

# Xerces Monarch Butterfly and Pollinator Hedgerow Project

Final Report Dated June 30, 2021

The Guadalupe-Coyote Resource Conservation District (“GCRCD”) is pleased to submit this final report regarding our joint project with Veggielution Community Farm (“Veggielution”) to install a monarch butterfly and pollinator hedgerow project with kits provided through the generosity of the Xerces Society (“Xerces”).

**Brief Description of the Project.** The Project site is located at Veggielution, in the Mayfair community of East San Jose. Partners and volunteers installed approximately 4,825 square feet of pollinator garden in several locations (Attachment 1) on the site using kits provided by the Xerces. GCRCD provided an additional \$2,000 to allow for the extension of the farm’s irrigation system and Veggielution staff added locally-sourced native plants provided by a local community college nursery to extend the ecological value of the plantings.

**Site Preparation Methods, Implementation, and Management Techniques.** Iterative volunteer weeding days were spent clearing out the weeds by hand to partially exhaust the weed seedbank to the extent feasible prior to planting (no herbicide was used). Compost was applied throughout the planting areas, some months before planting and some during planting. Irrigation was established concurrently with planting, and volunteers were largely credited with plant installation. In the early spring, a minor portion of the plants were installed into two garden beds within the farm’s Youth Garden, totaling approximately 325 sq. ft.; Veggielution engaged a professional native plant landscaper (Rebecca Schoenenberger of California Nativescapes) to design and manage the installation of the first planting. At the end of spring, the remainder of the plants were installed as a newly established 4,500 sq. ft. pollinator garden; Veggielution Horticulturalist Lee Stephenson and GCRCD Natural Resource Program Manager Nathan Hale planned the layout (Attachment 2) and oversaw the installation of the second planting. Follow-up weeding, wood chip mulching (as needed), and irrigation line inspection will occur every 1-2 weeks.

**Success of Plant Establishment.** The hedgerow kits were received in November 2020. Some of the plants appeared to have low health and vigor, so Veggielution obtained permission from Xerces to nurse the plants in a greenhouse to improve root establishment. Plants have not been in the ground long enough to make a meaningful comment on the success of the plantings, but in the smaller planting area plants all look to be in excellent health, and there appears to be no mortality. Given the high degree of attention and care that Veggielution puts toward plants, success within the larger planting garden will likely include high survivorship. Approximately 30% of the *Asclepias* spp. plants appear to have died following the 2020 growing season, as no new growth was observed within the planting containers, so going forward, effort will be put towards collecting seed and spreading *Asclepias* spp. within the gardens.

**Outreach.** Extensive outreach plans were prepared as part of Veggielution’s Environmental Education program, however, due to COVID-19 restrictions, outreach has not yet been implemented. Veggielution’s future educational outreach will involve engaging in conversation about wildlife and biodiversity, the impact of urban development and agriculture on pollinators, and how by planting gardens we can start taking action to support them. The educational and outreach activities will engage visitors, youth participants, farm volunteers, local area farmers and attendees at workshops, talks, and garden maintenance.

**Total Garden Area.** Approximately 4,825 sq. ft. (0.1108 acres) of dedicated pollination habitat was installed within the 6-acre community farm site.

