

Bee City USA - Rowlett

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.

The momentum our committee has built this year is truly inspiring. Together, we are fostering a culture of environmental stewardship and community engagement that will undoubtedly leave a lasting positive impact in our city and its ecosystems. We encourage community involvement in building and maintaining the public pollinator garden, as well as inspiring residents to create their own pollinator gardens using native plants at home. We currently have 3 public pollinator gardens near City Parks. We continue to expand and enhance our pollinator gardens. Our committee organized 2 major garden workdays for pollinator gardens besides other regular garden maintenance and enhancement efforts. Our garden has flourished remarkably this year, boasting a vibrant array of native flowers that bloom throughout the seasons, attracting a bustling community of bees and other pollinators. The Coyle house garden has transformed into a captivating showcase of natural beauty and a source of immense enjoyment. It stands as a testament to the wonders of native plants and the vital role of pollinators in our ecosystem. The garden now serves as an ideal setting for educating others about the importance of native flora and supporting pollinator populations. We continue to identify and award residents' environmentally friendly gardens through the City's Rowlett Smart Yard program coordinated by our committee member in the City's neighborhood planning. Through our committee's outreach effort, we have identified over 20 pollinator home gardens, showcasing the commitment of our community to supporting local ecosystems. Furthermore, we are delighted to witness a surge in interest among residents in establishing pollinator gardens in their own homes, indicating a growing awareness of the importance of biodiversity and habitat preservation across our city. The enthusiasm and commitment from our community underscore the importance of our collective efforts in preserving and conserving nature, supporting pollinators and native plant species. We look forward to continuing our work together in fostering a culture of environmental stewardship towards a sustainable and biodiverse ecosystem in our city for generations to come.

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

3

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

50

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

10

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

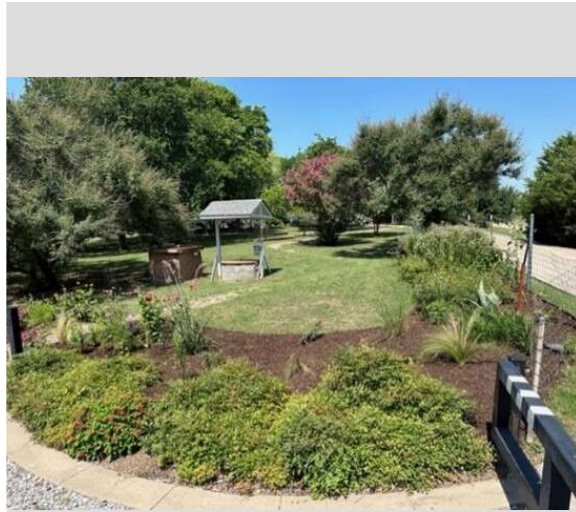
20000

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

- Flower garden
- Native milkweed planting for monarchs and bees (where appropriate)
- Invasive/exotic plant species removal for habitat improvement
- Native pollinator-friendly shrub border/hedgerow planting
- Roadside/rights of way planting



Pollinator Garden Day - Coyle House



Coyle House Pollinator Garden



Bee on Salvia at Coyle House Pollinator Garden

Education & Outreach

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

In 2023, the committee's pollinator conservation events or outreach activities comprised an annual Bee City celebration in conjunction with Rowlett Earth Day to help promote the Bee City USA program initiative, hosting two educational seminars, forming a Pollinator Garden Group with several pollinator garden group meetings, and engaging in community outreach via the Rowlett Smart Yard Program. 2023 has been incredibly exciting for our committee as

