

Bee City USA - Hawthorn Woods

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.

In 2022, we adopted a Pollinator Pocket Program, which provides our residents with a practical demonstration of proper management techniques in creating a pollinator-friendly garden, and is easily adopted by resident homeowners surrounding each of these neighborhood road islands. No new pockets were added in 2023, but members of our Hawthorn Woods in Bloom Committee, Rotary Club, and Girl Scout Troop 95 all aided in maintaining these islands. New in 2022, our Village began the implementation of our Hawthorn Heritage Outdoor Museum Trail, located within Community Park. This trail features a variety of pollinator gardens and trees dedicated to influential individuals who had an impact in our community. Our Girl Scouts and Eagle Scouts worked together to design and implement these pollinator gardens. They also played a major role in watering and caring for these plants in the midst of the summer heat. In 2023, we were able to add 28 pollinator friendly trees to this trail, in addition to the Leo & Naomi Burnette Memorial Garden. These were influential individuals within the community and were the parents of Phoebe Snetsinger, who also had a memorial garden dedicated to her in 2022. With that, we received a grant in 2022 through the Urban and Community Forestry Grant Program and used that grant money to add the Mark Gibson Pollinator Garden and Library. Over the next few years, the Village intends to plant 5 more gardens throughout our various parks. Indian Creek Nature Preserve was once a 9.5-acre thicket of overgrown vegetation. However, through the extensive clearing and planting efforts of our Village Parks Crew and a diverse group of dedicated volunteers, Indian Creek is now a sustainable woodland and wetland pollinator habitat. These individuals helped to restore this natural habitat and 12 more trees were planted here in addition to the 18 trees planted in 2022. These trees were purchased using grant funds awarded to us from the America in Bloom non-profit organization in partnership with CN Railway. To improve this natural habitat, some fallen trees were also left to provide shelter and other habitat opportunities for ground dwelling species. Indian Creek is open to the public and accessible to all mobilities, located within the Conservatory of Indian Creek subdivision. This park boasts an ADA accessible trail, in addition to ADA benches constructed with recycled materials. All of this is just Phase 1 of our plan to renew this space to its full potential as a sanctuary for pollinators and a way to educate our community on their importance. As a Village, we have worked hard to educate and implement the mass removal of the invasive buckthorn plant throughout the entire community. In total, we have removed buckthorn from 1.5 acres of land in the following areas: Country Meadow Sanctuary; Indian Creek Preserve; Bridlewoods Park; Woodland Park; and Brierwoods Preserve. After the buckthorn was removed, we spread a variety of prairie pollinator seeds over the newly tilled land. This work could not have been done without the help of many individuals from the Hawthorn Woods in Bloom Committee, America in Bloom Committee, Rotary Club, students of Fremont Elementary, and other community members. We are also partnering with and promoting a program offered

through the Ancient Oaks Foundation, in which private homeowners can receive up to \$150 for the removal of buckthorn on their private property.

