

Bee City USA - Santa Barbara

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.

1. Andree Clark Bird Refuge Restoration – As part of a larger restoration project, areas of turf and ice plant were removed to create native dune, salt marsh, willow, and coastal sage scrub habitat. The project primarily relied on contractors to complete this work but a few community volunteer events were hosted to target non-native vegetation removal, with a total of 15 volunteers. Approximately 3 acres of native habitat (dune, salt marsh, willow scrub, and coastal sage scrub) were created using about 9,500 native plants. The project also included native seeding and the installation of several interpretive signs. 2. Bohnett Park Creek Restoration – Additional planting was completed along the creek at Bohnett Park in 2023. Approximately 150 native flowering plants were installed over a 5,000 square foot area. No volunteers were utilized for this project. 3. Parma Park Restoration – The Parks & Recreation Open Space Planner Monique O’Conner completed an impressive amount of restoration work throughout the City’s 12 open space parks in 2023. The biggest push was at Parma Park where she managed crews to complete brush clearing, trail development & decommissioning, and removal of woody invasives with mechanical and chemical treatment (approved by the IPM Advisory Committee). In November 2023 she commenced a 4-acre native habitat restoration project to replace non-native grassland with 3-acres of coastal sage scrub and 1-acre of native grassland/wildflower field. In addition, recently decommissioned trails were seeded with a variety of native seeds collected from the park itself and the greater Sycamore Canyon watershed. Ten volunteers from a local rugby team helped spread seed and install native container plants on December 12, 2023. 4. East Beach Habitat Restoration Project – This project will restore approximately 1.1 acres of beach dunes by planting over 3,300 native plants, scheduled for completion in February 2024. Restoration involves solarizing ice plant and other invasive species for three month and planting Central Coast dune plants including pink sand verbena and silver bur ragweed. No chemicals were used with plant removal and chemicals will not be used in future maintenance. The restoration plants were grown from seed collected locally by biologists to preserve local genetics. 5. Urban Forestry Annual Planting – 290 street trees were planted, including 43 Coast Live Oak trees (the predominant local oak species), 21 other oak trees of various species, and 28 jacaranda trees. 6. The Parks & Recreation Department has started discussions in collaboration with the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden to plant native, pollinator-targeted, plant species in two planter beds at Alice Keck Park Memorial Garden, the larger one being 6,700 square feet and the smaller 2,040 square feet. This demonstration garden is planned to be installed in winter 2024. Additionally, research staff of the Botanic Garden will conduct pollinator surveys before and after the installation. This new planting will give Parks maintenance staff the opportunity to care for and learn about native species and associated pollinators, and potentially inspire further utilize and maintain natives in park spaces. 7. During 2023, Rincon Consultants and Channel Islands Restoration continued into their second year of monitoring and

maintaining the native coastal sage scrub installed at the Elings Park Veteran's Memorial Walk and coast live oak saplings installed at Elings Park near Godric Grove. Several weeding events were conducted to remove invasive weed species throughout the sites using hand tools, targeting invasive non-native grasses and cape ivy in particular. Replacement planting also occurred within the oak grove where individual saplings did not survive the heat of the summer.

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

7

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

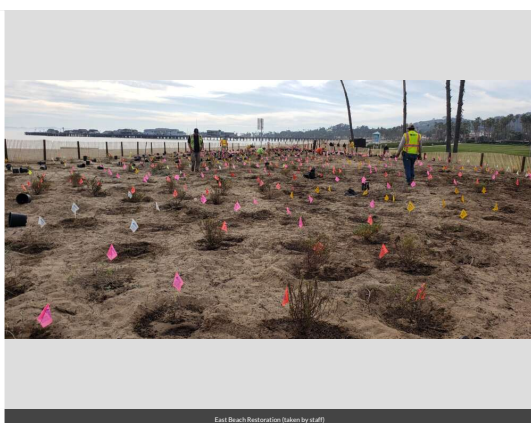
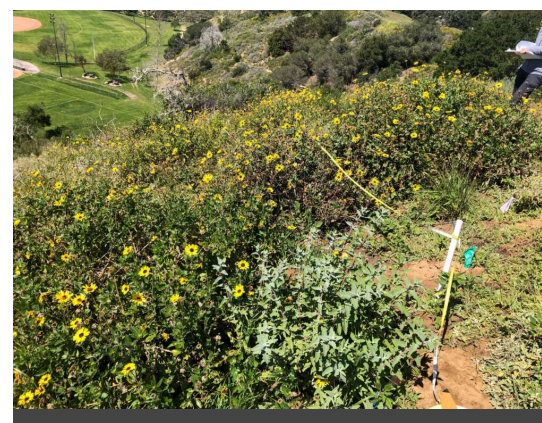
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How many total square feet of habitat were created or enhanced?

