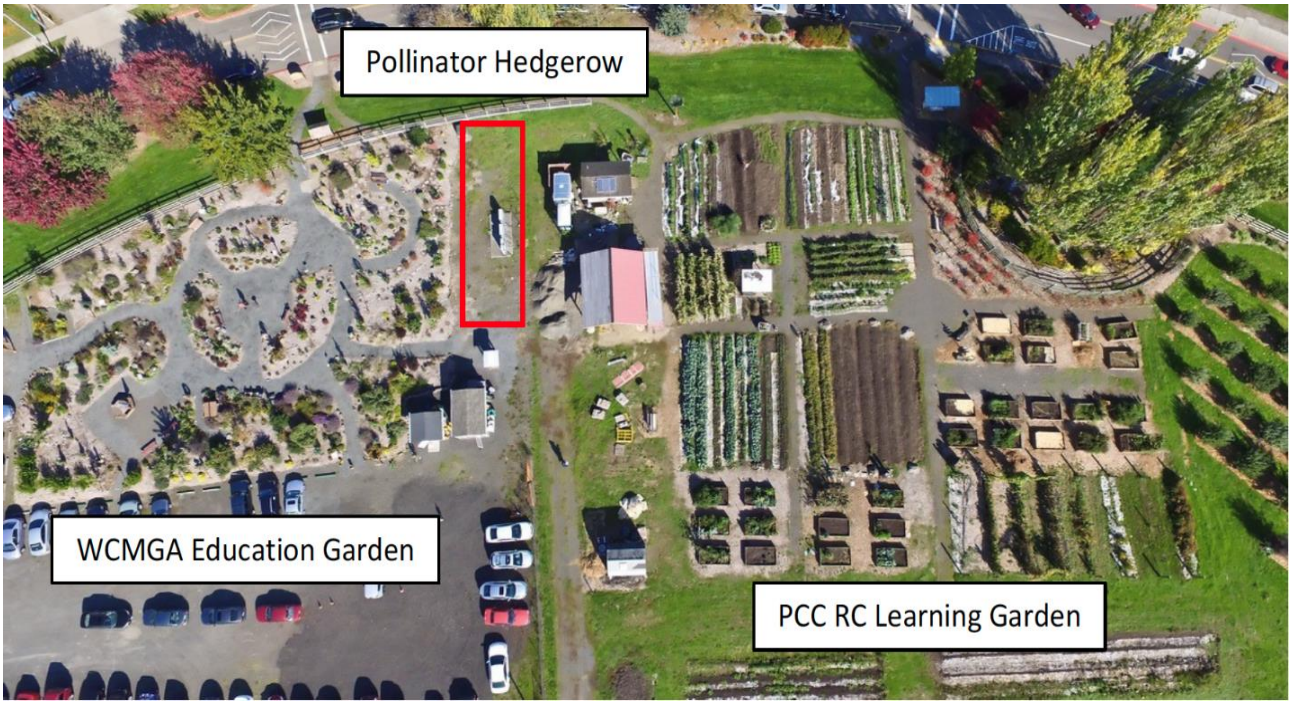
Bee Campus USA – Portland Community College

2021 Report

Pollinator Habitat Creation & Enhancement

We completed four pollinator health and habitat projects in 2021 for a total of **121,973 square feet at various PCC locations.** At PCC's new Oregon Manufacturing Innovation Center located in Scappoose, 32,200 sf of meadow mix was planted on site. At the Rock Creek campus, 50 lbs. of crimson clover was planted by our college Farm Coordinator, Avery Thompson. The clover was planted in 87,120 sf pasture south of the learning garden in October as a winter/spring cover crop. The Cascade Learning Garden enhanced pollinator habitat in 600 square feet of existing in-ground vegetable garden and 288 square feet of existing raised bed vegetable garden. At Cascade, staff companion planted with vegetables a mix of pollinator-friendly flowering cover crops, annual flowers and PNW native wildflowers.



