Bee Campus USA

Renewal Report

This University of Texas at Austin Bee Campus USA 2021 annual renewal report has information about events, educational service-learning projects, courses, and campus committee activities.

Education & Outreach

Number of pollinator-related events did you host or help with last year: 7
Number of people who attended those events: 350

In the Fall Semester of 2021, the Beevo Beekeeping Society, or Beevo, initiated a partnership with The University of Texas' Farm Stand to educate the student population about pollination, conservation, and sustainability. The Farm Stand hosted several farmers market events in the heart of UT campus, and Beevo occupied a table where marketgoers could learn about Bee Campus USA, pollination, club events, and more. The Beevo Beekeeping Society table featured poster boards with information about pollination, beekeeping, sustainability, and conservation. Students could chat with Beevo members about the importance of pollination, and were encouraged to attend future hive checks to learn more about beekeeping. The UT Farm Stand markets draw large crowds of students, between 250-300 each market, and about twenty Beevo members participated across two Farm Stand events. This collaboration is ongoing, with Beevo occupying a permanent pollinator table at the Farm Stand.

The Beevo Beekeeping Society also hosted two "Beekeeping 101: Hive Check Training" events, where members from Beevo and UT's student population were invited to learn the basics of beekeeping. Attendees were taught about different types of beehives, beekeeping equipment, and the biology of honey bees. Attendees were also educated on the different aspects of a hive, such as the honeycomb, brood, and honey. While this event dealt with non-native honey bees and their importance in pollination, attendees were also educated about the general importance of pollination and native pollinators.

Members of the Beevo Beekeeping Society run an informational table at UT Farm Stand. Market-goers could learn about pollination, Bee Campus USA, and beekeeping.

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Members of the Beevo Beekeeping Society and UT Austin students pose for a group photo at a Beekeeping 101 event.

Attendees at a Beekeeping 101 event hosted by the Beevo Beekeeping Society examine an example top-bar honeycomb frame.

Enhancing Pollinator Health & Habitat

Habitat projects we helped create or enhance last year: 2

Square feet of pollinator habitat created or enhanced last year: 2260

Number of volunteers who helped with those projects: 100

The habitat we helped create or enhance last year with pollinator benefits in mind includes natural areas with bare ground for ground-nesting bee species, and the following:

Flower garden, Orchard, Herb garden, Invasive/exotic plant species removal for habitat improvement, and Native pollinator-friendly shrub border/hedgerow planting.

Description of pollinator habitat creation or enhancement events on our campus last year.

The Beevo Beekeeping worked closely with Jim Carse, the manager of UT Landscaping Services, to revamp a plot of land that hosts the club's on-campus beehives. Beevo coordinated landscaping events to educate club members about the types of native plants already in the hive site. Additionally, more native pollinator-friendly plants were incorporated into the hive site area including honeysuckle, four nerve daisy, Turks cap, flame acanthus, and snake herb. Invasive species were also removed, and ground-covering plants like Asian jasmine were pruned back. Beevo members maintained the hive site landscaping by watering the plants 2-3 times a week. Overall, 15 members attended the education, landscaping, and watering events.

After receiving a grant from UT's Office of Sustainability Green Fund, the Beevo Beekeeping Society broke ground to build a pollinator garden on the University of Texas' campus. Garden plans were drafted with the collaboration of Beevo Beekeeping Society, American Society of Landscape Architects, UT's Green Fund Grant Program, and UT Landscaping Services. Student organizations, such as Texas Iron Spikes and Texas Lassos Service Organization, as well as interested members of the student population, volunteered on weekends to work at the gardens. Volunteer activities included clearing the area for planting, weeding, moving mulch, planting, and watering plants. Volunteer workday sessions were composed of 20 to 25 volunteers, and four workdays occurred over a span of three months. Upon landscaping completion, Beevo members maintained the garden by volunteering to water the plants 2-3 times a week.

UT students volunteer to prep an herb garden at Beevo Beekeeping Society's pollinator garden site.

Members of the Beevo Beekeeping Society pose for a group photo at a landscaping event in the on-campus hive site. At the event, members planted pollinator-friendly plants and removed invasive species.

Policies & Practices

Actions taken to make pest management practices more pollinator friendly.

(Implemented or maintained a written IPM plan; 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); Implemented non-chemical pest prevention and management methods on city or campus grounds; Eliminated pesticide uses that are solely to maintain aesthetics on city or campus grounds; Reduced the total area of city or campus-managed lands to which pesticides are applied; Restricted pesticides used to organic pesticides on city or campus grounds; Eliminated use of neonicotinoid insecticides on city or campus grounds; Dropped pesticide use altogether on city or campus grounds; Distributed educational materials to residents or students to encourage the reduction or elimination of pesticide use; 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); Sourced plants for city or campus grounds that were not treated with neonicotinoids; 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)

Implemented or maintained a written IPM plan, Implemented non-chemical pest prevention and management methods on city or campus grounds

Pollinator-friendly pest management actions on campus managed property.

The University of Texas at Austin has successfully maintained our integrated pest management plan, drafted and proposed in 2020. This plan features actions such as selecting appropriate turf species for certain areas, providing good drainage, inspecting land for pests and diseases, testing soil, and striving for a diversity of plant species.

Policy initiatives underway to further protect pollinators, people or waterways from pesticides.

https://facilitiesservices.utexas.edu/divisions/support/landscape-services

Actions by affiliates to attend training on ecologically based Integrated Pest Management or to review IPM plans, and programs considered of high quality by Bee City USA.

The IPM plan that UT implements was designed in collaboration with Bee Campus USA committee members in the Integrative Biology Department. Additionally, the Beevo Beekeeping Society encourages members to attend non-UT Austin events that educate about landscaping for pollinators and caring for native plants and ecosystems.

Our Bee Campus USA committee is fairly new, as this 2021 is the first full calendar year that UT Austin has participated in Bee Campus USA and pollination-friendly initiatives.

A member of the Beevo Beekeeping Society prunes plants at the club's on-campus hive site during a landscaping workday.

Curriculum & Continuing Education

Number credit courses that included pollinator-related information last year: 7

Number of students that attended those credit courses: 673

Number of continuing education courses with pollinator-related information last year: 1

Number of participants that attended the courses: 20

Curriculum involving pollinators or pollination topics that our campus engaged in last year:

UT Austin offered nine credit courses in 2021 for undergraduate students to learn about the importance of pollinators and pollination:

BIO 206L: Bugs in Bugs, Freshman Research Initiative, Dr. Nancy Moran, Jo Anne Holley
BIO 311D: Introductory Biology II, Dr. Ann Thijs
BIO 359K: Principles of Animal Behavior, Dr. Felicity Muth
BIO 373L: Ecology Lab, Dr. Lawrence Gilbert
BIO 435L: Entomology, Dr. Alexander Wild
EVS 311: Field Seminar in Sustainability, Dr. Jennifer Gillespie
NSC 109: Freshman Research Initiative Biodiversity research stream, Dr. Nancy Moran

Native Bees of Texas is a non-academic course for the general public, taught at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center by Laurel Treviño of the College of Natural Sciences. The course covers native bees' life history, behavior, and identification, as well as their role in ecosystems and habitat conservation.

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Freshman Research Initiative students, taught by Joanne Holley and sponsored by the Moran lab, engage in outdoor observations and laboratory investigations to study microbes associated with bees and other pollinators.

Dorothy Martinez, Outreach Program Coordinator of the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, set up a recording studio for the "Native Bees of Texas" collaborative course.

Nick Ivers, Camila Cortina, Sam Wilhelm, Laurel Treviño, Dorothy Martinez, Elizabeth Lopez

Service-learning

Number of service-learning projects our campus hosted or supported to enhance pollinator habitat on campus: 4

Number of students that participated in service-learning projects last year to enhance pollinator habitat on campus: 100

Description of the service-learning projects our students were engaged in last year.

The Beevo Beekeeping Society broke ground in the summer of 2021 to build an on-campus pollinator garden. This project was made possible by the UT Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects, who graciously designed plans for the garden, and the Green Fund Grant from UT's Office of Sustainability. UT Landscaping services also proved instrumental in organizing workdays and project timelines. From August and onward, the Beevo Beekeeping Society hosted four service-learning events where general volunteers and club members worked to help remove invasive plants, till the soil, plant pollinator-friendly plants, and more. Project leaders from Beevo took the opportunity to educate volunteers on the importance of the garden for pollinators and native ecosystems.