we have achieved a notable stride in our outreach initiatives, primarily through educational seminars on Bees & Pollinators, Pollinator habitat and native prairie creation, as well as Nature's value and conservation. These seminars sparked a keen interest in our community to actively engage in pollinator and native plant conservation, leading to the formation of a dedicated pollinator garden group. This group has played a pivotal role in maintaining and enhancing existing pollinator gardens in the city. Moreover, we have identified a considerable number of home pollinator gardens, and witnessed the creation of even more, reflecting a growing commitment to biodiversity and environmental stewardship. Two educational seminars were held this year: one in spring and another in the fall. Speakers from Texas Master Naturalists and Texas Master Gardeners led discussions on the importance of bees, pollinator gardens, nature conservation, and the harmonious coexistence of people and nature. Children's activities related to pollinators education are also included. The events attracted a total of 33 attendees for the first seminar and 27 for the second seminar. Attendees were invited to tour Rowlett Pollinator Garden to see these principles in practice. The committee hosted an Annual Celebration in conjunction with Rowlett Earth Day. A "pollinator lane" was created, where various environmental organizations including Texas Master Naturalists and Texas Master Gardeners showcase the vital role of Bees, pollinators, and native plants. The Bee City table organized by the Bee City Committee was set up to raise awareness about bees and their significance in our Ecosystems, buzzing with excitement as children engaged in educational games designed to raise awareness about bees and their significance in our ecosystem. The enthusiasm was palpable, with a constant stream of residents, especially those with children, eagerly lining up to learn and participate. Informative educational materials and Native plant seeds were given away. Over 50 residents expressed keen interest and signed up for further education and expressed interest in creating pollinator gardens at their home.

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

10

How many people attended those events (in total)?

750

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

2



Bee City Celebration: Earth Day - Bees & Pollinators Education



Bee City Seminar: World Bee Day



Bee City Seminar: Children Activities



Bee City USA street sign next to Pollinator Garden at Coyle House at Pecan Park

Policies & Practices

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

- In 2023 the Parks and Recreation Department, responsible for managing approximately 807 acres of parkland, nature preserve, and City grounds, continues to follow the guidelines noted in the 2022 Integrated Pest Management Plan, which outlines an integrated an environmentally sound, science-based approach to pest management. Properly employed, its goal is to minimize the potential negative environmental impacts of pesticides while providing effective pest control.
- Multiple practices have been incorporated to help minimize the potential negative environmental and

human impact from pesticide exposure, while providing effective pest control management. Our approach consists of no mowing of protected areas until the appropriate time of the season (i.e. inactive growth). Education of internal staff and the public via signage/ad campaign. When feasible it is highly recommended to use organic herbicide/insecticide when in proximity to pollinator gardens. The city is committed to more of a target approach for treatment of pests and weeds; chemical intervention is a last-course resolution. • The Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) policy applications will be performed when windspeeds are 10 mph or less, which will help further lower the chance of particle drift entering the waterways or undesired locations. Interdepartmental discussions take place to ensure consistency across all city departments. • City programs like Rowlett Smart Yard and the pollinator education workshop series that were hosted throughout the year created awareness and offered alternative solutions, such as planting native or adaptive flora that are better suited for the local environment and are more resistant to pests. • The City of Rowlett is an active participant in the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4) program of Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) that implement best management practices to reduce the discharge of pollutants into the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) that includes streets, storm drain systems, road side ditches, streams, rivers and other water bodies. Public education links and more information about Rowlett's storm water practices can be found by visiting the City's Department of Public Works Storm Water Management website.

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

• The City current policy related actions toward people and waterways are highlighted under our two Development Codes, both identifying to some extent environmental conservation, people, and waterways. Article 2.13 of the Rowlett Form Based Code (FBC) focuses to low impact development, conservation, and water quality. Section 77-502 of the Rowlett Development Code (RDC) focus on the protection of creeks and drainage areas, stormwater drainage and flood control within the city, to protect public health and safety, to minimize property damage due to flooding, to limit runoff rates to equitably distribute the cost of necessary drainage improvements, and to minimize the maintenance cost of drainage facilities constructed. • The City of Rowlett is also an active participant in the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4) program of Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) that implement best management practices to reduce the discharge of pollutants into the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4).

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

A member of the committee, Rowlett Parks and Recreation Facilities Superintendent, participated in training related to Pest Management Planning.

