

Bee City USA - Ashland

Report on 2022

Pollinator Habitat Creation & Enhancement

The year 2022 was challenging for new and existing landscapes in the Bear Creek Valley: a severe drought and repeated high heat events hit plantings hard and reduced the available irrigation water. On the other hand, we are planning a garden tour for June 2023, our first since 2019! Existing community pollinator gardens at North Mountain Park and The Grove were enhanced in 2022, while one new habitat project was started. We received twelve new applicants for Certified Pollinator Garden status. Committee members made site visits and approved them, bringing the city's total to 91 certified gardens. Existing habitat maintenance took place on the same 14,500 square feet as last year. These are city park lands. Thirty seven individuals devoted 750 hours of volunteer time to weeding and maintenance of the city gardens. The Oak Knoll Golf Course's new pollinator garden is a just few square feet as volunteers begin to convert a larger entry garden at the golf course. BeeCity USA Ashland committee member Kristina LeFever spoke with the group and advised on plant selection. A few plantings were installed in late spring, but irrigation water was scarce because of the drought. The Oak Knoll garden will be revisited this year. The City of Ashland is doing a multi-year project to relocate a sewer outfall. Part of the project involves restoration of an area near the discharge point at the confluence of Ashland and Bear Creeks, and at Ashland Pond. Enhancement of the riparian corridor is required over a longer distance. The restoration contractor, The Freshwater Trust, uses locally grown milkweed plugs and native plant materials in its work. New riparian plantings run thousands of linear feet on multiple public and private properties from North Mountain Avenue past the confluence of Ashland and Bear Creeks, around Ashland Pond and along the Medella Ranch just downstream from Ashland Pond. The overlapping nature and variability of the work areas makes it difficult to calculate a square footage of the improved area. The Bear Creek Greenway adjacent to Ashland Pond has seen pollinator project planting, invasive blackberry removal and most recently, fire recovery plantings. These continue from Ashland down through Talent and Phoenix, a distance of nine miles. The Almeda Fire of 2020 burned the entire length of this section of Bear Creek Greenway. Numerous restoration efforts by multiple jurisdictions and groups are turning to native plants in their efforts.

How many habitat projects did you help to create or enhance last year?

3

How many total square feet of habitat were created or enhanced?

14500

How many volunteers helped with those projects?

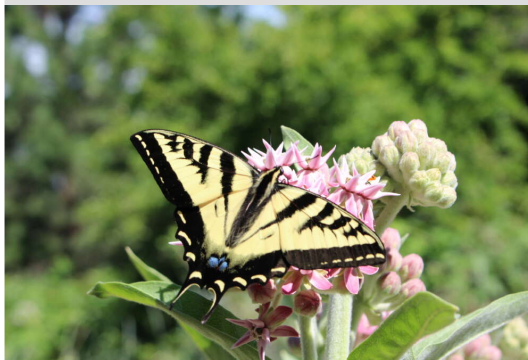
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Please check all that describe the habitats your affiliate helped to create or enhance last year with pollinator benefit in mind.

- Flower garden
- Natural area with tree snags and stumps, and bare areas for ground nesting species
- Meadow
- Pollinator-friendly lawn (with flowering clover, dandelions...)
- Herb garden
- Native milkweed planting for monarchs and bees (where appropriate)
- Invasive/exotic plant species removal for habitat improvement
- Native pollinator-friendly tree planting
- Native pollinator-friendly shrub border/hedgerow planting
- Rain garden/bioswale
- Roadside/rights of way planting



Invasives removed by hand, volunteer work parties at North Mountain Park



Southern butterfly reared at North Mountain Park in 2022



The Freshwater Trout Ashland Pond plantings include milkweed plugs, native shrubs, trees and grasses

Education & Outreach

- Bee City USA Ashland members hosted four events at Glen Vista HOA, Mountain Meadows HOA, Oak Knoll, and Riverwalk. These events were group discussions involving about 25 people in all.
- Two outreach activities were at annual public events: Bear Creek Salmon Festival and Ashland Earth Day. Bee City Ashland committee members staffed one table among dozens of other entities. Information was made available to more than three dozen people on the topics of promoting use of native and pollinator friendly plants, water conservation and gardening in drought.
- The third type of

event was weekly tabling at Ashland Farmers' Market through October and November. This effort combined information about native & pollinator gardening with water conservation resources and proper irrigation under high summer temperatures. The adjacent table was hosted by City of Ashland Fire Department and provided information about home fire risk reduction, including fire resistant landscaping.

How many pollinator-related events did your affiliate host or help with last year (in total)?

7

How many people attended those events (in total)?

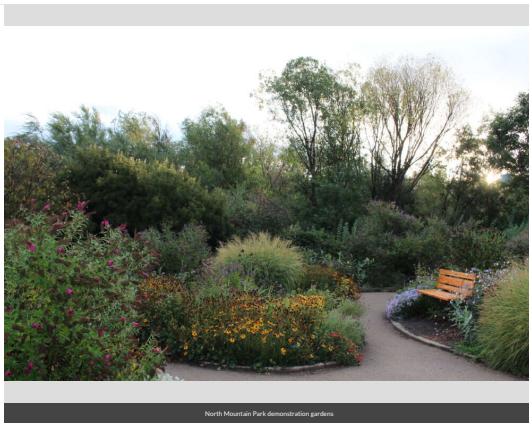
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How many Bee City USA logo street signs have you installed to date (in total)?

