

Coastal Bend College Establishes Pollinator Conservation Garden and Apiary

Coastal Bend College celebrated the establishment of its Pollinator Conservation Garden and Apiary last Friday, April 7th, 2017. Since being certified as an official “Bee Campus USA” in June of this year, the college has been looking for ways to support pollinator conservation. Dr. Beatrice Espinoza, CBC President, provided the Bee Campus Committee with a plot of land to enhance for the betterment of South Texas pollinators. The committee co-chaired by Nick Ottensman and Mark Secord, voted to establish a Conservation Garden and Apiary. Mr. Secord took the lead on the establishment of the Conservation Garden and Mr. Ottensman spear-headed the effort to establish CBC’s first apiary.

Work on the Pollinator Conservation Garden officially began in March. The plot of land selected was heavily overgrown with brush and trees, and was initially cleared to allow fencing and tilling of the soil. After soil preparation, 10 pounds of native seed was planted to provide a mixture of wildflowers for area pollinators. In addition, a decorative entrance was built. Signage was also put in place to inform the public and make them aware of the bees that would be in the immediate area.



J.C. Colmenero and Dr. Ecklund visit the plot of land provided by CBC President, Beatrice Espinoza.



Initial clean-up of site by CBC grounds Personnel.



Dr. Ecklund and Mark Secord prepare the site for planting.



Apiary site is cleared and a gravel base is put in place to support the hives.



Seeding of site with native flowering plants.



Dr. Ecklund and Mark Secord install decorative fencing and signage.



Nick Ottensman, local bee enthusiast and apiculturist, prepares the apiary site.



The apiary is put in place and the bee colony established.



Project completion and the Pollination Garden Reception event. The red star indicates the approximate location of the finished apiary located in the back of the property behind fenced warning signage.

This project was well received by the public and will give CBC additional opportunities to support area pollinators. CBC also provided pollinator awareness and education during the college's annual Spring fest held April 12th, 2017. A table was setup at the event and educational materials were provided to local community members.



Currently, CBC is partnering with the city to establish a Bee Jamboree during National Pollinator Awareness Week. This event will be held in June at CBC and will bring in musicians, vendors, educators, and various community groups together to increase pollinator awareness.