

**“Growing with Dana”: A Community Series on Sustainable Habits & Habitats
environmental education & activism**

Dana Fine Arts Building, Agnes Scott College

February 12 - May 19, 2025

Program of Building on Dana / Patterns in Space, Dalton Gallery

Co-organized by Peter Helfrich and Katherine Smith

"Growing with Dana" is a series of environmentally focused programs presented in conjunction with the *Building on Dana / Patterns in Space* exhibition (Feb. 7-May 19) in the Dalton Gallery, Agnes Scott College. Free and open to the public on alternating Wednesday evenings during the exhibition, each session will examine a topic related to creating and maintaining sustainable habitats in our community. Presented by the Building on Dana project, the Center for Sustainability, and Bee Campus USA® (People for Pollinators) at Agnes Scott College, with community partners Bee City USA® – Decatur, GA (BeeCatur) and City of Decatur.

Building on Dana / Patterns in Space is a celebration of architect John Portman's Charles A. Dana Fine Arts Building (1965). The exhibition establishes the significance of the building in Portman's early career and in shifts in the college's curriculum in the 1960s. It also highlights the challenge of access and inclusion in historical design and an evolving cultural context. The exhibition features works from contemporary artists and designers who have reinterpreted visual and programmatic aspects of Dana Fine Arts to create a visual conversation between past and present.

This exhibition also includes ongoing restoration of multiple green spaces—signature design elements in Portman's architecture—to native, pollinator gardens. The third organic plot on Agnes Scott's campus, the gardens are being re-envisioned and re-cultivated to increase biodiversity and support our native bees (and other species), aligned with our certification as a Bee Campus USA® and sharing our belief (and Portman's) in necessary transformation, with integrity and toward sustainability.

Lectures and workshops take place from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m., at the Dana Fine Arts Building, Agnes Scott College unless otherwise indicated.

Feb. 12 – “Introducing Pollinators: Meet Your Native Bees”

Peter Helfrich, Chairperson, Bee City USA® – Decatur, GA

Honeybees are incredibly important to our agricultural system. After all, we couldn't enjoy many of our favorite foods without them! But like many of us, they're not native to our state – or even to North America for that matter! This presentation will introduce you to a few of the almost 500 species of bees that are native to Georgia and can be found in backyards across Decatur. Learn how they're similar to and different from the honey bee in terms of where they live and what they do. You'll also learn why they're important, how to tell them apart, and how you can help them thrive in your little piece of our ecosystem.

Feb. 26 – “Creating Mosquito Buckets: Protecting Pollinators, Pets, and People”
Katherine Smith, Professor of Visual Practices/Co-curator, *Building on Dana / Patterns in Space*, Agnes Scott College

In this workshop, we will consider the sustainable and activist choices of installing mosquito buckets for mosquito control. These buckets, which use a naturally occurring bacterium, are the least toxic and most effective method of reducing mosquito populations while also supporting bees and other pollinators, who are eliminated by other solutions like sprays.

Come make a bucket and help us spread the word and make the change in our community!

March 12 – “Making Space for Pollinators: Creating Habitat/Removing Invasives”
Allison Ericson, Urban Naturalist, City of Decatur

The City of Decatur has been working on removing invasive plant species and planting natives back into the numerous greenspaces throughout the City. Learn how this initiative is being carried out with the help of volunteers, contractors, and local plant nurseries. Removal and planting strategies will be discussed as well as a new program that supports neighborhood groups helping with this important work.

March 26 – “Supporting Monarchs: Biology and Ecology”
Susan Meyers, Monarch Watch Conservation Specialist

Come learn about the biology and ecology of the Monarch Butterfly, its migration, and the threats that it faces. Plus, discover strategies you can use to create habitat and assist scientists in its recovery.

April 9 – “Planting Natives to Support Bird Biodiversity: A Hands-on Activity”
Indie Lorick ‘26, Community Outreach - People for Pollinators (Bee Campus USA®)

With all of the resources available to help navigate native planting to support local ecological biodiversity, it can become overwhelming. Agnes Scott’s People for Pollinators will introduce and facilitate an activity to guide choices of native plants and instill participants with actionable hope to attract and support native birds.

“Introducing Tree Biology, Health, Care”
Kay Evanovich, Arborist, City of Decatur

Trees contribute so much to urban environments like Decatur. From natural beauty and shade, to rain water capture and wildlife habitat, they’re essential parts of our community. We’ll discuss what our city’s trees need from us and what we can do to help our trees thrive.

April 23 – “Foraging as Ecological Care: Exploring Culinary and Creative Uses for Invasive Plants in Our Neighborhoods”
Eliza Crofts ’22, Lead Gardener, Building on Dana/Ecological Restoration

In this workshop, we will cover a wide variety of uses for common invasive plants, such as harvesting for food, basketry, dyes, and papermaking. We will start a project that participants can complete at home.

"Getting from Bare Dirt to Actionable Hope, Good Nutrition, & Climate Resilience"

Molly Embree, Director of STEM Mentored Research, Bullock Science Center for Women

This workshop will connect the state of our soil (in our yards, neighborhoods, nation, and abroad) to our physical health, to micro & macro-climate resilience, and to food security. We'll examine actual samples of unhealthy dirt as compared to healthy soil, and discuss the actions we can take in a short time-frame to improve climate resilience on our own properties and in our neighborhoods by improving soil health.

May 7 – "Moving Toward IPMs: A Community Conversation," all session leaders

Session leaders will facilitate a conversation about the opportunities and challenges of moving our communities toward developing ecologically sensitive Integrated Pest Management Plans. What are they? Why do we need them for our certifications as Bee City USA® and Bee Campus USA®? How could they support pollinators, pets, people, and our planet? And what can we do now? And next?

This final session will start earlier, at 5:00, with mocktails in the courtyards of the Dana Fine Arts Building, Agnes Scott College. We will provide mocktails. Please bring a snack to share! We will start our conversation at 7:00 p.m.