

# Iowa Public Library Community Native Garden

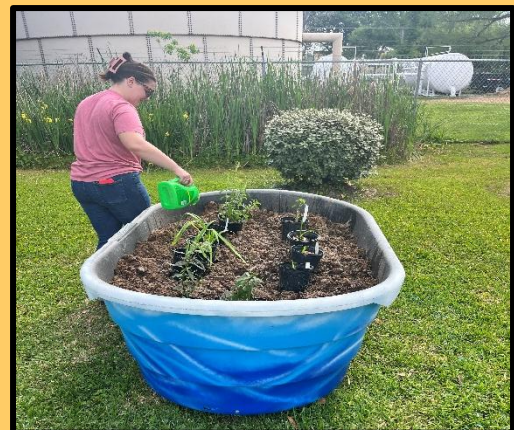
“What is your Branch’s attractor? What makes your Branch Special?” That was a question that was asked of us by our Library Director during a session. At this time the concept of our Native Garden was just starting to take root and I began to think, that could be our thing. This garden could be what makes us special to our community.

In the early stages of planning, we had doubts we were in over our head, or this may not work but through some research, the support of our administration, and the amazing team at the Acadiana Native Plant Project, we built up the confidence to see this project through. We started telling everyone about it and soon our staff and community were excited for us.

We acquired planters and painted them to give them some character. Once our patrons saw us out there painting, they were like moths to a flame, curious as to what we were up to. When we told them, their eyes lit up! They were so excited for something like this to happen and everyone understood the importance of why it needed to happen. Native plants are essential to a lot of natural life, and it is important they are protected and education about their importance is known. Since Libraries have always been a place that educates, excites, and ignites passion within people; it only seems right that something like this exist at someone’s local library.



Once our planters were all painted, we took a road trip to the Acadiana Native Plant Project and we couldn’t be more grateful for everyone there being so welcoming, so kind, and so generous. We were able to meet our goal of 25 different species of plants and gain some amazing knowledge at the same time. We then headed back to our branch, and it was time to plant.



We have 4 different themed planters that create an eye-catching scene to draw in patrons and to also represent why this garden is important to us and to our community.



After we planted, we soon got some visitors who seem very pleased with our Milkweed.



Now that our garden is all planted, we are excited to start planning programs and getting our community involved, educated, and excited. We recently had some visitors shortly after we planted, a mother and her two children. Her daughter was extremely curious about our garden, and we went to each planter and named every single plant, she was enthralled the whole time. I soon told her we would have programs that would help her learn what these plants were so she could later identify them whenever she was playing outside. Her head sprang up and she began jumping with excitement. That moment, even if it is the only one we receive through this whole process, is worth it. It is why we do what we do as a Library. We hope that through our services we plant a seed that some one later takes with them and remembers.



Thank you to the Acadiana Native Plant  
Project.