3

*Did your city council/county commission (highest elected body) issue a proclamation for National Pollinator Week last summer?
Please note: this is now an optional activity.*

- No



North Mountain Park demonstration garden



Bear Creek Salmon Festival held at North Mountain Park October 1, 2022



Tabling at Fall Farmers' Market

Table set up at Fall Farmers' Market, adjacent to city fire department booth

Policies & Practices

Ashland Parks and Recreation Department has followed its nearly-herbicide-free IPM policy since its adoption in 2010. Parks and Recreation manages volunteers for park care and weed control, instead of using pesticides. The invasive species removal volunteers put in a total of 2,953 hours in 2022! At North Mountain Park, volunteers maintained pollinator demonstration gardens, giving 570 volunteer hours with an additional 170 hours spent in the heirloom gardens. Total number of individuals who volunteered: 1,013 people!

What actions have you taken to make pest management practices more pollinator-friendly?

- Implemented or maintained a written IPM plan
- Avoided use of pesticides in public sites containing designated pollinator habitat or other sensitive features (except when targeted use is deemed the best option for invasive or noxious weed, insect or disease management)
- Implemented non-chemical pest prevention and management methods on city or campus grounds
- Eliminated pesticide uses that are solely to maintain aesthetics on city or campus grounds
- Reduced the total area of city or campus-managed lands to which pesticides are applied
- Distributed educational materials to residents or students to encourage the reduction or elimination of pesticide use
- Encouraged developers and private landscapers to source plants that were not treated with neonicotinoids

Are efforts underway in your community to further reduce pesticide use in residential or business areas? This may include neighborhood-led efforts, outreach to landscapers, etc. If so, please describe.

BCUSA Ashland committee members, alongside our colleagues at Rogue Valley Pollinator Partnership, Freshwater Trust, Lomakatsi, Ashland Garden Club members and master gardeners, continue to promote use of native, drought tolerant, locally grown plants in garden design and landscape restoration practices. Regional collaboration also includes The Understory Initiative, Vesper Meadows, Rogue Native Plant Partnership and many others supporting planting, harvesting native seed, and growing out plugs and seedlings for use in local landscape-level restoration projects throughout Jackson County. This year, BCUSA Ashland members specifically reached out to Homeowners' associations (Riverwalk, Glen Vista Estates, Mountain Meadows) and consulted with a group at Oak Knoll Golf Course clubhouse. Thirty individuals attended in total. A separate event arranged by the City of Ashland Fire Department for Southern Oregon Landscape Contractors Association (SOLA) looked at fire risks in home landscapes. An effort is underway to create a searchable database, that contains valuable information about hundreds of landscaping plants. This database will help people cross-reference all the desired attributes in garden plantings: native, pollinator, fire resistant, drought tolerant, deer browse tolerant, etc.

In your city or campus, are any policy initiatives underway to further protect pollinators, people or waterways from pesticides?

The Parks and Recreation Commission has established demonstration gardens at North Mountain Park. These gardens are maintained by volunteers. Parks and Recreation activities and education programs are offered year-round, as can be seen in this example of the community play guide: <https://ashland.or.us/register> and the North Mountain Park Annual Reports: <https://www.ashland.or.us/Page.asp?NavID=17474>. In addition, the Parks Commission will be

developing a new park on East Main Street. The Bee City USA Ashland subcommittee received a specific briefing from Terrain Landscape Architecture, the design firm, and the subcommittee members provided comments about how the design could be made more pollinator friendly. The Parks Commission has approved the plans and hopes to build out the park over the next few years, dependent on financing. The landscaping plan proposes to use a majority pollinator friendly and drought tolerant, and to the extent possible native, materials in lawn/meadow areas, ornamental plantings, decorative screens, stormwater system plantings and shade trees. An excerpt of the design drawing is attached. When completed, the park will have approximately two acres of the five acre park planted with mostly native species.

Please describe actions by your affiliate to attend training on ecologically-based Integrated Pest Management and/or to review IPM plans and programs considered of high quality by Bee City USA?

Committee members and gardeners took part in the educational offerings of Oregon State University Extension programs. The regional OSUX/Rogue Pesticide Stewardship Project annual meeting on March 15 & 16 offered a chance to meet OSU Extension staff, Jackson Soil and Water District staff and state agency representatives in person for the first time in three years (Hooray!). A seminar on September 29 was a pesticide applicators certification workshop on Integrated Pest Management. BeeCity USA Ashland committee members Kristina LeFever and Kate Jackson attended this event.

Integrated Pest Management Plan: [AshlandParks_IPM_PolicyOriginalAmendments.pdf](#)

https://www.ashland.or.us/SIB/files/APRC/APRC%20Policies/IntegratedPestManagement_Signed7-22-2019.pdf

Recommended Native Plant List:

https://www.ashlandsaveswater.org/assets/NativePlants_10.2010.pdf

Recommended Native Plant Supplier List:

https://www.ashland.or.us/Files/NATIVE_PLANT_RESOURCES_IN_SOUTHWEST_OREGON.pdf



East Main Park landscape plan and plant palette by Terrain Architecture

Learn More

<http://ashland.or.us/beecity>

<https://www.facebook.com/AshlandParksandRec>





January 2023 meeting of Ashland Bee City Committee: staff liaison Libby VanWyhe, Parks Commissioner Leslie Eldridge, committee members Kate Jackson, Kristina Lefever, Carolyn Reed and Nic Pflug