

# Bee Campus USA - University of Connecticut

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.*

All projects listed below were hosted by groups and organizations that have representatives on our UConn Bee Campus Committee and/or participate in pollinator-related outreach and education within our UConn campus and local communities: Over the summer of 2023 Spring Valleys Student Farmers facilitated the installation of a memorial garden around the beds of Peter J. Werth Towers to remember Andry Evangelista of UConn Public Health House. This was a collaborative effort between Public Health House, Dr. Parks landscape architecture class, and the learning community directors. Through this roughly 450 new square feet of new pollinator habitat were introduced. Additionally, UConn Community Garden, formerly EcoGarden, is SVSF's satellite permaculture garden closer to the UConn campus to showcase permaculture to students and allow them to get involved. In 2023, existing pollinator plants at the garden covering an estimated 14,000 square feet were maintained to promote a pollinator population. This effort was boosted by the Office of Sustainability Social Justice Grant, which expanded the garden's existing native growth. Additionally, UConn's Beekeeping Club and SVSF farmers have been working in conjunction at the garden to prepare materials and spaces for beehives in the near future. UConn students also participated in three trail maintenance events at the Hillside Environmental Education Park (HEEP) in 2023 on September 15, October 23, and October 26 that involved the removal of invasive species. Also, The Edible Forest Garden (EFG) at Spring Valley Student Farm is a cultivated garden of perennial trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants providing food for humans and habitat and nectar for pollinators. This diverse system replicates a forest structure and sustains itself through the many ecological roles played by each individual species. Student farmers and volunteers maintain the EFG by removing invasive plants, installing new plants, and building and maintaining trails. Student farmers contributed about 400 hours of volunteer work to maintain the EFG in 2023.

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

5

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

381

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

4

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

14450

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
- Natural area with tree snags and stumps, and bare areas for ground nesting species
- Herb garden
- Native milkweed planting for monarchs and bees (where appropriate)
- Invasive/exotic plant species removal for habitat improvement
- Native pollinator-friendly tree planting
- 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.

All events listed below were hosted by groups and organizations that have representatives on our UConn Bee Campus Committee and/or participate in pollinator-related outreach and education within our UConn campus and local communities: 1. During the fall 2023 semester, I Thrive Naturally unfolded as a two-week initiative, from September 18th from October 2nd, organized by NatureRx at UConn to boost scientific understanding of the benefits of spending time outside and to promote the many ways to engage with nature on the UConn Campus at Storrs. Whatever your

comfort level or prior interest in the outdoors, I Thrive Naturally offered events, opportunities and inspiration designed to open your eyes to the ways that engaging with Nature will help you be healthier, happier and more attentive you. Some of the pollinator related events that were in this initiative were "Room to Grow-A Houseplant Workshop," "Lichen Limelight: Illuminating the Forest's Living Decor," "Hike the HEEP," "Tree ID Walk and Talk," "Farm Friday," "Green Roof Cleaning," "Mushroom Mania." 2. On September 12, 2023 the Connecticut Invasive Plant Working Group (CIPWG) gave a presentation entitled "Survey Methods for Aquatic Plants" to The Northeast Aquatic Plant Management Society Plant Camp at UConn Avery Point. 3. On November 2, 2023 UConn Extension held the Native Plants and Pollinators Conference. The conference provides education about native plants in the landscape and creating aesthetically pleasing gardens that support pollinator health. In addition, the conference provides education about pollinator biology and conservation. An important component of the educational programming is the inclusion of research-based information in presentations. Conference attendees include nursery growers, garden center managers, landscape professionals, extension educators, land and municipality managers, master gardeners, and garden writers, consumers, and enthusiasts. Presentation topics for the 2023 conference included fast-growing plants (annuals and herbaceous perennials) for instant pollinator habitat, how to collect and sow native plant seeds, monarch butterfly biology, ecology and conservation needs, new native shrub and tree cultivars for pollinators, and an introduction to honeybee colonies, beekeeping, and garden design to support bees. 285 people attended the day-long, in person conference. 4. On April 15, 2023 In 2023, the UConn Spring Valley Student Farm (SVSF) distributed seedlings in paper pots made by student farmers out of recycled newspaper, and participants were invited to pot up their own plant or request that the student farmers put it up for them. SVSF also provided instructions for care and planting outside and invited participants to visit SVSF. 550 marigold seedlings were grown and handed out. 5. Student farmers hosted 18 hours of community events with an estimated 100 student volunteers during 2023. These events occurred on various Saturdays and Sundays during the semester from 12-3pm. Volunteers helped maintain and improve the permaculture garden through weeding, mulching, planting, and pruning perennial plants. The garden also served as a largely educational space, where students could learn about and implement sustainable permaculture practices. 6. Spring Valley Student Farm (SVSF) hosts Farm Friday every Friday during the parts of the semester that fall within the warm growing season (March, April, September, October). There were 15 Farm Fridays during 2023, so this counts as 15 separate pollinator-related events. Farm Friday is an opportunity for UConn students to gain a variety of valuable experiences within the SVSF grounds. Activities during Farm Friday include seed planting, crop harvesting, pollinator bed maintenance, and the ability to work with specialized projects such as aquaponics. SVSF works in collaboration with EcoHouse Learning Community to gather volunteers to give them the opportunity to learn about sustainable agriculture and gain skills they normally would not be able to in a classroom setting. In Spring 2023, SVSF hosted 99 individual volunteers (some of whom visited several times to volunteer), for a total of 282 volunteer hours. In Fall 2023, SVSF hosted 102 student volunteers for a total of 398 volunteer hours. This is a total of 680 volunteer hours. 7. The Edible Forest Garden (EFG) at Spring Valley Student Farm is a cultivated garden of perennial trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants providing food for humans and habitat and nectar for pollinators. This diverse system replicates a forest structure and sustains itself through the many ecological roles played by each individual species. Student farmers and volunteers maintain the EFG by removing invasive plants, installing new plants, and building and

