

Bee City USA - Mount Vernon

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.

Ariel-Foundation Park's 8-acre prairie was once again a large focus for Mount Vernon's Bee City volunteers last year. The Committee coordinated several seed-harvesting events and selective invasive removal. The lower section of the prairie, which was not over-seeded in 2023, was partially filled with clean cut material from City projects in order improve the topography of the prairie and suppress Autumn Olive that was cut and selectively treated earlier in the year. This section will be temporarily seeded with annual rye grass in Spring 2025, then permanently seeded with a pollinator prairie mix in late Fall 2025. Another major focus in 2024 consisted of right-of-way and riparian native tree/shrub plantings, including over 1,000 pawpaw seeds sown along approximately 1,500 feet of the Kokosing River. The City has continued to remove invasive honeysuckle from the banks of the Kokosing River, following up with native plantings.

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?

30

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

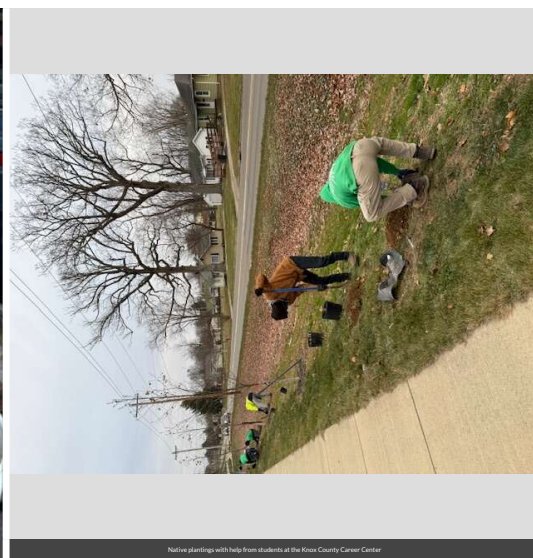
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How many total square feet of habitat were created or enhanced?

200000

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

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



Native plantings with help from students at the Knox County Career Center



Planting prairie seeds in a riparian area where invasive honeysuckle was recently removed.

Education & Outreach

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

Mount Vernon's Bee City Committee successfully partnered with several other local organizations to promote pollinator conservation through education, prairie maintenance, riparian habitat restoration, seed collection, seed sorting, and seed sharing. Notable partners include Kenyon College's Brown Family Environmental Center (BFEC), Pheasants Forever, Experience Mount Vernon, Ariel-Foundation Park, and the City of Mount Vernon's Shade Tree and Beautification Commission. Mount Vernon's Bee City volunteers manned a booth at three of the City's "First Friday" events—a monthly event held June – September attracting thousands of visitors from Central Ohio—handing out literature and seed packets, as well as engaging with passersby. The BFEC Earth Day Festival and Fall Harvest Festival offered a similar outlet as the First Friday events; however, attendees included students and parents from throughout the country in addition to local community members. Mount Vernon's Bee City was also honored to participate again in the local Pheasants Forever "No Child Left Indoors" event, teaching youth about the importance of native pollinators and their habitats.

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

6

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

10



Making seed bombs at the Brown Family Environmental Center (BFEC) Fall Harvest Festival



Bee City Tent at BFEC Fall Harvest Festival



Bee City road sign on Martinsburg Road

Policies & Practices

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

The City continues to engage in selective pesticide application, only as a last-ditch effort when other methods have not been successful.

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?

No.

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)
- Sourced plants for city or campus grounds that were not treated with neonicotinoids

Any lessons learned you would like to share?

Making seed bombs is a great activity for kids and relatively simple to set up and administer. I highly recommend this for outreach events targeting youth.

Committee Photo



Bee City Committee with volunteers prior to dispersing seed bombs

Learn More

Integrated Pest Management Plan:

Recommended Native Plant List: [22-021_01_NPPBI—GreatLakes_web.pdf](#)

<https://www.xerces.org/publications/plant-lists/native-plants-for-pollinators-and-beneficial-insects-great-lakes>

Recommended Native Plant Supplier List: [Native plant nurseries.pdf](#)

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