



FAIRFAX COUNTY PARK AUTHORITY



12055 Government Center Parkway, Suite 927 • Fairfax, VA 22035-5500
703-324-8700 • Fax: 703-324-3974 • www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks

Information Release

Judy Pedersen, PIO

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E-mail: parkmail@fairfaxcounty.gov

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Inquiries: 703-324-8662

New Native Plant Garden Sprouts at Hidden Oaks with Student Help

A new native plant garden is springing to life at Hidden Oaks Nature Center through the combined efforts of the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA), the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries Habitat Partners Program© (VDGIF), a team of dedicated volunteers, and local seventh graders.

Hidden Oaks is contributing land and VDGIF provided a free workshop for Master Naturalist and Master Gardener volunteers in the region who are assisting with the project. VDGIF also purchased native plants valued at \$1,440 through its Habitat Partners Program©, an educational outreach effort that promotes the use of native plants for a diversity of wildlife species (www.dgif.virginia.gov/wildlife/habitat).

Teams of workshop participants planned garden concepts for the 20' x 30' garden space, and FCPA naturalist Janis Jeffers finalized the plans and list of plants. The garden includes such native plants as arrowwood viburnum, button bush, black cohosh, New York ironweed, Joe-Pye weed, wild blue indigo, swamp milkweed and New England aster.

Participants in the native plant class have been busy planting this month along with students from Poe and Luther Jackson Middle Schools. The seventh graders are taking part through Northrop Grumman grant-supported Meaningful Watershed Education Experience (MWEE) field trips. Some of the students have assisted with the garden prep and planting, while others assisted with invasive plant removal or trail improvements. The new garden is located at the site of an older disused garden that Hidden Oaks maintained in the 1990s, across from the entrance to the Packard Center.

Hidden Oaks Nature Center is located at 7701 Royce Street, Annandale, Va. For more information, call 703-941-1065 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/hidden-oaks/.

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