

Bee City USA - Madison

Report on 2022

Pollinator Habitat Creation & Enhancement

General Parks pursued native plantings at a variety of sites both small and large-scale in 2022. As always, both East and West Parks manage over 511 acres of Managed Meadow land. These meadows feature native forbs and grasses and are managed to control invasive species. Parks also added 7 new native plantings around Park signs and in parking lot or building planters. Additional pollinator plantings were added to another 13 Parks across 17 acres. Conservation Parks continues to manage its 1,600 acres of land as ecosystems native to SW WI. ____ volunteers assist Conservation Parks in prescribed burns, invasive species control, native plantings and other activities that enhance and preserve this native habitat. Olbrich Botanical Gardens participated in No Mow May in 2022, excluding the 16,300 sf Great Lawn from mowing as well as smaller lawn areas. Olbrich installed educational signage to raise awareness of this initiative. Olbrich also offered a “Keystone Species” plug tray mix at their seasonal Plant Sale. The idea of the sale is to encourage residents to plant a pollinator planting at home. Olbrich planted 4,000+ early-blooming bulbs in the native prairie dropseed garden along their busy Atwood Ave frontage to provide nectaring plants and interest from March – June. Engineering pursues invasive species control and native plant restoration across its 1,600 acres of stormwater land. Since 2005, all new stormwater land has been required to be planted with native prairie and wetland species. Engineering manages this land with a routine of minimal mowing across sites with lower native plant diversity (once annual mow), and hands-on vegetation maintenance for higher diversity native planting sites. The primary means of invasive species control is hand or mechanical control with approximately 30% of in-house staff time spent pulling, digging and spot mowing weeds. Engineering also plants thousands of native plants annually in resident-maintained terrace rain gardens that take up stormwater from street runoff, as well as in City-owned rain gardens and pollinator plantings. Engineering staff and Operation Fresh Start youth crew collect native seed to be sown back onto Engineering land and offered to residents at educational events. In 2022 Engineering collected 300 lbs of clean native seed from 94 species. The estimated value of this seed is \$55,000. Engineering administers an Adopt-a-Median volunteer program of about 150 volunteers, providing funding to residents wishing to maintain plantings in medians and roundabouts. Engineering provides educational materials, planting plans and partners with Dane Co’s plant sale to provide free native plants to encourage volunteers to select native plants for these areas. Engineering planted a new educational native pollinator planting in a highly visible location in front of the Madison Municipal Building in 2022. The two planters feature pollinator favorites such as prairie dropseed, meadow blazing star, showy goldenrod and many others. Bee City USA signs and plant labels were placed in the planters to enhance the educational nature of the site.

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

480

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

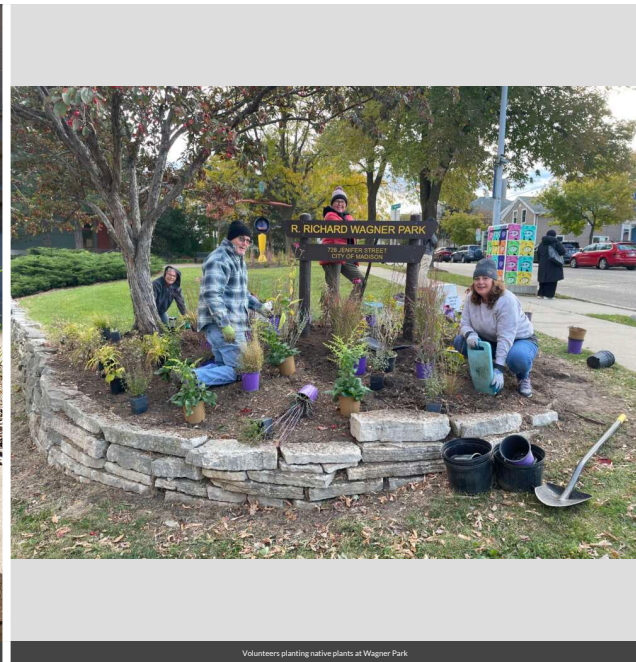
173280000

How many volunteers helped with those projects?

764

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
- 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
- Rain garden/bioswale
- Roadside/rights of way planting



Education & Outreach

Olbrich Botanical Gardens hosted the annual “Blooming Butterflies” event that offers participants the opportunity to release newly hatched butterflies into the conservatory, as well as to learn about native pollinators, and participate in an I-Spy Pollinator activity that includes information on: 1). Creating habitat by planting native flowering plants, leaving plant material standing through winter to provide nesting habitat for insects, and say “no” to insecticides, and 2). Support conservation by volunteering with local prairie restoration botanical garden or arboretum, participate in citizen science projects, and donate to pollinator friendly organizations. Olbrich also hosted the following classes: • Gardening for Pollinators (18 people participated) • Sustainable Successes Garden Walk (17 people participated) • A Walk Through Olbrich: Replacing Lawn in Your Garden (25 people participated) • Butterfly Photography (13 people participated) • Discovering Olbrich’s Insects Walk (13 people participated) • Planting a Prairie (15 people participated) • Seed Saving Workshop (19 people participated) • A Year in the Garden (11 people participated) • The Ultimate Caterpillar Garden (16 people participated) • Recycling Garden Debris: Functional and Funky Ways to Conserve Organic Matter for a Healthier Garden (33 people participated) • Benefits of Native Plants: Getting Started (83 people participated) • Woody Plants for Butterflies (15 people participated) We hosted a Little Sprouts Gardening series titled Summer Bugs that highlighted pollinators (including monarchs). 226 children and 231 adults participated. 25 students (3-5 years old) from Dempsy Road Head Start Program (Reach Dane) also participated in the series. Olbrich also hosted a “Butterfly Action Day” bringing together organizations invested in butterfly conservation. Each organization had a booth where they shared conservation resources and offer activities for children. Organizations at the 2022 Butterfly Action Day included Aldo Leopold Nature Center, Friends of Pheasant Branch Conservancy, Friends of Wisdom Prairie, Lussier Heritage Center, Madison Children’s Museum, Madison Public Library, Quercus Land Stewardship Services, and The Nature Conservancy. There were over 1,000 visitors during Butterfly Action Day. Engineering Dept. hosted a booth about native plantings on stormwater land at the Wingra Watershed event in spring. Staff had photos and information on native plants and passed out native seed.

