

Bee City USA - Athens

Report on 2022

Pollinator Habitat Creation & Enhancement

The Environment & Sustainability Commission (the Bee City USA Committee for the City of Athens) works with the Athens Arts, Parks & Recreation Department; Athens Shade Tree Commission; City Administration; Ohio University Center for Campus and Community Engagement, Office of Sustainability and Campus Grounds Department; and local citizen volunteers on two main "events" (made up of multiple work sessions) each year to maintain and enhance pollinator habitats in the city: Athens Beautification Month and Athens in Bloom (part of America in Bloom initiative). As part of these events community members volunteer to clean-up, maintain and plant pollinator and other flower species in city areas including roundabouts, traffic islands, parks, stormwater control bioretention areas and landscape beds and baskets. In 2022 the Athens Arts, Parks & Recreation Department also launched a multi-year initiative to recover a riparian area between the Community Center and the Hocking River from invasive species and to replace them with pollinator habitat. While that 243,000 sq ft area has yet to be planted with pollinator friendly plants I have included the measurement in the total above. Volunteers have not yet been requested for that area, a contractor has removed invasive species and we are waiting for the next phase to begin. The committee did not host, but supports, the weekly work of the Wistendahl Native Plant Garden volunteers. The Committee annually hosts a project to maintain Mike Stanley Park along the Hockhocking Adena Bikeway, including in 2022.

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

8

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

250000

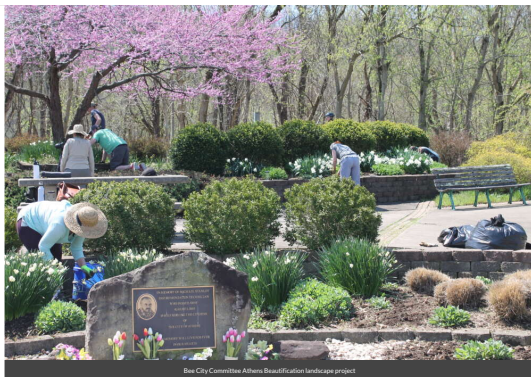
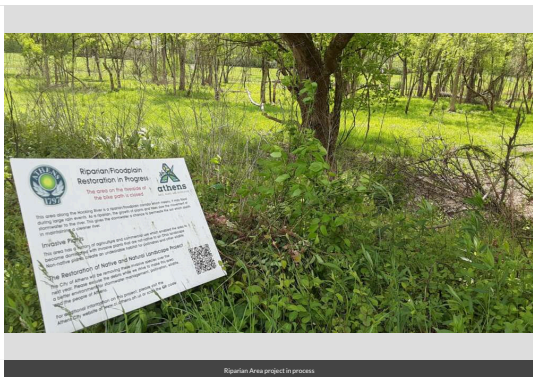
How many volunteers helped with those projects?

50

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

- Flower garden
- Meadow
- Pollinator-friendly lawn (with flowering clover, dandelions...)
- Invasive/exotic plant species removal for habitat improvement

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



Education & Outreach

The Environment & Sustainability Commission (the Bee City USA Committee for the City of Athens) works with the Athens Arts, Parks & Recreation Department; Athens Shade Tree Commission; City Administration; Ohio University Center for Campus and Community Engagement, Office of Sustainability and Campus Grounds Department; and local citizen volunteers on two main "events" (made up of multiple work sessions) each year to maintain and enhance pollinator habitats in the city: Athens Beautification Month and Athens in Bloom (part of America in Bloom initiative). As these events reach out to both the campus and local communities for participation and are educational for students I am including the information here and below. As part of these events campus and community members volunteer to clean-up, maintain and plant pollinator and other flower species in city areas including roundabouts, traffic islands, parks, stormwater control bioretention areas and landscape beds and baskets while university students are also learning from experienced volunteers. The Committee attended a City of Athens Boards and Commissions event open to the public and included pollinator information. Committee members collaborate annually to celebrate Earth Day through an Earth Day Parade and Earth Day Celebration fair where Bee City and pollinator information is shared. Pollinator information is also regularly shared at Athens City Council meetings. Wistendahl Garden volunteers also hold educational outreach activities at the Garden just in front of the Athens Community Center.

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

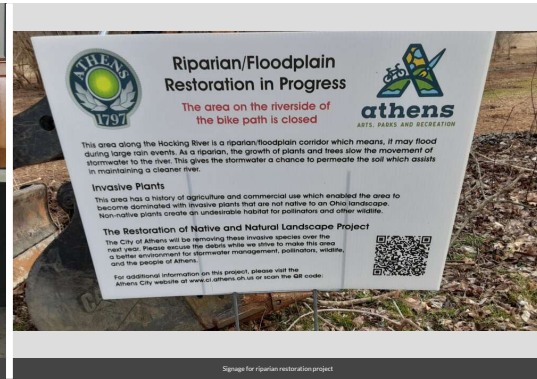
4

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

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



Policies & Practices

The Committee established mowing guidelines for the City of Athens to protect naturalized and native areas. Unfortunately the Committee has received very little information from Lands & Grounds Department on pesticide use and the adoption of an IPM plan but we will continue to seek their support. I was not able to check boxes above due to a lack of information but there may be additional boxes that can be checked. I am confident we will have more progress in this section by our next renewal.

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

- Distributed educational materials to residents or students to encourage the reduction or elimination of pesticide use
- Encouraged developers and private landscapers to source plants 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.

City of Athens Pollinator Program will help to reduce pesticide use, as will Environment & Sustainability Commission (Bee City Committee) adoption of Biodiversity Conservation Plan.

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

A Biodiversity Conservation Plan has been added to the City's Sustainability Action Plan.

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?

The Commission is working with the City of Athens to review Ohio University's IPM plan for adoption on city property.

Integrated Pest Management Plan: [Pollinator Application DCI Final.pdf](#)

Recommended Native Plant List:

<https://www.ci.athens.oh.us/630/Pollinator-Gardens>

Recommended Native Plant Supplier List:

<https://www.ci.athens.oh.us/630/Pollinator-Gardens>



Riparian project signage

Learn More

<https://www.ci.athens.oh.us/316/Environment-and-Sustainability-Commission>
scrowl@athenscitycouncil.com

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

<https://www.instagram.com/cityofathensoh>

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Bee City Committee 2022