

# Bee City USA - Mount Vernon

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.*

Mount Vernon's Bee City volunteers coordinated several activities with Ariel-Foundation Park to improve the 8-acre prairie located at the west end of the park. Volunteers planted plugs donated by Project Wingspan in the spring of 2023, assisted with a controlled burn in the fall of 2023, and assisted with over-seeding the prairie in late fall of 2023. Seed purchased by the park was supplemented with seed collected by Bee City volunteers along with seed donated by Project Wingspan. Another project consisted of re-planting a section of the Kokosing River riparian corridor on the western outskirts of Mount Vernon. The approximately 1.5-acre area was originally cleaned up in the fall of 2022 after an uncontrolled campfire caused substantial damage and pollution. Clean-up consisted of removing burnt trash and partial forest clearing (including removal of invasive bush honeysuckle). Bee City volunteers were granted permission to re-plant this area with native trees, shrubs, and forbs. Over the course of several months (continuing into 2024), volunteers executed several planting events to develop pollinator habitat in this section of the riparian corridor.

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

2

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

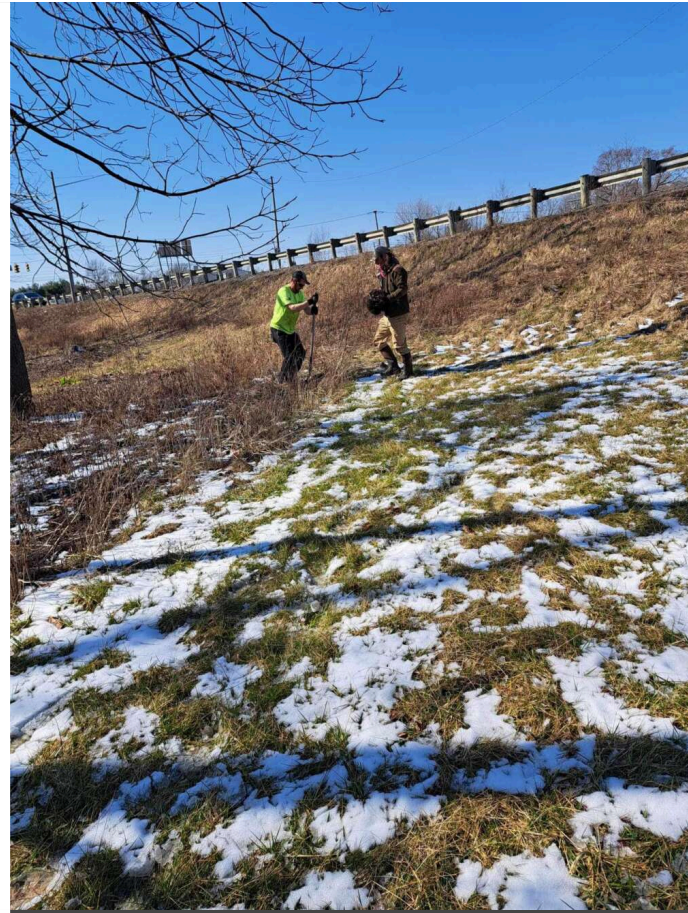
2

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

418176

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

- Meadow
- Invasive/exotic plant species removal for habitat improvement
- Native pollinator-friendly tree planting



Volunteers planting our 150 plus trees and shrubs at the Kokosing River project.

## Education & Outreach

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

Mount Vernon's Bee City Committee successfully partnered with several other local organizations to promote pollinator conservation through education, prairie establishment, prairie maintenance, seed collection, seed sorting, and seed sharing. Notable partners include Kenyon College's Brown Family Environmental Center (BFEC), Pheasants Forever, Experience Mount Vernon, Ariel-Foundation Park, and the Mount Vernon Fire Department. Mount Vernon's Bee City volunteers manned a booth at each of the City's four "First Friday" events—a monthly event held June – September attracting thousands of visitors from Central Ohio—handing out literature and seed packets, as well as engaging with passersby. The BFEC Earth Day Festival and Fall Harvest Festival offered a similar outlet as the First Friday events; however, attendees included students and parents from throughout the country in addition to local community members. Mount Vernon's Bee City was also honored to participate in the local Pheasants Forever "No Child Left Indoors" event, teaching youth about the importance of native pollinators and their habitats. Ariel-

Foundation Park's 8-acre prairie was a large focus for Mount Vernon's Bee City volunteers last year. The Committee coordinated several seed-harvesting events prior to a controlled burn of this prairie last fall. This seed was used to supplement that purchased for over-seeding the prairie later in the fall.

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

7

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

10





Bee City road sign on Martinsburg Road in South Mount Vernon, Ohio.

## Policies & Practices

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

The City of Mount Vernon engages in minimal pesticide use. All pesticide application is done by a licensed employee or contractor, and the most appropriate pesticide is carefully chosen in each instance. All pesticide application is direct application (no broad spraying). Mechanical removal is preferred over pesticide application when practicable.

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

The City of Mount Vernon's stormwater regulations explicitly prohibit illicit discharges to the City's Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4), which is tributary to the Kokosing River—a State Scenic River which serves as a vital habitat corridor through densely urbanized parts of the City. In 2023, the City committed itself to the Mid-Ohio

Regional Planning Commission's (MORPC) Sustainable 2050 Program and the associated Regional Sustainability Agenda. MORPC's Regional Sustainability Agenda's goals include improving air and water quality as well as protecting and preserving natural resources.

*Did your committee participate in any continuing education on ecologically-based Integrated Pest Management planning?*  
Mount Vernon's Bee City volunteers did not participate in any continuing education in 2023.

*Please check actions you have 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
- Sourced plants for city or campus grounds 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.*

Mount Vernon's Bee City volunteers have not begun efforts to reduce pesticide use in the private sector.

*Any lessons learned you would like to share?*

This year, Mount Vernon's Bee City volunteers learned the value of persistence in project execution. When certain projects were canceled or postponed for unforeseen reasons, Bee City volunteers refocused their efforts on other projects and initiatives.



Committee Members at Pheasants Forever event under a very red tent.

Learn More

Integrated Pest Management Plan:

Recommended Native Plant List: [22-021\\_01\\_NPPBI–GreatLakes\\_web.pdf](https://www.xerces.org/publications/plant-lists/native-plants-for-pollinators-and-beneficial-insects-great-lakes)

<https://www.xerces.org/publications/plant-lists/native-plants-for-pollinators-and-beneficial-insects-great-lakes>

Recommended Native Plant Supplier List: [Native plant nurseries.pdf](https://www.xerces.org/publications/plant-lists/native-plant-nurseries.pdf)

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