

Eric Vanbergen

ANPP Mini Grant for LSU Pollinator Habitat Garden Final Report

Despite Louisiana State University (LSU) in Baton Rouge being Louisiana's largest college, the school's campus lacked a good example of landscaping with the state's beautiful native perennial wildflowers before April 2022. With the enormous amounts of people that use LSU as a center of education and social events, it is extremely important that the campus features examples of landscaping with native plants to inspire a more ecologically-conscious landscaping culture in the state.

In 2020, I applied to LSU's Student Sustainability Fund to receive permission to create a pollinator habitat garden on campus featuring a diverse array of native plants. My application was approved in the spring of 2021; however I still needed to confirm a location on campus with the school where I could make the garden. Unfortunately, all of my requests to put the pollinator garden in a location on campus that would be highly visible to students was denied due to the skepticism that a native plant garden could look attractive and organized. While this was frustrating for me, I was able to get approval for a small 10'x18' rectangle behind the Wilson Laboratories. I wanted to fill this rectangle with a beautiful selection of native perennial wildflowers that would both provide a biodiverse habitat for wildlife and an attractive selection of native plants that demonstrates to LSU's landscape architects that native plant gardens can be spectacularly beautiful and should be incorporated all over the university's campus.



By the winter of 2021 it was time to determine the sourcing of plant species aiming to have the garden installed for March of 2022. Thanks to the Acadiana Native Plant Project's mini grant program, I was able to source a diverse array of 20 native wildflower species featured in the plant list below. Additional plants were sourced from the Urban Naturalist in Lafayette, and from generous donations from Matthew Herron and Robby Maxwell.

The garden was ready to be installed once the excavation permit was acquired and the sod was cleared. On April 15, 2022, student volunteers from all sorts of degree programs ranging from Landscape Architecture to Renewable Natural Resources to Entomology came to help install the garden.



As I write this in June of 2022, I am excited to continue to develop the garden over my next 3 years as a student at LSU. This summer I plan on installing signs in the garden that label plant species and also applying to get a Louisiana Native Plant Society Louisiana Certified Habitat Sign installed. I look forward to using the garden as an example of gardening with native plants for my fellow landscape architecture students. As the garden continues to grow, I look forward to filling it in with even more plants to allow it to become a dense and beautiful planting that is full of attractive flowers throughout the year. Once again, I cannot thank the Acadiana Native Plant Project enough for their help with this project! Native plant initiatives such as ANPP are allowing for our endangered native plant genetics to have a chance to return to the landscape and allowing the landscaping culture to shift towards more ecologically conscious designs that give hope for our declining biodiversity.



Plants of the LSU Pollinator Habitat Garden (as of June 2022):

- Asclepias incarnata* (Swamp Milkweed)
- Asclepias tuberosa* (Butterflyweed)
- Baptisia alba* (White Wild Indigo)
- Baptisia sphaerocarpa* (Yellow Wild Indigo)
- Chamaecrista fasciculata* (Partridge Pea)
- Coreopsis lanceolata* (Lanceleaf Coreopsis)
- Dracopis amplexicaulis* (Clasping Coneflower)
- Echinacea purpurea* (Purple Coneflower)
- Eryngium yuccifolium* (Rattlesnake Master)
- Gaillardia pulchella* (Indian Blanketflower)
- Helianthus angustifolius* (Swamp Sunflower)
- Helianthus mollis* (Ashy Sunflower)
- Hibiscus coccineus* (Texas Star Hibiscus)
- Hibiscus moscheutos* (Swamp Rosemallow)
- Kosteletzkya pentacarpos* (Saltmarsh Mallow)
- Liatris pycnostachya* (Prairie Blazing Star)
- Lonicera sempervirens* (Coral Honeysuckle)
- Monarda citriodora* (Lemon Beebalm)
- Monarda fistulosa* (Beebalm)
- Passiflora incarnata* (Purple Passionflower)
- Penstemon tenuis* (Gulf Coast Penstemon)
- Physostegia digitalis* (False Dragonhead)
- Pycnanthemum tenuifolium* (Narrowleaf Mountainmint)
- Rudbeckia grandiflora* (Rough Coneflower)
- Rudbeckia hirta* (Black-eyed Susan)
- Rudbeckia subtomentosa* (Sweet Coneflower)
- Rudbeckia texana* (Texas Coneflower)
- Salvia coccinea* (Scarlet Sage)
- Schizachyrium scoparium* (Little Bluestem)
- Silphium radula* var. *gracile* (Slender Rosinweed)
- Stokesia laevis* (Stokes' Aster)
- Symphotrichum praealtum* (Willowleaf Aster)

Total Species Count: 32