HEADLINE: North Coast Gardener Shares Love of Bee-Friendly Landscapes with New Book

TEASE: A new book co-authored by acclaimed North Coast gardener Kate Frey [[FRY]] looks at creating bee-friendly landscapes.

LEDE: Now that we’re well into spring, gardens across the North Bay have been getting some familiar visitors - Bees. And a new book called “The Bee-Friendly Garden” offers ideas to help attract even more of the pollen-seeking insects. . KRCB’s Tiffany Camhi [[KAM-High]] headed north to check out the buzzing garden of co-author and bee-enthusiast Kate Frey.

***AMBI: birds chirping in garden***

It’s a hot and sunny spring day in Hopland and Kate Frey’s [[FRYs]] one-acre home garden is brimming with life.. . It’s filled with blooming yellow poppies and hanging purple wisteria, edibles of all sorts, native manzanitas and many other plants in varying shades of green. AND there are lots and lots of buzzing birds, bees and insects around.

**FREY: Here's a bumble bee that you often see in the spring and you can see the pollen on it. [[Oh yeah, he's carrying a load]].**

Freyhas been designing gardens in Mendocino and around the world for close to 30 years – since starting her career at Fetzer Vineyard’s nearby gardens in Hopland. She says she’s always felt a responsibility to integrate her gardens with its natural environment - building spaces that will invite wildlife in.

**FREY: I hope that our gardens can provide food and shelter and nesting places for them as they either live in or move through our landscapes.**

And now Frey is sharing her knowledge and experience with integrative bee gardens in a new book, “The Bee-Friendly Gardenco-authored with San Francisco State biology professor Gretchen LeBuhn. Frey - who wrote the chapters on gardening - says she wants to make landscapes like hers accessible to home gardeners across the U.S.

**FREY: My heart really is with the homeowner because there are millions of us across the nation and we can make a difference in our cities and neighborhoods in terms of bringing wildlife in and also creating these beautiful, flower-filled gardens.**

She also hopes the book will underline how important bees are in sustaining our environment.

**FREY: Over 80 percent of the world's plants need animal pollination. Bees are the most efficient pollinators.**

**KURTZ: They’re really a part of our whole food system and that makes their importance really huge.**

That’s Christine Kurtz, a honey bee consultant based in Petaluma who works with the Sonoma County Bee Keepers Association.. According to Kurtz, bees forage 3 to 5 miles away from their hives...so their well-being is often an indicator of the health of their surroundings.

Kurtz says communities can help keep bees buzzing through habitat building - like designing and planting gardens that will attract all sorts of animals.

**KURTZ: Native bees, pollinators, birds, frogs...because we know that when we have more than one creature around that they’re just happier. There’s balance in nature.**

***Ambi: walking around Frey’s garden***

Back at Frey’s home garden, there are dozens of bees working away at the blossoms of a native California Lilac.

**FREY: This one has really deep, bright blue blooms and it's also really tolerant of garden conditions. And as you can see it's just covered in bees of many varieties.**

The vibrant shrub is about 8 feet tall and 9 feet wide. Frey says that makes for a significant area of bloom that bees - especially honeybees - gravitate towards throughout the day.

More bee garden pro tips and photos of some of Frey’s lush landscapes are in the new book. Overall, Frey says the book - and her work - is about giving back.

**FREY: I've just seen how transporting and how meaningful a garden filled with life can be to people. It creates an experience.**

I’m Tiffany Camhi for KRCB’s North Bay Report.

BACK ANNOUNCE: If you’re interested in creating your own buzzing garden Kate Frey will be offering two bee-friendly garden workshops. The first is at SHED Grange in Healdsburg tomorrow, Saturday, April 16th at 1 o’clock. Frey will hold another workshop on Friday, April 22nd at 1 o’clock at the Marin County Civic Center Library.