

# Bee City USA - Raleigh

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.*

In 2024, our community made significant strides in pollinator habitat creation and enhancement. Across various projects, 50 acres of invasive species were removed to restore native ecosystems, and 91,240 square feet of perennials and trees were planted to support pollinators and biodiversity. Our Parks Greenhouse grew and planted 10,000 native perennials, and 538 trees were added to the City landscape, enhancing forage and shelter opportunities for pollinators. We also established 11 acres of wildflowers and maintained 32 Monarch Waystations, further contributing to migratory pollinator support. In total, 90 sites across the city are now actively managed as pollinator habitats. While all of these initiatives were led or hosted by the Raleigh Parks and Natural Resources team, we also partnered with community groups, nonprofits, and volunteers to expand our reach and impact. Approximately 5,440 volunteers participated for a total of 12,981 hours of pollinator conservation-based efforts.

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

75

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

6514

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

42

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

481402

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

- Flower garden
- Vegetable garden
- Orchard
- Natural area with tree snags and stumps, and bare areas for ground nesting species

- Meadow
- Pollinator-friendly lawn (with flowering clover, dandelions...)
- Herb garden
- 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
- Rain garden/bioswale



## Education & Outreach

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

In 2024, the Raleigh Parks and Natural Resources team delivered more than 1,400 nature-based programs, including 57 focused specifically on flowering plants and pollination. In collaboration with local vendors and nonprofit organizations, our Earth Day event welcomed 2,000 visitors. With participation from various City departments, we showcased green initiatives such as electric equipment demonstrations, plant giveaways, volunteer opportunities in community gardens and invasive species management, and our Rainwater Rewards program, among others. The Instagram-famous five-acre sunflower field at Dix Park continued to draw over 100,000 visitors last season – and countless pollinators. During Pollinator Week, our Nature Preserves distributed hundreds of DIY mosquito dunk kits and 700 native perennials grown in the Parks Greenhouse. Also Greenhouse produced, were more than 2,500 vegetables and herbs for our popular, annual Mordecai Historic Plant Sale.

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

63

How many people attended those events (in total)?

3251

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

3



Raleigh Garden Club Historical Park Planting Lecture (Lauren Freudenberger)



Reflecting Raleigh Community Outreach (Lauren Freudenberger)



Pollinator Seed Mix Give-Aways (Lauren Freudenberger)



Most recent of our 32 registered Monarch Waystations (Lauren Freudenberger)

## Policies & Practices

*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.*

**Absolutely!** In recent years, our Parks and Natural Resource Maintenance teams have shifted toward using more native, ecologically sensitive plant palettes. This approach not only models our green initiatives for the public but also provides critical support for invertebrate life. The Raleigh community is deeply engaged and vocal about issues such as tree conservation, invasive species management, and the importance of native plant requirements in new developments. In response to these concerns, the Parks Department leverages sustainability grants and volunteer support to assemble DIY mosquito dunk kits for residents. These kits are paired with educational materials that highlight the risks posed by many commercial mosquito spray services to a broad range of insects—not just mosquitoes.

*In your city or campus, are any policy initiatives underway to further protect pollinators, people or waterways from pesticides?*  
 The City of Raleigh Parks and Natural Resources team is guided by both state licensing laws and a very stringent,

internal Pesticide Policy. Most of our gardening and conservation staff maintain pesticide licenses and the continuing education credits associated with them. Outside of fire ants, insecticide use is prohibited and/or subject to review by an appointed core team of stakeholders. Training and careful consideration are given when applying herbicides within range of any body of water. The label is the law and surfactant-free controls are utilized in most all applications.

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

While already an important facet of our Parks Pesticide Policy, in 2024 we officially drafted a Greenhouse IPM Policy for more specialized practices. Using Bee City USA's checklist as a model, our greenhouse staff now has a tailored process and can communicate as much to both our large volunteer base and outreach events. In addition to online webinars and CEU credit opportunities, we had staff representation at the NC Invasive Plant Council Symposium, the Perennial Plant Association Symposium, Green & Growin' landscape professional's conference, NC State Streambank Restoration workshops, GIS monitoring training, GSI and Stormwater and tours to local native plant nurseries and gardens.

*Please check actions you have taken to make pest management practices more pollinator-friendly.*

- Implemented or maintained a written IPM plan
- Only use pesticides as a last resort within the IPM plan
- 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)
- Implemented non-chemical pest prevention and management methods on city or campus grounds
- Eliminated use of neonicotinoid insecticides on city or campus grounds
- 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



First Year Implementation of Low Mow Spring and Petals in the Parks (Lauren Freudenberger)

*Any lessons learned you would like to share?*

**Not at this time.**

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Committee Photo



Raleigh Parks Gardeners (Hoffman Nursery)

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Learn More

Integrated Pest Management Plan: [3-13-23\\_Pesticide Management Policy-combined.pdf](#)

Recommended Native Plant List:

Recommended Native Plant Supplier List: