Bee Campus USA - College of Southern Maryland

Report on 2024

Pollinator Habitat Creation & Enhancement

Please describe pollinator habitat creation or enhancement projects in your community in 2024, and whether your committee hosted them or not.

CSM initiated a new partnership with the La Plata Neighborhood Creative Arts Center to support pollinator habitat expansion. Through a grant called Outdoor Space Reimagined, the two organizations are planning to install a new pollinator garden at the Early Childhood Education Center on our La Plata Campus. While the garden has not yet been installed, several planning meetings were held in 2024 to design the garden space and select appropriate native plant species. This future garden will serve as both a pollinator habitat and an educational resource for young learners.

How many habitat projects did you help to create or enhance in 2024?

2

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

26

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

1

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

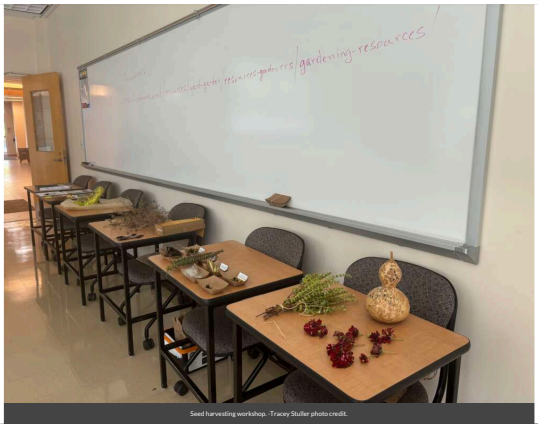
80

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

- Flower garden
- Native milkweed planting for monarchs and bees (where appropriate)
- Native pollinator-friendly tree planting
- School garden

Winter Sowing Class for faculty, staff and students, January 2024. Native Plants were started. -Tracey Stuller photo credit.

Seed harvesting workshop in our Spring pre-semester sessions for faculty. -Tracey Stuller photo credit.



Seed harvesting workshop. -Tracey Stuller photo credit.

Education & Outreach

Please describe pollinator conservation events or outreach activities in your community in 2024, indicating whether your committee hosted them or not.

At the College of Southern Maryland's La Plata Campus, students, staff, and community members have been working together to support the college's Bee Campus USA initiative through a series of hands-on conservation activities. In fall 2024, volunteers gathered for a Seed Harvesting Day, collecting seeds from native plants like milkweed and coneflowers. These seeds were later used during Winter Sowing Workshops, where participants planted them in recycled containers to prepare for spring planting. In early spring, the campus hosted a Native Tree Giveaway, distributing native saplings (and a few perennial native plants too!) to encourage the growth of more pollinator-friendly habitats throughout the community. This project was through a partnership with a group called Nurture Natives founded by CSM student, Esther Bonney. To expand these efforts, CSM also initiated a new partnership with the La Plata Neighborhood Creative Arts Center. Through a grant called Outdoor Space Reimagined, the two organizations are working together to install an additional pollinator garden at CSM's Early Childhood Education Center. This new garden will provide learning opportunities for young students while supporting local pollinators. Additionally, a group of students, faculty, and partners formed the NatureFest Committee to plan NatureFest 2025 — a new event that will bring together local environmental groups to promote conservation initiatives. NatureFest will feature educational activities, exhibits, and a Native Plant Giveaway to encourage the creation of pollinator gardens at home. Each of these events, hosted at the La Plata Campus, reflects CSM's ongoing commitment to pollinator conservation and building stronger connections between the college and the broader community. Additionally, our faculty and student volunteers hosted a "seed ball" table where attendees learned about native plants at a town hall event off campus.

How many pollinator-related events or outreach activities did you host or help with in 2024 (in total)?

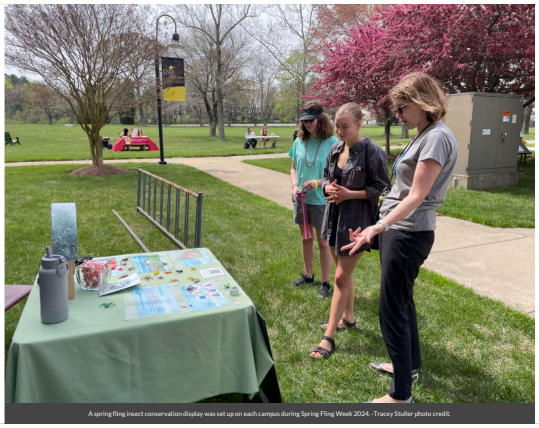
5

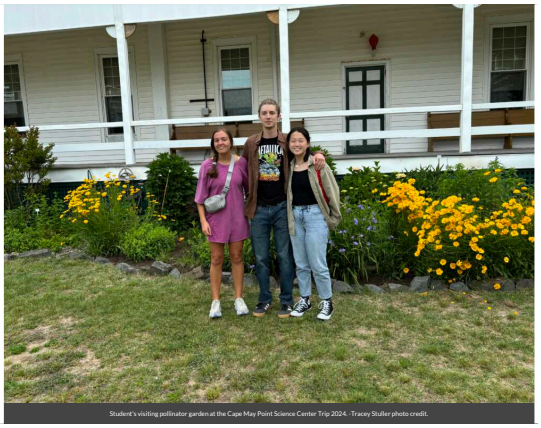
How many people attended those events (in total)?

