

# EXTENSION SNAPSHOT

## Fulton-Mason-Peoria-Tazewell Unit

June 2025



**Illinois Extension**

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

### Karen Weigelt added to Illinois Extension natural resources team

Over the past 13 years, the local University of Illinois Extension Master Naturalist program has steadily grown in the number of volunteers and the educational programs offered. It became important to add to the team to continue with the quality support Extension staff provides volunteers and partners. Karen Weigelt was added to the natural resources team as a part-time program coordinator.

Karen earned her Bachelor of Science in Forestry at Iowa State University. She has experience in forestry and environmental education in public and private sectors. She uses her experience from the USDA Forest Service and the Florida Forest Service to help others expand their passion for nature.

"I love nature and the environment. Protecting and restoring it are so important," Karen mentioned. "I really enjoy sharing that passion with our Master Naturalists and Master Gardeners. It's so inspiring to work with people who have that same vision."

"The horticulture and natural resources teams work very closely together," noted Nicole Flowers-Kimmerle, horticulture educator. "While Karen's primary role may focus on our Master Naturalist program, she also does a lot to help support Master Gardeners. She has become the expert on our team for the new volunteer data collection program and of course, she is our tree expert."

Prior to moving to Illinois, Karen worked for the USDA Forest Service and Florida Forest Service. She has been able to take her personal passion for nature and enjoy a fulfilling career that helps others expand their love for nature.

Karen enjoys spending time with her husband and children, especially outdoors. Her favorite outdoor activities include running and hiking.



*Photo by Anita Wilkinson | Illinois Extension*

*Karen Weigelt was recently hired to add more support to the growing Master Naturalist program serving Fulton, Mason, Peoria, and Tazewell counties.*

**Anita Wilkinson**

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