

# Bee City USA - Reno

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.*

Valley Wood Waterwise Gardens (VWWG) is a showcase of sustainable landscaping located within Valley Wood Park in Reno, NV. Approximately 1 acre of turf grass was repurposed with a focus on conservation and environmental stewardship. Since the Reno area receives approximately 7.5" of rainfall annually, VWWG features a diverse array of native and drought-tolerant plant species carefully curated to thrive in the local climate. BLBC conducted 3 work parties in 2023, with volunteers recruited by partner Keep Truckee Meadows Beautiful (KTMB). Each work party was followed by a free public tour of the gardens, to inspire Reno residents to plant more natively. Twice each year, Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation (TMPF) hosts planting events, drawing dozens of volunteers from around the Truckee Meadows. These fun events, "Plantapalooza", and "Plantemonium" are conducted as part of the Rosewood Nature Study Area restoration. This 30-year undertaking seeks to restore this 200+ acre abandoned golf course back to its original wetlands condition.

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

3

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

185

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

3

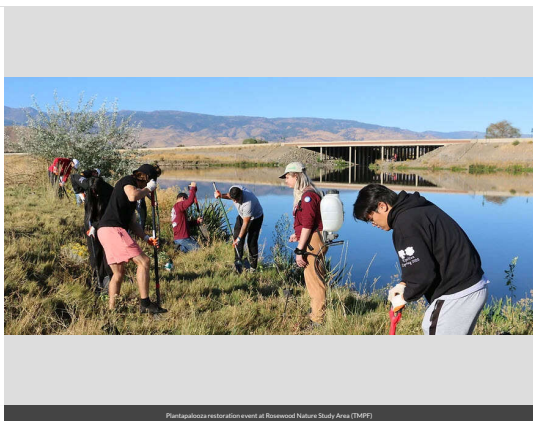
*How many total square feet of habitat were created or enhanced?*

43560

*Please check all that describe the habitats your affiliate helped to create or enhance in 2023 with pollinator benefit in mind.*

- Flower garden
- Orchard
- 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



Plantaploosa restoration event at Rosewood Nature Study Area (TMFP)



Firecracker Penstemon at Valley Wood Waterside Gardens / Ray Hopper



Work Party at Valley Wood Waterside Gardens (Ray Hopper)

## Education & Outreach

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

**PRESENTATIONS** “Bees on the Porch”, one of 4 “Programs on the Porch” at Bowers Mansion Regional Park, in Washoe Co. Held on the lawn in front of historic Bowers Mansion on a Friday evening in July. Featured presentations from the Northern Nevada Beekeepers Assoc.(NNBA), Biggest Little Bee City (BLBC), and the Natural History Museum at University of Nevada, Reno (UNR). Hosted by Washoe Co., coordinated by Biggest Little Bee City Committee. See photos below. The NNBA demonstrated beekeeping equipment and techniques, with a demonstration hive of live honey bees; BLBC demonstrated newly-emerged leafcutter bees and discussed the importance of native bees; UNR brought a bumblebee colony in a special observation hive, and an impressive collection of “other” pollinators native to the area and the Great Basin. BLBC Co-Chair and Master Gardener Barbara Fenne made a presentation about Bee Friendly Plants at "Gardening In Nevada" series, hosted by UNR Extension Master Gardener program. **TEACHING EVENTS** BLBC produced 5 indoor and outdoor classroom education events, each event teaching 20 – 50 kids about the importance of bees, pollinators and pollination. Kids rotate around 5 workstations, with each workstation attended by an expert, teaching an aspect about bees and pollinating. **BOOTH EVENTS** BLBC attended 8 public events with a booth or a table, where we talk to people about the importance of bees and pollination, and distribute information about

pollinator habitat and reducing the use of pesticides. One example is the information booth we had at the Earth Day celebration at Truckee Meadows Community College, who was the first Bee Campus USA affiliate in Nevada. We often have live honey bees and native bees at these events, which immediately raises interest in passers-by.

