

# Bee City USA - Davidson

Report on 2024

## Pollinator Habitat Creation & Enhancement

*Please describe pollinator habitat creation or enhancement projects in your community in 2024, and whether your committee hosted them or not.*

The Davidson Lands Conservancy Wildlife Enhancement Collaborative, with support from the Town, led an early-March prescribed fire on five acres of field at Fisher Farm Park. The controlled burn, which is aligned with Native American land stewardship and with the Wildlife Enhancement Collaborative (WEC) Master Plan, is a critical step to restore a prairie with native grasses and flowering plants to support pollinators. Restoration of the field is a long-term project, and the next steps will depend on the land's response to the treatment. Davidson Lands Conservancy is advancing other components of the WEC plan including removal of invasive plants, better management of milkweed areas and hiking trails. This year the town contracted with a local beekeeper to install a honeybee hive at the entrance of the park. The beekeeper will also care for the honeybees and maintain the hive. As in past years, volunteers also helped monitor naturally occurring milkweed protection areas in the park. These efforts are in partnership with the Davidson Lands Conservancy, Town of Davidson, Davidson College, committee members, and other organizations. Habitat that supports our local pollinators, was also created and enhanced by the Town of Davidson and local nonprofit Trees Davidson. The group hosted more than six tree plantings and tree maintenance events on school, neighborhood, affordable housing, retirement community, and park property. Large groups of community, school, and local business group volunteers helped plant over 200 trees in 2024, including native species such as holly, redbud, black gum, oaks, and mulberry trees that support pollinators. A new Leave the Leaves campaign enhanced at least five town properties, by providing leaf litter for overwintering invertebrates, and other wildlife. The Davidson Lands Conservancy in partnership with the Town, the Davidson Garden Club, and Friends of Beaty Park continues to make critical improvements to Beaty Park. The group coordinated with local middle school students to complete an invasive plant removal, as well as created bird nested materials to augment habitat areas. The Town received funding from the County to restore a failing pond on the property. That project will help provide freshwater access to pollinators when the project is completed in early 2025. Hundreds of dedicated community volunteers, Town staff, and members of the Bee City committee assisted with and made all these efforts a success!

*How many habitat projects did you help to create or enhance in 2024?*

14

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

600

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

6

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

260000

Please check all that describe the habitats your affiliate helped to create or enhance in 2024 with pollinator benefit in mind.

- 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
- Native pollinator-friendly tree planting
- Other



Captions: Photo #1 Prescribed Burn (Davidson Lands Conservancy), Photo #2 Honeybee Hive (Town of Davidson)

Arbor Day Celebration & Tree Planting (Town of Davidson)

## Education & Outreach

Please describe pollinator conservation events or outreach activities in your community in 2024, indicating whether your committee hosted them or not.

The Town of Davidson and the Davidson Lands Conservancy hosted multiple Bee City events and programs, with assistance from community partners. There were several opportunities to engage the greater community at events this year including Nature Fest that offered hands-on learning activities, and the Davidson Earth Day Festival that included a free native plant giveaway and a beekeeper educational booth. Also offered were the Arbor Day event, 100th

Treasure Tree Ceremony, and numerous tree plantings that offered an opportunity for education provided by volunteer Tree Masters, local experts, and town staff. The annual Moth Night event and a new Firefly Outing were very popular and offered an exciting opportunity to view pollinators in the dark. Educational efforts also included summer programming in environmental education through a new Davidson Lands Conservancy Camp, and as part of the Freedom School that offers camps for children from low-income families. Numerous World of Wonder family outings, a Wilderness Calling themed nature series, and a Monarch Migration program were educational and engaging for all involved. A new Leave the Leaves campaign was promoted by the Town in partnership with the Davidson Lands Conservancy. Over 75 households allowed leaves to remain in natural areas and displayed a "Leave the Leaves" garden flag in their yards to show participation. This effort supported pollinators and provided other environmental benefits as well. Demonstration areas were displayed at Davidson Town Hall and Community Center, as well as other prominent areas around town to educate the greater community. All education initiatives emphasize the importance of pollinators through hands on learning activities, these were organized by members of the Bee City committee and supported by partnerships with Davidson College and numerous regional nonprofits.

*How many pollinator-related events or outreach activities did you host or help with in 2024 (in total)?*

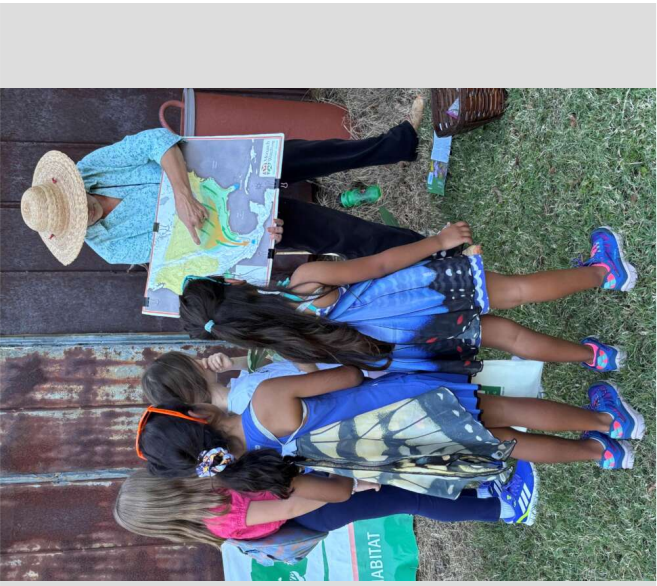
15

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

925

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

1



Monarch Migration Program (Davidson Lands Conservancy)



Firefly Festival (Davidson Lands Conservancy)



Earth Day Festival Beekeeper Booth (Town of Davidson)



## Policies & Practices

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

The Town of Davidson North Carolina is continuing to research best practices, is actively phasing out glyphosate use, and exploring organics as they develop. The town is continuing to focus on six parks to reduce turf spraying. The town has also avoided the use of pesticides in all designated pollinator habitats. The Town does not have a formal IPM plan but adopted a new Urban Community Forestry Plan in May 2024 that includes IPM goals. Goal four states that, "Pesticides are used only after monitoring indicates they are needed according to established guidelines, and treatments are made with the goal of removing only the target organism. Pest control materials are selected and applied in a manner that minimizes risks to human health, beneficial and nontarget organisms, and the environment." Currently with town owned trees, these programs are being maintained and monitored with the town arborist and Bartlett representative. The town has recently purchased electric landscape equipment, including two battery operated ride-on mowers, a gator, and other equipment. This reduces emissions and noise pollution within the town and is therefore more environmentally friendly.

*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.*

**Not at this time. Though it would be worth exploring.**

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

**Yes, the Town staff and committee volunteers are researching best practices and regional policy examples. This would be primarily focused on internal municipal policy.**

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

**Yes, the Town Arborist attended trainings this year with topics that included ecologically based IPM planning.**

*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)**

Learn More

Integrated Pest Management Plan:

Recommended Native Plant List: [Native Wildflowers of North Carolina.pdf](#)

<https://ncwildflower.org/native-plant-handouts/>

Recommended Native Plant Supplier List: [Sources for Native Plants.pdf](#)

<https://davidsonlands.org>