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Keeping the Eastern Sierra Abloom

Eastern Sierra Land Trust to host free Pollinator Garden Workshop on April 16

What's for dinner? Without pollinators, the options might be few. With one third of the food supply and at least 80% of the world's flowering plants depending on pollinators, their impact can be felt everywhere—from backyards to dinner plates. Much of the Eastern Sierra's natural treasures rely on bees, butterflies, and other pollinators in order to live and thrive. But their numbers are in decline: impacted by pathogens, parasites, pesticides, and habitat loss, pollinators are disappearing from the landscape.

Local non-profit Eastern Sierra Land Trust (ESLT) is committed to permanently safeguarding the Eastern Sierra's wild and working lands, and since launching their Eastside Pollinator Garden Project in 2014, a major focus of ESLT's work has been helping native pollinators thrive. With the Eastside Pollinator Garden Project, ESLT is building safe havens for pollinators and educating the community about the important role they play. Since the project began, ESLT has helped certify 54 gardens and community spaces in Inyo and Mono Counties as pollinator-friendly habitat.

For all those interested in creating their own pollinator garden blooming with beautiful native plants, Eastern Sierra Land Trust will be hosting a free Pollinator Garden Workshop on Saturday, April 16th from 10am to 12pm at Inyo Council for the Arts (137 S. Main St. in Bishop).

With support from US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) and California Native Plant Society (CNPS), the Pollinator Garden Workshop will provide guidance, information, and resources to anyone ready to create their own Eastern Sierra pollinator haven. Local experts – including Katie Quinlan of CNPS, Michelle Hunt of USFWS, Julie Fontaine of Trestles Environmental Corporation, and Steve Blair of Chalfant Big Trees Farm & Feed – will share helpful information about native plants, plant nutrition, irrigation techniques, and everything else needed to get a pollinator garden growing this spring.

Once a garden is ready to be planted, committed Eastside Pollinator Garden Project participants will be awarded a voucher for approximately \$125 of native plant purchases. Participants will also receive a Certified Pollinator Garden plaque to post near their new pollinator habitat when the certification process is complete.

This year ESLT aims to certify 20-25 additional gardens as pollinator havens; anyone interested in bringing bees, hummingbirds, and other pollinators to their yard is encouraged to attend the workshop to learn more about what they can do to help pollinators thrive. Those unable to attend the workshop are encouraged to stop by ESLT's annual "GardenFest" celebration, to be held at the ESLT office (250 N. Fowler St. in Bishop) on April 31st.

By working with members of the Eastern Sierra community to create pollinator habitat and encourage land stewardship, ESLT hopes to keep the Eastside blooming year after year. For more information about the Eastside Pollinator Garden Project and the upcoming workshop, please contact ESLT Education Coordinator/AmeriCorps Member, Catherine Tao, at catherine@eslt.org or (760) 873-4554.

Eastern Sierra Land Trust works with willing landowners to protect vital lands in the Eastern Sierra region for their scenic, agricultural, natural, recreational, historical, and watershed values. To learn more about ESLT's work and how to get involved, visit www.eslt.org.

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Sample low-resolution pictures with captions shown below; high-resolution images attached to email. For additional pictures, please contact Marguerite Merritt at marguerite@eslt.org.



Picture Caption: From wildflowers to working farms, much of the Eastern Sierra's natural treasures rely on pollinators to remain beautiful and productive.



Picture Caption: ESLT's Eastside Pollinator Garden Project has helped Eastern Sierra residents like Margy Marshall create and certify pollinator-friendly habitats. Get started on your own pollinator garden this spring by attending ESLT's Pollinator Garden Workshop on April 16th.