

# Bee Campus USA - South Dakota State University

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.*

The sustainability class here at SDSU approached us about a pollinator planting project they would like to complete on campus in 2024. The area they chose was one that had non-native ornamentals in a formal garden setting here on campus. This area had become a challenge to manage for our staff because of the challenging microclimate created with all of the stone, pavers, and gravel walk surfaces. Some of our native plants are well suited for these hot and intermittently dry conditions. The students designed the plantings and we reviewed them for maintenance considerations. The students planted approximately half of the habitat project this season and the same class (with different students) will design and plant the second half next year. This was a very hands on project valuable for the students and for the campus as we install another pollinator project. We continue to supplement the other pollinator plantings on campus by adding additional plants to compete with weeds and cool season grasses. Many of our larger scale plantings are still in their warm season grasses to forbs transition phase. We look forward to having more and more blooming plants as these landscapes mature!

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

1

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

25

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

1

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

300

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

- Flower garden
- School garden



## Education & Outreach

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

**September 7th-** The annual Insect Festival at McCrory Gardens was a great success again this year, drawing 506 visitors! Participants had the opportunity to learn about all kinds of insects, including insect pollinators. Some folks even wore their favorite insect costumes. One component of the programming was education related to monarch butterflies and their migration. Participants learned about monarch tagging and tracking. **August 3rd-** The native plant sale, hosted by the SDSU Native Plant Initiative, was a hit again this year. All of the native plants are grown without the use of pesticides and are insect safe for local gardens. The plants are grown in small cone-tainers by students and faculty with proceeds from the sale ensuring cost recovery to keep the native plants coming to the community year-after-year. The group sold roughly 400 plants in the span of just a couple hours. This is an effective way of getting high quality native plants in the hands of community gardeners.

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

3

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

526

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

1

*Number of temporary interpretive/educational/Bee Campus USA signs installed in 2024?*

2



Native Plant Sale



Young students sampling flowering plants for pollinators



Native plants ready to find gardens in Brookings!



Temporary signage on the new pollinator area

## 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.*

The overwhelming amount of pollinator information takes place in our for-credit classes at SDSU. Classes range from Ecosystem Sciences, Organic Plant Production, and Sustainability with class sizes varying widely between different topics and majors. One elective that sees many students from different disciplines and majors is the Sustainability course. Having more general courses deal with pollinator education can help reach across areas of study. Our university provides pesticide applicator recertification training for the State of SD. The training focuses on pollinator safety in one module to emphasize the importance of responsible pesticide application. The total number of recertifications is likely quite large and wide reaching.

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

25

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

732

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

2

*Please describe the service-learning projects your students were engaged in 2024, indicating which, if any, were associated with a course.*

Our service learning project this season was also our habitat creation project in the formal gardens here on campus. The project establishes phase one of two phases to transition our formal garden into a diverse pollinator planting here on the SDSU main campus.

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

1

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

20



Students work diligently to convert a formal garden to pollinator planting

## Policies & Practices

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

SDSU Facilities & Services does not endorse nor participate in any mosquito spraying on the main campus. We feel that fogging contact killing insecticides, while effective for controlling mosquitos, unnecessarily kills many beneficial insects including insect pollinators. This is not an official policy at this time, though we are working towards crafting the policy out of our current practices.

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

**Not currently**

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

**No**

*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**
- **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>)**
- **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**

*Any lessons learned you would like to share?*

Habitat projects are always a work in progress. Depending on how they are planned and planted, some require more maintenance than others.

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Committee Photo

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Learn More

Integrated Pest Management Plan: [IPM\\_SDSTATE.pdf](#)

Recommended Native Plant List:

<https://openprairie.sdstate.edu/nativeplant/>

Recommended Native Plant Supplier List:

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