



# Bee City USA Annual Report for 2018 Pollinator Conservation & Education DAVIDSON, NORTH CAROLINA



## EDUCATION & OUTREACH



The Town of Davidson's pollinator efforts are enhanced by a collaboration of many groups, including the Town Livability Board and the Davidson Lands Conservancy Outreach Subcommittee. The Davidson Lands Conservancy includes: WOW (World of Wonder) and TreesDavidson. WOW's mission is to provide families opportunities to explore, discover, and enjoy the wonders of the natural world together. Each of these groups have had a significant impact on moving the Bee City USA effort forward.

Davidson Earth Day Fair, April 21, 2018: Visitors learned about Davidson's Bee City USA designation and how native plants support pollinators. They tasted different flavored honey and learned what foods are pollinated by insect and animals. Children's activities were prevalent throughout the fair: Davidson Lands Conservancy's World of Wonder booth with the N.C. National Wildlife Federation, face painting, and more. TreesDavidson invited visitors to join their efforts to preserve the tree canopy and plant new trees.

Davidson Town Day, May 5, 2018: WOW and Davidson Lands Conservancy partnered with Dearness Gardens to provide the opportunity for young visitors to make a "bug hat," while adults had the opportunity to not only ask questions about pollinators and native plantings, but also to buy some native plants or the DLC Backyard Books (book topics include: butterflies, birds and insects).

Nature Festival/Bee City Celebration, October 21: Davidson Lands Conservancy celebrated Davidson's designation as a "Bee City USA." The event included activities for all ages, plus a fun, dynamic speaker, Phyllis Stiles, of Bee City USA. Celebrations included: Davidson Lands Conservancy and WOW-World of Wonder; Davidson Green School; the Audubon Society; TreesDavidson; Dearness Gardens; bee demonstrations; kids' activities and nature walks.

Throughout 2018, the Town of Davidson and DLC's WOW-World of Wonder scheduled monthly hikes and outings with opportunities to learn about native plants and local pollinators. In May, families enjoyed the "Nature Near and Far" nature expedition led by a local birder, pollinator expert and naturalist. Children and their parents walked local trails to discover all the activities of the local wildlife. Spring migration of birds, came into view with the use of a scope that allowed fantastic views of birds, and participants also took a close-up look at some butterflies, bees and spring wildflowers.

In August, families enjoyed a "Butterflies, Bees, Bugs and Dragonflies" outing. A great time was had by all on this nature expedition with a local pollinator expert and naturalist. A walk along the local trails allowed for the discovery of butterflies, bees, bugs and dragonflies. Participants learned about butterfly life cycles, which species can be found in Davidson, and why they are so important.

Other activities included: A weekly WOW Booth at Davidson Farmers' Market, blogs and e-newsletters. Some of the guests at the Farmer's Market booth included, the North Carolina Wildlife Federation, a Davidson College Professor discussed invasive plants, Mecklenburg County: Water and Soil, the Audubon Society and Carolina Waterfowl.

## POLLINATOR HEALTH & HABITAT



A significant pollinator enhancement event included second graders from a local school who joined Davidson Land Conservancy at a large local park on May 16 to help protect monarch butterflies. Students learned about the importance of preserving pollinator habitats and the plight of the monarch butterflies. The science lab teacher worked with students to create flags marking the milkweed plants in the park so they won't be disturbed. Children learned that milkweed is a native plant to North Carolina and is essential to monarch butterflies' survival. Monarchs lay their eggs on milkweed leaves and their larvae only eat milkweed. Each fall, monarch butterflies migrate south, passing through North Carolina between September and October. In the spring, monarchs begin their return to their northern home. By preserving the milkweed in our parks, we ensure that the monarchs have a safe habitat during their journeys.

Due to collaborative efforts between the County and Town Parks and Recreation Departments, three town parks were improved with pollinator friendly native shrubs and trees.

## POLICIES & PRACTICES



2018 was a productive year for pollinators in The Town of Davidson, and we anticipate 2019 to be even better. Its pollinator efforts are enhanced by a collaboration of many groups including, in particular, the Town Livability Board and the Davidson Lands Conservancy subcommittees (Outreach, WOW-World of Wonder and TreesDavidson). Each of these groups have a focus area: planting, promoting, protecting trees; providing environmental education to families; improving local landscapes at parks; environmental conservation and reform. Most of these groups meet monthly and are supported by dedicated volunteers. This collaboration has had a significant impact on moving the Bee City USA effort forward.

Public Works staff assisted TreesDavidson throughout Town properties, parks and public right-of-ways to plant hundreds of new trees. A focus on planting native species has been promoted throughout town.

The Town is awaiting approval from the Board of Commissions to moved forward with updates to the Planning Ordinance provisions related to landscaping, adding a table of recommended shrubs and trees that includes and notes pollinator friendly species to encourage new plantings as part of development projects. The Town of Davidson is creating an updated version of its Comprehensive Plan now which will allow for an update of policies and practices.

**Recommended Locally Native Plant Species List**—To be developed.

**Regional Native Plant Supplier List**— To be developed.

**Pollinator Friendly Integrated Pest Management Plan**— To be developed.

## CONTACT US!

**Committee**—DLC Outreach Committee

**Website**—<http://www.davidsonlands.org>