

# Bee Campus USA - Raritan Valley Community College

Report on 2023

## Pollinator Habitat Creation & Enhancement

*Please describe pollinator habitat creation or enhancement projects in your community in 2023, and whether your committee hosted them or not.*

The College received a donation of native pollinator plant seedlings from the Xerces Society. These were planted by students, employee volunteers, and children at the Childcare Center. The Environmental Club planted a vegetable garden and removed invasive species. (These events were not hosted by the Committee.)

*How many habitat projects did you help to create or enhance in 2023?*

6

*How many people (staff, volunteers, students, partners, etc.) helped with those projects?*

60

*How many projects benefit monarchs, milkweed, or nectar plantings?*

4

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

5600

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

- Flower garden
- Vegetable garden
- Meadow
- Native milkweed planting for monarchs and bees (where appropriate)
- Invasive/exotic plant species removal for habitat improvement
- Rain garden/bioswale



Environmental Club members planted a vegetable garden and are shown here picking tomatoes. (credit: Environmental Club)



Environmental Club members removed invasive species on campus. (credit: Environmental Club)



Children at the ChildCare Center are proud to show how much their native seedlings from the Xerces Society have grown. (credit: ChildCare Center)

## Education & Outreach

*Please describe pollinator conservation events or outreach activities in your community in 2023, indicating whether your committee hosted them or not.*

Our main outreach event was a lunch-n-learn for both students and the public to learn about fascinating ways flowers attract their pollinators, presented by Dorothy Smullen from New Jersey Audubon. Local business Advanced Solar Products sponsored the event and it was promoted by our local chamber of commerce, the Somerset County Business Partnership. Our Committee and the Environmental Club co-hosted the event.

*How many pollinator-related events or outreach activities did you host or help with in 2023 (in total)?*

2

*How many people attended those events (in total)?*

220

*Number of permanent interpretive/educational/Bee Campus USA signs installed to date?*

3



Environmental Club members, NJ Audubon reps, sponsors, Committee Chair, and community members. (credit: RVCC Environmental Club)



Environmental Club giving out native plant seeds to help native pollinators! (credit: Environmental Club)



Our annual Campus Cares planting by the Planetarium, done by employee volunteers.

## Curriculum, Continuing Education, & Service Learning

*Please describe the curriculum your campus engaged in 2023, indicating whether it was part of a for-credit course or continuing education.*

Ecology class runs butterfly labs . Students count butterflies in fields of different sizes and identified them to species. The students learn how to use the data to create regressions that can be used to predict the number of butterflies that could be expected to inhabit fields of different sizes, possibly in a restoration application/context. Each fall and spring semester ENVI 102 (Environmental Science and Sustainability) students learn about the benefits of rain gardens for stormwater mitigation as well as providing habitat for pollinators and wildlife. The students are trained in rain garden maintenance and perform several hours of maintenance in rain gardens on campus and in the local community. Maintenance activities involve removing invasive species so that perennial native wildflowers are able to persist and attract pollinators. The Botany and Ecology courses also cover material on pollinator plants, including landscape ecology and modern environmental problems, plant ecology, and conservation. The Plants, Humans & the Environment course covers the effects of human activities on plants and the environment. These are all for-credit courses.

*How many of your for-credit courses included pollinator-related information in 2023?*

4

*How many students attended those for-credit courses?*

225

*How many service-learning projects did your campus host and/or support to enhance pollinator habitat on- and off- campus?*

*How many students participated in service-learning projects in 2023 to enhance pollinator habitat on or off-campus?*

50

*Please describe the service-learning projects your students were engaged in 2023, indicating which, if any, were associated with a course.*

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## Policies & Practices

*Please describe actions taken to make pest management more pollinator-friendly.*

**We rarely use chemicals on campus. Chemicals are only applied near buildings for nuisance pests. We specify that our pest management company follow the IPM requirements used in local schools. We review all treatments to ensure low environmental impact.**

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

**No. We continue to follow our IPM plan and maintain our River Friendly certification (renewed in 2022).**

*Did your committee participate in any continuing education on ecologically-based Integrated Pest Management planning?*

**No.**

*Please check actions you have taken to make pest management practices more pollinator-friendly.*

- Implemented or maintained a written IPM plan
- Only use pesticides as a last resort within the IPM plan
- Sourced plants for city or campus grounds using “Buying Bee-Safe Plants” methods recommended by Xerces Society. (See <https://xerces.org/publications/fact-sheets/buying-bee-safe-plants>)

*Any lessons learned you would like to share?*

**Definitely review all pesticide treatments to ensure that only methods with low environmental impact are used. New PM employees and contracts for new buildings may lead to IPM plan not being followed.**



Members of the Sustainability/Bee Campus USA committee, faculty, and supporters gathered to celebrate our #1 AASHE STARS ranking for US 2-year colleges. Standing in front of our green wall in the student center. (credit: Mike Marion)

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Learn More

Integrated Pest Management Plan: [ipm\\_plan.pdf](#)

Recommended Native Plant List:

[https://www.raritanval.edu/sites/default/files/aa\\_PDF%20Files/8.x%20General%20Information/RVCC%20Native%20Pollinator%20Plant%20List.pdf](https://www.raritanval.edu/sites/default/files/aa_PDF%20Files/8.x%20General%20Information/RVCC%20Native%20Pollinator%20Plant%20List.pdf)

Recommended Native Plant Supplier List:

<https://www.raritanval.edu/general-information/national-recognition/sustainability>  
[susan.dorward@raritanval.edu](mailto:susan.dorward@raritanval.edu)

<https://www.instagram.com/raritanvalleycc>

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

<https://twitter.com/raritanvalleycc>

