



23 – 24 ANNUAL REPORT



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Surfrider Foundation Space Coast volunteers celebrate the recent installation of their Viva Florida native garden.



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

What a year it's been for Florida's wildflowers — and for the people working to protect and celebrate them.

As I look back on our last fiscal year, I'm reminded how central connection is to everything we do: connecting people to place, connecting science to practice, and connecting individual actions to broader ecological change. Whether it's a new native plant garden in a community space, a roadside bursting into bloom, or a classroom full of students learning about pollinators, the Florida Wildflower Foundation is helping Floridians see that wildflowers are more than beautiful — they're essential.

Last year, we strengthened and expanded the work at the heart of our mission. We launched Wildflower Watchers, a volunteer-powered program that brings new eyes and energy to our roadside conservation efforts. In Gainesville, our Bee City USA program ramped up, with new habitat projects and expanded outreach. We supported communities, nonprofits, teachers and volunteers with grants, training and tools. And we continued to build a stronger foundation for the future of native seed through early-stage planning and partnerships.

This growth is powered by people — especially those proudly displaying the State Wildflower license plate. By September 2023, registrations topped 30,000, making it the 21st most popular specialty tag in Florida. Each plate directly supports wildflower conservation, education and research statewide.

From every plant in the ground to each story shared and every mile of protected roadside, these efforts bring us closer to a future where Florida's landscapes are rich with native wildflowers — and the wildlife and people who depend on them.

Thank you for being part of this mission. Your time, your support and your passion make this work possible. We can't wait to see what grows next.

Stacey

Stacey Matrazzo, Executive Director



Foundation staff (left to right): Jenny Ryan, Rose Kinane, Marina Mertz, Stacey Matrazzo and Emily Bell.

Education is central to our mission. From publications to hands-on programs, we strive to connect people of all ages with Florida's native plants and the ecosystems they support.

This year, we **distributed more than 51,000 educational publications**, including a **new handout on *Grasses and Groundcovers***, designed to help people incorporate functional and beautiful native species into their home landscapes.

Our **webinar series** remains a cornerstone of outreach, with **11 live sessions** this year, drawing **1,661 attendees on Zoom** and **over 6,900 views on YouTube**. Topics ranged from garden design to ecological restoration, reflecting growing public interest in native plants.



Field trip participants learn about wildflower seed farming at board member Terry Zinn's farm, where blooming Black-eyed Susans grow for seed collection.



In addition to online learning, we gave **40 in-person presentations** with a total **audience of 1,721**, and hosted **14 native plant field trips** across Florida, giving **172 participants** an immersive experience in wildflower-rich habitats.

We also participated in **17 outreach events**, engaging more than **14,000 Floridians** through tabling, activities and direct education. Across social media and our monthly newsletter, we reached an average of **95,000 people per month**, sharing inspiration, science and practical guidance on native plant gardening and conservation.

To foster the next generation of native plant stewards, we supported the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs' **SEEK Camp**, a weeklong science camp for high school students. Our contribution helped provide scholarships and supported a full day of programming — including a pollinator pot workshop, native plant scavenger hunt, and more.

SEEK campers explored endangered native plants, learned how plants and pollinators depend on each other, and created their own pollinator pots to take home.



FWF staff shared native plant resources and connected with the community at outreach events across Florida.



Native plant gardens create more than beauty — they provide habitat, support pollinators and engage communities in conservation. This year, our planting programs brought native plants to life in schools, libraries, city parks and community spaces across Florida.

Through our **Viva Florida Landscape Demonstration Garden Grant** program, we awarded **14 grants** that supported the installation or expansion of native plant gardens in public spaces. These gardens welcomed over **144,000 visitors** this year and added more than **25,000 square feet** of native pollinator habitat to Florida's landscape.

A burst of color at Secret Lake Park in Casselberry, where a Viva Florida planting invites visitors to experience the beauty and benefits of native wildflowers.



We launched our new **Seeds of Knowledge Library Garden Grant**, supporting the creation of native plant gardens at two public libraries:

- **Bruce J. Host Northeast Branch Library** (Tallahassee), designed and planted by the Babies Breath Circle of the Tallahassee Garden Club
- **Port St. Joe Library** (Gulf County)

These **pilot gardens** introduce new audiences to the beauty and ecological value of native plants in community learning environments.

Our **Seedlings for Schools program** continued to grow. In fall 2024, we awarded **40 grants to schools across the state**, reaching over **7,000 students** through hands-on learning and planting experiences that connect youth with the natural world.



Native blooms flourish at the Bruce J. Host Northeast Branch Library, one of the pilot sites supported through our Seeds of Knowledge Library Garden Grant.

