

Seeds of Knowledge 2025–26 Final Report

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Program Description, Criteria and Timeline

The Seeds of Knowledge Library Demonstration Garden Grant provides up to \$750 in funding to Florida public libraries to establish or enhance small native plant demonstration gardens. Grant funds are used primarily to purchase Florida native wildflowers, grasses, shrubs or vines, and may also support educational signage or related materials. Participating libraries additionally receive native seeds twice a year from the Florida Wildflower Foundation to distribute through their existing seed libraries. The program's goal is to increase public familiarity with native plants, demonstrate their landscaping potential, provide community access to native wildflower seed, and highlight their value in supporting pollinators and other wildlife.



Emily Taber Public Library, Baker County

Applications are accepted annually between Jan 1 and Feb 15. Eligibility is limited to Florida-based public libraries that can demonstrate the ability to install and maintain native plantings and offer educational programming aligned with the garden's purpose. Libraries are encouraged to partner with community volunteers or organizations such as Master Gardeners, Florida Native Plant Society chapters or garden clubs to assist with garden establishment, maintenance and outreach.

Plantings must be located in publicly accessible areas on library grounds and be properly prepared prior to installation. All plants and seeds must be native to Florida, suitable for the site and region, and sourced from approved native plant nurseries. Each garden must remain in place and be maintained for at least one year following installation.

Educational and outreach components are required and include interpretive signage provided by the Foundation featuring a QR code that links to a dedicated garden information page. Libraries must also offer at least one public program on native plants or a related topic, along with plant identification materials and informational handouts or brochures. Grantees are expected to secure at least one media feature — such as an article, blog post or video — within 60 days of installation and to distribute native seeds provided by the Foundation twice annually through their seed libraries.

Grant Awards

This year, nine libraries (selected from 12 applications) were awarded full grants. The awardees were:

- **Bushnell Public Library,**
Sumter County
- **Deltona Regional Library,**
Volusia County
- **Emily Taber Public Library,**
Baker County
- **Fort Walton Beach Library,**
Okaloosa County
- **Orange Park Library,**
Clay County
- **Parker Public Library,**
Bay County
- **R.J. Bailer Public Library,**
Jefferson County
- **Spring Hill Branch Library,**
Hernando County
- **Tarpon Springs Public Library,**
Pinellas County

This year, more than 3,300 square feet of garden space were newly planted or enhanced with 100% Florida native plants. Over the life of the grant, libraries have distributed more than 2,000 packets of native wildflower seeds to visitors, and thousands of patrons have enjoyed the gardens and participated in educational activities, including presentations, workshops, pollinator parties and birding club visits.

Libraries partnered with Master Gardeners, UF/IFAS Extension, Florida Native Plant Society chapters, Audubon chapters, horticulture staff and community volunteers to support garden installation, maintenance and educational programming.



Orange Park Library, Clay County



Deltona Regional Library, Volusia County



Tarpon Springs Public Library, Pinellas County

Library Reflections

Following are comments collected from our fall 2026 surveys that demonstrate how communities are connecting with and utilizing the library gardens. Surveys were sent to both new and previous award recipients.

"The gardens grow more and more beautiful every month. It has been incredibly well received by members of the community as evidenced by several complimentary emails, passersby, and official members of the library and adjacent parks and rec teams."

— *Rebecca Campbell, Tavares Public Library*
(2025 award recipient)

"Thank you for this wonderful opportunity to extend our reach in sharing native plants with our patrons. The patrons appreciate seeing the demonstration gardens as a visual representation of that they could do in their own yards."

— *Christy Miller, Deltona Regional Library*
(2026 award recipient)

"Our patrons have been really enjoying taking home resources/brochures/flyers from the Florida Wildflower Foundation."

— *Paige Ely, Newport Richey Public Library*
(2025 award recipient)

"We hosted one community gardening event where we allowed the garden club and local volunteers come together to tidy up the garden, add beautifying features like a bird bath, and trim back some of the dead flowers following the end of summer. We tried to preserve seeds and allowed patrons to take them home to try growing their own."

— *Emily Grosskopf, R.J. Bailer Public Library* (2026 award recipient)

"Thank you for this lovely program! Everyone involved, from myself to our patrons, has learned so much throughout this process."

— *Meghan Duffey, Fort Walton Beach Library* (2026 award recipient)



Parker Public Library, Bay County



Bushnell Public Library, Sumter County

Acknowledgments

The Seeds of Knowledge 2025-26 program was supported by donations received from the State of Florida through sales of the State Wildflower license plate.