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

32

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

107

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

32

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

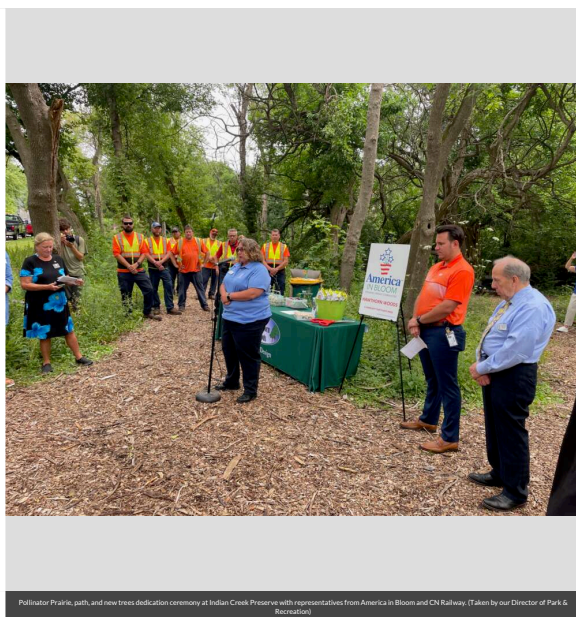
186000

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

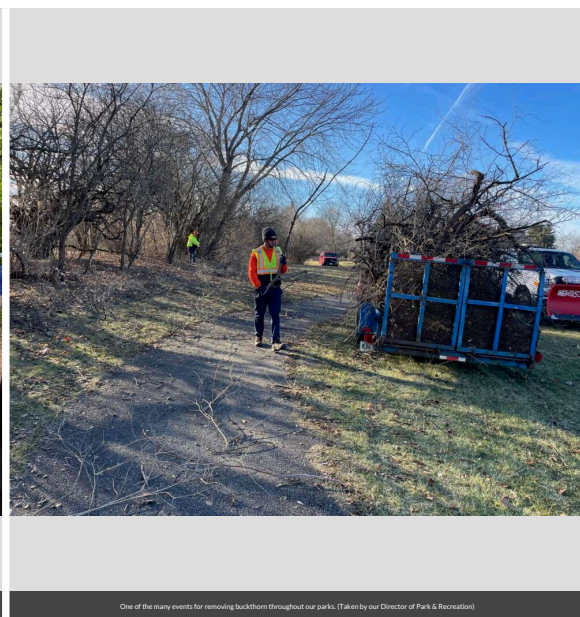
- Flower garden
- Vegetable garden
- Orchard
- Natural area with tree snags and stumps, and bare areas for ground nesting species
- Meadow
- Pollinator-friendly lawn (with flowering clover, dandelions...)
- Herb garden
- Native milkweed planting for monarchs and bees (where appropriate)
- Invasive/exotic plant species removal for habitat improvement
- Native pollinator-friendly tree planting
- Native pollinator-friendly shrub border/hedgerow planting
- Rain garden/bioswale
- Roadside/rights of way planting
- School garden



During one of tree dedication ceremonies, these individuals got to help water the newly planted tree on our Museum Trail. (Taken by our Communications Coordinator)



Pollinator Prairie, path, and new trees dedication ceremony at Indian Creek Preserve with representatives from America in Bloom and CN Railway. (Taken by our Director of Park & Recreation)



One of the many events for removing backhoes throughout our parks. (Taken by our Director of Park & Recreation)

Education & Outreach

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

Since Hawthorn Woods' 2020 designation with Bee City USA, the Village has gone above and beyond in its commitment to expanding pollinator habitat expansion, education, and beneficial practices. In 2023, we were able to conduct Pollinator Week events. Below are examples of the different activities/actions that our Village provided during Pollinator Week: • Various Facebook posts with educational materials, Pollinator Tool Kits, and Pollinator Friendly cooking recipes • A live zoom seminar hosted by the Lake County Bee Keeper's Association • Working with our local Ela Township Library to spotlight books about pollinators • Multiple activities/challenges/crafts with which the public could complete We aim to host another engaging and educational Pollinator Week in 2024. In addition to Pollinator Week, the following are examples of how we educated our community and kept them informed of all things about pollinators. Every year, the Hawthorn Woods Sustainability Committee hosts a public Arbor Day Tree Giveaway event for residents. Tree saplings are purchased from the Mason State Nursery and are distributed to residents with instructions on where and how to plant for optimal results. The selected species are all native to Hawthorn Woods and instructions for maintenance are provided with each sapling. In 2023, 189 cars drove through and received a total of 544 tree saplings for their homes. Each year, unclaimed saplings are retained and planted in one of the Village's parks or preserves by staff or volunteers. In addition to the tree saplings, 257 wildflower and milkweed seed packets were given to those who drove through this past year. These seeds are harvested from our very own pollinator flowers throughout the community by our committee members and the additional seed packets are from the Save the Monarch Group of Buffalo Grove. Our Hawthorn Woods in Bloom Committee members hosted an information table at many of



our community events throughout the year. They distributed informational brochures, as well as seed packets on multiple occasions. These events boasted anywhere from 500 to 800 people in attendance. Many of our village employees conducted educational presentations throughout our community. Our Director of Parks & Recreation led a multitude of presentations both in our community and outside of it. Some topics of these presentations included the importance of Monarchs, planting pollinator gardens, and the variety of pollinators in our area. Our Assistant Director of Public Works also gave a presentation about trees to our Woodchucks Summer Camp, as well as planting a tree with them. In addition to these presentations, our Chief Operating Officer, Director of Parks & Recreation, and Superintendent of Parks were able to attend the Bee City Keynote Speaker at the America in Bloom annual conference in 2023. Educational signs are posted throughout our parks to teach the public about the surrounding habitat. This year, 4 new signs were put in place throughout a few of our parks. We added 2 signs to our Community Park and 2 signs at our Indian Creek Nature Preserve. Along with the educational signs, we continue to provide educational brochures and plant identification pamphlets throughout our parks.

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

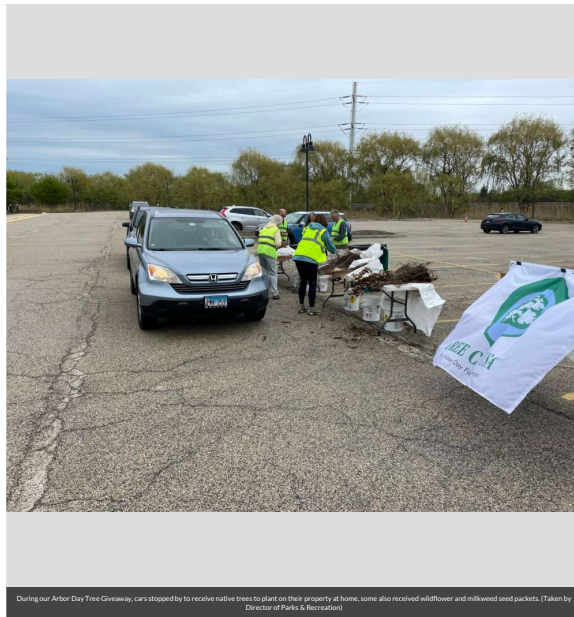
16

How many people attended those events (in total)?