maintaining trails. Student farmers contributed about 400 hours of volunteer work to maintain the EFG in 2023. 8. The UConn Office of Sustainability held three trail cleanup events at the Hillside Environmental Education Park (HEEP) during 2023. These cleanup events were held on September 15, October 23, and October 26. At these cleanups, volunteers walked the trails and picked up sticks, raked leaves, clipped bushes and branches, and picked up litter. 9. UConn Outing Club held two trail maintenance events in 2023 at local parks and nature conservancies on March 4, 2023 and April 1. 10. On April 22, 2023 EcoCaptain Interns at the UConn Office of Sustainability held an Earth Day campus cleanup event. Volunteers spent 4 hours picking up and separating trash and recycling in many different areas on the UConn Storrs campus. 11. The UConn chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society held two green roof maintenance events during 2023. They were held on April 10 and September 30, and they were each 3 hours events where volunteers weeded one of the roof gardens on the UConn Storrs campus, taking out weeds, dead plants, and invasive plants.

*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)?*

1391

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

10





# Ban Neonicotinoids



*Bees pollinate 1 in 3 forkfuls of the food we eat!*

- Alfalfa (Cows' Main Food; No More Milk, Ice Cream, Cheese)
- Apples • Apricots • Almonds • Avocados • Blueberries
- Boysenberries • Blackberries • Beets • Broccoli • Brazil Nuts
- Brussels Sprouts • Bok Choy • Black Eyed Peas • Buckwheat
- Cocoa (Chocolate) • Cranberries • Coconut • Cherries • Celery
- Cashews • Cactus
- Coffee • Cabbage
- Chestnut • Carrots
- Congo Beans
- Eggplant • Flax
- Grapes • Grapefruit
- Hazelnut • Kidney
- Li m a B e a n s
- Macadamia Nuts • Mangos • Mustard Seed • Nectarines • Nutmeg
- Okra • Orchid Plants • Onions • Plums • Peaches • Pomegranates
- Pears • Palm Oil • Peppermint • Pumpkin • Passion Fruit • Peppers
- Papaya • Raspberries • Strawberries • Sugarcane • Sunflower
- Starfruit • Sword Beans • Safflower • Sesame • Soybean • Squash
- Tangerines • Turnips • Tomatoes • Vanilla • Walnut • Watermelon
- Clover • Cauliflower
- Cantaloupe
- Cucumber
- Cotton • Elderberries
- Figs • Fennel
- Guava • Green Beans
- Beans • Kiwi Fruit
- Lemons • Limes



