

Just another day at the beach!

Sarasota County is world renowned for its beautiful beaches and azure blue waters – and we'd like to keep it that way! The morning hours of Saturday July 14th, 2018 spent planting native vegetation in a pond that captures stormwater at the Siesta Key Beach will help do just that.



Sponsored by the Sarasota County's Neighborhood Environmental Stewardship Team (NEST), dedicated volunteers and leaders from the Sarasota County NEST program, Sarasota Bay Watch, Science and Environmental Council and the Sarasota Water Stewards all came together to plant over 400 native plants along the shoreline of that pond to help keep the water clean, protect the shoreline from erosion, and add crucial wildlife habitat to the waterbody.

Stormwater ponds play a vital role in keeping pollution out of our bays and estuaries. Native plants in those ponds can keep the pond healthy, balanced and working efficiently to keep pollution such as fertilizers, greases and oils out of the water and off our beaches. The addition of flowering plants in the pond can create a beautiful, natural setting in your neighborhood. Volunteers installed flowering plants that will give passers by a view of dainty white flowers and soft lavender trumpet shaped flowers all summer long. Spring should bring about the vibrant lavender blue flowers planted close to the water's edge in the spring.



Duck potato



Blue Iris

Native plants in a stormwater pond can create areas more hospitable for wildlife too. As if to show how important having natural vegetation around a pond is, the volunteers had to give a wide berth to a baby bird that somehow found themselves out of the nest. With not nearly enough feathers to make a difference, that baby bird was able to hide in the plants already along the shoreline. Among the taller vegetation, that bird was safe from predators and could be still cared for by the adults. The adults let us, and any other bird, know we were too close by close fly-bys and dive bombings.

Mangroves planted along the shoreline will eventually grow to trees that will provide shelter and nesting opportunities for the many herons we saw at the pond that day.

Sarasota County's NEST program sincerely appreciates all those who attended! In just under 3 hours, these volunteers left a legacy of beauty, clean water and more wildlife at one of our most popular beaches.



THANK YOU!!