



THE BEE BUNCH POLLINATOR GARDENS

A Girl Scout Silver Award Project

THE BEE BUNCH POLLINATOR GARDENS - A GIRL SCOUT SILVER AWARD PROJECT

Girl Scout troop 109 is working on our Silver Award— the highest award for Cadettes (6-8th grade). We raised money selling handmade bee-related products and planted a pollinator garden at Camp Bon Temps in Breaux Bridge. Now it's your turn to help save the bees and plant your own pollinator garden. You can follow us on Facebook at @beebunchacadiana and share your gardens with us!

- Problem: Bee populations are declining.
- Root Cause: Human destruction of habitat and use of pesticides.
- Solution with Long-Term Impact: Plant food sources for pollinators
- Making the solution sustainable: Teach others to plant food sources for pollinators.

The bee population has been rapidly decreasing due to a variety of factors, including pesticide use, pollution, and destruction of habitats. This is a big problem because at least 1/3 of agriculturally raised crops are pollinated by bees. Bees are important for our economies and for our dinner plates. So it's important that we do as much as we can to save them. Saving the bees will help everyone on the planet live a better life!

After conducting a community survey, the Cadettes in our Girl Scout troop decided to launch a social media campaign to help raise awareness about the plight of the bees in an effort to help save them. We created our own brand called The Bee Bunch and then built a business from the ground up to raise money to plant pollinator gardens. We not only planted a garden ourselves, but funded 100 pollinator garden kits for participants around our area. Participants' gardens can be logged on a Google Map we created to track and visualize the progress of our garden planting.

WHAT IS A POLLINATOR GARDEN?

A pollinator garden is a garden that uses plants that produce a large amount of pollen. This helps attract bees and other pollinators to the plants.

SITE SELECTION

When choosing where to plant your pollinator garden, you must consider some important factors. The conditions of the site you choose will determine which plants will be happy there. Here are the conditions you need to know about before selecting plants:

How much sun does the site get?

How well does the soil drain?

How much rain will it get? What is the soil like? (Is it sandy or heavy clay or something else?)

You will also need to know what "zone" your site is in because planting times differ between zones.

PLANT SELECTION

Once you know what your site conditions are, you can start choosing what plants to put in your pollinator garden. Don't forget to consider the time of year. Use the included flower chart to help you when selecting plants.

MATERIALS

In-Ground Bed

Soil
Plants
Mulch
Garden tools

Container Garden

Containers
Soil
Mulch
Plants
Garden tools

Raised Bed

Raised Bed
Soil
Mulch
Plants
Garden tools

METHOD

If planting a raised bed or container garden, first fill the garden with soil. Lay out your potted plants on the soil where they will be planted. Check that plants are practicing social distancing - they don't like being too crowded. It's a good idea to place plants that will grow tallest in the back of your garden and the shortest ones in the front. Once you have figured out where all the plants will go, plant each one carefully by pushing the soil aside beneath it until you create a hole about the same size as the plant pot. Gently remove the soil and root ball from the pot and place in the hole. Move soil back around the roots up to the stem of the plant. Once all of the flowers have been planted, use mulch to cover the bare soil between and around plants. The mulch should be at least 1-2 inches thick. Make sure the mulch isn't too close to the plants - it shouldn't actually touch the stems. The mulch will help the soil to retain moisture and help to reduce the growth of weeds in your garden.

CARE

Check the chart to see how often your plants like water. If the weather doesn't provide enough, then water your plants as needed, especially during the first couple of weeks. Over-watering can hurt your plants too, so don't overdo it. If you see weeds sprouting up between plants, pull them up before they grow and steal the nutrients your flowers need. You can print the sign at the end of this document to laminate and put out.

After you set up your pollinator garden add its location to our Project Map and check out how far our garden project extends! Just copy and paste this link into your browser!

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/o/edit?mid=1K52mFcWbJHhuJgd5DTmZxSRJKuKNIRWy&usp=sharing>

For more tips and helpful information, check out The Urban Naturalist. Just copy and paste this link into your browser!
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