

# Bee Campus USA - University of Louisiana at Lafayette

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 2024, the University of Louisiana at Lafayette created and enhanced 4 campus habitats with committee members within the Office of Sustainability and Community Engagement. The Hamilton Hall Pollinator Habitat received a complete redesign, and large and small pollinator habitat educational signs were installed at this location and new planting plans were created so this location can act as a Living Laboratory by using landscapes to advance education on campus. New native plants were planted with UL AmeriCorps in the left bed with plans for numerous plantings planned for 2025. The Geology Department installed various rocks and minerals around the border of the plantings to further advance this area as an outdoor Living Laboratory that the campus and community can learn from. During the University's Big Event 12 members of the Office of Sustainability and Community Engagement, Students for Sustainability, and members of the UL Lafayette Alumni Association helped us plant the newest Pollinator Habitat / Rain Garden at the Hilliard Art Museum. 300 native plants were provided for free by Acadiana Native Plant Project (ANPP). Within a few months this location became the most popular spot for pollinators. A small No Mow No Spray Pollinator Habitat sign was installed at this location. The Judice Hall Pollinator Habitat also received a refresh with the addition of 35 pollinator friendly plants in the summer planted by 4 staff and students with the Office of Sustainability and Community Engagement. The BioSociety, student organization, led by a Bee Campus USA Committee member refreshed the Monarch Garden in front of Billeaud Hall with 15 pollinator friendly plants. Pollinator Habitats not mentioned above that received regular weeding maintenance in 2024 were the Billeaud Hall LA Certified Habitat, UL Lafayette Science Museum Pollinator Gardens, Fletcher Hall Habitat, Wharton Hall Habitat, Bourgeois Park's Cajun Prairie Planting and the Cajun Prairie Riparian Buffer along the Coulee. Note: The Urban Cajun Prairie / Bioswale habitat that was planted in 2016 in the center of campus was removed due to the construction of a new engineering building for campus. We had known for a few years that coming construction would affect this location so our plan included planting smaller habitats across campus in available spots that won't be affected by future development. The square footage of new pollinator habitats has already replaced the 5000 square feet of habitat that was lost.

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

4

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

31

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

4

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

1780

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
- Rain garden/bioswale



## Education & Outreach

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

In 2024, the University of Louisiana at Lafayette held multiple events and outreach opportunities on campus with committee members within the Office of Sustainability and Community Engagement. Our widest reaching outreach activity that we have held for the last few years has been tabling at university summer ordinations to talk to all incoming students and transfer students coming to campus about pollinator habitats on campus, how to get involved,

and we passed out packets of native wildflower seeds with more information. The summer orientations reached 3064 incoming students. We also visited UNIV 100 First-Year Seminar classes to talk to classes about sustainability which includes a few slides about Bee Campus USA and pollinator habitats around campus then we take the class for a tour of campus to visit living lab spaces with pollinator habitats and their signs while playing sustainability bingo to see if we can spot bees, birds, butterflies, native plants, wildflowers, and pollinator habitats. The 14 Sustainability Class Visits and Tours and Kids Camp tour reached 325 participants. During UL Lafayette's Earth Week we hosted two pollinator outreach events. The Fete de la Terre Expo brought in 452 students, faculty, staff, and community members to the Office of Sustainability and Community Engagement's Earth Day Celebration where our office hosted 30 environmental organizations from the state of Louisiana to table on campus. Our office tabled with Bee Campus materials and passed out wildflower seeds. Other organizations present at the expo talked to students about pollinator topics and passed out native pollinator plants for free. We also partnered with Students for Sustainability, a student organization, during earth week to co-host a EcoArt: Wildflower Seed Paper Event where 29 students, faculty, and staff stopped by to draw on some seed paper our office created from coreopsis and coneflower seeds. Half of the participants took their seeds home and the other half planted the seeds in raised planting beds across the street from our table. We kicked off the new year with a New Year's Day 125th Birthday Celebration Live Oak Tree Planting with the University President. At this event 85 campus and community members gathered for an historic tree planting and gala where Bee Campus USA Committee Member Dr. Gretchen Vanicor gave the opening address highlighting the university's Tree and Bee Campus USA commitments before participants gathered to plant 5 Live Oak trees on the new Health Sciences Campus.

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

8

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

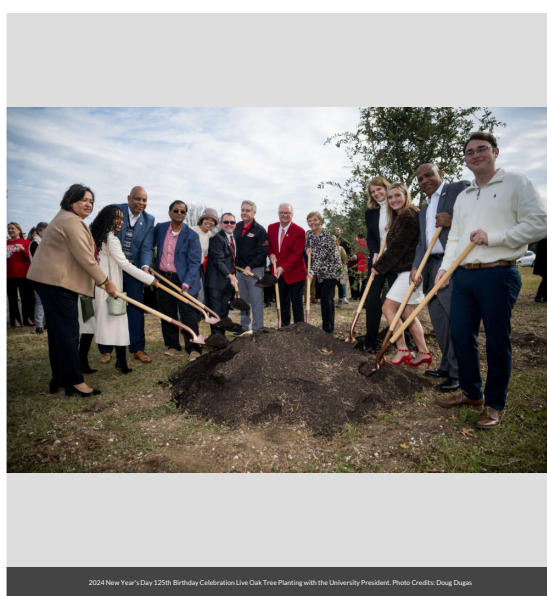
3977

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

14



During Earth week the Office of Sustainability hosted Earth's Wildflower Seed Paper Event where students, faculty, and staff stopped by to draw on some seed paper our office created from cornstarch and wildflower seeds. Photo Credits Blair Bregnaud



2024 New Year's Day 125th Birthday Celebration Live Oak Tree Planting with the University President. Photo Credits Doug Dupas



Blair Bregnaud, Chair of UL Lafayette's Bee Campus talking at all summer orientations and passing out native wildflower seeds to all incoming freshmen and transfer students. Paul Kieu University Photographer



Pollinator Habitat Sign at Justice Ricketts. This same sign was also installed at another habitat at Hamilton Hall. Photo Credits Doug Dupas



One of 8 No Mow & No Spray Pollinator Habitat Signs on campus. Photo Credits Doug Dupas



Pollinator Habitat Sign at Hamilton Hall's Pollinator Habitat. Photo Credits Doug Dupas

## 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.*

In 2024, there were a total of 7 for-credit courses and 1 independent research for-credit course (Biol 410) that were offered in the spring and fall semesters which included pollinator related topics and information's. Many courses were part of the Louisiana Native Bee Lab with Dr. Mark Genung. The Louisiana Native Bee Lab studies Pollination Efficiency, Biodiversity and Ecosystem Function in Observational Data, Pollinators in Threatened Louisiana Habitats. Masters and PhD students had noteworthy pollinator projects as part of their final thesis projects. MS student Anna Espinoza carried out the first survey of pollinators on Louisiana barrier islands, another habitat of great conservation interest. She focused on which pollinators commonly visited dune-building plant species, and likely documented a new species of *Lasioglossum* (to be finalized). PhD student Kimberly Hamm studied urban pollinator ecology and set up common gardens along an urban-rural gradient to examine intra-specific variation in bee traits in response to

urbanization. Both successfully defended their thesis projects and graduated in 2024. The courses were Biol 122 Biological Principles and Issues II, Biol 123 Biological Principles and Issues I Laboratory, Biol 321 Entomology, Biol 360 Principles of Ecology, Biol 410 Individual Project, Biol 461 Aquatic and Wetland Vascular Plants, Biol 575 Statistical Ecology, and Biol 599 Thesis Research and Thesis. UL Lafayette's Continuing Education just began offering "Growing Plants for Fun and Profit" which provides information on growing and selling plants and one of the lessons focuses on growing in your climate, natives, and the benefit of pollinators.

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

8

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

447

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

1

*How many participants attended those continuing education courses?*

2

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

UL Lafayette has the only university-based AmeriCorps Service program in the state of Louisiana and students assist the Office of Sustainability and Community Engagement throughout the year by learning, maintaining, and planting Bee Campus USA and Tree Campus USA projects on campus. In 2024 we engaged students with service-learning projects and peer to peer education between graduate students and undergraduate students. Amy and Matthew, two graduate students on the Bee Campus USA Committee, lead AmeriCorps students multiple times a week throughout the year with maintaining pollinator habitats. Students were taught by Amy and Matthew about how to identify plants, learned about pollinators and their habitats, and learned how to care for special habitats on campus. Matthew designed the Cypress Lake Louisiana Iris Master Plan and designed the Hilliard Art Museum Pollinator Habitat with a recycled glass mulch walkway and arranged the layout of native species for that habitat. With this experience, we had him lead the Big Event Volunteers in the Hilliard service learning planting by talking about the design process, reasoning for the planned planting layout, the recycled glass, the benefit of native plant species for pollinators, green infrastructure, the drain and grated slope that made the bed a rain garden, no mow no spray rules, other pollinator habitats on campus, and Bee Campus USA. Matthew also lead AmeriCorps Students in the plug planting of the Hamilton Hall bed where we taught students about how to identify the native plants and discussed how we source and grown our own plants with the UL Lafayette Ecology Center. Amy lead AmeriCorps students in weeding the Billeaud Hall's Louisiana Certified Habitat, Hilliard Habitat, Fletcher Hall Habitat, Wharton Hall Habitat, Bourgeois Park's Cajun Prairie Planting and the Cajun Prairie Riparian Buffer along the Coulee. She taught AmeriCorps students about how to identify plants as they

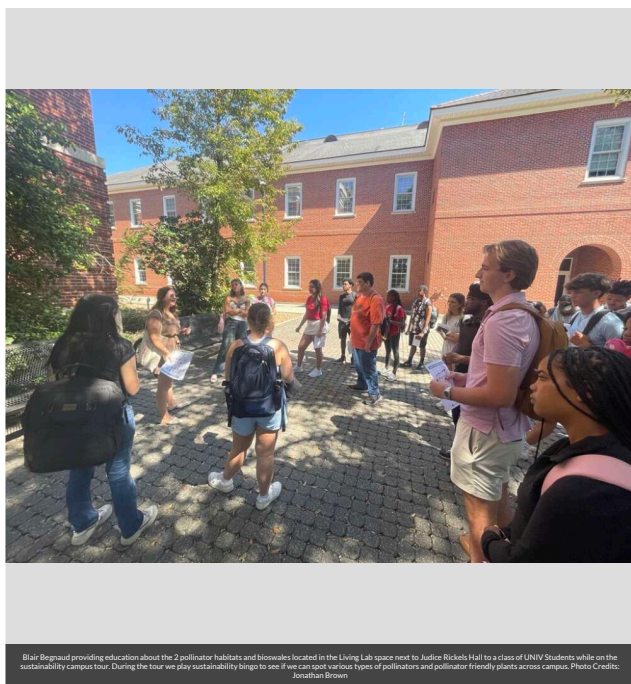
weeded. Bee Campus USA Committee members were growing milkweed at a campus building, and we were able to observe the full life cycle of the monarchs with 30 students and staff in the building. Soon we had an abundance of hungry monarchs and a depleted supply of milkweed. We decided to relocate over 40 monarch caterpillars to the Justice Rickels Pollinator Habitat and a pollinator garden in downtown Lafayette which both had plenty of milkweed. This was a fun learning experience and students, and staff enjoyed carefully relocating the monarchs to bigger habitats. No associated courses for service learning.

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?

26

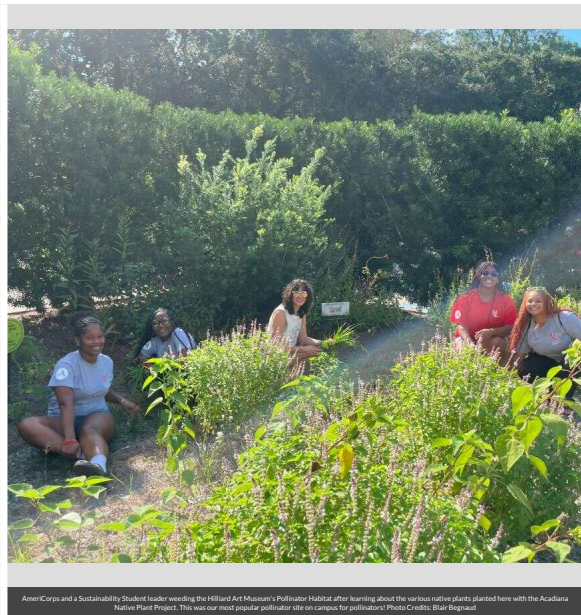




AmeriCorps and a Sustainability Student leader at the new Pollinator Habitat Sign at Hamilton Hall. We spoke to the students about pollinators, pollinator plants, and new things they didn't know about from the sign before we started planting native plants plugs grown at the UL Lafayette Ecology Center. Photo Credits: Blair Bagnaud



AmeriCorps weeding the Bilzoad Hall Louisiana Certified Habitat and learning about the various species planted at this location. Photo Credits: Jonathan Brown



AmeriCorps and a Sustainability Student leader weeding the Hilliard Art Museum's Pollinator Habitat after learning about the various native plants planted here with the Acadiana Native Plant Project. This was our most popular pollinator site on campus for pollinators! Photo Credits: Blair Bagnaud

## Policies & Practices

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

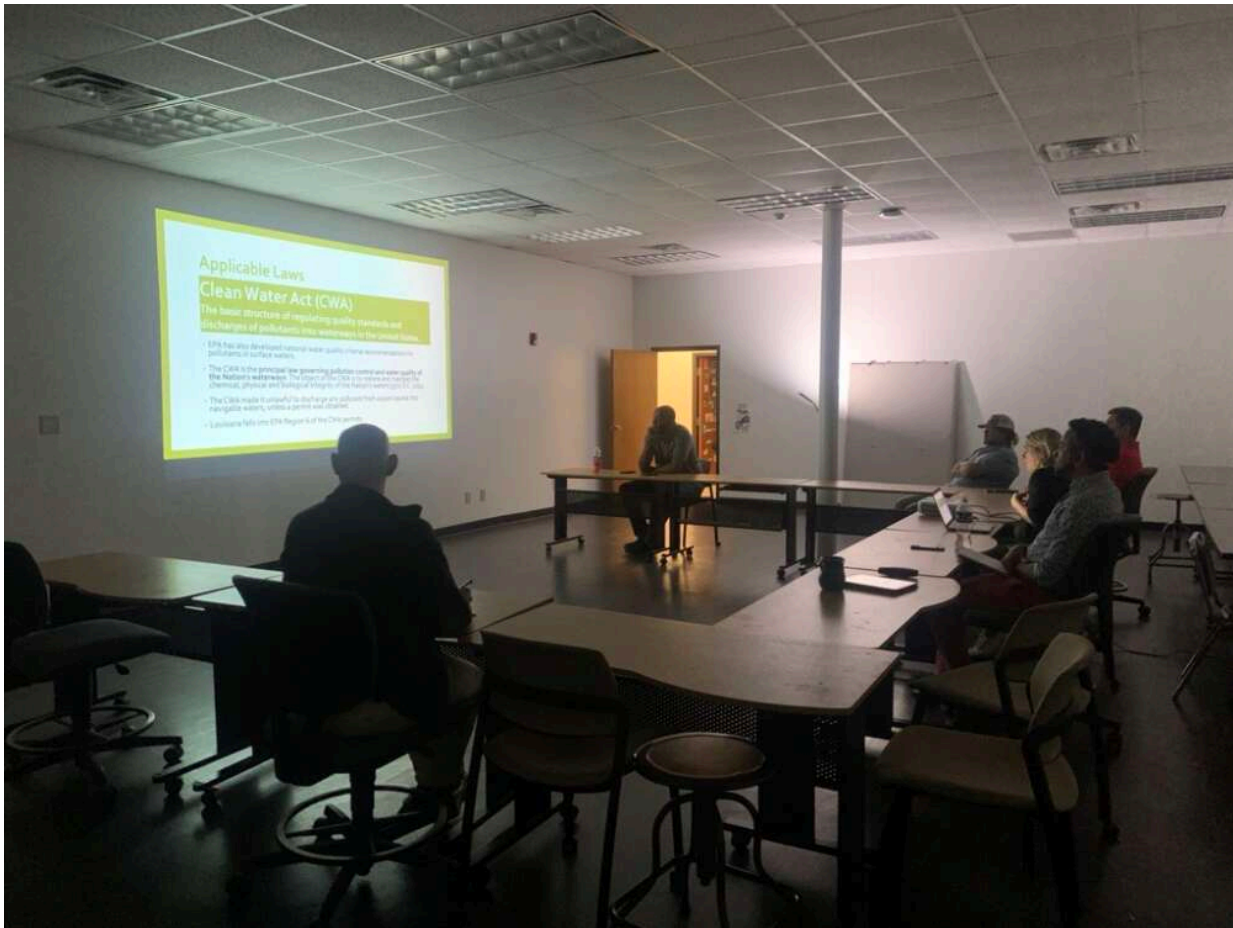
The University continued to use the Integrated Pest Management Plan in 2024 to protect both human and environmental health on campus. Standards are in place for all campus landscapes, but all pollinator habitats and Cypress Lake are identified as sensitive habitats for the species within them and because all pollinator habitats are also functioning as green infrastructure. As such, the locations are also protected by the University's Storm water Management Plan and the Clean Water Act due to the proximity to nearby drains. This year Poison Ivy at the Hamilton Hall and the Wharton Hall Pollinator Habitats was removed by hand to avoid treatment with chemicals. All pollinator habitats are maintained as No Mow, No Spray zones and most habitats on campus now have permeant signs installed that identify the habitat as a No Mow, No Spray zone to avoid any accidental treatments. The grounds contracts are managed by the Office of Facilities Management, and they have been fantastic partners in protecting our landscapes and communicating with contracted grounds crews about proper procedures. A map of campus which highlights all pollinator habitats as no mow no spray zones are distributed to grounds crews and paired with the permeant signs, has successfully prevented pollinator habitat accidentally getting mowed/sprayed, which has been an issue in previous years. Where treatments are necessary, organic products are used. Any exceptions in problem areas that required nonorganic products must be discussed with the Bee Campus USA Committee. Neonicotinoids are still not allowed to be used on campus. In 2024, many ongoing actions like avoiding unnecessary treatments, removing unnecessary fence lines that need to be maintained, and the prevention of various types of pests that can negatively affect buildings were taken. At UL Lafayette prevention over treatment is the priority in the Integrated Pest Management Plan because it saves money, protects human and environmental health, and reduces the need for avoidable treatments.

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

On our campus we adhere to multiple laws and university policies to protect pollinators, human health, and waterways. The University has Hazardous Waste Procedures in accordance with the requirements of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations (40 CRD) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). These regulations prevent hazardous materials from entering our environment. Our university also maintains a Storm Water Management Plan (SWMP) and MS4 Permit which follows the EPA's Clean Water Act 33 U.S.C. §1251 et seq., 2006 Louisiana Law – RS 30:2531, and Lafayette Consolidated Government's Storm Water Ordinance. The SWMP and MS4 include language about prohibiting spraying near drains or waterways. The SWMP also details that new Pollinator Habitats shall also serve as green infrastructure projects as we are in a flood prone area. Pollinator habitats on our campus double as either a rain garden or bioswales that can hold and direct water to nearby drains makes a stronger case that we need more on campus and provides further protections to these habitats. These special habitats are made even more valuable because they serve as key components of our Living Lab Program which seeks to use our landscapes to educate our campus and community. We also had no mow, no spray policies before we formalized them in the Integrated Pest Management Plan. Currently no mow, no spray protections are in place along watersheds, drains, pollinator habitats, special habitats, and green infrastructure projects, and riparian buffer strip plantings. Staff of the Office of Sustainability and Community Engagements who manage Hazardous Waste and SWMP/MS4 programs also serve as the chairs of the Bee Campus USA Committee which strengthens all overlapping programs and policies. Bee Campus USA topics are discussed in multiple committee meetings due to overlapping shared policies and shared committee members. Bee Campus is discussed in the SWMP/MS4 meetings and training, Keep UL Lafayette Beautiful meetings, Tree Campus USA meetings, Campus Planning Committee meetings, and in the Presidents Council for Sustainability meetings.

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

Yes, the chair who maintains the Integrated Pest Management attended the EPA's "Understanding and Applying Integrated Pest Management Methods" webinar on September 24, 2024 and also watched the EPA's Creating Monarch Habitats For Schools and Communities prerecorded webinar. The committee as a whole reviewed The Xerces Society "Smarter Pest Management: Pollinator Protection For Cities And Campuses" document at the Spring committee meeting.

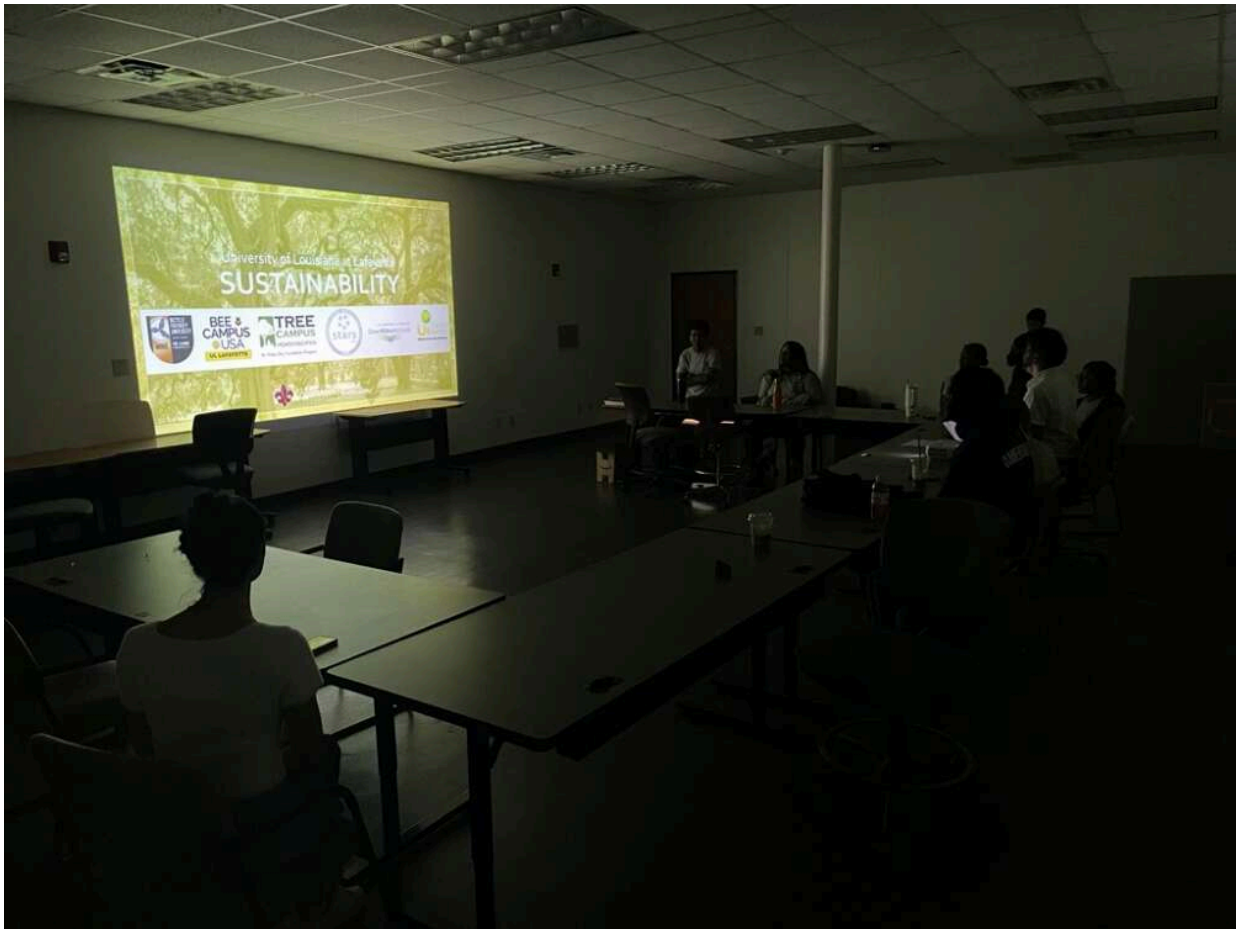


University Grounds and Facilities Management staff learning about various policies that protect special habitats. Featured on the slide is the Clean Water Act followed in the University's SWMP. Photo Credits: Blair Begnaud

*Any lessons learned you would like to share?*

Maintenance is key! A dedicated volunteer group, student org, or dedicated staff that can help maintain the pollinator habitats make a world of difference. Our university has AmeriCorps student volunteers who assist with regular maintenance in the spring and fall. We struggle with finding support with maintaining our habitats in the summer especially in a rainy and hot region where beds can easily become overrun with weeds and invasive vines. We would love to hear what other universities are doing if they lack support with bed maintenance.

Committee Photo



AmeriCorps Service Subcommittee of Bee Campus USA Committee in training at start of 2024 to prepare them for service learning work in pollinator habitats across campus. Photo Credit: Blair Begnaud

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Learn More

**Integrated Pest Management Plan:** [UL Lafayette Intergrated Pest Management Plan \(IPM\).pdf](https://sustainability.louisiana.edu/operations/landscape-and-habitats/intergrated-pest-management-plan)

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**Recommended Native Plant List:** [2024 Native Plant List.pdf](https://sustainability.louisiana.edu/node/307)

<https://sustainability.louisiana.edu/node/307>

**Recommended Native Plant Supplier List:** [2024 Native Plant List.pdf](https://sustainability.louisiana.edu/node/307)

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