1750



During Pollinator Week, we shared a few different craft ideas one of which was painting rock bees and placing them in a few of the community gardens. (unknown)



During our Arbor Day Tree Giveaway, cars stopped by to receive native trees to plant on their property at home, some also received wildflower and milkweed seed packets. (Taken by Director of Parks & Recreation)



This is the educational sign we added this year along with the memorial garden located at Community Park. (Taken by our Recreation Specialist)



Policies & Practices

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

The Village is proud to continue the Green Business Program of Hawthorn Woods in 2023, and designate another Green Business Award Certification. This program is intended to promote and celebrate green business practices in our community, big and small. Local businesses, including at-home business owners, can learn how to reduce energy costs, manage waste, and support natural landscapes through our Green Business Guidebook and Action Resources. This program is assigned to our Sustainability Committee, who meet quarterly to review activities and identify participants within the community. When meeting, the committee looks to and follows the sustainability steps/requirements recommended by the Lake County Sustainability Committee. In 2023, our Chief Operating Officer was able to conduct a presentation about this program at the National America in Bloom Conference in order to provide other municipalities with information on how they can implement the program within their community. Continuing the Village's environmental efforts, our raised gardens were once again planted and harvested by Village employees. The raised gardens are located at Village Hall and at our Public Works Building, where both flowers and garden vegetables are grown. The purchased plants are organically grown and placed together in plant communities that do not compete with one another. The Village continues to recycle large pieces of wood from trees that have been cut down into container gardens. These large pieces of wood are hollowed out, with drainage holes carved out and then planted up. They can be seen in front of Village Hall and in front of various local businesses throughout our community. They will soon be available for the front porches of our residents. These containers, each one unique, are sculpted by our Public Works Department and can be utilized year after year. This is a 100% eco-friendly initiative. Part of this restoration includes the repurposing of some of these stumps into additional ADA benches for our community. We plan to implement these throughout our parks in the coming years, but this year we were able to have an Eagle Scout create an ADA bench made from recycled material and place it on our walking trail within Indian Creek Preserve. Along with these benches, we have committed to utilize the dead trees removed from the parks as mulch for our public walking/hiking trails that are built to ADA specifications. In June 2022, our Sustainability Committee presented the Urban Forest Management Plan to our Village Board and was approved to begin implementation over this past summer. This plan has 3 elements to it: 1. Our committee reviews the status of all trees in public lands and report the information back to our Village Board. 2. We continually send our staff to training programs/opportunities to learn how to better maintain the forests within our parks. 3. We annually compete for the Tree City/Arbor Day Foundation Growth Award. A continuous effort within our community is the removal of thistle and teasel throughout our parks. This is a constant group effort to eliminate these invasive species in order to restore our natural pollinator sanctuaries. This, along with our use of organic pesticides and all phosphate-free fertilizer, will enable us to further create an environment for pollinators to thrive. Our staff also works hard to educate our village landscapers/vendors on what to cut and what to keep, how to treat certain plants, and what to look for in regards to our various pollinators.

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

Yes, looking to 2024, we are working with our Sustainability Committee to create an initiative for reducing/eliminating harmful pesticide use.

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

Our Director of Parks and Recreation has attended multiple webinars provided by the Illinois Association for Park Districts (IAPD), in-person sessions at the Illinois Parks and Recreation Association Annual Conference, as well as a training conducted by the Morton Arboretum. Our Superintendent of Parks also attended the training through the Morton Arboretum.

Please check actions you have 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)
- Implemented non-chemical pest prevention and management methods on city or campus grounds
- Eliminated pesticide uses that are solely to maintain aesthetics on city or campus grounds
- Reduced the total area of city or campus-managed lands to which pesticides are applied
- Restricted pesticides used to organic pesticides on city or campus grounds
- 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.

Yes, we work with our Homeowners Associations to include information in their newsletters for their residents. Information including, but not limited to, reducing pesticide use/alternative more natural pesticides, and practices that protect and help pollinators.

Any lessons learned you would like to share?

N/A



This is the ADA bench that an Eagle Scout made from recycled material, it was place along the trail in Indian Creek Preserve. (Taken by our Superintendent of Parks)



Everyone from our Village staff to Board Members to community members helped on different occasions to remove loads of thistle and teasel throughout our parks. (Taken by our Director of Park & Recreation)

Learn More

Integrated Pest Management Plan: [Village of Hawthorn Woods EAB Management Plan.docx](#)

Recommended Native Plant List: [NativePlantPollinatorChart.pdf](#)

Recommended Native Plant Supplier List: [Hawthorn Woods Native Plant Supplier List.pdf](#)