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

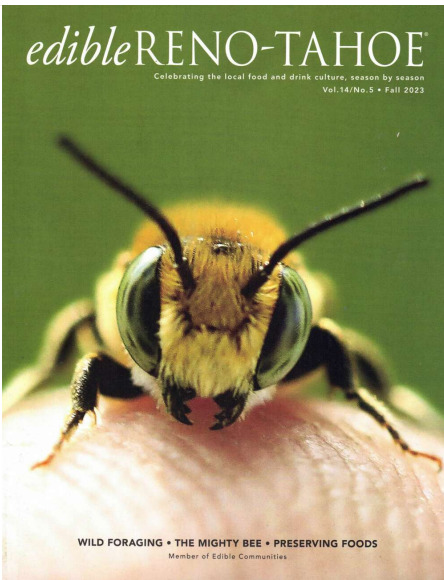
20

How many people attended those events (in total)?

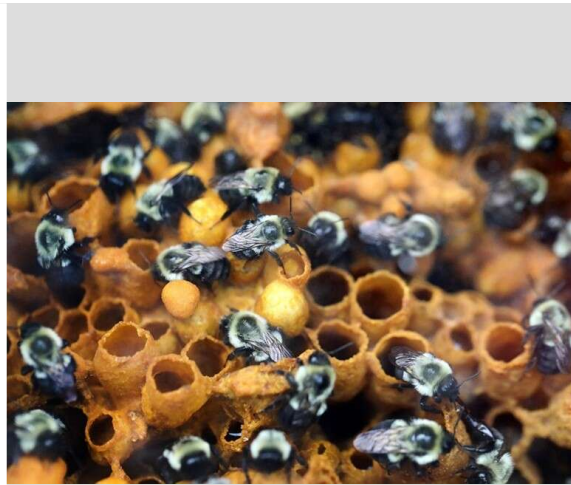
830

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

1



Newly-emerged Leafcutter Bee at 'Bees On the Porch' at Bowers Mansion Regional Park. This bee was the cover girl for the Fall issue of 'Edible Reno-Tahoe' magazine, which featured several articles about pollinators in the August issue Bee City. (Lou Manual)



Bumblebee colony in an observation hive in 'Bees On the Porch' event. (Lou Manual. Researchers from the UNR's Leonard Bee Lab brought one of their lab colonies; an instant audience favorite)



Queen Bee Barb Ferne and nephew teaching kids about native bees at the BLEC Kids and Bees event at the Urban Roots Outdoor School, Summer, 2023. Kids rotated around 5 stations learning about different types of bees, pollinators, and pollination. (David Yifor 18 June)



Bee City USA Street Sign at Reno City Plaza, across the street from City Hall. (Ray Hopper)

## Policies & Practices

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

Committee members testified before Nevada Assembly hearings to ban neonics from ornamental plants statewide. AB162 was subsequently passed, and products containing neonics, intended for use on ornamentals, are no longer available to the Nevada public. The Biggest Little Bee City Committee feels this is a huge win and will go far in

improving the safety of pollinator habitat, particularly in urban and suburban communities.

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

No new initiatives currently, but Reno Parks Dept. recently installed two pollinator-friendly gardens on city property in 2023: McKinley Arts and Culture Center, and at the Wells Ave. roundabout.

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

Two members (Barb and Ray) completed Phase 1 of Pollinator Steward Certification program hosted by the Pollinator Partnership.

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

- Only use pesticides as a last resort within the 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 use of neonicotinoid insecticides 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

*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.*

The organizers of local Bee Friendly Reno campaign, which uses lawn signs to promote less pesticides, posted 200 signs in 2023 is taking their campaign statewide, becoming Bee Friendly Nevada.

*Any lessons learned you would like to share?*

Strategic partnerships with local nonprofits and city staff are critical.



Monarch Waystation Sign in Butterfly Garden at Valley Wood Park. (Ray Hopper)



Biggest Little Bee City Committee and friends (Ray Hopper)

Learn More

Integrated Pest Management Plan: [IPM Plan.docx](#)

Recommended Native Plant List: [BLBC Valley Wood Plant List.pdf](#)

Recommended Native Plant Supplier List:

<https://biggestlittlebeecity.org>

<https://biggestlittlebeecity.org>

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