



BLUE RIDGE ECOGARDENER

CERTIFICATE of MERIT

The North Carolina Arboretum | a UNC System Affiliate

As a proud University of North Carolina System Affiliate,
The North Carolina Arboretum is pleased to offer lifelong learning opportunities
in horticulture and landscape design leading to a certificate of merit.

Blue Ridge Eco Gardening Certificate of Merit

Ecological gardening is a way of thinking about gardens and landscapes in which they are no longer seen as just a collection of plants, but as a thriving ecosystem — nurturing harmony and interdependency between plants, soils, structures, wildlife and humans! We encourage an understanding of ecological principles together with the fundamentals of design and site assessment to aid in the creation and management of healthy, self-sustaining gardens and landscapes. **Grow in place with us!**

Overview of Program

Students in the **Blue Ridge Eco Gardener Certificate of Merit (BREG)** program, will complete core classes as listed below. The core curriculum is designed to be completed within one to two years. Students may elect to take additional courses in their areas of interest through Adult & Continuing Education Programs at The North Carolina Arboretum, which might add to their own time commitments and schedule for completion. Students are advised to complete the required class, *Eco Gardening: Principles in Practice* early on in their course of study.

Any adult over 18 may take classes through Adult & Continuing Education Programs at the Arboretum and need not be enrolled in the certificate program. A student who elects to enroll in the program may petition to count courses identified as BREG core or elective credit taken one year prior to enrolling.

Notes on Program Delivery: These courses will be designed for diverse learning styles, needs and access through a blending of online (synchronous and asynchronous), in person and onsite courses given the changing nature of program delivery in 2022. Each course generally blends asynchronous (available on demand) and synchronous (live meeting) learning opportunities along with some garden walks and demonstrations offered onsite at the Arboretum.

Recommended Foundational Texts:

Norris, Kelly D. *New Naturalism: Designing and Planting a Resilient, Ecologically Vibrant Home Garden*. (2021, Cool Springs Press).

Rainer, Thomas and Claudia West. *Planting in a Post-Wild World: Designing Plant Communities for Resilient Landscapes*. (2015, Timber Press).

Tallamy, Douglas W. *Nature's Best Hope: A New Approach to Conservation That Starts in Your Yard*. (2020, Timber Press).

Core Studies - Required Courses

| Term | Course Title | Month 2022 Method of Delivery |
|-----------------|--|---|
| Winter Spring | Botany Basics | March – April; 8 sessions; blended |
| Spring | Landscape Design Fundamentals | May; 4 sessions; blended |
| Summer | Botanical Latin for Gardeners | July; 1 session, synchronous |
| Summer | Living Soil | August; 2 sessions; synchronous, blended |
| Summer Fall | Ecological Gardening: Principles in Practice | September; 8 sessions; synchronous, blended |
| Fall | Ecology of the Blue Ridge | September; 6 sessions; synchronous, blended |
| Fall | Gardening in a Changing Climate | October; 1 session; asynchronous |
| Fall | Introduction to Permaculture Plants of Interest | October; 3 sessions, synchronous, blended |
| Winter | Creating a Multi-Use Native Plant Garden | February; 2 sessions; synchronous, blended |
| In Season | Pollinators (several classes could count for this credit) | Variable |
| In Season | Wildlife in the Garden (several classes could count for this credit) | Variable |
| In Season | Seasonal Gardening Projects | Feb, Apr, June, Oct; 1 session; blended |
| In Season | Seasonal Plants of Interest | Feb, Apr, June, Oct; 1 session; blended |

Elective Studies – 15 Hours, minimum

Elective studies are selected from the following categories: Pollinators; Wildlife in the Garden; Plant Studies; Design and Botanical Illustration; Climate and Conservation Studies; Service and Volunteerism; and Blue Ridge Eco Gardener Round Table Discussions and Certificate Program Meetings/Events.

Students should elect to take at least one class from each category above and then may opt to take classes in any combination with elective studies selected from Adult & Continuing Education classes: Possible topics include seed saving, grasses, ergonomics, flora identification, beginning bonsai, garden blogging, creative nature photography and more. Classes that satisfy elective credits are identified by category within each course description.

How to Apply

Complete an application online: <https://www.ncarboretum.org/education-programs/certifications/>
A one-time, non-refundable \$75 application fee is required at time of enrollment. Applicants are admitted throughout the year on a rolling basis. Enrollment fees will increase to \$125 in January of 2023.

For More Information Contact: Certificate Program Coordinator Rebecca Caldwell email: adulthoodeducation@ncarboretum.org