



Catch the Buzz: Bee Campus USA Proposal

The [Bee Campus USA](#) and its sister initiative, [Bee City USA](#), brings communities together to sustain native insect pollinators. Through a certification process, affiliated campuses commit to increase the abundance of native plants, provide nest sites, reduce the use of pesticides, and incorporate pollinator conservation into education and outreach events. Bee Campus and Bee City USA are efforts of the non-profit Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation.

Bee Campus USA Commitments

Our first step was to form a standing committee (see below) of faculty, staff, administrators, and students, which we organized into teams focused on addressing the following, required Bee Campus USA commitments:

1. Create and enhance pollinator habitat on campus (Figure 1)
2. Create an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) plan focused on reducing overall use of pesticides, and specifically those that present the most risk to pollinators
3. Create a recommended native plant list (Figure 2)
4. Offer service learning projects to enhance pollinator habitat
5. Offer courses and continuing education opportunities that incorporate pollinator conservation
6. Publicly acknowledge Bee Campus affiliation through signage and online presence

We have established an online presence [Bee Campus VT](#), housed within the Office of Sustainability's website and will officially launch our Bee Campus VT initiative as part of Earth Week 2022.

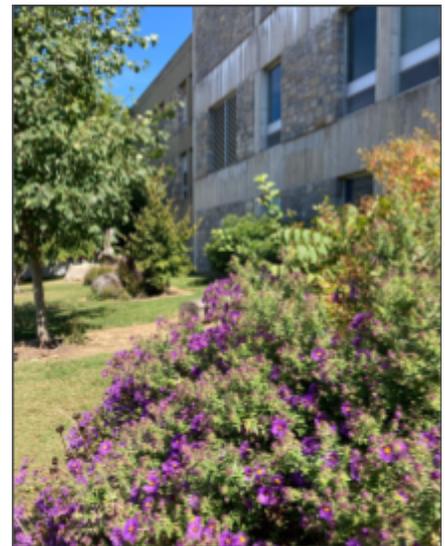


Figure 1: Beautiful pollinator plantings like this one outside of Cheatham Hall represent habitat assets that we will expand as part of the initiative.

Bee Campus USA Benefits to VT

We will join 132 other certified Universities including Penn State, UC Berkeley, NC State, James Madison University, and University of Virginia, in an effort that has wide appeal to students and stakeholders. The Bee Campus USA affiliation earns two Grounds Certification [exemplary practice credit points](#) in the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE)'s Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System™ (STARS) system and strengthens our [2020 Virginia Tech Climate Action Commitment](#). Most importantly, Hokies will come together around a positive, shared cause to ensure the survival of insect pollinators.



Figure 2: Joe Pye weed (*Eutrochium dubium*), identified by the Couvillon Lab (Palmerheim et al. in prep) as valuable to pollinators, will be included in plantings.

Bee Campus USA Budget

Campus affiliates pay an application fee, scaled by student enrollment, at the time of application submission (\$500) and an annual renewal fee (\$500). Additional operational funding for this program will help implement sustainable projects that will help us conserve native pollinators.

VT Bee Campus Standing Committee Members

1. Chair: Dr. Maggie Couvillon, Assistant Professor of Pollinator Biology
2. Co-chair: Dr. James Wilson, Extension Apiculturist
3. Jack Rosenberger, Campus Landscape Architect
4. Nathan King, Program Manager, Office of Sustainability
5. Emily Vollmer, Sustainability Coordinator, Office of Sustainability
6. Matt Gart, Grounds Manager
7. Jamie King, University Arborist
8. Scott Douglas, Hahn Horticulture Garden Director
9. Dr. Leighton Reid, Assistant Professor, School of Plant and Environmental Sciences
10. Dr. Daniel Frank, Director, Virginia Tech Pesticide Programs (VTPP)
11. Yugasha Bakshi, Graduate Intern, Office of Sustainability
12. Chad Campbell, Graduate Student, Entomology
13. Laura McHenry, Graduate Student, Entomology
14. Rob Ostrom, Graduate Student, Entomology
15. Grace Steger, Undergraduate Student, Arborist Intern
16. Susan Sale, Undergraduate Student, Hillcrest Hall Council Sustainability Officer
17. Ryan McDaniel-Neff, Undergraduate Student

Teams: Roles and Responsibilities

1. Administrative Team

Chair: Maggie Couvillon

Co-chair: James Wilson

Members: Chad Campbell, Ryan McDaniel-Neff, Grace Steger (for J.King), Emily Vollmer

Responsibilities:

1. Serve as point of contact for the standing committee
2. Submit initial application, including obtaining President's approval and \$500 fee
3. Complete annual report and reapply annually with \$500 renewal fee
4. Coordinate funding and maintain financial records
5. Facilitate quarterly group meetings

2. Pollinator Protection/Integrated Pest Management Team

Leader: James Wilson

Members: Daniel Frank, Matt Gart, Laura McHenry, Grace Steger (for J.King), Maggie Couvillon

Responsibilities:

1. Develop pollinator protection/IPM plan that sets goals for reducing overall pesticide use, targeting reduction of those most harmful to pollinators
2. Track implementation and reduction data

3. Pollinator Monitoring and Habitat Assessment Team

Leader: Chad Campbell

Members: Leighton Reid, Maggie Couvillon, Laura McHenry, Rob Ostrom, Susan Sale

Responsibilities:

1. Develop native plant list
2. Inventory and map current pollinator habitat quality
3. Install and maintain pollinator nesting sites
4. Inventory pollinator populations annually
5. Work with the landscape team to develop habitat improvement plans

4. Landscape Team

Leader: Jack Rosenberger

Members: Scott Douglas, Chad Campbell, Maggie Couvillon, Matt Gart, Grace Steger (for J.King)

Responsibilities:

1. Identify current and future habitat project sites
2. Design and install pollinator plantings
3. Identify existing signage
4. Install and maintain signage

5. Outreach Team

Leader: Emily Vollmer

Members: Yugasha Bakshi, Chad Campbell, Maggie Couvillon, Ryan McDaniel-Neff, Nathan King

Responsibilities:

1. Plan the Earth Week Bee Campus Launch Event, slated for Thurs 21 April, 2022
2. Design and maintain website
3. Maintain social media
4. Coordinate signage with landscape team
5. Organize service learning projects and coordinate with the landscape team
6. Create inventory of course offerings related to pollinators, their threats, and their habitats