

Nominated by Rob Hopper

Kristi Moyer has been instrumental in both small and large native plant installations throughout Palm Beach County. Her infectious optimism is only matched by her incredible ability to organize and inspire – a talent that has successfully resulted in many native plants having new happy homes in Palm Beach County.

I have personally worked with her on two of many projects. It has been a true pleasure - and quite amazing - to see her unique abilities to make good things happen despite challenges.

The first project involved a habitat restoration project at the Morikami Elementary School. The goal was to restore a remnant wetland that had been overlooked after the school was completed. Since Morakami is a green school, motivated parents and teachers thought this would be a wonderful opportunity to restore essential habitat while providing a living laboratory for the young students. It was not easy. There were many group procedural meetings, concerns about potential future school expansions, fund raising activities, temporary irrigation and weeding issues to be addressed, and site inventories to be done. But she prevailed through all these trials – and successfully organized (on time!) plant delivery and volunteer installation of truckloads of native plants from various local nurseries. This event was so successful with staff and young students, a second event was later scheduled by the group to install additional overstory plants for the regenerating site.

In addition, Kristi has taken the lead in designing and installing one of Habitat for Humanity's first all-native home landscapes in Palm Beach County. Habitat for Humanity International, is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to the elimination of sub-standard housing by building simple, safe, and affordable homes for low-income, hardworking families who cannot qualify for a conventional mortgage. Again, the process was complex but Kristi remained undaunted. Many site meetings, phone calls, budget requests, coordination efforts, and of course last minute design changes were involved. But Kristi rolled with the punches – often with a toddler strapped to her back. She managed to get significant amounts of funds and plant material donated for free from local nurseries and organizations. She even donated three cabbage palm trees from Pine Jog Nature Center to complete the landscape design. She and her staff were right there digging and planting with the volunteers and even offered to water the landscape after it was installed. But perhaps most importantly, she spent time with the new home owners to carefully explain the benefits of native plants and gently walk them through the responsibilities of taking care of their very first garden. This has been a wonderful collaboration between the Native Plant Society and a number of local volunteer groups that hopefully will gain even more momentum in the future.

This was all done in addition to her ongoing work as facilities manager at Pine Jog Environmental Education Center. Needless to say, as part of her job she has developed native plant seminars, several native plant demonstration gardens, a wetland creation area,

listed plant preservation areas, and pine flatwood restoration sites within the campus. And she just keeps going – be on the lookout for more great native plant projects in the future!



Kristi is on the right