

More on School Gardens

by Evelyn Somerville

The Calusa Community Elementary School in Boca Raton, named for the Calusa Indians who lived in the area, is a \$6 million school completed in the summer of 1987.

The Boca Raton Garden Club saw the need for helping the new school with schoolground improvements. The Garden Club organized and sponsored the Junior Garden Club, and the entire school enrollment is registered as Junior Garden Club members. All students participate in Arbor Day activities and the Youth Flower Show, etc.

The thirty active Junior Garden Club members meet biweekly for programs. The Senior Garden Club assists with programs, which include presentations on horticulture, birds, butterflies, wildflowers, flower arranging, environmental issues, trees, and other garden-related subjects.

On alternate Fridays, a select group works with Evelyn Somerville, FNPS and Garden Club member and Junior Garden Club counselor, on projects on the school grounds. They planted the first trees in January, 1988, and the planning and planting has continued. The school now has a Native Nature Walk-through Classroom, a Butterfly Sanctuary, and an Outdoor Classroom.

The Calusa Junior Garden Club is the first Junior Garden Club to have been awarded by the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs the honor of having a designated "Butterfly Sanctuary" on campus.

Evelyn Somerville is Butterfly/Bee Conservation chair for the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs. She calls herself a butterfly farmer, and offers classroom presentations on insects and wildlife gardens to Palm Beach County schools, garden-related organizations, and civic clubs. She has been written up in the Palm Beach Post and other local newspapers, and was presented as "Today's Hero" in The News, a Boca Raton newspaper.



This picture shows a small portion of the Native Classroom at Calusa Elementary School, planted with all native trees and shrubs.



Ricky Audrey, ready to work in Calusa Elementary School's Butterfly Garden.



Calusa Elementary School students learning to plant on their school grounds.



After planting, and some growing time, the Butterfly Garden looks like this.