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

35

How many people attended those events (in total)?

27123

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

3

*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.*

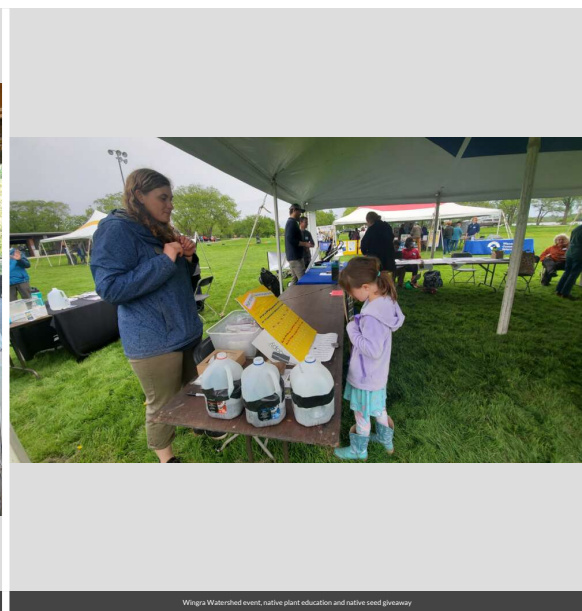
- Yes



Monarch Tagging at Oberlin Botanical Gardens Butterfly Action Day



Pollinator education class at Oberlin Botanical Gardens



Wingra Watershed event, native plant education and native seed giveaway

Policies & Practices

Across agencies that manage land as natural area or maintain plantings, an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach is encouraged. Engineering and Parks, as the two largest land-owning City agencies, are closely aligned in their use of an IPM approach that seeks to minimize pesticide use and manage invasives with a regimen of monitoring, exclusion and mechanical pest control as a first line of defense. Conservation Parks has employed goat grazing continually since 2020 as a means of woodland restoration. Sites that are overrun with invasive woody species are grazed intensively on a rotational regimen over the course of several years. Native herbaceous seed is then sown, and prescribed fire is eventually returned to degraded oak woodland habitats to benefit native herbaceous species and set back invasive woody plant growth. Engineering pursues a robust regimen of timed spot mows to control invasive species on stormwater land. In that stormwater land is primarily vegetated with grassland and wetland species, timing mows for when invasive plants are in bloom can very often be an effective means of setting back growth and creating opportunities to reintroduce native plants or encourage growth of native plants already on site. General Parks has continued to create and maintain “managed meadow” sites in general parks. Managed meadows are sections of general Parks that were formerly underutilized turf grass. By reducing or eliminating mowing and introducing native species into these areas, they have been able to create valuable pollinator habitat that is managed almost exclusively with occasional mowing rather than a more traditional approach to starting and maintaining native plantings in turf areas that might have involved an initial application of pesticides to kill off existing vegetation.

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)

- Implemented non-chemical pest prevention and management methods on city or campus grounds

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.

In general, City of Madison residents are environmentally minded and continue to let City staff know that reducing pesticide use is something they value. This is reflected in official City policy and guiding documents such as the Pollinator Protection Task Force recommendations, the Urban Forestry Task Force Final Report, and continued updates to the Madison Sustainability Plan. Some specific approaches City have taken to reduce pesticide use include: A major redesign and revegetation effort at Glenway Golf Course that removed underutilized turf/green areas from turf and replanted to native prairie, restored native savanna where stands of oak present, and replanted or replaced trees with native species. The redesign sought to enhance biodiversity and native pollinator habitat and reduce the need for inputs such as pesticides to maintain turf. This year City of Madison endorsed a “Low Mow May” approach, relaxing city ordinances surrounding mowing and allowing private landowners to reduce mowing to just one mow in May. Common lawn weeds such as wood violet, dandelion and white clover provided valuable early-season food sources for foraging insects.

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

The Integrated Pest Management Policy Update Task Force that convened in 2019 and dismissed at the start of the pandemic in 2020 is still in the process of being reinstated. This task force will update the City’s Pesticide Use Policy with an emphasis on an IPM approach.

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?

In 2022 two City of Madison Engineering employees attended the Bee City USA Open House: Pesticide Reduction Strategies discussion in July.

Integrated Pest Management Plan: [PesticidePolicyOnCityProperty.pdf](#)

Recommended Native Plant List:

<https://www.cityofmadison.com/engineering/stormwater/programs-initiatives/rain-gardens/rain-garden-plant-list>

Recommended Native Plant Supplier List:

Learn More

