

Bee City USA - Town of Garner

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.

Invasive Species Removal (hosted) – This year, we hosted two invasive species removal events with 10 staff and volunteers, along with an ongoing project involving a staff member and returning volunteer (with over 16 hours logged). Targeted species include Japanese stiltgrass, Chinese privet, autumn olive, and English ivy. **Native Plant Sensory Garden (enhanced)** – This garden celebrates the five senses of hearing, sight, smell, taste and touch. Each section of the garden appeals to an individual sense. We have selected plants that are native to North Carolina, most of them pollinator friendly. This year, we received a \$250 donation to plant additional nectar plants, including purple cone flowers, blanket flowers, and bee balm. **Pollinator Garden (enhanced)** – We received a donation of 64 native nectar plants (Sweet Goldenrod, Lanceleaf coreopsis, Beardtongue, Blue Mistflower, Narrowleaved Sunflower, Lyreleaf Sage, Spotted Bee Balm, and Swamp Milkweed) from the Garden for Wildlife program (National Wildlife Federation) which we planted in our pollinator garden at the entrance of the White Deer Park Nature Center. **Milkweed Seed Collection (hosted)** – As both a volunteer and educational opportunity, participants of our "Little Outdoor Explorer's Club" program (ages 4-6) assisted staff in collecting milkweed seeds from our Monarch Waystation. **Low Mow Zones (enhanced)** – In 2022, we identified three areas in two parks as "Low Mow Zones." These zones are left alone to grow wild in order to provide habitats for native pollinators. Leaving this land alone allows for pollinators to build a safe and undisturbed home. Leaving seed heads and stems will help our solitary bees have nesting materials, which is something we try to do in other gardens as well. We continue to primarily leave these areas natural but cut back dead plants in late winter to allow plants to begin growing again in the spring.

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?

18

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

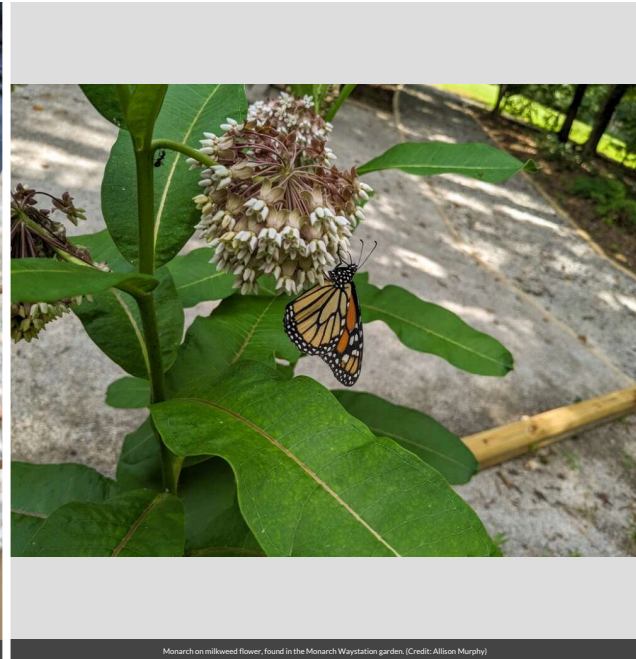
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How many total square feet of habitat were created or enhanced?

115000

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
- Meadow
- Native milkweed planting for monarchs and bees (where appropriate)
- Invasive/exotic plant species removal for habitat improvement



Education & Outreach

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

The City Nature Challenge (international) and Parks for Pollinators BioBlitz (national) are citizen science projects that encourage participants to document wildlife species they find in their area. It helps to create a snapshot of biodiversity throughout the country and/or world, and also spreads awareness about the importance of biodiversity and conservation. For the City Nature Challenge, we hosted a guided hike in which we took a walk through White Deer Park, taking pictures and learning about whatever wildlife species we came across. For the Parks for Pollinators BioBlitz, we hosted two similar guided hikes that focused on cataloging pollinators species. We also led many public

and group programs (around 20 participants each) with a pollinator-focus, including Little Wild Ones: Pollinator Paradise, Prolific Pollinators, and Insect Investigations, as well as larger pollinator-themed events (up to 70 participants each) including Pollinator Party, Moth Night, and Discovery Day: The Flower Moon. These programs focused on educating participants on the importance of pollinators, and a few also allowed participants to plant and take home their own milkweed seeds.

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

21

How many people attended those events (in total)?

396



Policies & Practices

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

We have worked with our Public Works Department (responsible for parks maintenance) to identify areas that do not need to be treated for pests. This includes all pollinator gardens. Our new parks manager, who carries a pesticide applicators license, has been working on invasive species removal in the parks. We remove invasive species by hand if possible, and only targeted pesticide use when necessary.

In your city or campus, are any policy initiatives underway to further protect pollinators, people or waterways from pesticides?
There are no new policies in place regarding pesticides, but we are seeing a shift to more sustainable practices overall. We are hopeful this will trickle down to other areas of operations.

Did your committee participate in any continuing education on ecologically-based Integrated Pest Management planning?
Our Parks & Nature Superintendent attended the "Enhancing Conservation Benefits for People and Nature in North Carolina: Introducing Two New Online Tools" webinar and "CCP Webinar: Aquatic Ecosystem Conservation." Our Outdoor Education and Parks Manager attended the online "ForestHer Pollinator Workshop" series (3 sessions) and the "Nash County Master Gardeners Pollinator Symposium." Our Recreation Program Specialist also attended one session of the online "ForestHer Pollinator Workshop."

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
- Sourced plants for city or campus grounds that were not treated with neonicotinoids
- Encouraged developers and private landscapers to source plants that were not treated with neonicotinoids

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.

Through educational programming, we encourage residents to limit pesticide use and practice environmentally friendly habits. There are currently no efforts to reduce pesticides in business areas.



Parks & Nature Superintendent, Katie Lockhart and Recreation Program Specialist, Allison Murphy during an Invasive Species Removal event. (Credit: Martha Engeman)

[Learn More](#)

[Integrated Pest Management Plan:](#)

[Recommended Native Plant List:](#)

[Recommended Native Plant Supplier List:](#)

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