

# Bee City USA - Howard County

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.*

**Trees for Bees Giveaway:** Howard County Bee City continued its Trees for Bees initiative, which focuses on the vital role of native trees and shrubs in supporting pollinators. This program, led by the Office of Community Sustainability, offers free native trees and shrubs to nonprofits for planting in common areas and to residents for enhancing pollinator-friendly landscapes. These species provide essential pollen, nectar, food, and shelter for native bees, butterflies, and other wildlife while also contributing to climate resilience through carbon sequestration, stormwater reduction, and water quality improvement. **Belmont Meadow Planting:** In collaboration with the Department of Recreation and Parks (DRP), volunteers from Howard County Bee City and the Office of Community Sustainability planted 1,200 native plants to restore the Belmont pollinator meadow. Originally installed in 2019, the meadow had become overrun with invasive grasses. After DRP and OCS cleared the area in winter, new native plants with sequential bloom times were introduced to support pollinators year-round. Deer fencing has been installed to protect the plants, and a long-term maintenance plan has been developed. This project served as a capstone effort for Chesapeake Conservation and Climate Corps member. **5-Year Anniversary Native Plant Giveaway:** To celebrate five years as a Bee City USA affiliate and to improve access to native plants, Howard County Bee City distributed 400 native plant plugs at fall events, reinforcing the importance of native flora in pollinator conservation.

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

3

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

17

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

2

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

1080

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

- Meadow
- Native pollinator-friendly tree planting
- Other



5 year anniversary native plant giveaway at Howard County Fair - photo: Julie Costantino

## Education & Outreach

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

Howard County Bee City organized and participated in numerous outreach events to engage and educate the community about pollinator conservation: **Library Speaker Series:** Over the course of the year, we hosted five educational talks and workshops on a range of pollinator-related topics. **Expansion of Native Bee Trading Cards:** Building on past success, we introduced two new sets of Native Bee Trading Cards, bringing the total to 45 cards and furthering our mission of engaging youth in pollinator education. **Native Bee ID Workshop:** Our popular Native Bee ID workshop returned for another year, providing hands-on learning opportunities for participants to identify and understand native bees in their environment. **New Website Launch:** With our program's growth over the past five years, we created a dedicated website for Howard County Bee City to better share resources and connect with the community. **Pollinator Week Impact:** Howard County Bee City held several events throughout Pollinator Week, drawing a total of 957 attendees across 11 events. Highlights included Saturdays in the Children's Garden - Critters in the Garden at Robinson Nature Center Summer Saturday Strolls at Robinson Nature Center Bug Bonanza Pollinator

StoryWalk Who's the Gardener's Best Friend? at RNC Howard EcoWorks Native Plant Nursery Experience HCBC Butterfly Walk at HCC Building a Pollinator Habitat at HCLS Pollinator Fest Pollinator Powerhouse Plants Leave the Leaves Raffle: To encourage pollinator-friendly landscaping practices, we launched the Leave the Leaves pledge campaign, educating residents about the importance of maintaining leaf litter for overwintering pollinators. Participants were entered into a raffle to win a Leave the Leaves sign or a signed copy of Nancy Lawson's book Wildscape. We received 80 pledges in support of this initiative. Other outreach events to note: Native Plant Palooza Fall 4 All Howard County Fair Savage Farmer's Market 2024 STEM Festival at Triadelphia Ridge Elementary School GreenFest

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

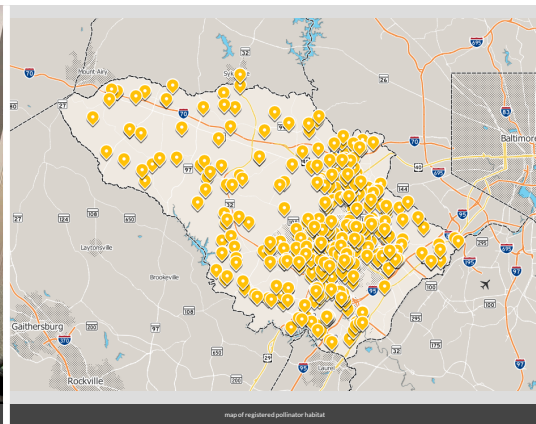
24

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

2000

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

2



## Policies & Practices

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

Howard County Bee City continues to educate the community about the harmful effects of residential mosquito spraying. We have recruited new members to our outreach efforts and are planning our first workshop for Pollinator Week 2025. This builds on the county's 2020 pesticide policy updates and the Stop Mosquito Spraying campaign, originally developed with support from BeeCatur, GA.

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.

no

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

no

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

**yes, committee members attended Xerces Society webinars on pesticide reduction and are using the toolkit to develop our campaign.**

Any lessons learned you would like to share?

no

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Committee Photo

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Learn More

**Integrated Pest Management Plan:** [Pesticide-Use-on-County-Property-rev.-10.22.19.pdf](#)

**Recommended Native Plant List:** [Howard County Native Plants.xlsx](#)

<https://livegreenhoward.com/land/pollinators/>

**Recommended Native Plant Supplier List:** [Native Plant Suppliers During Coronavirus.pdf](#)

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