Students at Springwood Elementary School got their hands dirty planting seedlings, while a young gardener helped water the first Bee City Gainesville garden at Grow Hub.



In **Gainesville**, the Foundation leads the **Bee City USA program**, working to increase native pollinator habitat and community awareness. This year, we **installed a new native plant garden at Grow Hub**, a nonprofit nursery and training center that supports adults with disabilities. We also represented Bee City Gainesville at the **Pollinator Palooza festival**, hosted by the Florida Museum of Natural History, where we engaged individuals and families in learning about the vital role of pollinators and how native plants support them.

Several additional planting projects were made possible with support from the Foundation:

- In **Longwood** (Seminole County), a new native plant garden was installed through a partnership between the City, landscape firm Dix.Hite+Partners, and FWF. The garden serves as both a **serene community space and a demonstration of biodiversity, water conservation and sustainable landscape design**.
- The **Blountstown Pollinator Garden** (Calhoun County), located near the historic M & B Railroad Depot, continues to thrive under the care of longtime FWF contractor **Bob Farley**, who shares its story and ecological purpose with visitors.
- In **Paisley** (Lake County), our work on the **Ellis Acres Ethnobotanical Garden** continues to grow. This unique, multi-year project **honors the traditional uses of native plants by Indigenous peoples** and is being developed in partnership with Lake County Parks. Located along an existing trail at a former dairy farm homestead, the site features an ADA-accessible shell rock path and plantings that reflect the historical ethnobotanical uses of native species. Maintenance activities like invasive species control and seasonal planting are ongoing, with more native grasses, wildflowers and shrubs being added over time. Educational signage will help visitors explore the cultural and ecological significance of the landscape as it evolves in the coming years.
- A forthcoming **native planting in Groveland** (Lake County) will **transform a city median into a vibrant corridor of native grasses and wildflowers**. Supported by grants from the Foundation and the WT Bland Charitable Trust and designed by Dix.Hite+Partners, installation is scheduled for December 2024.



Board member and Dix.Hite+Partners CEO Kody Smith lays pine straw at the new native garden in Longwood — a partnership project enhancing community habitat.

Successful native plantings start with good science. Our research initiatives explore the challenges and opportunities of native plant establishment, from roadside enhancement to large-scale habitat restoration.

In June 2024, we launched a new study: **Testing Site Preparation Methodologies to Overcome the Weed Seed Bank**. This one-year research project is **investigating how different soil preparation techniques can suppress unwanted weed growth** before seeding with wildflowers. The goal is to develop low-cost, effective practices that can be used by land managers, solar farms, and conservation groups statewide.

Our ***Pityopsis* Groundcover Study** continued into its second year. This multi-year trial evaluates the establishment and spread of two native perennials — *Pityopsis tracyi* and *Salvia lyrata* — in a minimally managed site. The study **explores how different planting densities affect groundcover development over time**, with implications for long-term resilience in restoration settings. An update report in March 2024 detailed plant survival and flowering rates as well as weed competition.

We also co-sponsored the **Groundcover Restoration and Enhancement Workshop**, hosted by UF/IFAS. This annual event convenes researchers, growers, land managers and agency partners to advance native seed supply and restoration science. These discussions are forming the backbone of the forthcoming **Florida Native Seed Partnership**.

Researchers, land managers and growers gather at the Groundcover Workshop, while ongoing trials of *Pityopsis tracyi* contribute data on low-maintenance native groundcovers.



Florida's roadsides are more than just driveable corridors — they are vital pollinator pathways and reservoirs of native plant diversity.

This year, we strengthened our roadside conservation work by launching **Wildflower Watchers**, a volunteer-based program that revitalizes and expands our efforts. Trained Watchers **conduct seasonal surveys** of designated wildflower roadsides, **monitor mowing compliance**, and **track changes in species composition** over time. Their observations provide **critical feedback** on the effectiveness of current management practices and help ensure that roadside habitats are protected and thriving.

To support this growing network of roadside stewards, we launched a **new section on our website** that offers **tools, guidance and background** on the ecological importance of roadside wildflowers. Visitors can learn how roadsides function as habitat, how the Foundation supports roadside management, and how to get involved as a volunteer: FlaWildflowers.org/roadsides.

FWF staff conducts a roadside survey in one of our new Wildflower Watcher vests, part of our revitalized volunteer monitoring program.



The following organizations and entities benefited from the Florida Wildflower Foundation's Education, Planting or Research programs during the 2023–24 fiscal year.