**No Bees,  
NO FOOD**

**UConnPIRG**  
Standing Up  
To Powerful Interests

**LOCAL ROUTES**

## 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.*

For-credit courses: ARE 1110 Population, Food, and the Environment ANTH 1010 E Global Climate Change and Human Societies ANTH 3340E Culture and Conservation BIOL 1108 Principles of Biology II BIOL 1110 Introduction to Botany EEB 2100 Global Change Ecology EEB 2208 Introduction to Conservation Biology EEB 2222 Plants in a Changing World EEB 2244 General Ecology EEB 2245 Evolutionary Biology EEB 2250 Introduction to Plant Physiology EEB 3220 Evolution of Green Plants EEB 3256 Plants and Civilization EEB 3269 Social Insects EEB 4120 Paleobiology EEB 5369 Current Topics in Biodiversity EDLR 1161 Husky Reads: Introducing Food and Nutrition to Children through Reading ENVE 1000 Environmental Sustainability ENVS 2000 Integrating Humans and the Environment GEOG 2400 Introduction to Sustainable Cities GEOG 3410 Human Modifications of Natural Environments HIST 2570 American Indian History HRTS 4291 Service Learning Seminar/Internship LAND 3230W Environmental Planning and Landscape Design NRE 1000 Environmental Science NRE 2455 Forest Ecology NRE 2600 Global Sustainable Natural Resources NRE 4000W Natural Resources Planning and Management NRE 4475 Forest Management NUSC 1167 Food, Culture, and Society PHIL 1108 Environmental Philosophy PHIL 3216 Environmental Ethics POLS 3412 Global Environmental Politics SOCI 2705 Sociology of Food SPSS 1060 The Great American Lawn: History, Culture, and Sustainability SPSS 1110 Fundamentals of Horticulture SPSS 1125 Insects, Food and Culture SPSS 2100 Environmental Sustainability of Food Production in Developed Countries SPSS 2110W Sustainable Plant Pest Management Communication SPSS 3150 Advanced Turfgrass Management SPSS 3610 Organic and Sustainable Vegetable Production SPSS 3840 Integrated Pest Management Continuing Education Courses offered by UConn Extension and their Master Gardener Program: F23/04 Connecticut Gardens: A Celebration of the State's Historic, Public, and Private Gardens F23/09 NYBG Herbarium & Library Tour F23/10 Obsessed With Monarchs: What Gardeners Can Do to Help Cultivate Them F23/07 Pollinator Support: Take It to the Next Level F23/03 Applying the Big Picture of Healthy Gardening in our Home and Public Gardens S23/20 The Making of a Garden(er) S23/14 Applying the Big Picture of Healthy Gardening in our Home and Public Gardens

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

25

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

4180

*How many of your continuing education courses included pollinator-related information in 2023?*

*How many participants attended those courses?*

164

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

5

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

383

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

The service-learning projects that students were engaged in during 2023 were the installation of the Werth Memorial Garden, Farm Fridays at Spring Valley Student Farm, creation of the UConn Community Garden, updates to the Edible Forest Garden, and at CT Pollinator Species Survey and Identification Guide at UConn Extension in Cheshire, CT. Over the summer of 2023 Spring Valleys Student Farmers facilitated the installation of a memorial garden around the beds of Peter J. Werth Towers to remember Andry Evangelista of UConn Public Health House. This was a collaborative effort between Public Health House, Dr. Parks landscape architecture class, and the learning community directors. Through this roughly 450 new square feet of new pollinator habitat were introduced. Additionally, UConn Community Garden, formerly EcoGarden, is SVSF's satellite permaculture garden closer to the UConn campus to showcase permaculture to students and allow them to get involved. In 2023, existing pollinator plants at the garden covering an estimated 14,000 square feet were maintained to promote a pollinator population. This effort was boosted by the Office of Sustainability Social Justice Grant, which expanded the garden's existing native growth. Additionally, UConn's Beekeeping Club and SVSF farmers have been working in conjunction at the garden to prepare materials and spaces for beehives in the near future. UConn students also participated in three trail maintenance events at the Hillside Environmental Education Park (HEEP) in 2023 on September 15, October 23, and October 26 that involved the removal of invasive species. Also, The Edible Forest Garden (EFG) at Spring Valley Student Farm is a cultivated garden of perennial trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants providing food for humans and habitat and nectar for pollinators. This diverse system replicates a forest structure and sustains itself through the many ecological roles played by each individual species. Student farmers and volunteers maintain the EFG by removing invasive plants, installing new plants, and building and maintaining trails. As for the CT Pollinator Species Survey and Identification Guide at UConn Extension in Cheshire, the goal of this project was to provide the Cheshire Pollinator Pathway with data and resources that can be used in future events to educate the public about our native pollinators and the importance of planting native plants. The two main components of this project were data collection/species survey and pollinator identification guide. For data collection, the Pollinator Pathway garden at Lock 12 Historical Park on North Brooksvale Road in Cheshire was visited 8 times from July 30th to November 6th and the number of pollinators observed in each taxonomic group was recorded. The other aspect of this project was a Pollinator Identification Guide was created in

Google Slides that includes information about all of the common species of bees in Connecticut. Because it can be accessed freely online or printed by anyone, the Identification Guide can be used for both formal and informal education and as a personal informational resource.



