

# Bee Campus USA - University of Central Florida

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.*

In April, we hosted our annual Arbor Day Celebration and enhanced our Plants for Birds Pollinator Garden in the Arboretum Park. Our UCF student chapter of the National Audubon Society, the Knighthawks, sponsor this garden and provided funding to enhance the garden by adding new plants. The partnership between the Arboretum and Sustainability Initiatives and the Knighthawks has been a 2 1/2 year partnership that includes an enhancement of the pollinator garden each year. Additionally, we enhanced our Greenhouse pollinator garden with a few new plants to give the garden a re-fresh and add some new blooms.

*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?*

30

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

2

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

250

*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
- Herb garden
- Native milkweed planting for monarchs and bees (where appropriate)
- Invasive/exotic plant species removal for habitat improvement
- Native pollinator-friendly tree planting



The UCF Audubon Chapter Knighthawks partnered with ASI for Arbor Day to enhance their club-sponsored pollinator garden. Twenty-five new plants were added to the garden! Photo Credit: ASI Marketing Team



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## Education & Outreach

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

The UCF Arboretum and Sustainability Initiatives Department participated in 6 on-campus Farmer's Markets where we sold our Arboretum Honey and educated those who stopped by about pollinators and our on campus apiary. The Farmer's Markets are hosted by our on campus partner, Aramark, and usually have around 200 students pass through. Additionally, the Arboretum participated in Backyard Biodiversity Day at Mead Botanical Garden where we tabled and shared resources about pollinators. Our students loved connecting with community members! Student Government hosted a Pollinator Education event in the Arboretum Park that included various UCF Registered Student organizations that are Environmentally or Pollinator related. ASI participated and provided tours of the pollinator gardens and showcased the apiary during the event.

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

9

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

500

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

4



Arboretum and Sustainability Interns attend Backyard Biodiversity Day hosted by the Florida Native Plant Society at Mead Botanical Gardens. Photo Credit: ASI Marketing Team



Tabling with Arboretum Honey at the monthly Aramark Farmer's Market on Main Campus. Photo Credit: ASI Marketing Team



## 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.*

At UCF, both the general Biology and Plant Sciences B.S. degrees include required courses that contain pollinator-related information. There are 15 courses in which this information is provided: Principles of Plant Science, Ethnobotany, Plant Anatomy, Plant Physiology, Plant Taxonomy, Plant Science Capstone, Biology I, Urban Ecological Field Studies, Honey Bee Biology and Beekeeping, General Entomology, Principles of Ecology, Florida Ecology, Natural History and Conservation, Urban Ecology, and Invertebrate Biodiversity. Additionally, the Honey Bee Biology and Bee Keeping Course allows 20 students to work hands-on in our campus apiary and learn the art of Beekeeping and the importance of pollinators to the environment.

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

15

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

300

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

The Arboretum and Sustainability Initiatives Department hosts weekly volunteer shifts in the pollinator gardens. All students volunteering to maintain the pollinator gardens are enrolled in Service-Learning courses that require them to complete service learning projects, including volunteering. We are one of two entities on campus who host service-learning students and projects.

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

25

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

200



The Honeybee Biology and Bee Keeping Class conducting a regular hive inspection of the apiary. Photo Credit: ASI Marketing Team



Students checking a frame covered in honeybees from the apiary. Photo Credit: Mariana Molano



The ASI Public Garden Management team works with volunteers to weed and plant a few new plants in the Greenhouse Pollinator Garden. Photo credit: Lucrezia Ongaro

## Policies & Practices

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

The Arboretum Public Garden is the last natural green space on the inner circle of UCF Main Campus and is around 8 acres. On this site, we have a vegetable garden and 3 pollinator gardens along with a lot of open green space. Only organic pesticides are used on this 8 acre site and manual removal of pests is practiced when possible, especially in the vegetable garden.

*In your city or campus, are any policy initiatives underway to further protect pollinators, people or waterways from pesticides?*  
In 2024, the UCF Landscape Operations Department hired a new Landscape Manager who is actively assisting our department in an IPM Plan Overview and Enhancement. A goal of the Landscape Manager is to heavily reduce the amount of non-pollinator friendly fertilizers that are used on campus.

*Did your committee participate in any continuing education on ecologically-based Integrated Pest Management planning?*  
A few members of the UCF Committee attended the online webinar for the IPM Toolkit to learn how it can be implemented here. Due to the Landscape Manager being a new hire in 2024, no other continuing education was completed.

*Any lessons learned you would like to share?*

Modifying, Updating, and realistically overhauling a 10 year old IPM Plan for a campus that spans 1400+ acres is quite a task. We have learned that it takes time to understand what is currently in place and what can be modified quickly, as opposed to other areas that may take additional time.

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## Committee Photo



ASI Public Garden Management Team who works to maintain all pollinator gardens and habitat in the Arboretum Park. The Public

Garden Management team hosts pollinator related events and tables at campus events to educate about our Bee Campus USA status as well as advocate for pollinator protection. Photo credit: ASI Marketing

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Learn More

**Integrated Pest Management Plan:**

<https://www.green.ucf.edu/landscape/integrated-pest-management/>

**Recommended Native Plant List:** [NEW Pollinator Plant List.pdf](#)

**Recommended Native Plant Supplier List:** [Native Plant Suppliers.pdf](#)

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