Alachua Conservation Trust
 Alachua County Master Gardeners
 Ann Norton Sculpture Garden
 Apalachicola National Estuarine Research
 Audubon Everglades
 Beachwalk Homeowners Association
 Bloom and Grow Society
 Bonita Springs Library
 Bonnet Springs Park
 Born Architects
 Brevard Zoo
 Brooker Creek Preserve
 Brooksville Garden Club
 Callahan Garden Club
 Camellia Garden Club
 City of Casselberry
 City of Gainesville
 City of Oakland Park
 City of Parkland Library
 City of Sanibel
 City of Wildwood
 Clay County Master Gardeners
 Coastal Plains Institute
 CREW Land & Water Trust
 Cypress Village Property Owners
 Association
 Dade City Garden Club
 Deland Garden Club
 Duval County Master Gardeners
 Eco-Bellagio
 Edison Ford Winter Estate
 Embry Riddle Aeronautical University
 Faith United Church of Christ Dunedin
 Flagler County Master Gardeners
 Florida Federation of Garden Clubs (FFGC)
 FFGC District VI
 FFGC District VII
 Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation
 Commission
 Florida Gulf Coast University
 Florida Museum of Natural History
 Florida Native Plant Society (FNPS)
 FNPS Beautyberry Chapter
 FNPS Broward County Chapter
 FNPS Citrus Chapter
 FNPS Conradina Chapter
 FNPS Cuplet Fern
 FNPS Dade Chapter
 FNPS Eugenia Chapter
 FNPS Ixia Chapter
 FNPS Lake Beautyberry Chapter
 FNPS Longleaf Pine Chapter
 FNPS Marion Big Scrub Chapter
 FNPS Nature Coast Chapter
 FNPS Pasco County
 FNPS Pawpaw Chapter
 FNPS Paynes Prairie
 FNPS Pine Lily Chapter
 FNPS Sea Rocket Chapter
 FNPS Suncoast Chapter
 FNPS Tarflower Chapter
 FNPS The Villages Chapter
 Florida Native Plants Nursery &
 Landscaping
 Folly Farm
 freeFall Theatre
 Friends of Merritt Island National Wildlife
 Refuge
 Friends of Savanna Preserve

Gainesville Garden Club
 Gainesville Master Gardeners
 Garden Club by the Sea
 Garden Club of the Tri-Counties
 Girl Scouts Troop 24019
 Green Isle Gardens
 Green Mountain Scenic Byway, Inc
 Grow Hub
 Hendry Glades Audubon Society
 Hernando Audubon Society
 Hernando College
 Hernando County Master Gardeners
 Nursery
 Hillsborough Master Gardeners
 Hing Family Apiary
 Jacksonville Garden Club, Old Fashioned
 Garden Circle
 Jacksonville Parks
 Jaybird Hammock Farm
 Jupiter Tequesta Garden Club
 Labelle Garden Club
 Lafayette Oaks Homeowners Association
 Lake County Master Gardeners
 Lakes & Hills Garden Club
 Lakeshore Women's Club
 Lee County Master Gardeners
 Legends Pointe Property Owners
 Association
 Lemon Bay Garden Club
 Leon County Public Library
 Little Red Wagon Native Nursery
 Love the Everglades
 Lukas Nursery
 MainStreet Deland
 Manatee County Master Gardeners
 Mandel Public Library
 McKeithen Growers
 Mead Botanical Garden
 Melbourne Garden Club
 Miami Beach Botanical Garden
 Nassau County Master Gardeners
 Native Butterfly Flowers
 Natural Treasures
 Nehrling Gardens
 New Smyrna Beach Garden Club
 Orange City Village Improvement
 Orange County Master Gardeners
 Orlando Health
 Palm Beach County Environmental
 Resources Management
 Palm Harbor Master Gardeners
 Pelican Island Audubon Society
 Pinellas County
 Pinellas County Master Gardeners
 Pollinator Power
 Port St. Joe Garden Club
 Rainbow Lakes Estates
 Sandhills Native Nursery
 Santa Rosa County Master Gardeners
 Sew Nature
 Sierra Club Big Bend Group
 Sky Academy Englewood Garden Club
 Solivita Butterfly Club
 Solivita Native Plant Club
 Solivita Wildlife Conservation Club
 Springer Environmental
 St. Augustine Alligator Farm
 Steven Miller Photography
 Stocking Savvy

Sun Country Trail Blazers Inc
 Sunken Gardens
 Surfride Foundation Space Coast Chapter
 Sustainable Tallahassee
 Synchrony Financial
 Tallahassee Garden Club
 The Environmental Conservancy of North
 Port And Surrounding Areas
 The Florida Headwaters Foundation Inc
 The Nectary
 Trinity Springs Garden Club
 Turkey Creek Neighborhood Association
 University of Florida Institute of Food and
 Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS)
 UF/IFAS Palm Beach County
 UF/IFAS Sarasota County
 UF/IFAS Walton County
 University of North Florida
 University of North Florida, Department of
 Biology
 Volusia County Master Gardeners
 Wakulla County Master Gardeners
 Wilcox Nursery
 WT Bland Library Mount Dora
 Youth Environmental Alliance

