



Bee Campus USA Annual Report Pollinator Conservation & Education 2019



Vassar College Poughkeepsie, New York

EDUCATION & OUTREACH



Trees for Tribes Event with the NYS Dept of Environmental Conservation, student volunteers learning how to plant the trees.

Trees for Tributaries, 9/28/19

POLLINATOR HEALTH & HABITAT



Students assisting in a Pollinator Garden that the Environmental Cooperative helps upkeep in City of Poughkeepsie.



Before and after of a new pollinator garden designed and planted by students on campus in 2019.

We weeded and planted pollinator gardens on the campus throughout the season, we planted a significant number of trees along our creek 9/28/19.

Many of the naturalized areas on campus act as pollinator habitat. Student volunteers often help to maintain these areas by removing invasive vines and augmenting them by planting native wildflowers.

SERVICE LEARNING



Students working at the Lown Memorial pollinator garden.

Students were involved in a series of plantings and weeding at a local park. The Clarence Lown Garden, located at College Hill Park, is a pollinator garden. 52 students total were involved.

CURRICULUM & CONTINUING EDUCATION

Two Biology courses and one environmental studies course included pollinator-information in their curriculum:

Biol 208, Plant Diversity and Evolution: Plant structure and function is examined in a phylogenetic context. Emphasis is placed on adaptations to novel and changing environments as well as plant-animal and plant-fungal coevolution, including plant-pollinator and plant-herbivore interactions. Laboratories include comparative study of the divisions of plants and the identification of locally common plants and fungi in the field. Margaret Ronsheim.

Biol 352, Conservation Biology: Conservation Biology uses a multidisciplinary approach to study how to best maintain the earth's biodiversity and functioning ecosystems. We examine human impacts on biodiversity and ecosystem function and discuss how to develop practical approaches for mitigating those impacts. We start the semester by assessing the current human footprint on global resources, asking questions about what we are trying to preserve, why we are trying to preserve it, and how we can accomplish our goals. We critically examine the assumptions made by conservation biologists

throughout, using case studies from around the world to explore a range of perspectives. Discussion topics include conservation in an agricultural context, the efficacy of marine protected areas, the impact of climate change on individual species and preserve design, restoration ecology, the consequences of small population sizes, conservation genetics, the impacts of habitat fragmentation and invasive species, and urban ecology. Margaret Ronsheim.

ENST 260, Issues in Environmental Studies: The purpose of this course is to examine in depth an issue, problem, or set of issues and problems in environmental studies, to explore the various ways in which environmental issues are embedded in multiple contexts and may be understood from multiple perspectives. The course topic changes from year to year.



Topic for 2019/20b: Grasslands: Human History and Ecology of the American Plains. For thousands of years, humans have sought ways to survive and prosper in the semi-arid plains—an area popularly known in the 19th century as the “Great American Desert,” a place devoid of life. This class explores the roots of such misconceptions and their often catastrophic legacies, as well as other modes of life on the grasslands, including those of native peoples. Environmental and cultural histories of the Plains provide a framework for examining such complex issues as tallgrass prairie conservation and restoration; water management; climate change; and use of land for energy production and carbon farming. Visions of different futures for this critical place in the American heartland are placed in the context of major ecological and cultural transitions over the past 10,000 years. The course includes a one-week trip to the Plains over spring break, with visits to bison re-introduction sites, a restored Pawnee earth lodge, a perennial agriculture research facility, and a viewing site for hundreds of thousands of migrating sandhill cranes along the Platte River. Rebecca Edwards and Margaret Ronsheim.

One lecture was given that focused on the work the Environmental Cooperative is doing in the community and on campus related to pollinators and native gardening. This was given as part of Vassar's Lifelong Learning Institute in May of 2019.

EDUCATIONAL & INTERPRETIVE SIGNAGE



An educational sign on the Vassar Ecological Preserve showing different local pollinators.

A new pollinator habitat sign was installed in the pollinator garden created in 2019.

POLICIES & PRACTICES

We only use pest management when and where needed, not blanket coverage.

Recommended Locally Native Plant Species List —

<https://environmentalcooperative.vassar.edu/docs/nativeplantspt2.pdf>

Regional Native Plant Supplier List —

<https://environmentalcooperative.vassar.edu/docs/nativeplantsupplier.pdf>

Pollinator Friendly Integrated Pest Management Plan —

https://environmentalcooperative.vassar.edu/docs/Vassar%20College%20IPM_FINAL.pdf

CONTACT US!

Committee — The Bee Campus committee is a subcommittee of the Vassar Arboretum Committee

Website — <https://environmentalcooperative.vassar.edu/programs/healthy-habitats/>

Social Media — <https://www.facebook.com/TheEnvironmentalCooperative/>