

# What Makes a Successful Great Southeast Pollinator Census Counting Event: A Guide for K-12 Educators (August 22-23, 2025)

The Great Southeast Pollinator Census (GSEPC) provides a unique opportunity to engage students, faculty, and the broader community in hands-on science learning while contributing valuable data to pollinator conservation efforts. This guide offers strategies for planning successful counting events within a K-12 educational setting.

## 1. Marketing Leading Up to the Day: Engaging Students and the Community

- **School-Wide Communication:**
  - **School Newsletters and Announcements:** Include information about the GSEPC event in school newsletters, websites, and morning announcements.
  - **Classroom Presentations:** Have science teachers incorporate presentations about pollinators and the census into their curriculum.
  - **Flyers and Posters:** Create eye-catching flyers and posters to display around the school and in classrooms.
- **Digital and Social Media Campaigns:**
  - **School Social Media:** Utilize school social media platforms to promote the event, sharing photos of pollinator gardens and student activities.
  - **Classroom Blogs and Websites:** Encourage students to create blog posts or website entries about their involvement in the census.
  - **Share the Statewide Event:** Promote the statewide Facebook event (<https://www.facebook.com/share/1YPu3BUe4o/>) and create a school-specific event page.
  - **GSEPC Newsletter:** Encourage sign-ups for the GSEPC newsletter (<https://gsepc.org/>) to keep participants informed.
- **Community Outreach:**
  - **Local Media:** Contact local newspapers, radio stations, and TV stations to publicize the school's involvement in the census.
  - **Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs):** Collaborate with PTAs to promote the event and recruit volunteers.
  - **Community Partnerships:** Partner with local environmental organizations, gardening clubs, and businesses to expand outreach.
- **Garden-Based Marketing:**
  - **School Pollinator Gardens:** Utilize existing school gardens or create new pollinator gardens to attract and observe pollinators.
  - **Student Projects:** Incorporate the development and maintenance of pollinator gardens into student projects.
  - **Use GSEPC Marketing Materials:** Utilize the provided Google Drive folder containing rack cards, flyers, and social media logos to create visually consistent promotional materials.

## 2. Selecting a Site for the Event: Creating a Learning Laboratory

- **School Grounds:**
  - Utilize existing school gardens, fields, or natural areas.
  - Create designated counting zones within the school grounds.
  - Ensure the site is accessible and safe for students.
- **Community Partnerships:**

- Partner with local parks, nature centers, or botanical gardens.
- Collaborate with community gardens or urban farms.
- Incorporate field trips to off-site locations.
- **Garden Development:**
  - If possible, create a new pollinator garden to be used as a learning tool, and a counting location.

### 3. Educate Leading Up to the Event: Integrating Pollinator Science into the Curriculum

- **Curriculum Integration:**
  - Incorporate lessons about pollinator biology, ecology, and conservation into science, environmental science, and biology classes.
  - Use the GSEPC as a real-world example of citizen science.
  - Incorporate art, language arts, and social studies projects related to pollinators.
- **Hands-On Activities:**
  - Conduct insect identification workshops.
  - Build bee hotels or other pollinator habitats.
  - Plant pollinator-friendly gardens.
  - Organize garden tours and nature walks.
- **Educational Content:**
  - **Pollinator Gardening:** Teach students about the importance of pollinator-friendly plants and garden design.
  - **Protecting Pollinators:** Discuss the threats facing pollinators and how to mitigate them.
  - **Pesticide Reduction/IPPM:** Educate about responsible pesticide use and integrated pest management strategies.
  - **Insect ID:** Provide resources and training on identifying common pollinators.

### 4. Day-Of Top Tips: Creating an Engaging and Educational Experience

- **Student Involvement:**
  - Assign students specific roles and responsibilities during the counting event.
  - Encourage students to collect and analyze data.
  - Organize student presentations or displays showcasing their findings.
- **Volunteer Support:**
  - Recruit parent volunteers to assist with data collection and supervision.
  - Provide clear instructions and training to volunteers.
  - Recognize and appreciate volunteer contributions.
- **Educational Activities:**
  - Set up educational stations with information about pollinators and their habitats.
  - Organize guided garden tours and nature walks.
  - Provide hands-on activities for students and families.
- **Resource Distribution:**
  - Provide insect identification guides and reference sheets.
  - Make GSEPC resources readily accessible.
  - Share local pollinator plant lists.
- **Data Collection:**
  - Ensure accurate data collection by providing clear instructions and training.
  - Use data collection sheets or apps.
  - Emphasize the importance of accurate data for scientific research.

By implementing these strategies, K-12 educators can create engaging and educational GSEPC counting events that empower students to become active participants in pollinator conservation.