

# Bee Campus USA - Tufts University Medford-Somerville

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.*

In 2023, our focus consisted of maintaining our existing 3000 sq feet of habitat space and enhancing the way people can experience and enjoy these spaces. We added three informational signs to our gardens to give community members an opportunity to learn about the history of our sites, what they can do to help pollinators in their own ways, and what insects they can look for in our gardens. This new signage allows us to reach and inform the community even when we are not in the gardens providing guided tours or pollinator safaris. We also enhanced our gardens by adding a student-created Free Little Seed Library to our main garden space, which allows us to share local seeds collected from our gardens to the greater community while also providing a place for nearby gardeners to share their own seeds. Outside of our own gardens and committee, we have worked with multiple municipalities, government agencies, and community members. The pollinator garden we consulted on last year for Medford City Hall has been installed by the city, the Mystic Charles Pollinator Pathways group, the Medford Community Garden commission, and volunteers. Our commission also helped design their informational sign that will be placed in front of the garden. We are currently working with the MBTA, the city of Somerville, the Somerville Garden Club, and landscape architects to help design and organize the installation of a pollinator garden along the new Somerville community path extension. If the installation of the first garden is successful, there are talks of converting other patches of land along the community path into pollinator habitat, including a stand of milkweed for monarch butterflies.

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

8

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

15

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

3060

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

- Flower garden
- Rain garden/bioswale



## Education & Outreach

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

In 2023, we have continued our commitments towards providing access to pollinator education to the greater community. Our goal is to enhance the relationship between people who live in cities and the nature around them, and as a result encourage community members to engage in and care about pollinator conservation. We attended a variety of events that reached community members of all ages, including the I Heart Science festival hosted by the Harvard Museum of Natural History, a high school climate fair hosted by the Museum of Science, and Tufts Community Day. We also gave presentations and hosted workshops for smaller groups at least five instances over the course of the year, hosted nine insect safaris, and provided three garden consults. This year, instead of a plant sale, we donated over 100 purple coneflower plants to 85 people in the greater community as an effort to reach a larger audience of people who want to start a pollinator garden. We also worked with students through the Tufts Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning department on a variety of individual projects, including artistic ways to present information on pollinators, planting native plants, and saving seeds. Another collaborative project included a Free Little Seed Library built by a senior Tufts engineering student, which we restock with native seeds from our gardens.

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

25

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

1145

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

6



TPI members leading a "build your own pollinator" activity at the I Heart Science Festival. Photo taken by Karen Dooley



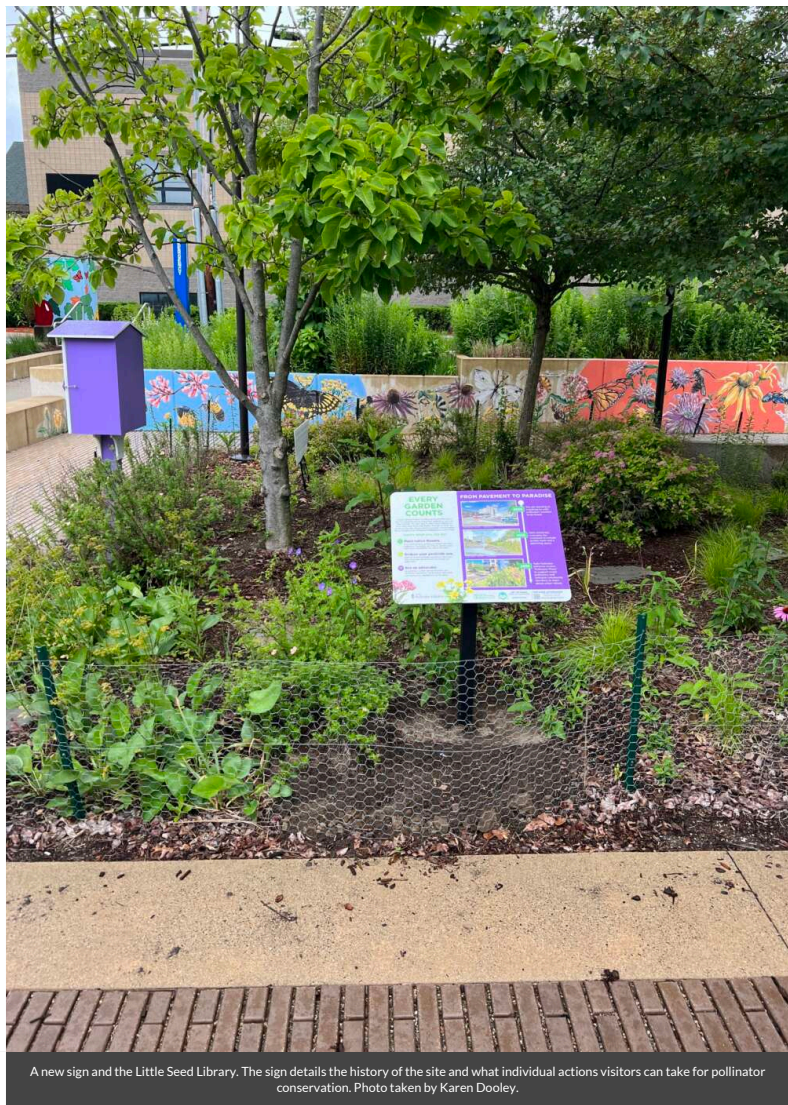
TPI members leading a pollinator safari at the Tufts Pollinator Plaza, with one of our pollinator gardens and the Little Seed Library in the foreground. Photo by Karen Dooley



TPI members tabling at Tufts Community Day. Photo taken by Erin Treanore.



One of the new signs installed, welcoming visitors to the pollinator plaza. Photo taken by Karen Dooley.



A new sign and the Little Seed Library. The sign details the history of the site and what individual actions visitors can take for pollinator conservation. Photo taken by Karen Dooley.

## 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.*

We incorporated pollinator-related information into curriculums of five different classes by leading guest lectures about pollinators and our work to four different classes, which reached 133 students. These courses include “Contemporary landscapes” (hosted by the School of the Museum of Fine Arts), “Environmental Biology,” “Organisms and Population,” “Community Resilience” (hosted by the Tufts Urban Environmental Planning and Policies program), and “Food 4 All: Ecology, Biotechnology, and Sustainability.” The content for each guest lecture is tailored to the specific course, but generally covers what pollinators are, how pollinators are tied into global food security, the

differences between wild and managed pollinators, and the main points of pollinator conservation. In several classes, students visit our gardens to learn about pollinators in a tangible, hands-on manner.

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

5

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

133

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

2

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

10

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

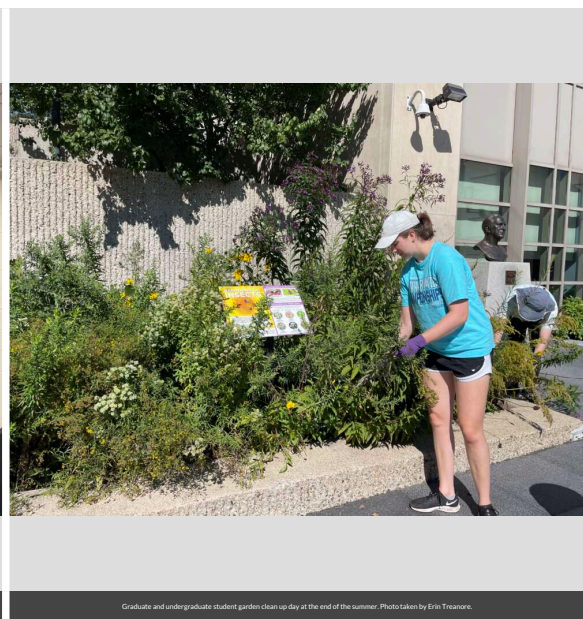
In spring of 2023, we completed the Tufts Pollinator Ambassadors program, where 14 students learned about pollinators and their conservation to best be able to perform educational outreach. These students have since worked outreach events, including community tabling events and pollinator safaris. Tufts graduate and undergraduate students learned to care for a garden year round, including maintenance over the summer so the gardens remain usable by people, trimming down plants in the fall, and cutting back for the winter. Students also learn to weed the gardens and grow native plants to supplement the gardens. This fall, we worked with graduate and undergraduate students to teach them how to collect native seeds. We then packaged and labeled these seeds to be distributed to the community through our Free Little Seed Library.



TPI members restocking the Little Seed Library after collecting, processing, and packaging seeds from our own gardens. Photo taken by Erin Treanore.



Tufts Pollinator Ambassadors at the end of the program in April of 2023. Photo taken by Karen Doolley.



Graduate and undergraduate student garden clean up day at the end of the summer. Photo taken by Erin Treanore.

## Policies & Practices

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

We have worked with the Tufts ground management team to ensure proper management of our gardens, including not using any pesticides on our native pollinator gardens. We have also worked with them and created a plan to ensure that they understand proper care of the gardens into the future, including where to order bee-safe plants to supplement gardens and proper maintenance during all seasons (with pollinators in mind). This ensures that the habitat we have worked hard to create is maintained for years to come by the university.

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

We don't currently have policy initiatives underway in addition to the work we've done, but there are continued efforts in the greater Boston Area, such as through the Somerville Pollinator Action Plan, the Mystic Charles Pollinator Pathways group, and other groups like the MBTA.

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

We did not participate in any continuing education.

*Please check actions you have 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)

- Restricted pesticides used to organic pesticides on city or campus grounds
- Distributed educational materials to residents or students to encourage the reduction or elimination of pesticide use
- Sourced plants for city or campus grounds that were not treated with neonicotinoids
- Encouraged developers and private landscapers to source plants that were not treated with neonicotinoids

*Any lessons learned you would like to share?*

Our focus this year is to reach new communities outside of our usual scope. Educational outreach is a fantastic tool we've found can really increase our positive impact on pollinator conservation in urban environments.



Some members of our committee. We unfortunately don't have a current photo of all members. Photo taken by Erin Treanore.

Learn More

Integrated Pest Management Plan: [FINAL TPI Tufts IPM.pdf](#)

Recommended Native Plant List:

<https://sites.tufts.edu/pollinators/guides/>

Recommended Native Plant Supplier List:

<https://sites.tufts.edu/pollinators/guides/>

[sites.tufts.edu/pollinators](https://sites.tufts.edu/pollinators)

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