31

Number of permanent interpretive/educational/Bee Campus USA signs installed to date?
6

Planning Committee for our NatureFest 2025 event was formed. We're proud of the partnerships and are looking forward to a great event! -Tracey Stuller photo credit.


A spring fling insect conservation display was set up on each campus during Spring Fling Week 2024. -Tracey Stuller photo credit.


Student's visiting pollinator garden at the Cape May Point Science Center Trip 2024. -Tracey Stuller photo credit.

Curriculum, Continuing Education, & Service Learning

Please describe the curriculum your campus engaged in 2024, indicating whether it was part of a for-credit course or continuing education.
CSM continued to support pollinator education through both continuing education (CE) and credit course offerings. One of the most popular non-credit courses was Beekeeping, with 46 community members completing the class. While this course does focus on honey bees, pollinator importance and support is emphasized. Several other continuing education courses related to pollinators and native ecosystems were scheduled but did not run in 2024 due to low or no enrollment. These included Container Gardening (HGC-5010), Joy of Bird Watching (AAA-8510), and Getting Started with Native Plants (HGC-5120). Container Gardening is scheduled to return in Summer 2025. In addition to non-credit offerings, credit courses like Biology for Science Majors integrate pollinator topics directly into the curriculum. One instructor includes a pollinator survey activity, which helps students gain hands-on experience in identifying and understanding pollinator species.

How many of your for-credit courses included pollinator-related information in 2024?
4

How many students attended those for-credit courses?
124

How many of your continuing education courses included pollinator-related information in 2024?

4

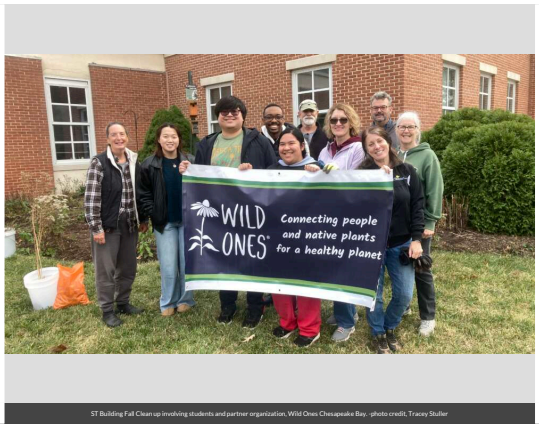
How many participants attended those continuing education courses?
35

Please describe the service-learning projects your students were engaged in 2024, indicating which, if any, were associated with a course.
Several pollinator-focused activities were incorporated into service learning opportunities for students and the community. Campus garden clean-ups were held at the La Plata Campus, giving students a chance to help maintain and improve pollinator habitats while earning service learning hours. Participants helped remove invasive plants, spread mulch, and prepare garden beds for new plantings, directly supporting the health of our campus ecosystems. Additionally, Winter Sowing Workshops were organized as service learning events. Students and volunteers planted native seeds into recycled containers, learning about the importance of native plants for pollinators while helping grow new plants for campus gardens and community projects. In partnership with Nurture Natives, the college also hosted a Native Plant Giveaway. This event allowed students to engage with the community by distributing native plants, sharing information about the benefits of planting for pollinators, and encouraging sustainable gardening practices. All of these activities not only supported the college's Bee Campus USA goals but also gave students meaningful, hands-on experiences that connected classroom learning to real-world environmental stewardship.

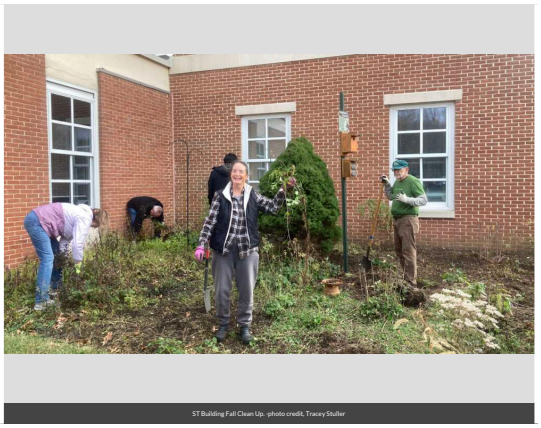
How many service-learning projects did your campus host and/or support to enhance pollinator habitat on- and off- campus?
4

How many students participated in service-learning projects in 2024 to enhance pollinator habitat on or off-campus?
28

Seed harvesting workshop. -Tracey Stuller photo credit.

