

# Bee City USA - Lexington

Report on 2022



## Pollinator Habitat Creation & Enhancement

Nine pollinator habitat projects were either created or enhanced last year: • The Lexington Bee Company maintains hives at a community garden, a town-owned heirloom orchard, and a vegetable garden maintained by Lexington's faith communities for donation of produce to our town's food pantry. • The Lexington Native Plant Nursery supplied 1200 plants for installation at four locations: Dunback Meadow and Parker Meadow town conservation land and two locations adjacent to the Minuteman Bikeway. • One of the two bikeway locations is the Brown Homestead project of Lexington Living Landscapes, where they are seeking to replace a knotweed colony of about 7,000 square feet with a native plant meadow. This past year was the second year of the project. Volunteers continued to remove knotweed shoots while planting and watering natives through the summer drought. A path through the meadow-to-be was also created with assistance from town conservation staff and with wood chips provided by our Department of Public Works. • The Conservation Division conducted meadow restoration management on two Conservation Areas, Daisy Wilson Meadow and West Farm. 2022 was the second year of Meadow Preservation at Daisy Wilson Meadow resulting in approximately 290 non-native invasive plants removed and 149 native trees, shrubs, and herbaceous pollinator friendly plants planted, enhancing 2.7 acres of meadow habitat. The first year of restoration management began at West Farm mainly focused on non-native invasive plant management including but not limited to working collaboratively with the University of Rhode Island on the use of a biocontrol for management of black swallow-wort.

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

9

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

560000

*How many volunteers helped with those projects?*

70

*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
- Orchard

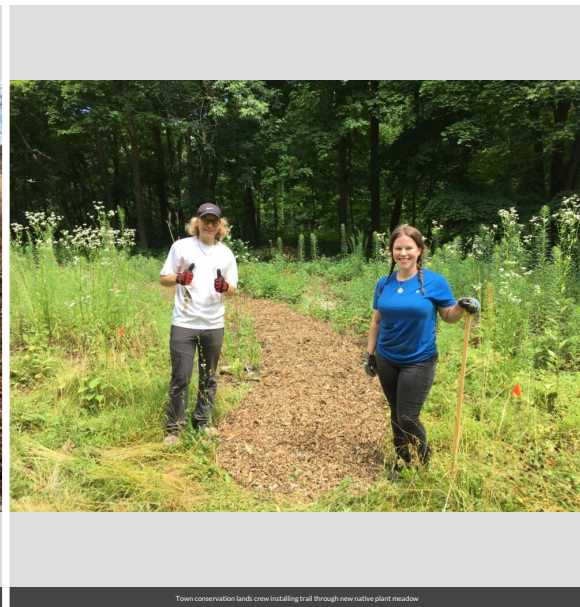
- Natural area with tree snags and stumps, and bare areas for ground nesting species
- Meadow
- Pollinator-friendly lawn (with flowering clover, dandelions...)
- Native milkweed planting for monarchs and bees (where appropriate)
- Invasive/exotic plant species removal for habitat improvement
- Native pollinator-friendly tree planting
- Native pollinator-friendly shrub border/hedgerow planting



Town of Lexington's Native Plant Nursery



Planting of pollinator-friendly plants grown in the town's native plant nursery at site adjacent to Minuteman Bikeway



Town conservation lands crew installing trail through new native plant meadow

## Education & Outreach

Educational presentations: Lexington Living Landscapes, with support from Cary Memorial Library and the Lexington Conservation Division, offered the following programs online via Zoom during 2022: • Rebecca McMackin on The Language of Flowers: An Introduction to Pollination Ecology • James Lowenthal on It's Nighttime–It's Supposed to be Dark! • Uli Lorimer on Native Plants for Your Garden • Dan Jaffe Wilder on Kill Your Lawn • Chris Cratsley on Fireflies from Lexington and Beyond: Their magic, mystery and conservation • Stephen Vernon and Greg Mosman on What Every Homeowner Should Know About Their Trees • Desiree Narango on Landscaping for Birds and Pollinators at Home Two field walks focused on insects were hosted by, respectively, the Lexington Conservation Division and Lexington Living Landscapes: • Robert Gear on Bumblebees and the Becology Project • Chris Cratsley on fireflies In addition, Citizens

for Lexington Conservation hosted 26 field walks on Lexington conservation land, including 7 walks focused on birds and 4 walks oriented specifically for senior citizens. The CLC walks are designed to acquaint residents with Lexington's diverse conservation properties and to help educate them about the value of nature and biodiversity. Three sales of native plants were conducted during the year:

