Bee Campus USA - Syracuse 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.

This event was hosted by our committee. We held a Seeds and Weeds event and invited the campus community to help gather native seeds from the pollinator garden while removing non-native plants to support the garden's health. The collected seeds have been distributed to our other pollinator garden, and the extra seeds will be distributed at future events throughout 2025/2026.

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?

65

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

3

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

20

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
- Orchard
- Herb garden
- Native milkweed planting for monarchs and bees (where appropriate)

Seeds and Weeds Event

Education & Outreach

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

In April, as part of Earth Month, we hosted an Agroecology class for a tour of the vegetable, pollinator, and research gardens. Students were particularly interested in concept designs, model agroecology farming, and how garden layouts impact pollinators. We also collaborated with the Wellness Initiatives group on a volunteer event to prepare the

gardens for the growing season. Participants helped spread compost, weed the gardens, and plant early-season seeds suited to cooler temperatures. Another April event, The Importance of Composting, provided an educational session on proper composting techniques and sustainable methods for disposing of food and garden waste. During this event, we gave out propagated house plants for participants to grow. Additionally, we hosted Bats as Pollinators and How to Build Bat Houses in the campus library. Faculty, staff, and students learned about bats' role as pollinators and received informational pamphlets on constructing bat houses. Attendees also received packets of native seeds harvested from our pollinator garden, if they lived locally or in the Northeast. For participants outside the local area, we provided herb or sunflower seeds instead harvested from our vegetable garden. Throughout April, we hosted a sustainability information table on six separate days to promote our campus-wide sustainability initiatives. During these events, we engaged with prospective students and their families, sharing information about our Bee Campus USA pollinator garden, Pete's Giving Garden—our on-campus vegetable garden—and our campus honey bee program. We highlighted the importance of pollinators, described how the gardens support biodiversity, and discussed how and when we harvest and sell honey produced by our bees. From May through October, we hosted weekly volunteer hours, inviting the campus community to assist in the BeeCampus USA garden and Pete's Giving Garden. Since fewer students are on campus during the summer, most volunteers participated from late August through October. One particularly dedicated student contributed approximately 25 hours solely to weeding the pollinator garden. In September, we hosted another Agroecology class in the gardens. Students learned best practices for maintaining pollinator and vegetable gardens, including the benefits of a no-till approach, which helps sequester carbon in the soil when compost is added. They sampled fresh produce from Pete's Giving Garden, herbs from our herb garden, and native berries from the pollinator garden. We discussed the medicinal uses of native plants, too. Currently, we cultivate yarrow, sage, echinacea, milkweed, jewelweed, and lavender—all of which have traditional medicinal applications. In October 2024, we hosted four events centered on our pollinator and vegetable gardens, highlighting the importance of bees and their role in our ecosystem. The first event, Seeds and Weeds, invited the campus community to help gather native seeds from the pollinator garden while removing non-native plants to support the garden’s health. The collected seeds will be distributed at future events throughout 2025/2026. The second and third events were held consecutively, allowing students to learn about the gardens and then participate in gleaning the vegetable garden. The first session, designed for students in the Food Movements class, included a tour of the pollinator garden and a discussion on the significance of native plants in vegetable gardening. This was followed by an exploration of the vegetable garden and a discussion on the role of fresh produce in community well-being. Immediately afterward, we welcomed students from the Food to Fork class, and those from the previous session were invited to stay and participate. This session began with a presentation on the importance of pollinators in food production. We highlighted the pollinator garden, which surrounds the vegetable garden, before students assisted in gleaning the remaining produce and harvesting herbs for drying and distribution through our campus food pantries. They also collected seeds for next season’s vegetable garden, which aligns with our goal of relying on harvested rather than purchased seeds. Our final October event, All About SU’s Honey and Our Bees!, was open to both the campus and the public. Two of our beekeepers shared insights into honeybee behavior, including how bees gather pollen and nectar from native plants within a five-mile radius of the hive. Since our pollinator and vegetable gardens are located within half a mile of the hives, these bees likely contributed

to pollination, ensuring successful seed and vegetable production. The beekeepers also emphasized the importance of maintaining flowering plants to provide nectar and pollen for honeybee health. Attendees had the opportunity to sample fresh, university-produced honey.

How many pollinator-related events or outreach activities did you host or help with in 2024 (in total)?
15

How many people attended those events (in total)?
540

Number of permanent interpretive/educational/Bee Campus USA signs installed to date?
1

Bats as Pollinators and How to Build Bat Houses event


All About SU's Honey and Our Bees!


Native Seeds from our Bee Campus Garden and Propagation of House Plants

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.
Though we offer more than 3 credit courses that engage in pollinator-related information, these are the ones that we either presented to or held events in our garden for the students to participate. Credit courses: 2 – Agroecology Seminar (Falk College – Food Studies Program) – Undergraduate and Graduate Course: Explores the biological processes that undergird the food production system on which we depend. Topics include soil fertility and quality, pest ecology, nutrient cycling and socioeconomic and policy aspects of agricultural production FST 304 – Farm to Fork Exploration of alternative food systems, including culinary theory and practice. Topics in contemporary food issues examined through systems perspective and practical applications. Includes field trips and cooking laboratory. FST 303 – Food Movements Examination of food movements, the various efforts to address public health, social, and environmental contradictions of the conventional food system.

How many of your for-credit courses included pollinator-related information in 2024?
3

How many students attended those for-credit courses?
75

Please describe the service-learning projects your students were engaged in 2024, indicating which, if any, were associated with a course.
Student Involvement – Garden Volunteer Hours Each week during the months of June, July, August, September, and October, we hosted open volunteer hours in our campus gardens. These sessions provided students with opportunities to earn service learning hours while supporting our sustainability efforts. Throughout the summer, several dedicated students volunteered regularly, contributing to garden maintenance and pollinator habitat care. Participation increased significantly toward the end of August and continued strong through September and October, as more students returned to campus and engaged in hands-on environmental stewardship.

How many service-learning projects did your campus host and/or support to enhance pollinator habitat on- and off- campus?
12

How many students participated in service-learning projects in 2024 to enhance pollinator habitat on or off-campus?
30


Food Movements and Food to Fork event


Food Movements and Food to Fork event

Policies & Practices

Committee Photo

Learn More

Integrated Pest Management Plan:

Recommended Native Plant List:

Recommended Native Plant Supplier List:

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