**Photos of Habitat and Planting Activities.** Please refer to Attachment 3.

# Veggielution Pollinator Gardens

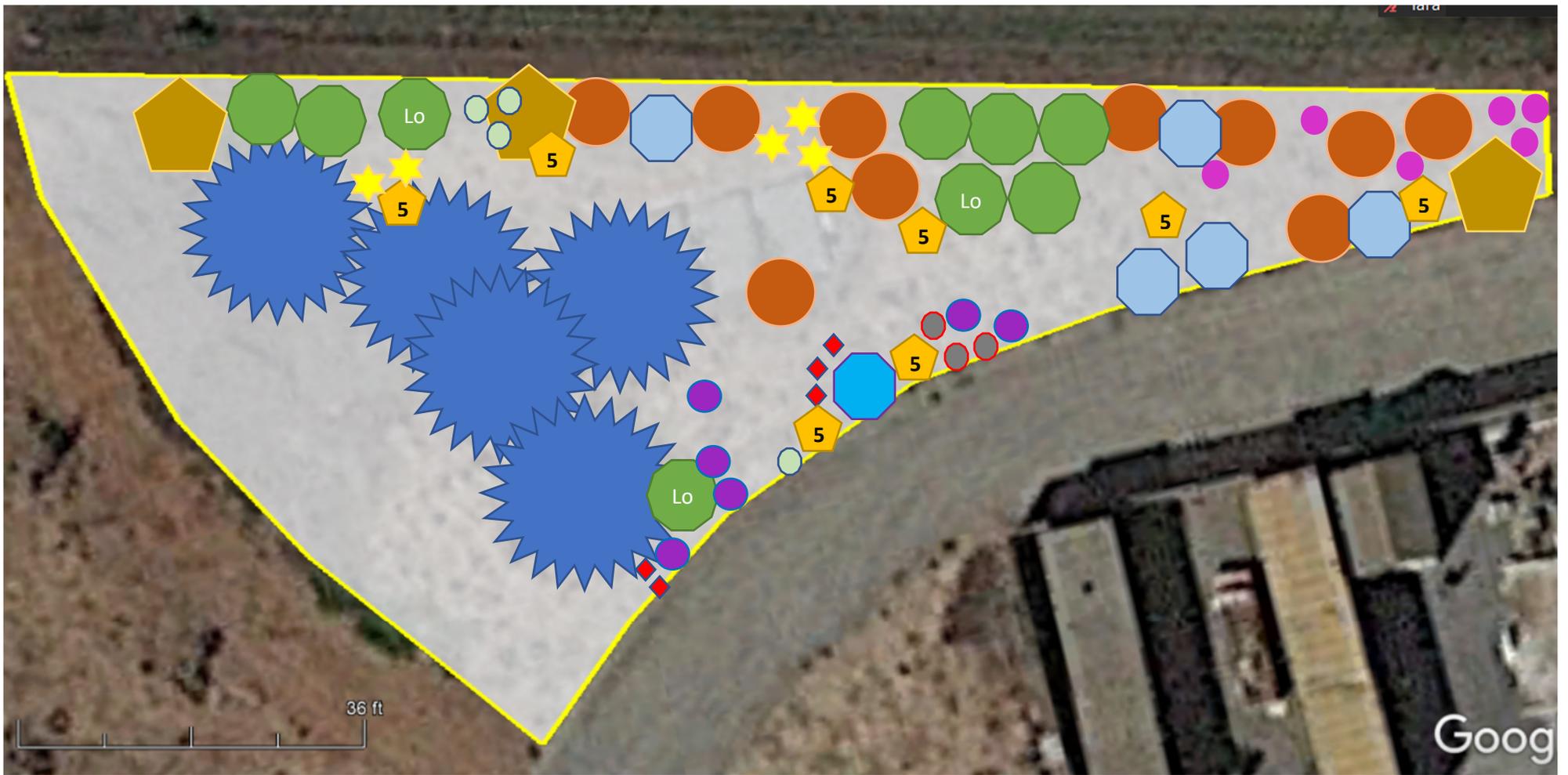
Xerces Monarch Butterfly and Pollinator Hedgerow Project

## Legend

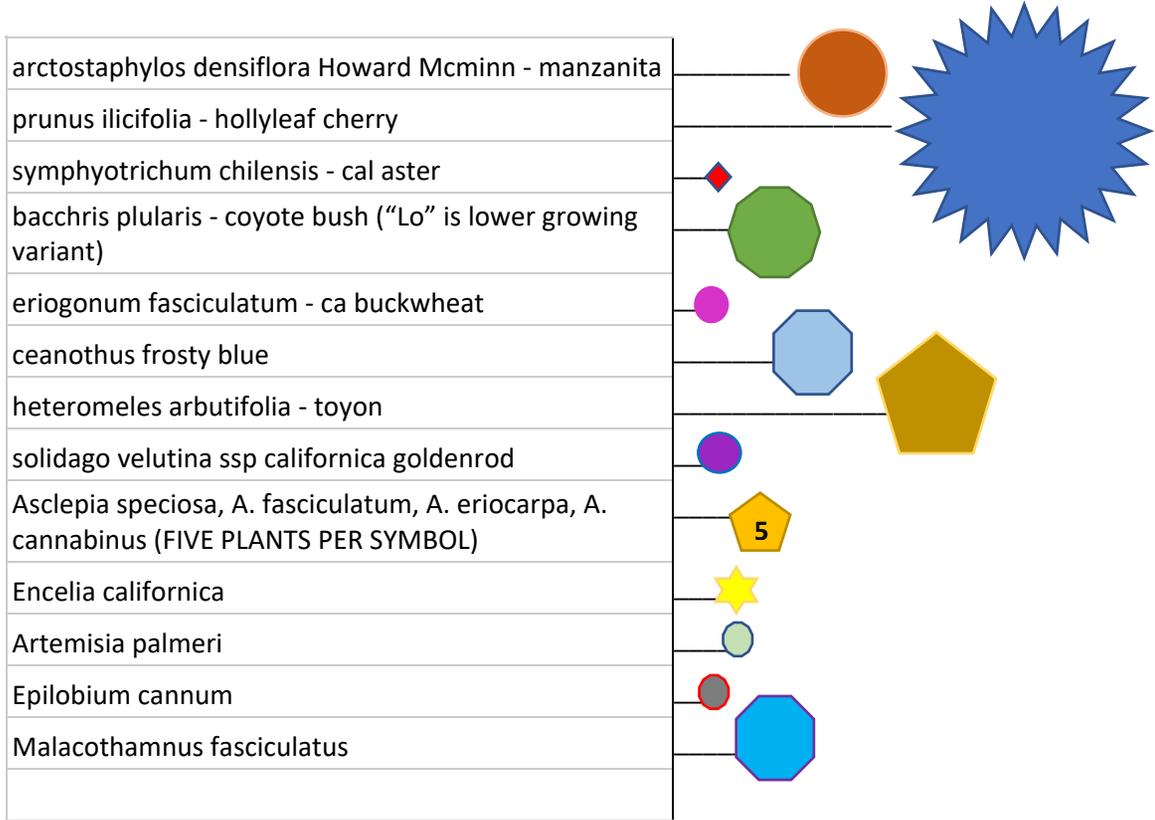
-  Monarch Garden
-  Veggielution Community Farm