- Spring native plant sale. At this event 1200 pollinator-friendly native plants from Bagley Pond Perennials were sold by the Lexington Conservation Division and Lexington Living Landscapes, as well as 50 plants grown in Lexington's Native Plant Nursery.
- Fall native plant sale. At the Lexington Farmers' Market Sustainability Day in September, 200 plants grown at the town's Native Plant Nursery were sold.
- Fall plug sale: A total of 23 flats of plugs of native plants from North Creek Nurseries were sold to area gardeners for use in their projects, coordinated by Lexington Living Landscapes.

Seed distribution events:

- The Lexington High School Bee Club and Lexington Bee Company received a grant from the Lexington Field and Garden Club to package and distribute hundreds of packages of native plant seeds. The residents of Artis Memory Care assisted in creating attractive seed packages.
- Lexington Living Landscapes distributed free native plant seeds from Lexington gardens at two street fairs in the fall.

Native Plant Garden Tour: Lexington Living Landscapes hosted an Open Gardens Day in September, featuring 12 native plant gardens in town; approximately 80 individuals participated in the event.

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

15

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

1475

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

1

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

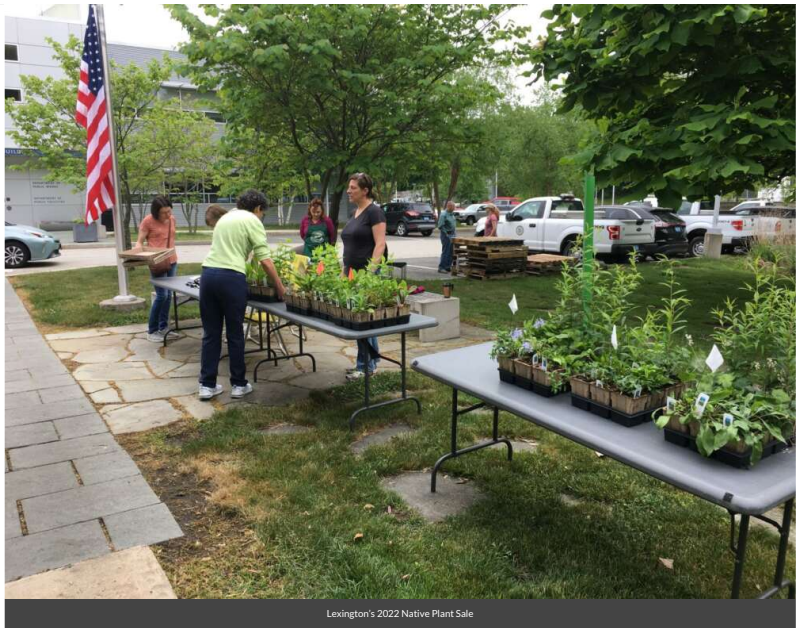
*Please note: this is now an optional activity.*

- No





Lexington High School Bee Club members preparing native plant seed packets for distribution.



Lexington's 2022 Native Plant Sale

## Policies & Practices

Field and meadow habitats on Conservation Areas across town are mown once annually to maintain the open habitat. This mowing occurs late in the season after plants have had adequate time to go to seed to ensure there is a healthy seed bank maintained for desired species. The Conservation Division is also targeting 1-2 of their field and wet meadow habitats every few years for restoration management to proactively remove encroachment, manage non-native invasive plants, and actively restore with native species including pollinator friendly species when appropriate.

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

- Implemented or maintained a written IPM plan
- Implemented non-chemical pest prevention and management methods 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.*

Lexington Living Landscapes promotes chemical-free gardening through their newsletter, website, and online programs. One page of the website lists landscapers who provide organic lawn care.

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

Any plantings within wetland jurisdiction across town require straight native/ non-cultivar species. The Conservation Division includes a plant list that permit applicants can choose from and includes sources on where those plants can be purchased. Many of the sources grow these native non-cultivar plants organically without the use of synthetic pesticides.

*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?*

**Integrated Pest Management Plan:**

**Recommended Native Plant List:**

**Recommended Native Plant Supplier List:**

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