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)

- Reduced the total area of city or campus-managed lands to which pesticides are applied
- Distributed educational materials to residents or students to encourage the reduction or elimination of pesticide use
- Sourced plants for city or campus grounds using “Buying Bee-Safe Plants” methods recommended by Xerces Society. (See <https://xerces.org/publications/fact-sheets/buying-bee-safe-plants>)
- 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>)
- 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.

The community of neighbors with pollinator gardens around our city are strong advocates for natural pest control methods to avoid pests and minimize the use of chemicals. Some are active master naturalists and gardeners with extensive knowledge that is shared with the community via social media or public group gatherings.

Any lessons learned you would like to share?

o Volunteer leadership groups in the community were key to assisting with the creation and enhancements of pollinator gardens. o Create a strong foundation by building upon what has already been working well. o Set actionable goals and objectives at the beginning of the year. o Keep notes on what is going well and what requires improvement. At the end of the year this will inform your goals and objectives for the following year. o Training and educating city staff is as important as educating the community. o Departmental collaboration and leadership support is key to running a successful Bee City USA Initiative. o Set aside a budget to run the program, to include training for the committee members. o Understand the communication outlets used by your community to help reach a larger audience (metrics). o Having an assigned staff member engaged in the Bee City USA program is a key component to making internal organizational change. It is recommended that this person has adequate training in all things related to pollinator conservation and all that relates to sustaining a healthy natural ecosystem. o Collaboration among diverse groups within the city, including leadership, community engagement, parks and recreation, neighborhood planning, codes and enforcement and economics, along with Keep Rowlett Beautiful, and the environmentally conscious community residents, is crucial for positively impacting environmental sustainability. This collaborative effort fosters synergy, shared resources, and collective action towards creating a healthier, more vibrant community that prioritizes pollinator habitats and a sustainable environment. o Unleashing the passion, skills, and strength of committee

members, collaborative groups, and residents, is essential to realizing Bee City's shared vision of creating a pollinator paradise, fostering nature conservation, and establishing a sustainable environment. Through collective effort and commitment, we can transform aspirations into tangible actions for a thriving ecosystem and amplify our impact within our city.

- o Inspire individuals passionate about pollinators and nature conservation to step up as leaders and spearhead garden initiatives. By expanding community engagement efforts, we can raise awareness about the importance of pollinators and nature conservation, inspire action, and enroll more people in the movement towards creating thriving habitats for pollinators and preserving our natural environment. Together, we can make a significant impact and inspire positive change for a sustainable environment.
- o To enhance participation in our educational seminars, we should focus on improving our marketing strategies. This could involve leveraging social media platforms, creating visually appealing and informative promotional materials, collaborating with local community organizations and schools, offering incentives or giveaways for attendance, and actively engaging with potential participants through targeted outreach efforts. Additionally, soliciting feedback from past attendees can provide valuable insights for refining our approach and making our seminars more appealing and accessible to a wider audience.
- o Ensuring continued collaboration with environmental organizations like the Texas Master Naturalists, Texas Master Gardeners, and other environmental groups is vital for securing grant support, fostering successful garden activities, and delivering impactful education initiatives. By maintaining strong partnerships, we can leverage collective resources, expertise, and networks to advance our shared goals of environmental stewardship and community engagement.

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Program

City of Rowlett Parks and Recreation Department

Updated November 2022



Rowlett: THE place to live, work, and play.

City of Rowlett IPM



Rowlett, Texas
Bee City Committee



Rowlett Bee City USA Committee 2023-24

Learn More

Integrated Pest Management Plan: [Rowlett IMP PLAN_Final.pdf](#)

Recommended Native Plant List: [Rowlett Bee City Plant List Only Dec 2022.pdf](#)

Recommended Native Plant Supplier List: [Native Plant Suppliers List - North Texas.pdf](#)

<https://www.rowlettx.gov/1947/Bee-City-USA>
cindyhome777@hotmail.com

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