

# Bee City USA - Woodstock

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.*

397 people shared in the creation and or enhancement of pollinator habitats during 33 events outlined below. Events in and around the town of Woodstock: Sustainability Matters held four data collection events involving 41 participants at native meadow plots at the landfill (Making Trash Bloom). Three of the events were "science team" events, which consisted of training citizen scientists to identify native and invasive plants, and to estimate the coverage of each within a 3' x 3' plot and continued planting of pollinator meadows. Through these activities, participants are collecting valuable data about the efficacy of hydroseeding native plants onto a steep landfill slope. This is helping refine the technique so we can plant more native meadows at landfills around the state, as well as on future trash cells, in Shenandoah County in the Woodstock vicinity, as the cells are closed. In the process of helping collect research, citizen scientists are also learning about the importance of native plants (and the dangers of invasive ones) and learning to identify them in their own yards and about the role of pollinators. The fourth event, "big bug bioblitz," participants learned to identify various insects, including pollinators, and determine how well our native meadows are attracting and supporting the pollinators that are critical to our ecosystem. An Eagle Scout project at Seven Bends State Park Playground in Woodstock resulted in the planting of 150 seedlings in December and an estimated 20, 2-inch caliper trees in October. All the trees were mixed genera and species, with the majority being natives. At least 20 people volunteered to plant, which included Boy Scouts, Friends of Seven Bends, Friends of the North Fork and other citizens in a total of 3 events. In 2023, the Woodstock Master Gardeners hosted 11 pollinator events at the Seven Bends State Park involving 107 adults and 172 children. The events included assisting The Friends of the North Fork of the Shenandoah River Group focusing on Gokotta Trail, a beekeeper's informational tour for visitors from across USA including activities such as bee habitat talk, coloring beehive pages, hikes to bee hives and painting beehives, and learning about native pollinator gardens. Other activities included planting native pollinators such as Paw Paws, distributing pollinator plant seed packets, and talks about milkweeds and monarchs. Much of the focus was on monarch habitats and what everyone can do in their own backyard to improve monarch habitats. Town Committee sponsored events: In addition to the 16 events noted above, the town hosted 15 native pollinator planting events with the community which engaged a total of 57 people resulting in a total of 162 plantings of natives in public spaces. Some of the plantings included high school students from the local Central High School, with their teachers, while other plantings involved the Tree Board members with town planning and public works staff.

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

33

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

397

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

33

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

435000

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

- Flower garden
- Meadow
- Pollinator-friendly lawn (with flowering clover, dandelions...)
- 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
- Roadside/rights of way planting



Sustainability Matters Volunteers Measuring Wildflower Habitat at Landfill. Photos by Kara Balcerzak.



Sustainability Matters Volunteers Measuring Wildflower Habitat at Landfill. Photos by Kara Balcerzak.



Mason Bee Outreach at Kids ROC Farmers Market for Pollinator Habitat Activities. Photo above by Katie Mercer, Town staff.

## Education & Outreach

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

1,401 persons were involved in a total of 42 activities in Woodstock vicinity. Events hosted by the Woodstock Bee Community included: 84 persons attended a total of six Tree Board meetings, one day every other month. During these meetings activities are shared by the Bee City committee and pollinator activities are discussed. Approximately 600 people total visited the annual Tree Board table the Shenandoah County Fair, over a period of six days, in Woodstock where pollinator handouts were distributed as well as a drawing to win pollinator plants. Tree Board volunteers and town staff celebrated Arbor Day with 238 second and third graders, distributing native trees and discussing the importance of pollinators and monarchs. The Shenandoah County Beekeepers (SCB) 2023 Bee City USA Pollinator Friendly Activities involved 467 people, listed below. April 22, 2023: The SCB displayed active honeybees and conducted pollinator education talks at the Woodstock Nursery Native Plant Event. 12 SCB Club members participated and approximately 20 members of the public attended the presentation and education talk. May 27, 2023: The SCB participated in the Kids ROC held at the Woodstock Farmers Market. The event showcased demonstration hives and the children built habitats, planted pollinators, and worked on crafts with the children attending. Approximately 10 SCB Club members participated in planning or working the event, and over 30 parents and children attended the event. August 10, 2023: SCB members lead a beekeeping education event for the Seven Bends State Park Junior Ranger program, which included a demonstration hive of honeybees, education talk, hive box painting and a hike to the Seven Bends Apiary. Recurring 2023 beekeeping events: Work days at the apiary at the Seven Bends State Park

Apiary with 10-14 volunteers on average. Members of the public regularly observe the beekeepers in the apiary and interact with them and ask questions about the apiary and the bees. In 2023, approximately 12 work days occurred involving about 10-14 SCB member volunteers and 6-10 members of the public each time. Estimated 15 events with 8 persons per work day, totaling 120 people. Beekeepers' breakfast for public beekeepers is a regular SCB meeting held at a local Woodstock restaurant discussing pollinators, activities, and hive management. Estimated attendees ranged 10 people at 10 meetings, or 100 people. SCB meetings are also held every other month in 2023 at the Woodstock Town Hall. Pollinator education, beekeeping practices and outreach are discussed in each meeting. The average number of attendees was approximately 20 per meeting, or 120 people.

