

**NEWS RELEASE**

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Township launches new volunteer programs

THE WOODLANDS, TEXAS (September 5, 2019) – The Woodlands Township has introduced two new volunteer programs with the goals of minimizing invasive species and maximizing habitat for monarchs and pollinators. Volunteers play a critical role in keeping the environment of The Woodlands healthy, contributing 4,890 hours of service in 2019.

If you are interested in joining the Invasives Task Force, starting a pollinator garden or participating in other volunteer opportunities, please email enviro@thewoodlandstownship-tx.gov.

In keeping with George Mitchell's vision of The Woodlands as a community that lives, works, plays and learns in harmony with nature, Township Environmental Services has launched a volunteer initiative called Milkweed for Monarchs. Through a partnership with Nature's Way Resources, a local commercial compost facility and native plant nursery, a group of local Master Naturalist volunteers are helping to grow native milkweed plants. Milkweed is crucial to the survival of the monarch butterfly, serving as both a home and a food source.

More than 13,000 seedlings have been established, and a portion of the volunteer-grown milkweed will be made available to residents to create or add to their own pollinator gardens this fall. Residents who have registered their existing pollinator garden with the Environmental Services Department will be the first to receive the milkweed. To register your pollinator garden, please visit www.thewoodlandstownship-tx.gov/plantforpollinators. Residents who do not have a pollinator garden can pick up a voucher for six free plants at Woodlands Landscaping Solutions on Saturday, September 28, 2019. For more information on Woodlands Landscaping Solutions, please visit www.thewoodlandstownship-tx.gov/environment.

The Township has also created the Invasives Task Force, a group of volunteers who are working to remove invasive non-native plants in The Woodlands. Invasive plants crowd out native plants, degrade soil health and rob wildlife of critical food sources. Trained volunteers, under the supervision of Township staff, are clearing invasive plants along pathways and open spaces throughout the community. More than 40 volunteers attended a recent training under the teaching of Dr. Hans Landel, Invaders of Texas Program Director for the UT-Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center. The next training is scheduled for Saturday, February 15, 2020, at the Houston Advanced Research Center (HARC).

For more information on The Woodlands Township, please call 281-210-3800 or visit www.thewoodlandstownship-tx.gov.



The Woodlands Township has launched two new environmental programs for volunteers, including the Milkweed for Monarchs program.