

# Bee City USA - Columbus

Report on 2022



## Pollinator Habitat Creation & Enhancement

Bee City committee members with the Blazing Stars CISMA and community volunteers focused on two habitat areas in 2022. Blackwell Pollinator Park and Millrace Park. We removed invasive plant species, installed bird houses and bee hotels and also planted milkweed using seed balls.

*How many habitat projects did you help to create or enhance last year?*

**12**

*How many total square feet of habitat were created or enhanced?*

**413820**

*How many volunteers helped with those projects?*

**223**

*Please check all that describe the habitats your affiliate helped to create or enhance last year with pollinator benefit in mind.*

- Flower garden
- Natural area with tree snags and stumps, and bare areas for ground nesting species
- Meadow
- Native milkweed planting for monarchs and bees (where appropriate)
- Invasive/exotic plant species removal for habitat improvement
- Native pollinator-friendly tree planting
- Rain garden/bioswale
- Roadside/rights of way planting



Educational signage at the 8-acre Blackwell Pollinator Park



Educating volunteers on the importance of why it is important to plant native plants.



Volunteers remove invasive plants at Blackwell Pollinator Park.

## Education & Outreach

Each year National Recreation and Parks Association holds a Parks for Pollinators BioBlitz. It is a month long event in September taking observations of pollinators and plants in our parks and community. Columbus Indiana Parks and Recreation participates each year. Bartholomew County also started a CISMA (Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area) and our Bee City committee is also on the CISMA committee. The Bartholomew County Blazing Stars CISMA educates community members of the devastation invasive plants cause to native plants and animals. One education method we use is called Weed Wrangles. Weed Wrangles uses volunteers to remove invasive plants and encourage native plant growth. And finally in November second graders from Lincoln Elementary School dispersed milkweed seed balls in our Blackwell Pollinator Park.

*How many pollinator-related events did your affiliate host or help with last year (in total)?*

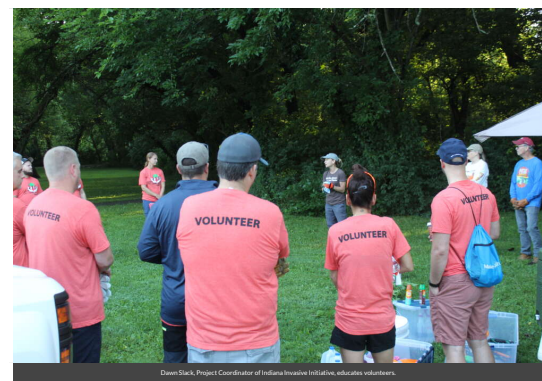
14

*How many people attended those events (in total)?*

223

*How many Bee City USA logo street signs have you installed to date (in total)?*

3



Dawn Slack, Project Coordinator of Indiana Invasive Initiative, educates volunteers.



Member of the Bee City Committee and Blazing Stars work to remove invasive plants at Blackwell Pollinator Park.



Second graders disperse milkweed seed balls at Blackwell Pollinator Park.

## Policies & Practices

The Columbus Indiana Parks Department has teamed up with Purdue Extension, Bartholomew County Soil and Water, Sierra Club and Master Gardeners to create a plan for our habitat areas to reduce the use of pesticides. We are using mechanical removal of invasive plants, ground disturbance such as plowing, as well as no treatment. We are rotating the above treatments for best native plant results.

*What actions have you taken to make pest management practices more pollinator-friendly?*

- **Avoided use of pesticides in public sites containing designated pollinator habitat or other sensitive features (except when targeted use is deemed the best option for invasive or noxious weed, insect or disease management)**
- **Reduced the total area of city or campus-managed lands to which pesticides are applied**
- **Sourced plants for city or campus grounds using “Buying Bee-Safe Plants” methods recommended by Xerces Society. (See <https://xerces.org/publications/fact-sheets/buying-bee-safe-plants>)**
- **Sourced plants for city or campus grounds that were not treated with neonicotinoids**

*Are efforts underway in your community to further reduce pesticide use in residential or business areas? This may include neighborhood-led efforts, outreach to landscapers, etc. If so, please describe.*

**Yes during our Weed Wrangles we discuss what plants not to purchase. If we can educate our community on best practices for backyard gardens, we can reduce invasive plants being spread to our parks which will reduce the need for pesticides.**

*In your city or campus, are any policy initiatives underway to further protect pollinators, people or waterways from pesticides?*

**The parks department does not use pesticides along our People Trails or along our water ways.**

Please describe actions by your affiliate to attend training on ecologically-based Integrated Pest Management and/or to review IPM plans and programs considered of high quality by Bee City USA?

Member of the Blazing Stars CISMA and Bee City committee members attend Regional Invasive Plant Management training sessions hosted by the Indiana Invasive Initiative. These trainings include invasive plant identification and management, habitat restoration and land conservation.

Integrated Pest Management Plan: [IPM.docx](#)

Recommended Native Plant List:

<https://extension.entm.purdue.edu/publications/POL-6/POL-6.pdf>

Recommended Native Plant Supplier List:

<https://indiananativeplants.org/landscaping/where-to-buy/>



Volunteers mechanically removing invasive plants from Hodson Hill habitat area.

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Learn More

<http://www.columbusparksandrec.com>

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Members of the Bee City Committee and Blazing Stars together to celebrate.