

# Bee City USA - Mountain Brook

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.*

1. The city seeded a 15,000 sf (prominent and highly visible) traffic island with native seeds to create a pollinator meadow; this island had previously been grass. We have promoted this effort via our website, social media, and our quarterly newspaper (The Reporter); also local news outlets have interviewed us and reported on the effort to other local communities (it has received a lot of praise). 2. The city established a soft landing native shade garden under an Overcup Oak on the city hall campus. Signs are posted to let passersby know what a soft landing is. 3. The Bee City Committee assisted a local neighborhood group to gain city approval to create native meadows in 3 traffic islands; the city partnered with the neighborhood group by giving \$3,000 to the project, and by assisting in the creation and maintenance of the landscapes with our Parks/Recreation Department equipment and labor. 4. A private group (Friends of Jemison) raised funds, planned and installed all new native landscaping at a prominent city park (Jemison Park). This park is in an ecologically sensitive landscape along Shades Creek, and it has a walking rail that is heavily used by MB citizens as well as people from other surrounding communities. The Friends of Jemison partnered with the city Parks/Rec department for installation and maintenance.

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

6

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

35

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

6

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

2178000

*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
- Roadside/rights of way planting



## Education & Outreach

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

1. **Spring Educational Family Event:** Showcase city hall pollinator garden with identification signs; live Monarch caterpillar display and Milkweed giveaway (50 native milkweed plants); Mosquito Dunk information and giveaway (100 dunks); Do's and Dont's of Bee Hotels (display with a variety of bee hotels labeled with "no" and "yes"); caterpillar module with 6,000 imitation caterpillars (cut from straws) and a bird nest (to show a visual of how many caterpillars it takes to raise one clutch of songbirds); Xerces Society YouTube videos rolling on a smart t.v. (with audience seating); display of book titles and handouts; posters of native plants, native bees, and native birds of the Southeast; served tea made from a native plant. 2. **Fall Native Plant Giveaway:** Gave away 100 native plants (not treated with chemicals) to 100 people; displayed book titles and handouts; gave away gardening tools and stickers. 3. **Hosted garden clubs and civic clubs** for 45-minute PowerPoint presentations on native plants and native bees (hosted 15 groups in 2024). 4. **National Pollinator Week:** Weeklong mosquito Dunk Giveaway and information table in city hall; and partnered with library to display books on native habitats, native bees, and pollination. 5. The city established a Little Lending Library at the city hall pollinator garden. The books inside are about native habitat gardening, native bees, and pollination. The Little Library holds about 15 books, and it is heavily utilized! 6. The city mails out a quarterly newspaper to every household and business in the city (over 7,000 copies!) Every issue has 2-4 educational articles in it that align with our Bee City affiliation. 7. **MBee, AL website:** contains 55 Tabs of information that align with our Bee City affiliation. MBee, AL website analytics indicate 2,600 new users and 3,488 webpage sessions in 2024! All of the above events were sponsored by our Bee City Committee.