During a pollinator garden landscaping workday, a volunteer removed non-native Johnson grass growing in a future pollinator garden site.

A group of volunteers worked to solarize Bermuda grass at the Beevo Beekeeping Society pollinator garden site.

Volunteers remove non-native plants at the Beevo Beekeeping Society pollinator garden site.

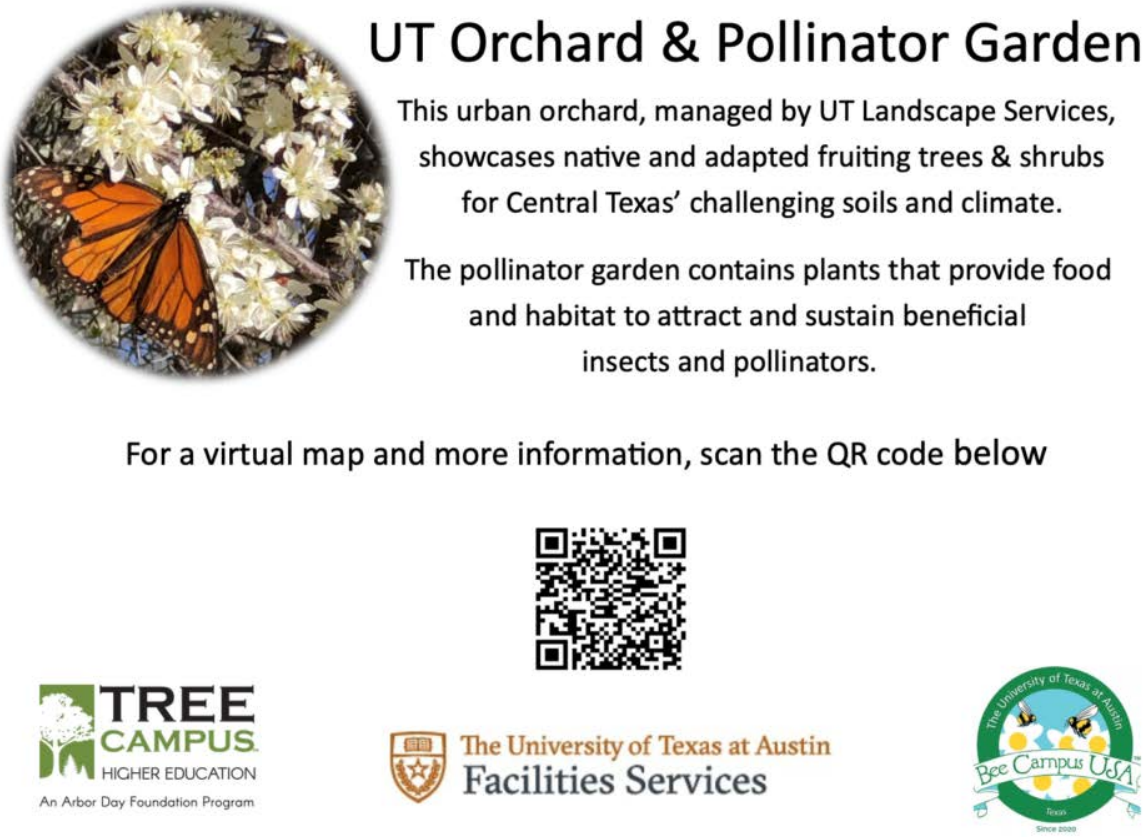
Educational & Interpretive Signage

Number of permanent interpretive/educational/Bee Campus USA signs installed to date: 2

