, try to make it to the **Thursday 6:30 PM** repeat.

You will learn the best practices to let your plot rest and recover from the depletion of fall and winter season work. Plus, learn where and when to get help if you need it. This seminar will shortcut your efforts and produce results.

We will also discuss how to replace your work on your plot with the very important work around the garden. See you there!

## Summer Plot Preservation

Although almost every raised garden bed at VISTA is closed for the summer months, we ask Seasonal Gardeners to continue to keep pathways around their gardens weed free and well mulched, as well as continuing to volunteer a minimum of 2 hours each month to create compost, tend the herb, flower, and pollinator gardens, and assist with repairs and other infrastructure activities. Some volunteer more since they are not raising vegetables, and we appreciate this!

If you are one of the very few who want to “brave the heat” and garden during the summer months, please communicate with someone on the Garden Committee to make special arrangements.

### TIPS FOR CLOSING YOUR GARDEN BED:

**Removing plants:** Cut your plants at soil level to leave the root in the ground to foster microbial action. If you are concerned about a plant regenerating, pull it but disturb as little soil as possible and shake the root base well to capture the soil for the good of your garden.

**Composting healthy plants:** Give decomposition a head start by chopping vines into small pieces 12” or less.



**Disposing unhealthy plants:** Bring a large garbage bag to contain any diseased plant material and take it home for disposal. Since VISTA does not have garbage services, we appreciate you not placing plant material or weeds in the garbage cans.

**Covering garden soil:** Used black landscape cloth and landscape staples are available for reuse or you can purchase your own at a garden center. Before covering with landscape cloth, some gardeners add a layer of unfinished compost to promote life while the soil is otherwise dormant. Shovel a wheelbarrow full of compost from one of the last geo bins. If you need more information, ask the Compost Committee.

**Secure the landscape cloth well to inhibit weed growth.**

**Take home trellises and garden decorations for summer storage:** Trellises and décor often pierce the landscape cloth and all will have to be removed from the garden if we need to prepare for a storm or hurricane.

## Welcome to our new members!



Marybeth and Craig Storts enjoy learning and sharing information at VISTA as they garden at home.



Janet recently relocated from Jacksonville to Citrus Park. Active in the Sierra Club, Janet looks forward to gardening and bringing her grandchildren to VISTA, especially since she gave up her butterfly garden in Jacksonville.



A Florida native who lives in original Carrollwood, Beverly has always enjoyed landscape gardening at home and looks forward to growing vegetables at VISTA.

## In the Weeds!





Many of our members are doing an excellent job of keeping the weeds in check. Long-term members recall the beginning days when the torpedo grass took over. It took up to eight hours to rid a bed of the massive root structure. But, it is gone now!

Next up is completely eliminating the **nutsedge** (see photo). Like torpedo grass, sedge grass propagates via **rhizomes**.

From Dictionary.com, a **rhizome** is a rootlike subterranean stem, commonly horizontal in position, that usually produces roots below and sends up shoots progressively from the upper surface.



In order to get rid of **sedge**, you must get rid of the whole root structure and not just what you see on the surface. The second photo shows a whole sedge structure that was pulled from our garden. You can see how everything is connected. If you just pull the parts you can see, you leave most of the plant behind encouraging it to propagate even more.

If you throw mulch on top of the sedge, the root system will continue to grow outward until it finds a place to pop up which is inside the beds.

Together we can get rid of it! Get a shovel and dig on section and throw it outside the perimeter of the garden and it will be mowed over.

## The Hive at VISTA is Growing

Bee hives are modular so that we can regulate their space. Much like goldilocks, they need hive space that is “just right”. Too much space and they cannot adequately defend it from other insects and opportunistic pests. Too little space and they will voluntarily swarm. Their mission is to fill the cavity with bees and food and when that is done, 40-60% of the bees leave with the old queen to start a new colony (in a tree, in a house, etc.). They leave behind the older worker bees and newly emerging queen.

Notice a Bee Following You While You Water Your Garden?

With this drought the bees are looking for clean water sources. Some of the bees are tasked with bringing water to the hive. No doubt it is a less glamorous job. They get H<sub>2</sub>O duty; not nectar duty.



It is a state requirement for beekeepers to have a water resource nearby. VISTA's pond more than satisfies that requirement, but our bees may still be attracted to irrigation water. Rest assured they are more than likely just trying to gather water.

Some gardeners at home have a bird bath with clean water that is much appreciated by the birds and other pollinators. They float a stick (or wine corks) in the water to help the bees and other insects survive if they fall in. You will know if bees select your water source, as there will be 20-50 drinking any one time!



## Garden Activities



### Last Yoga in the Garden until the Fall

Join us for yoga in the garden!

