

Master Gardeners to host open house at Silvermont

The Transylvania Master Gardeners invite the community to an open house at their demonstration gardens at Silvermont Park and Mansion on Thursday, July 10 from 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. The free event offers an opportunity to explore the Pollinator Garden, Raised Bed Garden and Woodland Garden; and learn directly from master gardener volunteers.

Visitors will have the chance to engage with experienced gardeners who will be on hand to discuss the featured gardens, answer questions and offer insights into successful gardening practices in Transylvania County, according to a news release.

The Pollinator Demonstration Garden showcases a vibrant array of native perennial plants specifically chosen to attract and support local bees, butterflies and other vital pollinators, the release said. Revamped in 2019, the garden now boasts an increased variety of native plants, a pathway and a spiral stone “puddling” area for insects to drink. Mouse-eared coreopsis and golden Alexander kick off the bloom season in early May and a host of



Submitted photo

Beverly Hughey plants ferns in the Woodland Garden.

other native perennials take over from there. In autumn, several varieties of aster and goldenrod are crowded with

pollinators well into October.

Attendees can learn about the garden's win-

ter management strategy, which includes leaving plant stems to overwinter to support nesting soli-

tary bees and provide food for birds, and how this “untidy” approach benefits pollinators year-round. The garden is also an ideal spot to participate in the upcoming Great Southeast Pollinator Census Aug. 22-23 with information on this citizen-science program available at the open house.

Adjacent to the Pollinator Garden is the Raised Bed Learning Garden, which demonstrates effective methods for growing edibles. This garden highlights how vegetables, herbs and small fruits can thrive in raised beds, a particularly beneficial gardening style for Transylvania County. Sustainable practices, such as crop rotation and companion planting, are implemented to minimize disease, reduce pests, attract beneficial insects and improve soil fertility. Produce harvested from this garden is donated to local organizations including Bread of Life, Sharing House and The Haven.

Lastly, the Woodland Garden, nestled in a shaded corner of the Silvermont grounds, showcases native plants that flourish in partial and full shade.

Originally an herb garden, it became too shaded for sun-loving herbs as the surrounding trees grew. As a result, it was transformed to demonstrate how groundcovers, herbaceous plants, shrubs and canopy trees can replicate a natural forest environment. Visitors can observe spring ephemerals that bloom before the trees fully leaf out and summer-flowering plants that thrive in the cool shade, including a central circular garden featuring a serene collection of mosses and ferns. The woodland garden has become a popular haven for many people who use the walking trail at Silvermont.

The demonstration gardens are located behind the Silvermont Mansion at 364 E. Main St. Ample parking is available at the property entrance. The next Master Gardener Demonstration Garden Open House will be held at the Pisgah National Forest Ranger Station from 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m., Monday, July 21.

For more information on these programs, contact the NC Cooperative Extension, Transylvania County Center, at (828) 884-3109 or go to 106 E. Morgan St., Suite 109, Brevard.