Seedlings for Schools Grant Awards

Avalon Elementary
 Bailey Elementary
 Bonnevill Elementary
 Cocoplum Nature School
 Cordova Park Elementary
 Deerfield Beach Middle School
 Dorothy C York Innovation Academy
 Dundee Elementary Academy
 East Pasco Education Academy
 Gateway Environmental K-8 Learning
 Center
 Griffin Elementary
 Harmony High School
 Heritage Elementary
 J.D. Parker Elemaentary
 Lake Magdalene Christian School
 Lake Orienta Elementary
 Lake Shore Middle School
 Naples High School
 Okeechobee Healthy Start
 Palm Bay Magnet High School
 Palm Beach Central High School
 Philip O'Brien Elementary
 Rain Lily Montessori School
 Roberts Elementary School
 Rock Springs Elementary
 Roots Nature and Leadership Academy
 Sand Lake Elementary
 Sheridan Hills Elementary
 Southside Elementary
 Sparr Elementary
 Springwood Elementary
 St. Elizabeth Seton Catholic School
 St. Paul Catholic School
 Storybrooke Academy
 Suwannee Pineview Elementary
 The Goddard School of Baymeadows
 Timber Lakes Elementary School
 Trinity Tots Preschool
 Twin Rivers Montessori Academy
 Web of Wisdom

FINANCIALS & GOVERNANCE

TEAM WILDFLOWER

BOARD MEMBERS

Sara Burke, chair
 Fatima Elkott, vice chair
 Marissa Kaprow, treasurer
 Terry Zinn, secretary
 Jeff Caster, immediate
 past chair
 Nancy Bissett
 Jeff Henry
 Melissa Hunt
 Mona Johnston
 Anne MacKay, honorary
 member
 CJ McCartney
 David Price
 Mark Russell
 Carolyn Schaag, honorary
 member
 Kody Smith

STAFF

Stacey Matrazzo,
 Executive Director
 Emily Bell, Communications
 Coordinator
 Rose Kinane, Programs and
 Administrative Coordinator
 Marina Mertz, Roadsides and
 North Florida Programs
 Coordinator
 Jenny Ryan, Operations and
 Development Coordinator

CONTRACTORS

Bob Farley, education and
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 Geena Hill, North Florida
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 Jeff Norcini, research,
 planting and education
 Jennifer Tyson, social media

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REVENUE

	<u>2023-2024</u>	<u>2022-2023</u>
Donations*	\$589,069	\$555,750
Investment earnings	\$126,973	\$42,998
Gifts In-kind	\$2,097	\$3,919
Memberships	\$12,301	\$17,088
Admissions	\$1,416	\$6,898
Grants	-	\$25,100
Other	\$418	\$149

TOTAL Revenue **\$732,274** **\$651,902**

*includes restricted funds received through sales of the State Wildflower license plate

EXPENSES

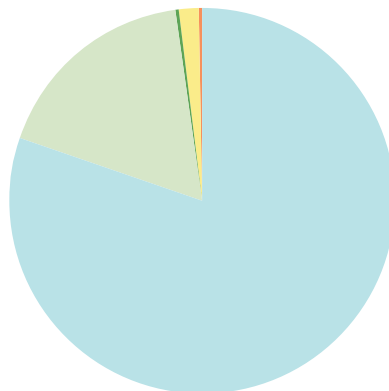
	<u>2023-2024</u>	<u>2022-2023</u>
Education	\$228,255	\$211,946
Planting	\$102,742	\$80,094
Research	\$27,996	\$23,889
Management/Gen	\$50,767	\$33,760
Fundraising	\$103,523	\$94,645

TOTAL Expense **\$513,283** **\$444,344**

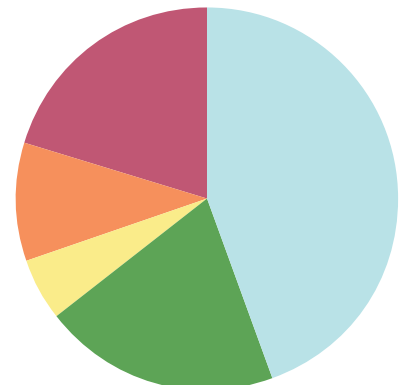
Net assets, beginning \$1,352,542

Net assets, end† \$1,571,533

†Includes board-designated reserve of \$300,000



REVENUE



EXPENSES

