

# Bee City USA - Gastonia

Report on 2022



## Pollinator Habitat Creation & Enhancement

Our committee received a grant for a project we designed to create "mini meadows" of pollinator flowers at the 8 Fire Stations and the Farmers Market. We created over half an acre of new mini meadows throughout the city to promote pollinator habitats. 57 volunteers helped this fall to create the meadows at each Fire Station with a final one that will be planted at the Farmers Market in Spring 2023. Students from: Ashbrook, Forestview, Gaston Early College, Highland School of Technology plus board members and other community members helped to complete the project!

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

7

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

21780

*How many volunteers helped with those projects?*

57

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

- Flower garden
- Vegetable garden
- Meadow



Over 57 volunteers helped to create our mini meadows this fall thanks to a grant to promote pollinators throughout our City at 7 Fire Stations.



Our Community Garden has beds throughout that are filled with pollinator friendly plants and when toured by a local beekeeper, he noted that the garden was filled with native bees and he was "really impressed!"



Local neighbors grow vegetables for their personal use in our community garden and one scout group utilizes the bed for educational purposes!

## Education & Outreach

Each year as a committee we host a Beetopia event. Each year our event has grown bigger and 2022 was a great year for us! The purpose for Beetopia is to gather the community to share our knowledge and love of the honeybees & all pollinators. We have created this new tradition at our Farmers Market to have a joyful day for people of all ages to enjoy crafts, activities, while tasting world-class Gaston County honey. Schiele Museum – Gaston County Beekeepers – educated at 15 different events during 2022 and interacted with over 1200 across all events. The Beekeepers Association is a very active association and we are proud they are partners with us in our journey! The Schiele Museum of Natural History has 4 active apiaries on their property and has been educating visitors on bees since they were installed. All visitors can see the apiaries when they visit the farm. They host a "Bug Day" each year where 1,000+ visitors come to learn about all kinds of bugs including bees. Hosted two summer camps titled "Buzz about bees" that educated 26 kids for a week They recently hosted 34 students in bee lab and did cool experiments to replicate how bees pollinate. Keep Gastonia Beautiful was motivated to create unique ways to highlight our Bee City USA affiliation by flourishing our downtown with public art and placemaking through a large mosaic art piece and smaller metal bees that will waggle through downtown. This project, titled "Great Place to Bee" has the potential to create a buzz of excitement and interest throughout downtown. A 20 foot mosaic column was commissioned with honeycomb geometry and Main Street Gastonia architectural elements on the bottom. The placemaking bees are along Main Avenue and educate about the buildings featured or about bees and pollinators along the way leading people back to the column near our new baseball stadium. This project won a national award through Keep America Beautiful, 2022 Innovation Award Learn more here: <https://www.cityofgastonia.com/public-art/great-place-to-bee.html>

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

1

How many people attended those events (in total)?

1500

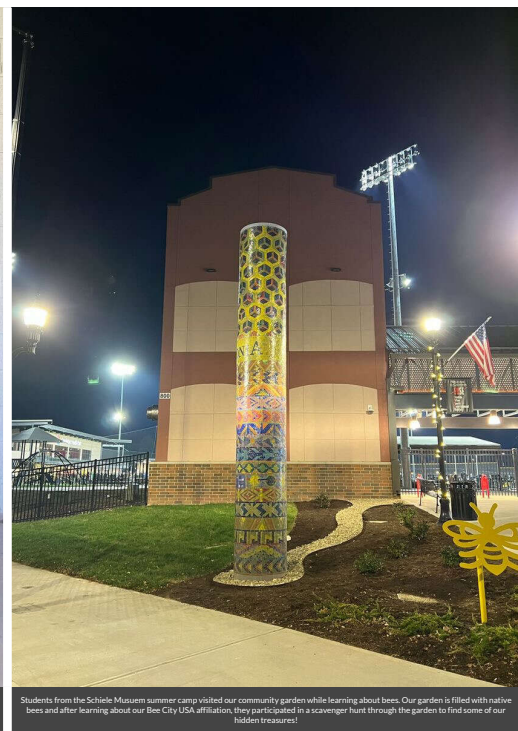
How many Bee City USA logo street signs have you installed to date (in total)?

7

Did your city council/county commission (highest elected body) issue a proclamation for National Pollinator Week last summer?

Please note: this is now an optional activity.

- Yes



## Policies & Practices

City Parks and Recreation staff scout for bugs to minimize pesticide use.

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

- Implemented or maintained a written IPM plan
- 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)
- Implemented non-chemical pest prevention and management methods on city or campus grounds
- Eliminated pesticide uses that are solely to maintain aesthetics on city or campus grounds
- 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>)

*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.*

**We have put out information on social media to educate about the reduction of pesticides for residents.**

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

**Through this committee we continue to grow our pollinator habitats throughout the city and encourage the parks and recreation staff to use IPM practices. With using the IPM we know not to spray near water ways and protected pollinator beds throughout the downtown designated areas.**

*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?*

**Staff take trainings both online and in person on IPM to maintain CE's and gain better knowledge on up to date practices.**

**Integrated Pest Management Plan:**

[https://www.cityofgastonia.com/images/keepgastoniabeautiful/Integrated\\_Pest\\_Management.pdf](https://www.cityofgastonia.com/images/keepgastoniabeautiful/Integrated_Pest_Management.pdf)

**Recommended Native Plant List:**

[https://www.cityofgastonia.com/images/keepgastoniabeautiful/Bee\\_City/2017-049\\_Mid-AtlanticPlantList\\_Dec2017\\_web-3page.pdf](https://www.cityofgastonia.com/images/keepgastoniabeautiful/Bee_City/2017-049_Mid-AtlanticPlantList_Dec2017_web-3page.pdf)

**Recommended Native Plant Supplier List:** [2017-049\\_Mid-AtlanticPlantList\\_Dec2017\\_web-3page.pdf](https://www.cityofgastonia.com/images/keepgastoniabeautiful/Bee_City/2017-049_Mid-AtlanticPlantList_Dec2017_web-3page.pdf)

<https://gardeningwithcreekside.com/>

Learn More

<https://www.cityofgastonia.com/bee-city-usa.html>

juliannL@cityofgastonia.com

<https://www.facebook.com/keepgastoniabeautiful>

[https://www.instagram.com/kgb\\_nc/](https://www.instagram.com/kgb_nc/)





Staff and committee members at Beetopia join for a quick photo during the event.