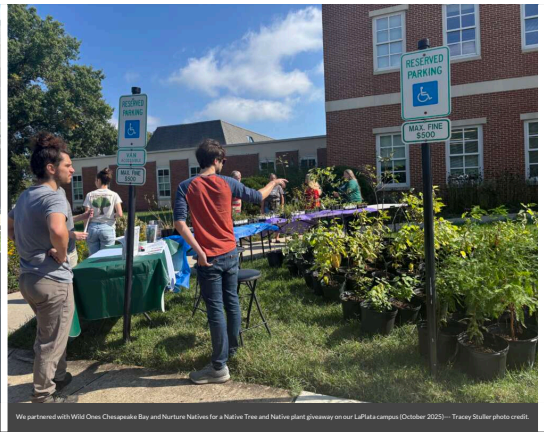


ST Building Fall Clean up involving students and partner organization, Wild Ones Chesapeake Bay. -photo credit, Tracey Stuller



ST Building Fall Clean Up. -photo credit, Tracey Stuller

We partnered with Wild Ones Chesapeake Bay and Nurture Natives for a Native Tree and Native plant giveaway on our LaPlata campus (October 2025)— Tracey Stuller photo credit.



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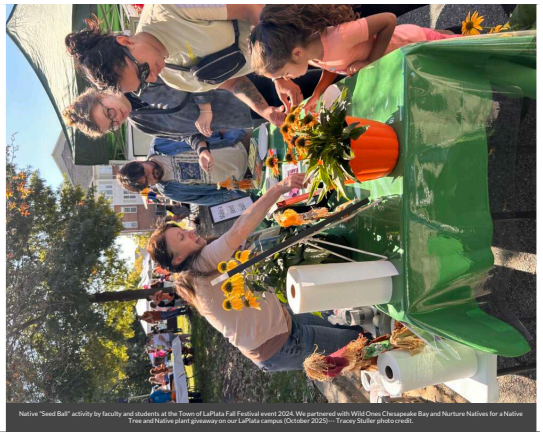

Native "Seed Ball" activity by faculty and students at the Town of LaPlata Fall Festival event 2024. We partnered with Wild Ones Chesapeake Bay and Nurture Natives for a Native Tree and Native plant giveaway on our LaPlata campus (October 2025)— Tracey Stuller photo credit.

Policies & Practices

Please describe actions taken to make pest management more pollinator-friendly.
Steps were taken to reduce chemical use and promote more sustainable land management on campus. The college began using an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach for groundskeeping, based fertilization on soil testing, and stopped using pesticides in child care areas. Regular spraying around buildings was replaced with targeted baiting and spot treatments only when needed.

In your city or campus, are any policy initiatives underway to further protect pollinators, people or waterways from pesticides?
Our college took several steps to reduce chemical use and promote more sustainable land management on campus. The college began using an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach for groundskeeping, based fertilization on soil testing, and stopped using pesticides in child care areas. Regular spraying around buildings was replaced with targeted baiting and spot treatments only when needed. Turf care practices also changed. The college improved fields by aerating, overseeding, and using organic materials instead of chemical fertilizers. Low-maintenance grasses were planted on new soccer fields, and wildflowers were added in new low- and no-mow zones. A net-zero tree removal policy was adopted, meaning every tree removed due to disease or safety concerns was replaced, and Ash trees were treated to avoid losing them to disease. The college also planted fruit trees and completed a tree inventory to better track and care for campus trees. To manage water and runoff, CSM installed pervious walkways and parking lots and planted buffer areas near waterways. Moisture sensors were installed to better control irrigation on soccer fields. Equipment upgrades, like a snow-brushing mower, also helped cut down on the need for salt and chemicals during winter. Finally, the college started composting organic waste from grounds work and food services, and created a Facilities Department Sustainability Committee to involve staff, students, and community members in planning future sustainability efforts. No, but is something to consider for the future.

Did your committee participate in any continuing education on ecologically-based Integrated Pest Management planning?
No, but is something to consider for the future.

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

- 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)
- Reduced the total area of city or campus-managed lands to which pesticides are applied

Seed Ball display at Fall Festival. -- Tracey Stuller photo credit.

Committee Photo

Learn More

Integrated Pest Management Plan:

BEE CAMPUS USA
AN INITIATIVE OF THE XERCES SOCIETY

XERCES SOCIETY
for Invertebrate Conservation

Recommended Native Plant List:

Recommended Native Plant Supplier List: