

Bee City USA - Santa Barbara

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.

1. **Cabrillo Pavilion Planting Project** – City Parks and Recreation Department & Enviroscaping: Completed on December 9th this work involved removing old plantings, digging holes for new plants, and installing a variety of pollinator-friendly species, along with setting up additional irrigation to support the new plants. A total of 45 *Strelitzia reginae* (Bird of Paradise), 110 *Senecio mandraliscae* (Chalk Sticks), 41 *Carissa m. 'Tuttlei'* (Natal Plum), and 9 *Rhaphiolepis umbe* (Indian Hawthorn) were planted across 4,400 square feet. These plants were specifically chosen for their ability to attract pollinators, including bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds, thereby helping to create a thriving environment for local pollinator populations.

2. **Davis Center Renovation** – City Parks and Recreation Department & Enviroscaping : The Louise Lowry Davis Center has served as a community recreation center since 1933. In 2015, the Parks and Recreation Department began the process of developing a full-scale renovation of the community center and it was completed in 2024. The landscape portion of the project focused on the selection of drought-tolerant plants, a reconfiguration of the layout, and the resolution of drainage issues, with the goal of fostering a more sustainable and visually appealing pollinator habitat with a plant selection that included large cape rush, little olive and foxtail agave.

3. **A.C. Postel Mission Rose Garden Renovation** – City Parks and Recreation Department: The A.C. Postel Mission Rose Garden renovation was completed on November 13th, 2024, with a focus on improving the garden's aesthetic appeal while enhancing its pollinator-friendly qualities. Key tasks involved removing old roses that were sprouting suckers rather than canes, and replacing them with new 5-gallon roses of the same variety. A total of 75 new rose plants were introduced, including varieties such as Sugar Moon, Pillow Fight, Henry Fonda, Iceberg, Color Magic, and Koko Loco. These were spread across seven different planters, covering a total of 300 square feet, ensuring that each plot is filled with roses of specific types to encourage a variety of pollinators. The new planting not only revitalized the space but also supported local pollinator populations.

4. **Alice Keck Park** – Santa Barbara Botanic Garden and City Parks & Recreation Department: Last fall, Santa Barbara Botanic Garden finished prepping and planting a new native plant demonstration garden in the larger of two planting beds at Alice Keck Park Memorial Gardens. With the addition of 168 butterfly-friendly, California native plants, the new bed will serve as a demonstration of readily available native plants that conserve water, provide habitat, and add to the existing beauty of the cherished Santa Barbara park. Installed by students of the Garden's California Native Plant landscaping course and horticulture staff, this newly-installed garden will also provide an opportunity for City Park staff to learn more about the care and maintenance of California native plants, and serve as an outdoor classroom for hosting classes and programs, including community science and family days. The bed is being maintained by the Garden's horticulture staff.

5. **Chase Palm Park** – City Parks and Recreation Department: The Chase Palm Park Expansion planting project was completed on December 13th,

2024, with the installation of drought-tolerant plants in the planter bed at the corner of Cabrillo Blvd and Calle Cesar Chavez. The planting included 4 Yucca elephantipes 'Jewel,' 1 American Agave Century Plant, 4 Euphorbia tirucalli 'Firesticks,' and 15 Senecio mandraliscae (Chalk Sticks), covering a total area of 175 square feet. This project enhances the park's sustainability by introducing resilient plant species that thrive in the local climate. 6. Cabrillo Boulevard Planting – City Parks and Recreation Department: Completed in the fall/winter of 2024, the Cabrillo Boulevard Planting project involved replacing and filling in dead or missing plants along Cabrillo Blvd. A total of 180 succulents were added to enhance the landscape, covering an area of 2,000 square feet. This project not only revitalizes the boulevard but also contributes to a more sustainable and drought-tolerant environment along this key pathway. 7. Los Banos, Shoreline Planting – City Parks and Recreation Department: The Los Banos, Shoreline planting project, completed in September/October 2024, focused on beautifying the front and side of the Los Banos pool, the pool alleyway planter, and the street terrace. The project included the installation of 150 succulents, 8 dwarf palms, 9 Carax, and 6 Carrissa plants, covering a total of 3,000 square feet. This planting initiative enhances the aesthetic appeal of the area while supporting a low-water, resilient landscape. 8. Leadbetter Planting Project – City Parks and Recreation Department: The Leadbetter Planting Project is currently ongoing and focuses on filling in bare areas with new plantings. As part of this initiative, 16 La Jolla and 6 Rosenka 5-gallon Bougainvillea plants have been added to enhance the landscape. These vibrant, drought-tolerant plants are being placed across a 1,900 square foot area, which will not only improve the aesthetic appeal but also contribute to the habitat's resilience and sustainability. The Bougainvillea varieties chosen are known for their colorful blooms, which can attract pollinators like bees and butterflies. 9. Oak Park Mission Creek Restoration – Sustainability and Resilience: In 2022, the Creeks Division began initial design work on the Mission Creek Restoration at Oak Park. The project included transforming an 1,800 foot reach of Mission Creek that flows through the City's Oak Park back to its natural configuration by removing concrete structures in the creek bed, restoring hardened creek banks, and creating floodplain habitat. The restoration process also involved removing invasive, non-native plants; restoring the creek channel, creating floodplain habitat, and planting over 3,000 native plants and trees. 10. Urban Forestry Annual Planting – City Parks and Recreation Department: 222 trees were planted, including 8 coast live oak trees, 61 other oak trees of various species, and 25 jacaranda trees.

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

10

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

41

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

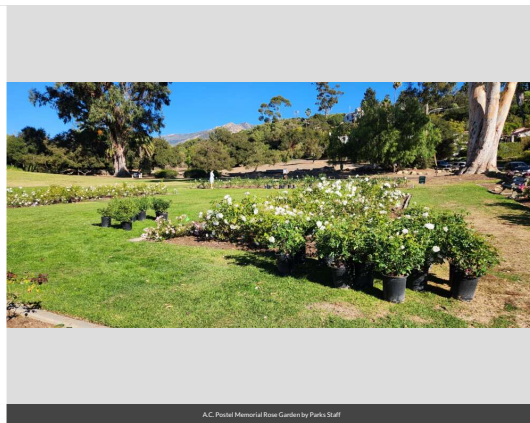
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How many total square feet of habitat were created or enhanced?

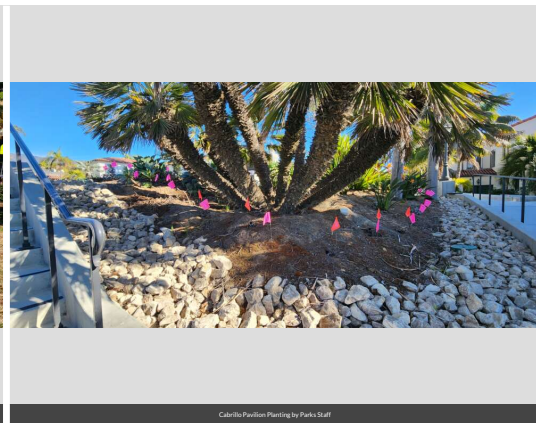
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Please check all that describe the habitats your affiliate helped to create or enhance in 2024 with pollinator benefit in mind.

- Flower garden
- Vegetable garden
- Orchard
- Natural area with tree snags and stumps, and bare areas for ground nesting species
- Meadow
- Pollinator-friendly lawn (with flowering clover, dandelions...)
- Herb garden
- Native milkweed planting for monarchs and bees (where appropriate)
- Invasive/exotic plant species removal for habitat improvement
- Native pollinator-friendly tree planting
- Native pollinator-friendly shrub border/hedgerow planting
- Rain garden/bioswale
- Roadside/rights of way planting
- Other



A.C. Powell Memorial Rose Garden by Parks Staff



Cabrillo Pavilion Planting by Parks Staff

Education & Outreach

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

The Master Gardener chapter celebrated the 16th anniversary of the Butterfly Garden at Alice Keck Park Memorial Garden on Saturday September 28th.

How many Bee City USA logo street signs have you installed to date (in total)?

1



Policies & Practices

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

Since 2004, the City of Santa Barbara has had a robust Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Strategy to promote environmentally sensitive pest management while preserving assets and protecting the health and safety of the public and our employees. The IPM Strategy seeks to reduce the use of pesticide products that pose known, likely, or probable human health or environmental risks and promote the use of non-hazardous and/or reduced risk alternatives. The Strategy establishes a clear criteria for pesticide use in structures, landscapes, and other grounds and requires that pesticides be applied in a manner that protects and enhances our region's natural resources and public health. The Strategy is accompanied by a PHAER Zone System and a Tiered Materials List that help determine what kind of pest control materials can be used and where. The majority of City Parks are designated 'green' or pesticide-free with some 'floating yellow zones' inside of 'green' parks. The IPM Strategy is largely administered through the IPM Advisory Committee, which meets quarterly to review and advise pest control needs throughout City lands and property. Parks staff and Committee members prepare an Annual Report that is presented to the Parks and Recreation Commission. Since establishing this strategy, City Parks pesticide usage has dropped by 97%. In December 2023, two new committee members were appointed and attended their first meeting in January 2024.

Are efforts underway in your community to further reduce pesticide use in residential or business areas? This may include neighborhood-led efforts, outreach to landscapers, etc. If so, please describe.

The Green Gardener Program for Santa Barbara County educates local gardeners in resource efficient and pollution prevention landscape maintenance practices. The Green Gardener Program is a regional program designed to offer education, training, and promotion of participating gardeners and landscape maintenance contractors. Since Fall 2000, thousands of students have completed the certification program. Our community is lucky to have the award-winning Santa Barbara City College that offers a Skills Competency Award, Certificate of Achievement, and Associate Degree in Environmental Horticulture. This is a vocational program that teaches the basic skills and provides state-of-the-art information required to develop a strong foundation for a variety of career specialties within the landscaping, ornamental horticulture and the regenerative and restoration industry. The program explains the importance of ecological and economic sustainability, while also promoting making practical decisions with all available options. This program serves 150 students per year and uses experiential learning in a 3 acre teaching garden on campus. This garden includes an insectary section that was revitalized in the fall of 2021, central to a diverse orchard of fruit trees, and housing over 20 different nectar and host plants for insect pollinator species.

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

The Creeks Division of the Sustainability & Resilience Department was created to protect pollinators, people, and waterways from pesticides and other harmful chemicals. In November 2000, the City of Santa Barbara's voters

approved Measure B, an increase in the transient occupancy tax rate from 10% to 12% effective January 2001. All proceeds from the 2% tax increase are restricted to use in the Creeks Restoration and Water Quality Improvement Program. Creek restoration is an important component of the Creeks Division's programs, which helps to improve creek health, native habitat for wildlife, and water quality. Goals for restoration projects include removal of invasive plants, restoring native riparian vegetation and habitat, and improving water quality through natural filtration. Restoring native vegetation also provides benefits to native pollinators. When possible, the community is invited to participate in restoration efforts at both large and small scale restoration projects. Volunteers have participated in native planting days, invasive plant removal, and clean-ups at various sites throughout the City over the last several years.

Committee Photo

Learn More

Integrated Pest Management Plan: [IPM Strategy Final Version.pdf](#)

<https://www.santabarbaraca.gov/gov/depts/parksrec/parks/stewardship/ipm/default.asp>

Recommended Native Plant List:

<https://sbotanicgarden.org/grow/gardening-resources/>

Recommended Native Plant Supplier List:

<https://www.sbbg.org/explore-garden/nursery>

<https://sbparksandrec.santabarbaraca.gov/aboutparksandrec>

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