360220

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

- Flower garden
- Vegetable 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
- Native pollinator-friendly tree planting
- Native pollinator-friendly shrub border/hedgerow planting
- Rain garden/bioswale
- Roadside/rights of way planting
- School garden
- Other



East Beach Restoration (taken by staff)

Creeks Restoration (taken by staff)

Education & Outreach

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

The Master Gardener chapter celebrated the 15th anniversary of the Butterfly Garden at Alice Keck Park Memorial Garden on Saturday April 29th in conjunction with the City's Earth Day Festival.



IPM Chair Greg Chittick receiving proclamation for National Pollinator Week from Mayor Randy Rowse (taken by staff)

IPM Chair Greg Chittick holding National Pollinator Week Proclamation (taken by staff)

Policies & Practices

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

Since 2004, the City of Santa Barbara has had a robust Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Strategy to promote environmentally sensitive pest management while preserving assets and protecting the health and safety of the public and our employees. The IPM Strategy seeks to reduce the use of pesticide products that pose known, likely, or probable human health or environmental risks and promote the use of non-hazardous and/or reduced risk alternatives. The Strategy establishes a clear criteria for pesticide use in structures, landscapes, and other grounds and requires that pesticides be applied in a manner that protects and enhances our region's natural resources and public health. The Strategy is accompanied by a PHAER Zone System and a Tiered Materials List that help determine what kind of pest control materials can be used and where. The majority of City Parks are designated 'green' or pesticide-free with some

'floating yellow zones' inside of 'green' parks. The IPM Strategy is largely administered through the IPM Advisory Committee, which meets quarterly to review and advise pest control needs throughout City lands and property. Parks staff and Committee members prepare an Annual Report that is presented to the Parks and Recreation Commission. Since establishing this strategy, City Parks pesticide usage has dropped by 97%. In December 2023, two new committee members were appointed and attended their first meeting in January 2024.

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

The Creeks Division of the Sustainability & Resilience Department was created to protect pollinators, people, and waterways from pesticides and other harmful chemicals. In November 2000, the City of Santa Barbara's voters approved Measure B, an increase in the transient occupancy tax rate from 10% to 12% effective January 2001. All proceeds from the 2% tax increase are restricted to use in the Creeks Restoration and Water Quality Improvement Program. Creek restoration is an important component of the Creeks Division's programs, which helps to improve creek health, native habitat for wildlife, and water quality. Goals for restoration projects include removal of invasive plants, restoring native riparian vegetation and habitat, and improving water quality through natural filtration. Restoring native vegetation also provides benefits to native pollinators. When possible, the community is invited to participate in restoration efforts at both large and small scale restoration projects. Volunteers have participated in native planting days, invasive plant removal, and clean-ups at various sites throughout the City over the last several years.

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

Our CADPR Qualified Applicators, Parks Supervisor Steve Biddle, Parks Supervisor Todd Newell, and Parks Manager Simón Herrera, are required to complete 20 hours of continuing education every 2 years.

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
- 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
- Restricted pesticides used to organic pesticides on city or campus grounds
- Eliminated use of neonicotinoid insecticides on city or campus grounds
- Dropped pesticide use altogether 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 using “Buying Bee-Safe Plants” methods recommended by Xerces Society. (See <https://xerces.org/publications/fact-sheets/buying-bee-safe-plants>)
- Sourced plants for city or campus grounds that were not treated with neonicotinoids
- Encouraged developers and private landscapers to source plants using “Buying Bee-Safe Plants” methods recommended by Xerces Society. (See <https://xerces.org/publications/fact-sheets/buying-bee-safe-plants>)
- 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 Green Gardener Program for Santa Barbara County educates local gardeners in resource efficient and pollution prevention landscape maintenance practices. The Green Gardener Program is a regional program designed to offer education, training, and promotion of participating gardeners and landscape maintenance contractors. Since Fall 2000, over 1,500 students have completed the certification program. Our community is lucky to have the award-winning Santa Barbara City College that offers a Skills Competency Award, Certificate of Achievement, and Associate Degree in Environmental Horticulture. This is a vocational program that teaches the basic skills and provides state-of-the-art information required to develop a strong foundation for a variety of career specialties within the landscaping, ornamental horticulture and the regenerative and restoration industry. The program explains the importance of ecological and economic sustainability, while also promoting making practical decisions with all available options. This program serves 150 students per year and uses experiential learning in a 3 acre teaching garden on campus. This garden includes an insectary section that was revitalized in the fall of 2021, central to a diverse orchard of fruit trees, and housing over 20 different nectar and host plants for insect pollinator species.



Learn More

Integrated Pest Management Plan: [IPM Strategy Final Version.pdf](#)

<https://www.santabarbaraca.gov/gov/depts/parksrec/parks/stewardship/ipm/default.asp>

Recommended Native Plant List:

<https://www.sbbg.org/sites/default/files/Fall%202019%20AVAILABILITY%20LIST.pdf>

Recommended Native Plant Supplier List:

<https://www.sbbg.org/explore-garden/nursery>

<https://sbparksandrec.santabarbaraca.gov/DAHernandez@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>

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

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