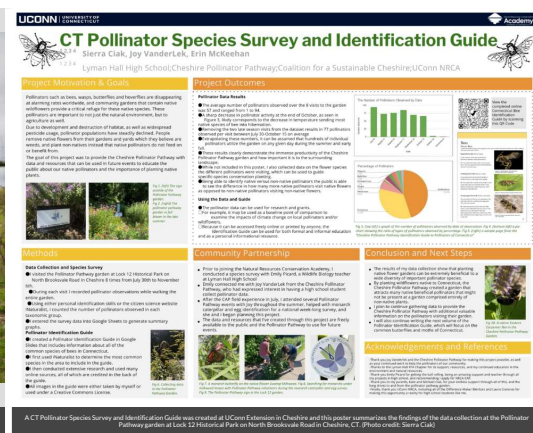
Participants learning about monarch butterflies in a UConn Extension class. (Photo credit: Victoria Wallace)



Student farmers after completing the installation of the Worth Memorial Garden, Summer 2023. (Photo Credit: Jessica Larkin-Welch)



Student volunteers planting perennials at the UConn Community Garden, Spring 2023. (Photo credit: Jessica Larkin-Welch)



A CT Pollinator Species Survey and Identification Guide was created at UConn Edgemoor in Cheshire and this poster summarizes the findings of the data collection at the Pollinator Pathway garden at Lake 22 Historical Park in North Brimfield Road, Cheshire, CT. (Photo credit: Sierra Clark)

## Policies & Practices

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

The UConn Spring Valley Student Farm (SVSF) is located about 2 miles from the Storrs campus and is a collaborative venture between Dining Services, Residential Life, EcoHouse Learning Community, and First-Year Programs, the College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources, and the Office of Sustainability. The SVSF houses 11 resident student farmers each year who grow crops, raise bees, and host educational events and opportunities for UConn and the local community. SVSF is a pollinator friendly space by the nature of their farming practices and production methods. SVSF grows a wide variety of edible plants, cover crops, and native wildflowers that it leaves unmanged throughout the growing season with crop rotation and intercropping methods. This ensures that there are always plants in bloom at Spring Valley Student Farm, and as such there is always a source of nectar and pollen to feed pollinators. This can include beds cover-cropped with blooming buckwheat, and then later the buckwheat gets mown and the bed is re-planted with a different vegetable that will be in bloom soon, such as summer squash, beans, or peas. With significant portions of the space less ideal for growing vegetables and fruits, SVSF dedicates space to the growth of wildflowers, such as aster, goldenrod, milkweed, and black-eyed susan. These spaces are not suited for vegetables due to either being too steep, rocky, or any other factor, but they work well for wildflowers because they do not need to be mown and are far more tolerant of less-than-ideal soil conditions. These plants have variable flowering seasons, providing nourishment for adult pollinators and food for caterpillars and larvae. SVSF does not destroy native wildflowers when they begin growing in a place where they can't stay, such as the middle of a bed. Instead of a damaging removal, depending on the species of wildflower that is being removed, student farmers will either move it to a more convenient location, such as into one of the pollinator beds, or in the case of plants that have long runners or are easily divided, student farmers will pot them up to sell at their farm market as a pollinator-friendly plant for people to grow in their own yards.

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

UConn Landscape Services follows guidance from the IPM plan, but at this time there are no policy initiatives

underway related to the use of pesticides.

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

Our affiliate has not yet pursued training on ecologically-based IPM in the recent year, but we will try to focus on this for the future. UConn Landscape Services last updated their IPM plan in November 2019, so this department will likely review it again within the next few years, if not sooner.

*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)
- Implemented non-chemical pest prevention and management methods on city or campus grounds

*Any lessons learned you would like to share?*

During the last year, there has been an increase in the number of students interested in and taking pollinator-related courses, and there was also more service learning projects related to pollinators and pollinator habitat conservation that were conducted in 2023 compared to some previous years. This shows that at UConn there is an increasing awareness and appreciation for pollinators.



Student farmers appreciating pollinators in the SVSF cut flower bed, which ensures that there are always plants in bloom at Farm Friday, Fall 2023. (Photo credit: Jessica Larkin-Wells)

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Learn More

**Integrated Pest Management Plan:** [UConn IPM Plan Nov 2019.pdf](https://ecohusky.uconn.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/2041/2020/02/UConn-IPM-turf-and-ornamental-Final_112019.pdf)

[https://ecohusky.uconn.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/2041/2020/02/UConn-IPM-turf-and-ornamental-Final\\_112019.pdf](https://ecohusky.uconn.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/2041/2020/02/UConn-IPM-turf-and-ornamental-Final_112019.pdf)

**Recommended Native Plant List:** [Native Pollinator Plants List CT.pdf](https://nenativeplants.psla.uconn.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/3415/2021/11/Some-Pollinator-Plants-for-Connecticut..pdf)

<https://nenativeplants.psla.uconn.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/3415/2021/11/Some-Pollinator-Plants-for-Connecticut..pdf>

**Recommended Native Plant Supplier List:** [Native Pollinator Plants Suppliers List.pdf](https://beecityusa.org/wp-content/uploads/ultimatemember/187/file_c8f6bbcc_fcf14cf79d2d6ad62e69fe9eed72edf5b3869086.pdf)

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