

Bee City USA - Rapid City

Report on 2022

Pollinator Habitat Creation & Enhancement

New pollinator habitat was created in 2022 when our committee partnered with the Rapid City Sustainability Committee, West Boulevard Neighborhood Association, and Rapid City Parks & Recreation Department to plant two 8' by 18' beds at Wilson Park with a pollinator-friendly seed mix, native plants, and cosmos flowers, rather than the usual monoculture of flower plantings. The pollinator beds are highly visible to park visitors and a pollinator-friendly garden sign was posted for the public. The beds grew very well over the summer and were left in a natural state at the end of the growing season to provide pollinator habitat over the winter. The Pennington County Master Gardeners also created new pollinator habitat with a project at Storybook Island, a local children's playground with attractions based on children's book characters. Two beds were planted based on the theme of Mr. McGregor's Garden from Peter Rabbit. One 3' by 18' bed was a vegetable garden and the other 3' by 24' bed was a sensory garden for children to smell, touch, etc. Both beds were designed and planted with benefiting pollinators in mind. In addition, multiple garden talks were given by master gardeners over the summer to teach kids about gardening and growing plants. In addition, several enhancements were made to the Rapid City Garden Club's Bee Garden prior to their dedication event (see above). The improvements included the addition of a fence to keep out deer, installation of bee hotels and garden art, bee-themed stepping stones, and general sprucing up.

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

5

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

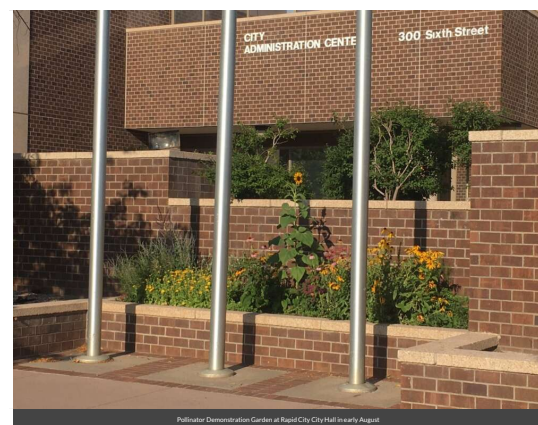
3009

How many volunteers helped with those projects?

30

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
- Pollinator-friendly lawn (with flowering clover, dandelions...)



Education & Outreach

Our main pollinator event was held during the celebration of Pollinator Week. On June 18, 2022, our committee hosted a pollinator education booth at the Black Hills Farmers Market. The booth featured an observation hive populated by a local beekeeper, a prize giveaway of pollinator-themed books for those who stopped to talk with us, free packets of pollinator habitat and forage seeds, kids' activities like temporary tattoos and a bee/butterfly coffee filter coloring and clothes pin craft, and information on native plant species and the importance of pollinators. We saw really good turnout thanks to nice weather. We were encouraged to find many others in the community were interested in learning more and some were also aware and passionate about this issue. The Mayor also issued a Pollinator Week proclamation and a press release was sent out to the local news media. Also during Pollinator Week, the Rapid City Garden Club held a couple of events that were open to the public. The club held an outdoor gathering at the Canyon Lake Park Butterfly Garden which they have maintained for several years. This event was intended to provide garden club members an opportunity to visit the butterfly garden and to educate children on pollinators and what habitat they need to thrive. The Rapid City Garden Club also dedicated a Bee Garden in honor of the club's 75th anniversary on July 28, 2022. The bee garden dedication was chosen by the club to support Rapid City's Bee City USA designation. Rocks painted with a bee image were hidden in gardens throughout the community with information about the event and inviting the public to attend. At the dedication, a program was given by the club president which talked about the importance of bees and other pollinators, information about the importance of pollinators and how to help them was provided to the public, and bee-themed prizes were given to adults and children. A local City Council representative also attended this event. Lastly, the Rapid City Sustainability Committee provided pollinator-friendly seed packets and information at their annual Earth Day event on April 22, 2022. This event was held at the Dahl Fine Arts Center and included a documentary screening by local high school students, a showing of the movie 2040, tabling by local environmental organizations, food truck, and prize giveaways. People were excited to pick up the seed packets for spring planting and were encouraged to take as many as they had room for to grow.

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

2

How many people attended those events (in total)?

200

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.

- Yes



Policies & Practices

Our affiliate has drafted a basic integrated pest management plan that will be a framework for pollinator-friendly pest management on city managed land, especially our parks system and greenway. We intend to develop it further with specific information on the pests we encounter, pesticides that we apply now, pesticides we'll use or avoid in the future, and a plan delineating which areas will not receive pesticides. Mosquito management is a hot topic in our city even though our dry climate doesn't facilitate as large a mosquito population as wetter parts of our state. However, since a majority of our parkland is located along Rapid Creek, our parks and recreation areas are where mosquito populations tend to concentrate. Our current practice of mosquito management has largely moved away spraying adulticide, focusing more on using brickettes in surface waters to prevent larvae from maturing in the first place. Our Parks Division has done a good job of communicating with the public about when mosquito spraying will be taking place (only on calm nights) and alerting the city's beekeepers to cover their hives when they'll be applying in their area. In drier years, we have avoided spraying adulticide completely. Another focus of our IPM plan will be reducing areas of non-native plants. By increasing native pollinator habitat in our parks, meaning taller native grasses, wildflowers, bare spots, snags, etc. that can become a safe

haven for bees and other pollinators, we hope to force out broadleaf weeds which easily take hold in non-native turf and flower beds. The reduction of turf will allow our Department to cut back on mowing, should reduce pesticide application, and benefits pollinators all at the same time. Establishing new natural areas will inevitably invite the growth of toxic native plants or invasive species. We plan to be more proactive in manually removing such plants where feasible and targeting bee-safe pesticides at species which do not respond well to manual removal, such as Canada thistle.

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)

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.

Not at this time

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

None at this time

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?

No additional trainings were attended by committee members in 2022. We continue to read and reference the Xerces Society newsletters, articles, and resources for general information on pesticide use and IPM plans created by other affiliates. The EPA website also has useful pages which describe how pesticides are regulated, how to read labels, etc.

Integrated Pest Management Plan: [Rapid City IPM Plan_Feb 2023 Draft.pdf](#)

Recommended Native Plant List:

<https://www.pollinator.org/pollinator.org/assets/generalFiles/BlackHills.2020.ver2.pdf>

Recommended Native Plant Supplier List: [Recommended Native Plant Supplier List for Rapid City.pdf](#)

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