

## **Master Gardener Peg Baseden is National Wildlife Federation's 2008 Affiliate Volunteer of the Year**

Peg Baseden, New Castle County Master Gardener of the University of Delaware Cooperative Extension, and a resident of Wilmington, Delaware, has been selected as the National Wildlife Federation's 2008 Affiliate Volunteer of the Year. She received this prestigious award because of her extensive outreach and spirit of volunteerism in the name of conservation and nature. One of only three people nationally to receive the award, Baseden was honored at the Delaware Nature Society on Wednesday, April 1, during the organization's annual meeting in Hockessin, Delaware. National Wildlife Federation annually selects three individuals from its thousands of volunteers, to honor as Volunteer of the Year in three categories: Volunteer, Affiliate Volunteer and Community Volunteer.

It is the boundless enthusiasm and dedication of people like Peg Baseden that helps ensure a rich habitat for our country's amazing wildlife, said Larry Schweiger, CEO and President of the National Wildlife Federation. Peg's volunteer efforts have had a major impact on her community. National Wildlife Federation (NWF) is grateful for her continued support and determination to make a place for wildlife and wild places

Baseden began volunteering with the National Wildlife Federation in the early 1990s and with its affiliate, the Delaware Nature Society in 2001, shortly after becoming one of National Wildlife Federation's on-the-ground troops assisting homeowners, businesses and other to create wildlife friendly gardens in their backyard. She has been an avid force of one in promoting the goals of NWF's Green Hour, Backyard Habitat and Schoolyard Habitat programs by connecting people to nature through her extensive educational outreach.

Education and conservation organizations, as well as homeowners in New Castle County, Delaware, have been the beneficiaries of Peg's unwavering efforts. Peg spearheaded *Keep It Green: A Series of Four Environmental Workshops for the Home Gardener*, an initiative that focused on conservation and combating climate change for New Castle County residents through ecologically sound gardening practices in keeping with NWF Backyard Habitat certification guidelines.

In *Teaching and Learning with Monarch Butterflies*, a workshop sponsored by the Delaware Nature Society and the Delaware Teacher Center, Peg taught K-12 teachers about the educational opportunities that monarch butterflies afford both inside and outside the classroom, even inspiring them to install butterfly gardens on their own school grounds. In addition, she has been extremely active with the Red Clay School District, helping teachers and students to connect with the magnificence of the natural world through their Schoolyard Habitats and in-class instruction.

Continuing her community outreach, Peg has provided phenomenal support and resources on nature, specifically as it applies to New Castle County, at Brandywine State Park, the Children's House Montessori School and the University of Delaware Cooperative Extension.

Peg Baseden demonstrates the critical connection between conservation and activism which has so enriched her community, concluded Schweiger. The National Wildlife Federation is America's conservation organization protecting wildlife for our children's future.