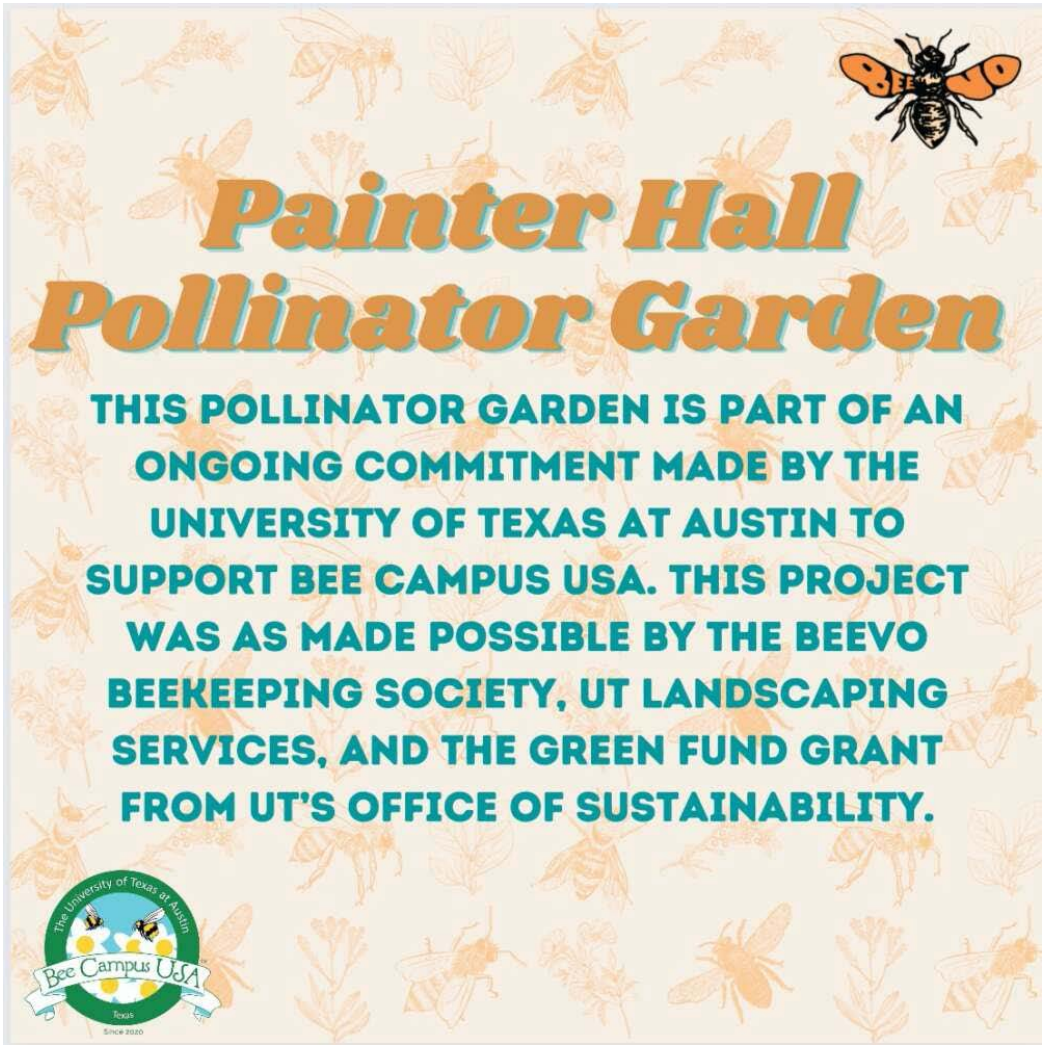
Educational signage installed last year.

UT Austin currently has two pollinator gardens on campus with permanent educational signage: a butterfly garden and a pollinator orchard and is in the process of installing another pollinator garden. The Beevo Beekeeping Society will install a permanent sign at their pollinator garden.

Signage at a butterfly garden on The University of Texas at Austin campus.



Proposed signage at the pollinator orchard garden on UT Austin campus.



Proposed sign design for the Beevo Beekeeping Society pollinator garden.

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UT Austin Bee Campus USA committee working to coordinate pollinator-friendly initiatives.

URL for our recommended locally native plant species list
https://utexas.app.box.com/s/6qlr5p6davd6591slblgh717on501eqm

URL for integrated pest management plan
https://facilitiesservices.utexas.edu/sites/fs.utexas.edu/files/IPMplanstruct2.6.2020.pdf

URL for more Beevo beekeepers news
https://www.facebook.com/beevobees/
https://www.instagram.com/beevobeekeepers/?hl=en