

# Developing a Pollinator Garden at the Wildcat Farm

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## Introduction

Pollinators are crucial to life on Earth. They play a vital role in the food web, helping to feed larger predators and facilitating healthy plant communities. Along with the environment, pollinators supply humans with a large percentage of our food supply. Native pollinators in Washington state include several species of bees, moths, butterflies, beetles, and birds. Unfortunately, native pollinator populations are declining due to decreasing habitat, disease, and pesticides. In response to the problem of declining pollinator populations, an additional garden was developed and implemented near the CWU Wildcat Farm to support local pollinators at the farm. Eleven species of plants were selected based on bloom time, color, and size, as well as their benefit to pollinators. The species were planted in the garden in the form of clusters to further create an accessible resource to the pollinators.

## Current Progress

- The location of the pollinator garden was selected
- The plant species were selected
- The layout of the garden was planned
- The site of the garden was prepared for planting
  - Weeding
  - Soil preparation
  - Irrigation system installation
- The plants will be purchased and planted

## Location of the Pollinator Garden



Figure 1. Map of CWU Wildcat Farm. Orange Box represents the specific location of the pollinator garden

## Plant Species and Layout

Because the garden is in close proximity to the farm's apiary, it is vital that the plant species selected benefit the honeybees. One of the main priorities in selecting plant species was ensuring that they were all native plants that would contribute to the farm's ecosystem while using fewer resources. Another factor that went into selecting plant species is their bloom time. Of the eleven plant species used for the pollinator garden, plants bloom from April to October. This enables pollinators to use the garden for the optimal amount of time each year. The plant species are planted in a cluster formation (Figure 3.). This promotes pollinator use and makes it a more accessible resource because it is easier for pollinators to spot and feed when there is a cluster of the same plant rather than singular plants scattered.

Plant Species	Bloom Color	Bloom Time	Pollinators	# of Plants
Blanketflower	Yellow	June-September	Bees	7
Common Yarrow	White	May-August	Birds, Butterflies	6
Narrow Leaved Milkweed	White/Pink	June-August	Butterflies	14
Nodding Onion	Pink/White	May-June	Butterflies, Honeybees, Hummingbirds, Native Bees	13
Orange Globemallow	Orange	June-August	Bees, Butterflies	7
Red Columbine	Orange/Red	May-July	Hummingbirds	7
Rock Anise Hyssop	Pink/Orange	June-September	Hummingbirds	6
Shrubby Penstemon	Lavender	April-May	Honeybees, Native Bees	4
Silverleaf Phacelia	White	May-July	Honeybees, Native Bees	8
Sulfur Buckwheat	Yellow	May-June	Bees	9
Western Goldenrod	Yellow	July-October	Bees, Beetles, Butterflies, Flies	

Figure 2. Table of plant species used for the pollinator garden

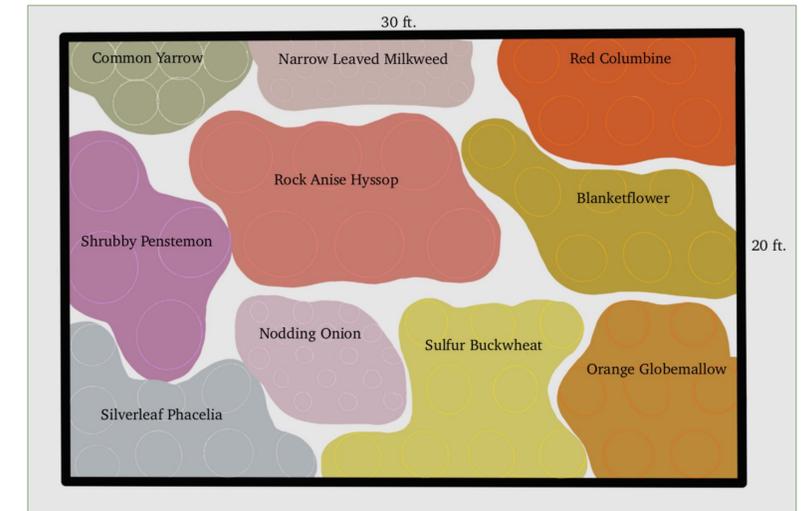


Figure 3. Pollinator Garden Layout: Colored groups represent plant species, and the circles represent the mature plant size

## Pollinators

Pollinators are the animals and insects responsible for transporting pollen and initiating plant fertilization. They are essential to life on earth, accounting for 80% of crops grown worldwide that rely on pollinators. Moreover, the pollinators depend on plants as a food source, feeding off the plant's nectar and pollen. The garden developed at the Wildcat Farm aims to primarily benefit the bees in the apiary and surrounding moths, butterflies, and birds by adding a food source and potential home to a location that previously had little appeal.



Figure 4. Targeted pollinators for the garden

## Conclusion

The pollinator garden has impacted the well-being of the CWU Wildcat Farm by adding to the farm's species diversity and creating a resource for the honeybees located next to the garden and other local pollinators. As CWU strives to be a more sustainable institution, more campus locations should prioritize using native plants and plants that are beneficial to our local pollinators.

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