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

73

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

1798

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

2





Town Hall Bee City sign in front entranceway. Photo by Jill Jefferson, Town staff

## Policies & Practices

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

From a town staff perspective, integrating pollinator-friendly efforts into public works' integrated pest management (IPM) practices and collaborating with the town Tree Board are crucial steps in promoting pollinator health and biodiversity. To make pest management more pollinator-friendly, several actions have been taken. Firstly, we have implemented a comprehensive IPM program that prioritizes non-chemical methods of pest control whenever possible. This includes regular monitoring of pest populations, implementing cultural practices to discourage pest infestations, and employing mechanical and biological controls as alternatives to chemical pesticides. Additionally, we have adopted a targeted approach to pesticide use, opting for selective and low-impact products that minimize harm to non-target organisms, including pollinators. Furthermore, in collaboration with the town Tree Board, we have developed guidelines for tree planting and maintenance that emphasize the selection of native tree species known to support pollinator populations. Town planning department follows through on these initiatives encouraging development of sites to utilize preferred native and pollinator-friendly tree and shrub species. By incorporating these pollinator-

friendly practices into our public works operations and planning efforts, Woodstock is actively working to create a more sustainable and ecologically resilient community while safeguarding the health and well-being of our pollinator species.

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

In Woodstock, there are several policy initiatives underway aimed at enhancing the protection of pollinators, people, and waterways from pesticides. One significant measure is the annual passage of Pollinator Awareness Week as a formal resolution by elected officials. This week serves as a focal point for raising awareness about the importance of pollinators and the threats they face from pesticide use. Additionally, our town has implemented a policy directive for planning and zoning staff to actively promote the inclusion of native landscaping and preferred trees and shrubs in landscaping plans for subdivisions and commercial developments. This initiative encourages developers to prioritize native plant species known to support local pollinator populations and contribute to ecosystem health. By integrating native landscaping practices into urban development projects, we aim to create more sustainable environments that benefit both pollinators and people while also safeguarding our waterways from the harmful impacts of pesticide runoff. In addition, Woodstock's public works staff, under the direction of the arborist, has a policy to implement IPM where practicable and to avoid pesticides and fungicides on all publicly-maintained landscaping, unless warranted after all IPM efforts have been undertaken. The Woodstock Tree Board has a policy of an annual Arbor Day native tree sapling distribution to the second and third graders at the local W.W. Robinson Elementary School in Woodstock. The Tree Board members utilize classroom time to discuss the Bee City and Tree City designations and importance of native pollinators. These policy initiatives represent a proactive approach to environmental stewardship, demonstrating our commitment to fostering healthy ecosystems and protecting biodiversity within our community.

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

Yes, our public works arborist attended two IPM trainings, one hosted by Tree Virginia at the Waynesboro Tree Care Workshop and the MAC-ISA Annual Conference in Morgantown, WV.

*Please check actions you have taken to make pest management practices more pollinator-friendly.*

- Implemented or maintained a written IPM plan
- Only use pesticides as a last resort within the 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

- Eliminated use of neonicotinoid insecticides on city or campus grounds
- 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>)
- Sourced plants for city or campus grounds that were not treated with neonicotinoids
- 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.*

An outreach event was held December 2023 with a town subdivision community named Hillcrest Heights to discuss managing a common area prone to flooding. Approximately 16 persons were in attendance with Town staff and a consultants to discuss the importance of native plantings to help with pollinators and reducing runoff.

*Any lessons learned you would like to share?*


Arbor day native tree free tree distribution in our local school schools is a successful event. Also, hosting a booth at the county Fair during “Fair week” with pollinator plant giveaways and handouts draws a lot of attention to the importance of pollinators to the general public. Our town’s Tree Board has been very active in events and the meetings have been growing, attracting new participants such as a local winery as well as local retail landscapers. These new participants have broadened the activities and recommendations thereby helping promote pollinator-friendly activities in the community.

**WOODSTOCK**  
Virginia

Your Government      Our Community      Doing Business

- Notable Trees Program
- Tribute Trees - Commemorative Tree Program
- Urban Tree Canopy Assessment & Plan
- Bee City USA
- Urban Tree Ordinance

## Bee City USA



In October 2020, the Town Council passed a [resolution](#) to be designated as a Bee City. A natural part of the Woodstock Tree Board, we promote native pollinator plantings to support our bee populations thus sustaining our environment and food supply.

### Pest Management to Support Pollinators

Pollinators also thrive with integrated pest management. We are currently in the process of developing an integrated pest management plan. Wherever possible, Woodstock public works is dedicated to using environmentally sound practices on our landscaping that promotes the health of the plant and protects our native bee population. We endorse the principles and practices set forth in the Virginia Cooperative Extension's 2021 [Pest Management Guide](#). The Town's Integrated Pest Management Plan can be found [here](#).

### Best Plants to Attract Pollinators

Did you know that the colors and smells of native plant species can attract pollinators such as bees? We encourage our community consider planting native pollinators such as those included in this list to help save our bee population. [Recommended pollinator species for plantings](#)

Woodstock VA Bee City Website Page highlighting IPM and Preferred Species list. Photo above by Jill Jefferson, Town Staff



Several members of Woodstock Tree Board. Photo by Town staff, 2022

Learn More

**Integrated Pest Management Plan:** [IPM Plan.pdf](#)

<https://www.townofwoodstockva.com/DocumentCenter/View/2133/IPM-Plan>

**Recommended Native Plant List:** [Recommended Plant Bio-Diversity List.docx](#)

<http://Recommended%20pollinator%20species%20for%20plantings%20on%20website.>

**Recommended Native Plant Supplier List:**

<https://vnps.org/native-plant-nursery-list/>

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