

# Bee City USA - Davidson

Report on 2023

## Pollinator Habitat Creation & Enhancement

*Please describe pollinator habitat creation or enhancement projects in your community in 2023, and whether your committee hosted them or not.*

Beaty park, a local park that consists of approximately 20 acres of land at the northern entrance into Davidson and Mecklenburg County, now features five raised demonstration garden beds, and a pollinator maze garden. Approximately two-thirds of the parkland allows for passive recreation with newly enhanced trails, foot bridges, and a small pond. In partnership with the Davidson Lands Conservancy, high school volunteers, conservation professionals, and teachers supported a significant invasive plant removal as well as created bird nested materials to augment habitat areas at the park. The newly formed Davidson Lands Conservancy Wildlife Enhancement Collaborative was established to support biodiversity in one of the largest town parks, Fisher Farm. Efforts are in partnership with the Town of Davidson, and Davidson College. Work is underway to enhance ecological diversity which began in 2023. This work includes meadow restorations that are aimed at creating sustainable natural prairies which will encourage healthy pollinator habitats. As in past years, volunteers helped monitor and enhance naturally occurring milkweed protection areas in the park. These areas are now being extended and the planting of wildflowers and native grasses are planned for the near future. Trees Davidson hosted several tree plantings and tree maintenance events on school and park property to enhance native tree canopies and promote pollinator habitats. Many dedicated volunteers made these efforts a success!

*How many habitat projects did you help to create or enhance in 2023?*

5

*How many people (staff, volunteers, students, partners, etc.) helped with those projects?*

600

*How many projects benefit monarchs, milkweed, or nectar plantings?*

2

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

300

*Please check all that describe the habitats your affiliate helped to create or enhance in 2023 with pollinator benefit in mind.*

- Flower garden
- Natural area with tree snags and stumps, and bare areas for ground nesting species
- 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
- School garden



Beaty Park Pollinator Gardens (Town of Davidson)



Arbor Day Native Tree Planting (Davidson Lands Conservancy)

## Education & Outreach

*Please describe pollinator conservation events or outreach activities in your community in 2023, indicating whether your committee hosted them or not.*

This has been another busy year for the Town of Davidson and the Davidson Lands Conservancy who lead Bee City events and programs, along with other community partners. The Davidson Lands Conservancy launched a program in partnership with Davidson College called Citizen Science. Education efforts also included summer programming in environmental education through Freedom School, in the summer, and Learn Works during the school year to lead environmental education with underprivileged children. Other programs included: World of Wonder family outings, kids' activities at the Davidson Farmers Market, and nature hikes. There were several opportunities to engage the greater community at events this year including STEAMfest at a local school, Nature Fest, and free native plant give-away at the Davidson Earth Day Festival. All education initiatives emphasize the importance of pollinators through hands on learning activities, these were supported by partnerships with Davidson College and numerous regional nonprofits.

*How many pollinator-related events or outreach activities did you host or help with in 2023 (in total)?*

20

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

600

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

1



Hands-on Fun at Nature Fest (Davidson Lands Conservancy)



STEAMfest Engagement Activities (Davidson Lands Conservancy)



Earth Day Native Plant Giveaway (Town of Davidson)

## Policies & Practices

*Please describe actions taken to make pest management more pollinator-friendly.*

The Town of Davidson North Carolina is continuing to research best practices, is actively phasing out glyphosate use, and exploring organics as they develop. The town is continuing to focus on six parks to reduce turf spraying. The town has also avoided the use of pesticides in all designated pollinator habitat. In the coming year, the town will increase the use of organic products or natural methods used at the six parks. Increase the number of town staff trained on the use of organic products and non-toxic landscape management. Implementing these new methods and products will be a great learning experience and support the creation of an IPM plan in the future that is a good fit for the town. The hiring of a new Town Arborist in late 2023, who is also certified plant professional with the North Carolina Nursery Landscape Association and the a member of the North Carolina Bee Keepers Association and will serve as a great resource to town staff and assist significantly with this effort.

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

Not at this time. Although a Climate Action Plan is underway and includes strategies focused on this topic area. The recent hiring of a Sustainability Manager and new Town Arborist will be great resources for future policy development.

*Did your committee participate in any continuing education on ecologically-based Integrated Pest Management planning?*

Attendance to trainings has been encouraged. We have seen a lot of new turnover, we have recently hired a new landscape crew leader and arborist so we will seek out trainings related to ecologically-based care of our park and town

lands.

*Please check actions you have 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)
- Reduced the total area of city or campus-managed lands to which pesticides are applied

*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.*

A local non-profit organization has started a Citizen Science initiative in 2023, they are still determining their goal areas, but this could be a potential focus. The hiring of a new Town Arborist in late 2023, who is also certified plant professional with the North Carolina Nursery Landscape Association, will likely serve as a great resource to neighborhood and landscapers.

*Any lessons learned you would like to share?*

**Not at this time.**

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Learn More

**Integrated Pest Management Plan:**

**Recommended Native Plant List:** [Native Wildflowers of North Carolina.pdf](#)

<https://ncwildflower.org/native-plant-handouts/>

**Recommended Native Plant Supplier List:** [Sources for Native Plants.pdf](#)

<https://davidsonlands.org>