



# Bee City USA Annual Report for 2018 Pollinator Conservation & Education Seattle, Washington

## EDUCATION & OUTREACH



*Common Acre Flight Path Field Day. Photo: Eric Rabena*

Working in conjunction with more than 20 local organizations, Bee City Seattle hosted a variety of events to celebrate Pollinator Week 2018. The week kicked-off with a Bee Photo Exhibit at Central Co-op, by biologist and wild-pollinator photographer, Will Peterman. Central Co-op also installed educational markers on various items in the grocery store that are pollinator dependent.

Seattleites were treated to a party to “Meet the Bees”, where The Common Acre celebrated the release of the first EVER Field Guide to Bees of Puget Sound. 50 guests enjoyed presentations from key scientists involved with the guide, live music, actors portraying bees, and tasty treats. Midweek, 100 people gathered for a Save Pollinators Symposium which explored how our communities can save pollinators, with lightning talks from diverse perspectives including but not limited to, the WA state Poet Laureate, urban farmers, and educators.

In addition, Central Co-op hosted a screening of *The Guardians* and invited a butterfly expert to talk about the difference between the monarchs in the movie and the monarchs on the west coast, as well as how the two groups interact. It was also a delight to hear from a couple of educators in attendance, who travelled to see the monarchs and area featured in the film.

Tilth Alliance and The Common Acre offered multiple opportunities to participate in a field day and work parties in local parks, farms, and p-patches, as well as workshops on pollinator friendly gardening. Here, community members learned how to make insect hotels, planted native plants, and met with Washington State University (WSU) researchers and other pollinator experts to learn about tools for identifying, conserving, and promoting wild pollinators.

In addition to Pollinator Week activities, The Common Acre manned an educational booth at CHOMP - King County's local food and sustainable living festival - and Folk Life Festival, reaching over 5000 attendees. TCA also hosted Cross-Pollinations in September, a day long storytelling and interactive learning experience centering Indigenous Knowledge and Leadership in the work to restore human relationships with the earth, promote native plantings, and protect pollinators as an essential thread connecting us all.

# POLLINATOR HEALTH & HABITAT



*Emily planting salal at the Green Line. Photo: Eric Rabena*

Bee City Seattle includes multi-agency representations from core partners such as The Common Acre, BeeSearch, Tilth Alliance, Seattle P-Patch, and local researchers. Over 2018, our partners had many accomplishments in habitat augmentation.

The Common Acre continued two key habitat initiatives: Flight Path airport restoration and Green Line transmission corridor restoration. We broke ground on our second Flight Path iteration and Boeing's factory in Everett, converting an initial test plot of .6 acres into pollinator friendly meadow. We also expanded our Green Line habitat planting by .5 acres, and

hosted AmeriCorps teams from EarthCorps to conduct regular maintenance and site improvement. Across all three of our restoration programs, botanical and entomological monitoring continued. At our original Flight Path site at Sea-Tac airport, bee population and abundance surveys by BeeSearch have yielded impressive results from the first 5 years: population diversity has increased by at least 70% after habitat augmentation.

Tilth Alliance continues to work on the creation of a medicinal pollinator garden at the Rainer Beach Urban Farm and Wetlands in SE Seattle, installing small scale native trees, shrubs, perennials, and groundcovers along with other ornamental pollinator attracting plants. The goal of the hillside is to showcase how you can incorporate native plants with ornamentals, include useful weeds like fireweed, dandelion, chicory and other wild plants and still have an attractive landscape. The hillside will feature meadow type plantings, shrubs and perennials and a higher shrub and small tree native area to allow people to visualize how pollinator gardens can take many forms. During the creation of the garden we have been working with volunteers who have worked to create the garden through the summer and fall.

Seattle Department of Neighborhoods' P-Patch Program oversees 89 P-Patches located throughout the city. Community gardeners grow food on 14.9 acres and provide stewardship for an additional 18.8 acres of public land for a total of 33.7 acres. While each urban garden provides wonderful habitat, many P-patches have also adopted specific habitat improvement protocols. At the Rainier Vista Sunrise Garden P-Patch, we installed a rented mason bee/leaf cutter bee house on the side of our garden shed, and will do so again in the coming season. The Fremont Whirled Peas P-patch similarly hosts over a half a dozen plots have pollinator-friendly plants in them and installed a mason bee.

Lila Westreich is a University of Washington Graduate student focused on investigating the connections between foraging habits of native solitary nesting bees and the urban landscape of native, non-native, ornamental, and invasive plants. The goal of this work is to understand how landscape composition in an urban setting will impact the foraging and fitness of our native wild bees in the PNW. She works with *Osmia lignaria*, the Blue Orchard Mason bee, a native solitary bee bred for orchard pollination. Lila places nesting boxes with mason bees across Seattle, WA, with 12 total nests across 6 urban parks and restoration sites in 2018. Each spring, Lila allows bees to forage and build up their nests, then remove nesting tubes and sequence the pollen provisions inside in order to understand which flowering plants are cornerstones of native bee diets across a range of restored and disturbed landscapes. Lila also performs nutrition testing on pollen provisions from each site, in order to understand how nutritional content may vary across these landscapes.

## POLICIES & PRACTICES

Our committee includes representatives from three Seattle City departments: Parks and Recreation, City Light, and Department of Neighborhoods. It also includes non-profits and private partners engaged in pollinator restoration, food systems, and pollinator research: The Common Acre, Tilth Alliance, City Fruit, EarthCorps, and Central Co-op. We work together on broad public education and habitat restoration efforts regionally, and share resources and best management practices, while encouraging new policy protections in our municipality.

[Recommended Locally Native Plant Species List](#)  
[Regional Native Plant Suppliers](#)  
[Pollinator Friendly IPM Plan](#)

## CONTACT US!

Committee: Bee City USA - Seattle; Maria Meyer & Meg Kennedy, Co-Chairs  
Website: <https://commonacre.org/programs/bee-city/>  
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