

# Bee City USA - Town of Garner

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.*

We currently maintain four pollinator/native plant gardens at White Deer Park, and we have added additional pollinator plants to all of them this year. We also maintain two Low Mow Zones at White Deer Park, with the assistance of our Public Works landscape crew. We developed a new partnership with the non-profit Wake the Forest, and they have donated and planted several native trees, shrubs, and perennials that will benefit pollinators. These plants were planted in a variety of habitats and landscape areas at White Deer Park and Lake Benson Park, including stream corridors, woodland areas, and rain gardens. We hosted several invasive species removal days with a variety of volunteers, and in some areas, after we cleared out the invasive shrubs, Wake the Forest planted native shrubs to replace them. We hosted all of these efforts.

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

10

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

111

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

7

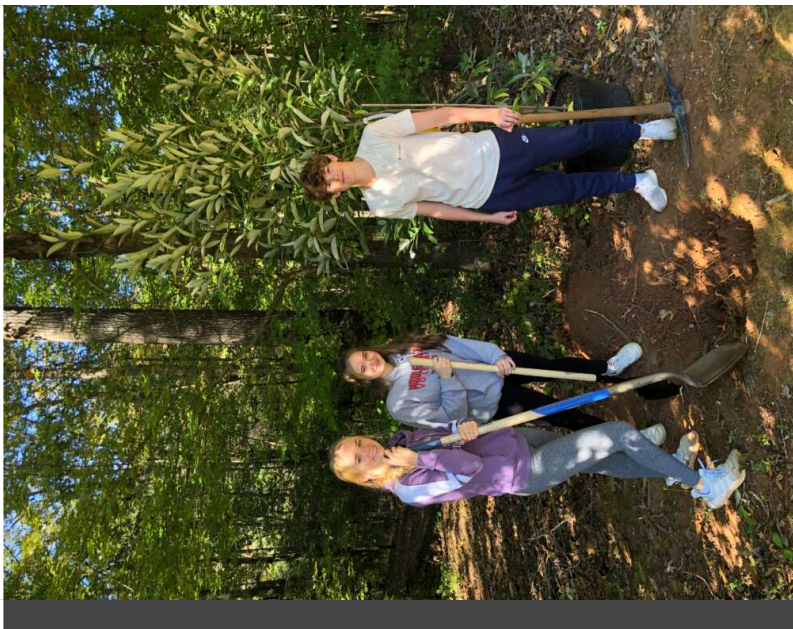
*How many total square feet of habitat were created or enhanced?*

149317

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

- Flower garden
- 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
- Native pollinator-friendly shrub border/hedgerow planting



Removing autumn olive from the woods near the Nature Center (park staff)

## 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 Garner offers a variety of environmental education programs, including public and group programs on-site at White Deer Park, outreach programming, summer camps, and special events. Some of the highlights of our pollinator conservation-related programming this year include: 1) our first Native Plant Swap at the White Deer Nature Center which had 22 participants swapping hundreds of native and pollinator plants, 2) our Kids in Nature event which had 424 participants, mostly families, who learned about butterflies, bees, and other topics related to pollinator conservation, and 3) hosting two sessions of volunteer training and recruitment for the Carolinas Butterfly Monitoring Program. Our on-site programs range from small groups of children (6-12) to school field trip groups (20-30 kids per class). We offer monthly series like Discovery Days (drop-in, 20-60 people per program), and Little Wild Ones, with various themes, including pollinators and related topics. We also participate in Moth Week, Parks for Pollinators, and National Pollinator Week where we encourage the public to participate in various citizen science programs for pollinator conservation and host public programs to promote these efforts. We host all of our events and programs and sometimes work with partners for events like Kids in Nature Day (South Wake Conservationists, etc.). Staff lead outreach programs in our town, county, and beyond, including presentations to civic organizations and garden groups

on the benefits of creating pollinator habitat and reducing pesticides, among other topics. Self-guided opportunities are also available, including our Prolific Pollinators Discovery Backpack and interpretive signage throughout White Deer Park at our gardens and along our trails. Elsewhere in our community, the Garner Grows Community Garden hosted a Native Pollinators and Native Bees workshop in September, and one of our staff members attended. They also hosted an Introduction to the Honeybee workshop in April.

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

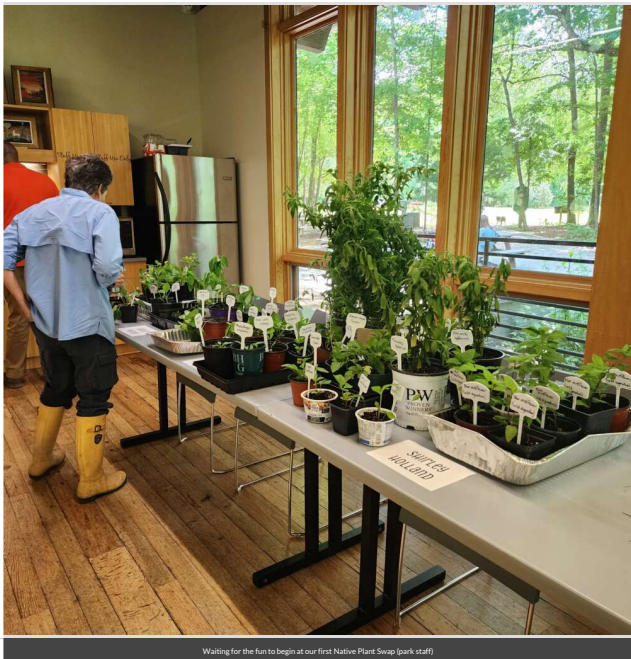
58

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

1223

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

1



## Policies & Practices

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

In the Town of Garner, our Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources department works closely with our Public Works department to manage our parklands. The landscape crew does not spray pesticides near our pollinator gardens or Low Mow areas, and park staff and volunteers manually remove weeds instead. When cutting and treating invasive plant

species, we apply the herbicide directly to cut stumps and stems, rather than broadcast spray. We also use Triclopyr instead of Glyphosate and other, more harmful chemicals.

*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.**

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

**Not at this time.**

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

**Colleen Bockhahn, Recreation Programs Manager, attended a one-hour "Pesticides and Bees" webinar on January 2, 2024.**

*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)**
- **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 that were not treated with neonicotinoids**

*Any lessons learned you would like to share?*

**N?A**

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Committee Photo

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Learn More

Integrated Pest Management Plan:

Recommended Native Plant List:

Recommended Native Plant Supplier List:

<http://GarnerNC.gov>

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