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

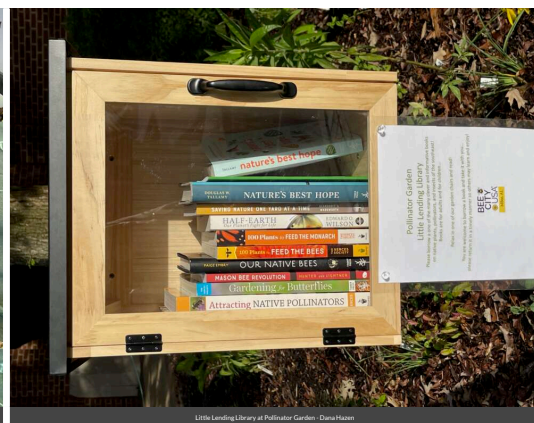
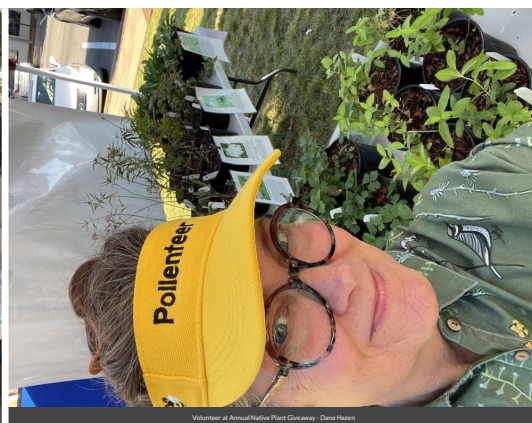
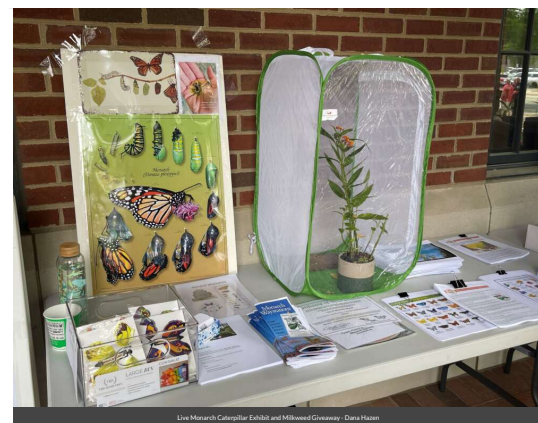
18

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

700

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

13



City of Mountain Brook - Bee City Sign - Dana Hazen

## Policies & Practices

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

All of the above new native/pollinator habitats were established using minimum chemicals for the conversation; and all

new growth is to be weeded by hand and maintained without chemicals. Plant material selected should lessen the need for weeding and should be mostly self-sustaining after the first 2 years. The city is also developing a GIS mapping project to identify and map invasive plant species in all public parks and traffic islands.

*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.*

We use our in-person presentations, social media, newspaper, and website outlets to raise awareness about the harmful effects of pesticides. In 2024, our webpage, "How Pesticides-Insecticides-Herbicides Are Harmful To Pollinators" was in the Top-3 most visited MBee webpages 9 months out of 12!

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

At the recommendation of the Bee City committee, the city is undertaking the hiring of a stormwater engineering consultant to study our most critical stormwater flood basins and develop recommendations for a Green Infrastructure Master Plan to implement Low Impact Design in stormwater management. A primary component will be finding places to implement rain gardens along roadways, so chemical pollution from the roads doesn't just run straight into our stormwater system and into the streams; instead, the chemicals will be filtered by native plants in the rainwater gardens so the water reaching the streams will be cleaner and not contain so many chemicals. Also, the native plants in the rain gardens will benefit pollinators. All of this will benefit people! The meetings on this subject began taking place with key city officials and staff in 2024, and the adoption of the master plan is anticipated in late 2025.

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

Parks/Recreation staff has on-going training and certification programs on how, when, and when-no-to use chemicals in our parks and traffic islands. We just finished out IPM, so we will be expanding in this category in 2025.



Removing Invasive Nandina Berries By Hand (Instead of using Pesticides)

*Any lessons learned you would like to share?*

If installing a Bee Hotel or encouraging others to do so, be sure and learn the Do's and Dont's of Good Bee Hotel construction and care, so as not to do more harm to the native bees than good!

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Committee Photo



City of Mountain Brook Bee City Committee - Annual Educational Event 2024 - Dana Hazen

Learn More

**Integrated Pest Management Plan:** [IPM Plan 2025 - City of Mountain Brook 20250217.pdf](https://www.mtnbrook.org/mbee/page/citys-ipm-plan)

<https://www.mtnbrook.org/mbee/page/citys-ipm-plan>

**Recommended Native Plant List:**

<https://www.mtnbrook.org/mbee/page/native-plant-list>

**Recommended Native Plant Supplier List:**

<https://www.mtnbrook.org/mbee/page/native-plant-suppliers>

<https://www.mtnbrook.org/mbee/page/bee-informed>

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