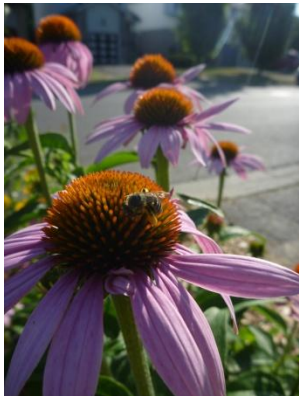


Victoria's Pollinator-Friendly Boulevard Garden in 2012

In the spring of 2012 I turned half of my boulevard into a pollinator-friendly garden. I started by laying down newspapers and then piling on about a yard of topsoil. I quickly transplanted a few Brown-eyed Susans I had in my backyard to the bed so that the neighbours would realize that it wasn't just a pile of dirt but a garden in progress. I had quite a few people wondering what I was doing!

After I hit a few plant sales, and raided a friend's garden (with permission, of course), I added a LOT more plants. These included species like Golden Alexanders, Swamp and Butterfly Milkweed, Ox-Eye Daisy, Coreopsis, Obedient Plant, Coneflowers, Violets, Monarda, a few different Asters, and others still. Although mulch isn't great for ground-nesting bees, I did spread some wood chips over the surface to keep the moisture in, which was definitely needed as a drought hit in early spring and didn't let up until late fall. The garden didn't look all that great to start with, but as the days and weeks passed, the plants really took off and the pollinators were very appreciative of the blooms!



By early fall, some of the plants had grown big enough to be split. I also went to another plant sale and came home with a trunk full of plants. What to do? Expand the garden of course! I had more topsoil delivered and followed the same process as in the spring. New plant species included a couple of Goldenrod and Mountain Mint species, Pearly Everlasting, Russian Sage, Sundrops, Evening Primrose, and more again! I added a bit of mulch, and then in late fall, covered the garden with a bed of leaves. I left the seed heads and stems for the birds and bees, and watched the garden go to sleep for the winter. When the snow came, I just piled it up on the bed! I am now eagerly awaiting spring.