 Veggielution Community Farm



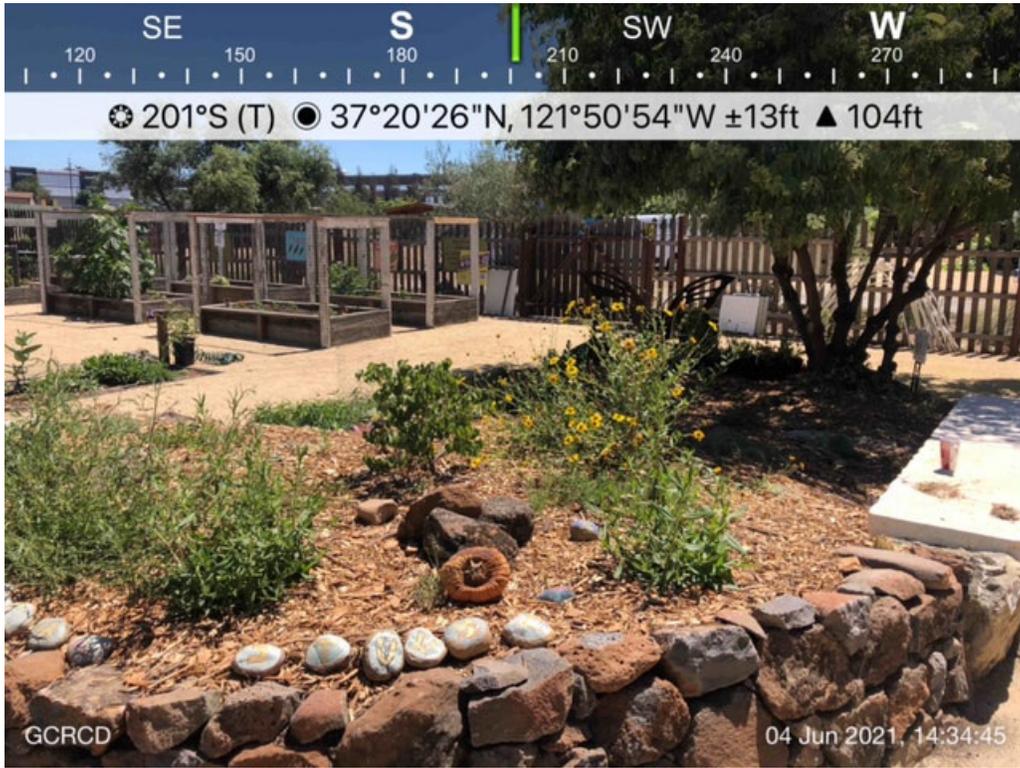


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**Attachment 3: Photos of Habitat and Planting Activities**





Youth Garden Pollinator Habitat Garden Bed



Youth Garden Pollinator Habitat Garden Bed



Large Pollinator Habitat Garden Bed Prior to Planting



Planting Day.





Planting Day: Final touches.





Half of the volunteer crew.