

# National Wildlife Federation Certifies Keowee Key as a Community Wildlife Habitat

by Alice Fleming Guzick, Team Leader, National Wildlife Federation Certification Project

On October 3, 2018, a bright sunny day on Lake Keowee, with butterflies and birds flitting around us, Keowee Key celebrated a milestone. Thirty-five people, including outside guests joined to recognize Keowee Key as the first National Wildlife Federation Community Wildlife Habitat in Midlands and Upstate South Carolina, the fifth community within the state, and the 112th community in the nation.

This National Wildlife Federation certification demonstrates that residents of Keowee Key care about local wildlife, native plants and their symbiotic relationships. When we welcome wildlife into our spaces, we look out our windows, walk around our homes, and we see that our yards are alive with activity! We share notes about how many creatures or blooms we have seen, we enhance our overall environment and we build community.

At the Certification Celebration, Sara Green, Director of Education at South Carolina Wildlife Federation, congratulated Keowee Key for having more than 20 residents who had certified their yards 15 or more years ago and continue to "garden with wildlife in mind". Ms. Green also congratulated Keowee Key for attaining certification in only eight months, which demonstrates the community's widespread and enthusiastic interest in nature.

Guests Marguerite Warren and Dee LeMay, from the West Piedmont District of South Carolina Garden Clubs admired the newly planted commemorative Butterfly Garden. Spotted on that day were a buckeye butterfly, a yellow cloudless sulphur butterfly, and one monarch. Even from a distance, they could identify the plants they knew will bring more butterflies and pollinators to that sunny hillside on warm days. Erika Hollis, from Upstate Forever, was impressed with the cleanliness and natural beauty of Lake Keowee as seen by her for the first time from Keowee Key. How did Keowee Key attain certification?

Two components of points are required for certification:

Points earned in Registration, Administration, Education and Outreach; earned in five- and ten-point increments with numerous options for how points are attained in Education and

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Outreach

Points earned by certifying individual backyards and common spaces; quantity needed is based on population of community

In Keowee Key, the project was sponsored by the Lake and Hills Garden Club. Team Leader Alice Guzick gave a PowerPoint presentation to the Garden Club outlining the program requirements and its benefits to the community. The project was unanimously approved. The project was presented to the Keowee Key Property Owners Association Board, where it also received unanimous approval.

In re Keowee Key home page on the National Wildlife Federation website was created. This is simple to do with basic computer skills by uploading photographs and a written description of the community.

The team leader created an Excel spreadsheet to establish goals and track activities as they were completed. The spreadsheet can be uploaded to the NWF website. Core team members were enlisted and registered online with National Wildlife Federation.

The core team performed Education and Outreach activities to encourage and inform homeowners how to certify their own yards. Lists of site-specific native plant species are available at each garden club meeting and on the garden club's website and Facebook page. Lists of birds, how to attract them, and bird nesting boxes are available. Information pages showing which native plants attract specific types of butterflies are available on

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Keowee Key's National Wildlife Federation homepage. Clean up activities within Keowee Key have kept the community attractive.

All of these registration, administration, education and outreach activities were documented by on the NWF website, and earned points!

Meanwhile, a grass roots effort was underway to encourage and inform property owners how to certify their individual backyards and garden spaces. Keowee Key has nearly 100 individual homes and 4 common spaces certified. Each individual home certified earns 1 point; each common space earns 3 points; a school or nature center would earn 5 points.

Combined, the points in Registration/Administration/Education/Outreach AND the individual property and common space certifications were enough to certify Keowee Key with the National Wildlife Federation as a Community Wildlife Habitat.

Keowee Key's page on the National Wildlife Federation website offers resources mentioned in this article about native plants, deer resistant plants, attracting Eastern Bluebirds, attracting butterflies and much more. View these resources and many photographs at: <https://www.nwf.org/CommunityWildlifeHabitat/Communities/Community/349>

For information about how to certify your community, go to: <https://www.nwf.org/CommunityWildlifeHabitat/>

If you would like to certify your yard, go to: [www.nwf.org/certify](https://www.nwf.org/certify).

CERTIFIED  
**WILDLIFE**  
**HABITAT**

FOOD • WATER • COVER • PLACES TO RAISE YOUNG

This property is recognized for its commitment to sustainably provide the essential elements of wildlife habitat.