Aerial view of a 21' x 80' PNW Native Hedgerow site on the Rock Creek campus

The Washington County Master Gardener Association (WCMGA) designed and planted a 1,765-sf pollinator hedgerow that serves as a border between their Education Garden and the PCC Learning Garden at Rock Creek. Pacific northwest native plants and wildflowers were planted and a pollinator kiosk with Mason Bee nesting stations and information on pollinators was installed at the south end of the hedgerow.

Planting at the PNW Native Pollinator Hedgerow project

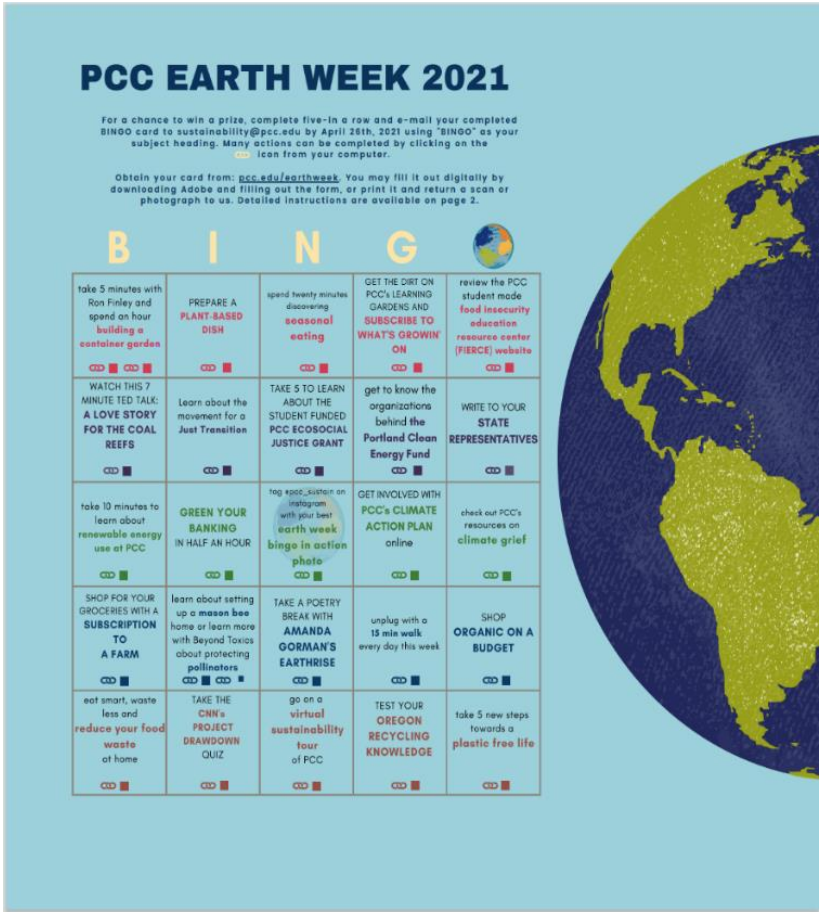
Meadow mix planted at PCC's new Oregon Manufacturing Innovation Center

Education & Outreach

Portland Community College remained closed through mid-year and then some classes started up in the fall but most faculty and staff remained working from home. Employees needed to request access and then get approval by a manager to work on campus so this limited our bee campus events and activities. We were able to host a couple events.

WCMGA members gained more access to their education garden on campus in mid-June so they could earnestly begin laboring on their PNW Native Pollinator Hedgerow and other projects. Ron Spendal, a WCMGA member, created a series of ***Bee Flashcards*** for the Pollinator Kiosk. Ron also continued extensive research on mason bees located at various sites in Washington County, including both WCMGA gardens. The Education Garden includes mason bee observation sites, nesting stations and information boxes with handouts on mason bee life cycle and how to support their habitat.