Come in comfortable clothing, and bring water, a mat and a towel to place underneath your mat (in case the grass is damp).

**Yoga: June 12, from 10-11  
am**



### Friday 5 pm Happy Hours

Are you new to the garden or would you like to socialize outdoors in our amazing Florida weather?

Join your fellow garden members for a socially-distanced Happy Hour at the garden.

Please bring a chair, if you'd like, and also your favorite drinks and/or snacks.

**VISTA to be the site of a  
Florida Landscape Demonstration Garden**



# in Autumn 2021!



We are pleased to announce that VISTA received a grant to establish a Wildflower Garden along South Village Drive. In autumn, we will plant native trees, vines, grasses, and wildflowers that begin at our entrance gate, surround the pergola, benches and Little Free Library, and extend 138 feet along the crest of the earthen berm, ending among tall pines.

We are grateful to VISTA volunteers on the Grants Committee, Jennifer Grebenschikoff, Mary Ellen Dallman, and Vanitha Venugopal, who developed the grant proposal.

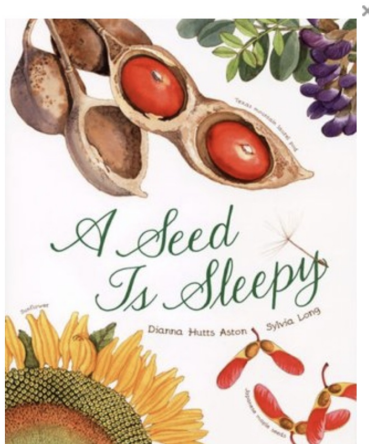
For more information, read the article Jennifer wrote for the Carrollwood Village Voice.

[Read more here.](#)



## "Little Free Library" Spotlight

**A Seed Is Sleepy**  
by Dianna Hutts Aston,  
Sylvia Long (Illustrator)



Award-winning artist Sylvia Long and author Dianna Hutts Aston have teamed up again to create this gorgeous and informative introduction to seeds. Poetic in voice and elegant in design, the book introduces children to a fascinating array of seed and plant facts, making it a guide that is equally at home being read on a parent's lap as in a classroom reading circle.

[Click to Discover](#)

**Bluebird Summer**  
by Deborah Hopkinson,  
Bethanie Andersen (Illustrator)

For Mags and Cody, summer has always meant long golden days with Gramps and Grandma at the farm on





[Click to Discover](#)

the ridge, where the wheat fields stretch to the horizon and bluebirds sing from the old wood fence. But now Grandma has died and Gramps is selling off his fields one by one, and the bluebirds -- no longer at home in Grandma's abandoned garden of tangled weeds -- are gone. How can Mags and Cody bring them back, bring everything back?

This rich picture book -- the collaboration of a master storyteller and an immensely gifted artist -- offers readers of all ages hope, comfort, and the renewal that can come with great patience and love. Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators' 2001 Golden Kite Honor Book Award Winner.

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**Both VISTA and our community appreciate [Forever Friends](#) for a grant to purchase books for the Little Free Library.**

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### **Little Free Library Steward, Denise Wood**

VISTA members volunteer in a multitude of ways. Denise generously shares her time tending the Little Free Library to ensure that we present an interesting selection of books about gardening, nature, plants, and intergenerational relationships for VISTA members and neighbors to enjoy.

“Little Free Library stewards are the backbone of the Little Free Library network. It never would have grown so quickly without the support and dedication of volunteer stewards worldwide.”

[Learn more.](#)



Denise attends book sales, searches online, accepts donations, and finds quality used books to add to the library. If you have gardening books and books about nature to donate, bring them to the House of the Rising Seeds, where Denise regularly picks them up. Instead of shelving books, share them with others!

**Needed: Compost Help**





We are looking for members to sign up for Compost Fit. We can use the help!

Contribute to our production of the "Black Gold," get some exercise and enjoy the VISTA community.

From 8-9 am or 9-10 am: **June 24, 25 and 26.**

[Click to get "Compost Fit!"](#)

## Grubs be Gone!

Our Native Plant Landscape is important to VISTA's ecosystem, and we are increasing the number and variety of beneficial insects. On May 20, we witnessed this docile female scoliid wasp nectaring on a Stokes' aster in full bloom in the pollinator garden north of the pavilion.

Scoliid wasps are parasitic upon larvae of soil-inhabiting scarab beetles. In their immature larval stage, known as white grubs, scarab beetles damage roots of turf grasses and other plants, from edible berries and fruits to evergreens and ornamental trees. [Read more here.](#)



## Wedding Bells

Congratulations and best wishes to Doug and Jennifer Cummins Kostelnik who were married in a beautiful wedding at VISTA Gardens in April!



Have anything to add?

**Submit** your photos and stories for future editions of VISTA Matters.

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Connect with us

