



Sara Wittenberg <PollinatorPartnership@mailman.bloomerang-mail.com> [Unsubscribe](#)

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Bee Friendly Gardening™ Newsletter

Dear Sara

January invites us into a season of rest and renewal, when gardens may seem quiet but are already gathering energy for what's to come. It's a time for dreaming, planning, and reflecting on how our small actions can make a big difference for pollinators in the year ahead. As fresh pages turn and new possibilities take root, we look forward to another year of growing alongside this inspiring community.

Happy gardening,



Sara Wittenberg
Bee Friendly Gardening Manager
Pollinator Partnership

Where Do Mason Bees Go In Winter?

Anthony Colangelo, Education Manager, Pollinator Partnership



Did you know that mason bees (genus *Osmia*) overwinter as adults? Once a mason bee egg hatches, the newly emerged larva will feed on nutritious pollen provided by the solitary female. This larva will then pupate, and eventually develop into an adult bee. Incredibly, when the weather starts to cool, mason bee larvae develop into adults and remain inside their cavity nests over the entire winter. Once they detect the warmth of the spring, these adults emerge from their nests for the first time, ready to forage on the pollen and nectar of early blooming flowers!

This is part three of a three part series. Look back at the November and December newsletters to see the others.

[Read the full article](#)

If You Plant It They Will Come

Jeremy Napp, Master Beekeeper, Pollinator Farm Owner

Living among the rolling hills and valleys of the Appalachian Mountains of Pennsylvania never gets old. Watching the landscape change through the four seasons, the shifting colors, the returning birds, the subtle emergence of life, each spring feels almost magical. What is far less enchanting, however, is the steady habitat loss and fragmentation due to agricultural and urban development. As these spaces disappear, the need to intentionally replace them becomes increasingly urgent. Creating safe, connected habitat for pollinators is no longer optional; it is essential.



[Read the full article](#)

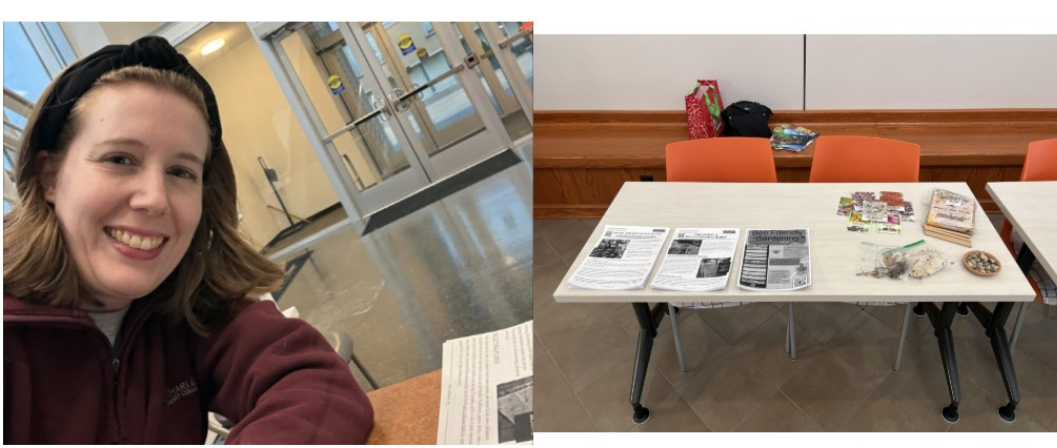
Member Spotlight: Jenna Smalley

Growing Bee Friendly Change on Campus and Beyond

Inspired by the words of Doug Tallamy – “We all share the responsibility of good Earth stewardship because we all depend on the biodiversity that good Earth stewardship protects” – Bee Friendly Gardening member Jenna Smalley is turning that belief into action. From college campuses to conservation areas, Jenna is actively creating spaces for learning, curiosity, and connection around pollinators. This fall, she began hosting tabling events at St. Charles Community College, bringing Bee Friendly Gardening resources directly to students, faculty, and community members. Her tables featured not only educational materials, but also items from her own garden: native flower seeds, mason bee tubes, and even a homemade bee watering station. By sharing what has worked in her personal space, Jenna made pollinator conservation approachable, tangible, and inspiring.

The response has been enthusiastic. Students stopped to take flyers, ask questions, and express interest in joining Bee Friendly Gardening. One professor even invited Jenna to speak to her class about pollinator-friendly gardening, opening the door for even deeper engagement. Jenna has continued scheduling tabling events across multiple campuses, always looking for the busiest corners and best opportunities to connect with new audiences. She's also exploring outreach closer to home, with plans to host events in her neighborhood after neighbors showed interest in her native plants and pollinator features.

Jenna's impact extends beyond outreach tables. She has volunteered at a local conservation area, helping plant native pollinator species like baptisia and spreading milkweed seed. While planting, she and fellow volunteers spoke with children who stopped to ask about the plants, using the moment to explain how native flowers support bees and other pollinators – and encouraging the kids to grow their own bee friendly gardens. Whether she's talking with college students, young learners, or neighbors, Jenna embodies the spirit of Bee Friendly Gardening: meeting people where they are, sharing what she's learned, and planting the seeds – both literal and figurative – for a more pollinator-friendly future.



Want to earn your Ambassador badge? Check out the resources in our toolkit to help you do so!

[BFG Ambassador Toolkit](#)

The Bee Friendly Gardening Ambassador Badge is our highest level of distinction, reserved for members who go above and beyond to share the Bee Friendly Gardening message and inspire others to take action for pollinators. Ambassadors take significant, visible outreach or education actions that reach a wide audience or have a lasting community impact. This badge is not for individual gardening activities—it's for those who help grow the movement by spreading awareness of pollinator conservation and Pollinator Partnership's Bee Friendly Gardening program.

It is our desire that our new toolkit arms you with the resources you need to go out into your community and increase awareness about pollinators and BFG. We are excited to let you know that in this toolkit we have created a new BFG slide deck and printable media pack to help you with your future pollinator outreach activities!

Please note—actions must include a clear promotional or educational component for the Bee Friendly Gardening program. If you're completing your Pollinator Steward Certification, please use a different activity to qualify for this badge.

We look forward to celebrating your leadership in helping pollinators thrive and your role in growing the Bee Friendly Gardening movement!

BFG/PSC Bonus Webinar



WINTER IN YOUR NATIVE PLANT LANDSCAPE

Join Annie Sales, Director of Restoration with the Illinois River Watershed Partnership, for an exploration of what happens in native landscapes during the quiet season, and learn why winter is one of the most important times for ecological work. This presentation will highlight the value of winter structure, seedheads, and dormant vegetation for pollinators and wildlife, while also outlining key management, planting, and planning activities best suited for the cold months.

Thursday January 29
10PDT/12CDT/1EDT

Must Register to Receive Link

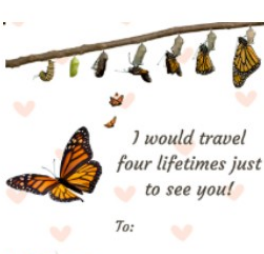


[Register](#)

One of your member benefits is a free quarterly webinar by a carefully selected expert to bring you curated content to assist your efforts in gardening for pollinators. But every now and then, we offer an extra, bonus webinar, like this one we are co-hosting with Pollinator Partnership's [Pollinator Steward Certification](#) program, titled [Winter in Your Native Plant Landscape](#).

This presentation will highlight the value of winter structure, seedheads, and dormant vegetation for pollinators and wildlife, while also outlining key management, planting, and planning activities best suited for the cold months. From invasive species control and prescribed winter pruning to dormant-season seeding and preparing planting plans for spring, Annie will provide practical, seasonally informed guidance to help landowners, gardeners, and conservation professionals make the most of winter in their native landscapes.

Missed a past webinar? We've got you covered! You can find recordings of [archived webinars here](#) on the member website.



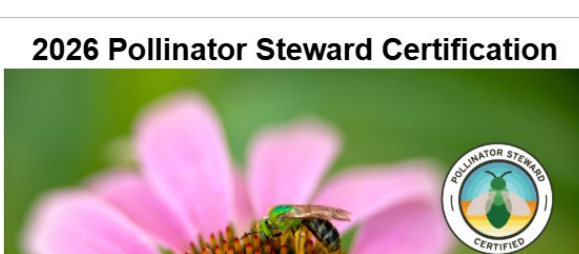
Will You Bee My Valentine?

Enjoy these sweet Valentines, made by Pollinator Partnership's Communications Coordinator Maddie Dong. Show those you love how much you care for them and pollinators!



[Download Valentines](#)

2026 Pollinator Steward Certification



Last chance to register for our 2026 [Pollinator Steward Certification \(PSC\)](#) training! PSC empowers people with the scientific know-how to make a positive difference for pollinators, people, and the planet.

Topics include an introduction to the world of pollinators, how they live and thrive, threats to pollinators, and how we all can help. Details will be provided on habitat creation for pollinators in many landscapes including home gardens, parks, rights-of-way, and agricultural landscapes. Additional information on pollinator identification and how to share your knowledge through community outreach will be provided.

This course is ideal for home gardeners, land managers (large and small), farmers, organizations, government departments, and anyone who wants to do more to support pollinators. Join our growing community of Certified Pollinator Stewards!

[Register for PSC](#)

Notable Dates

- January 31 - National Seed Swap Day
- February - National Bird Feeding Month
- February 2 - World Wetlands Day
- February 3 - Feed the Birds Day
- February 5 - Western Monarch Day
- February 14 - Valentine's Day
- February 21 - [Pollinator Steward Certification](#) begins
- February 23-27 - National Invasive Species Awareness Week

Interested in writing an article for BFG?

We're always looking for content for our recurring columns “My Favorite Native” [Tell us about your favorite native plant, why you love it, and what pollinators love it.] and “How Many Host Plants?” [Highlight what host plants you have included in your garden, as well as the pollinators that they support.]. We would love to feature you in an upcoming BFG [newsletter](#)! Simply email your response, along with a photo if possible, to bfg@pollinator.org.

Bloomerang: What You Need to Know



Now that we are using a different Customer Relations Management (CRM) software, what does that mean for BFG members? First, let's define each platform: Bloomerang is a donor management software that helps organizations like Pollinator Partnership keep track of donations and sponsorships. Bloomerang Fundraising (formerly Qgiv) is Bloomerang's payment processor that allows us to receive online donations.

#1 If you use PayPal for your recurring annual Bee Friendly Gardening Membership payment, we encourage you to discontinue that payment and instead update your payment method to Bloomerang Fundraising. In Bloomerang Fundraising, you have the ability to choose the start date of your payment. Once you have made the switch, don't forget to cancel your recurring donation in PayPal.

#2 With Bloomerang Fundraising, donors can easily create and access their donor portal. This portal allows you to view your giving history, update payment information, and access tax receipts.

We need all of our supporters to switch your recurring donations over to Bloomerang Fundraising by July 1, 2026. Thank you for your incredible support. Your donations make a real impact for pollinators and their habitat!

[Switch to Bloomerang Fundraising](#)

Bee Friendly Gardening is for Every Landscape!

Be a part of the Bee Friendly movement.

Our Contact Information

Pollinator Partnership
582 Market Street, Suite 1215
San Francisco, CA 94104
415.362.1137
<http://pollinator.org>