An example from the Bee Flashcards: A female long horned bee. She collects nectar by drinking it. She collects dry pollen by packing it onto small hairs on her back legs. When she returns to her nest, she spits up the nectar and mixes it with the pollen she scrapes off her legs. She is a good pollen distributor. She is a solitary bee and nests in the ground.



The Cascade Learning Garden hosted five pollinator-related virtual lunch bunch events in 2021 which were attended by 50 people. The Sustainability Department organized Earth week 2021 activities which included a virtual, interactive bingo game. We added squares to the card to encourage participants to learn more about setting up a mason bee home, protecting pollinators by reducing chemicals with NGO Beyond Toxics, container gardening, eating a seasonal or plant-based diet and community supported agriculture.

PCC's 2021 Earth Week Bingo Card with pollinator education squares

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Courses & Continuing Education

The Cascade Learning Garden collaborated with 10 for-credit classes with a total of 200 students. In each collaboration a virtual tour of the learning garden was presented via zoom or recording with information on pollinators and pollinator habitat. In 2021, Jolie Donohue taught seven non-credit classes with PCC Community Education that included information on pollinators or were specific pollinator gardening classes.

Jolie Donohue showcasing companion planting in the Cascade Learning Garden

Service-Learning

One of our committee members and Learning Garden Coordinators, Jolie Donohue, organized work parties at the Cascade Campus Learning Garden. A small cadre of Bee Campus committee members volunteered to maintain our apiary after our long-time campus bee keeper, Anne LeSenne, left her position. Other than that, we did not organize any service-learning projects due to COVID restrictions at the college.

Rachel Zarfas participating in service learning at the Cascade Learning Garden. Briar Schoon, PCC's Sustainability Manager and Bee Campus committee member, helping to check on our hives over the summer.

Educational Signage

The Pacific Northwest Native Pollinator Hedgerow project has metal signage. Grant funding helped to pay for the pollinator kiosk at the south end of the hedgerow, in proximity to both the WCMGA Education Garden and the PCC Rock Creek Learning Garden. It features educational handouts on bees and other pollinators.

At the college no new signs were installed but Grounds staff continue to maintain our educational and informational pollinator friendly signage that is posted at our four main campuses and centers.

2021 PCC Honey Label

Honey labels were designed and branded to educate customers about our apiary and provide some money from the sales of honey to help buy supplies for our hives. It was a small harvest this summer, but the honey was popular as ever.

Ron Spendal constructing the Pollinator Kiosk at the south end of the PNW Pollinator Hedgerow

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Completed Pollinator Kiosk at the WCMGA Education Garden

Policies & Practices

At the college we maintained our IPM plan in 2021 by reducing our dependence on pesticides. To that end, no neonicotinoids were used on the campus grounds and no pesticides were used near any storm water facilities or pollinator friendly areas on college properties. Also, no rodenticides were used, only snap traps. Mechanical, hand weeding and chip placement to reduce weeds is an ongoing practice.

The Cascade Learning Garden continues a no-spray policy in all areas. This year two environmental studies classes collaborated with the Learning Garden in a virtual community-based learning project. The classes both studied IPM, selected from a list of pests identified in the Learning Garden and created infographics to display in the garden. The infographics included the pest name, common organic pesticides used to treat infestation, negative consequences (for example on pollinators) of using the organic pesticide, and no-spray solutions.

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Integrated Pest Management Plan: **https://www.pcc.edu/facilities-management/wp-content/uploads/sites/31/2019/01/integrated-pest-management_Oct_2015.pdf**
Recommended Native Plant List: **The Garden Ecology Lab at OSU conducts research on plants for pollinators. https://blogs.oregonstate.edu/gardenecologylab/**
Recommended Native Plant Supplier List: **https://portlandnursery.com/garden-projects/bee-friendly**

PCC's exceptional Grounds crews continued to support the maintenance of pollinator-friendly landscaping with endless hours of hand weeding

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Learn More

https://www.pcc.edu/sustainability/initiatives/bee-campus-usa/

Bee Campus committee members tending to the campus apiary during the summer.