

# Bee City USA - Rapid City

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.*

Pollinator-friendly species were planted as part of a capital improvement project to renovate a beloved, 87-year-old city park, Dinosaur Park, and make it accessible for the first time. As an estimate, approximately one-half acre was planted with drought-tolerant grasses, native shrubs, trees, and some areas were protected during construction to preserve the natural plant life, including brushy areas that could be good pollinator habitat. The committee was not involved in this project, except that the committee liaison is the Parks project manager.

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

1

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

7

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

21780

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

- Natural area with tree snags and stumps, and bare areas for ground nesting species
- Meadow
- Native pollinator-friendly tree planting
- Native pollinator-friendly shrub border/hedgerow planting

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## Education & Outreach

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

The four pollinator conservation outreach events in 2024 consisted of tabling at other organizations' community events. In March 2024, Sustainability Committee members – one of whom also sits on the Bee City USA/Urban Wildlife Committee – hosted a table at the Black Hills Home Builders Association Home Show. They handed out free pollinator habitat seed packets. Attendance at this multi-day exposition could be in the range of 2,000-3,000. The committee liaison hosted a table on behalf of Rapid City Parks and Recreation at an Earth Day Expo on April 20, 2024. This event was held at Western Dakota Technical College and included a clothing swap, various speakers and demonstrations and an exhibit hall filled with a multitude of environmental organizations, businesses, and government entities. Attendance was approximately 1,000 people. The Parks and Recreation table included information relating to pollinators, pesticide use, and appropriate native plants for our area that can be planted for the benefit of pollinators. People were excited to pick up bookmarks which held a piece of plantable seed paper in the shape of a watering can. Our third pollinator event was held during the celebration of Pollinator Week in June. Two committee liaisons and three non-committee members hosted a pollinator education booth at the Black Hills Farmers Market. The booth featured free packets of pollinator habitat and forage seeds, kids' activities like temporary tattoos, coloring pages, a kid's craft project where construction paper tubes were inserted into tin cans to make bee houses, and information on native plant species and the importance of pollinators. Turnout was good. We were encouraged that many people (perhaps 80) stopped to ask questions, talk about their gardens, and get information about how to better advocate for pollinators. A fourth event was the Youth and Family Services Harvest Festival in September. This was a fall festival to promote various strategies for healthy living to families with children. Organizers estimated that around 1,000 children and adults attended. Our main angle was teaching kids how vital pollination is in our food system. The table was decorated with a display of some of the most popular produce which is created with pollinators' help – apple, avocado, banana, tomato, pumpkin, coffee, chocolate, blueberry, almond, etc. Our booth proved to be quite popular because of an activity which we guided kids (and adults!) through. Step one was creating a bee finger puppet out of pipe cleaners. Step two was demonstrating how if the bee landed on a (paper) flower to feed, it could pick up pollen (cheese powder sprinkled in the center) with its hairy legs or body and that if it flew to a different (paper) flower, some of the pollen would get transferred. Tons of families found our table and said "this is where they're coming from! Can we make a bee puppet?"

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

4

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

3580

*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.*

This is an area where we would like to be more proactive in the future. Parks staff have been avoiding the use of pesticides in designated pollinator habitats in the parks. An Integrated Pest Management Plan is still in draft form but it is our intent to make progress on it in 2025 and take it to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board for adoption before next year's growing season begins.

*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, nothing we are aware of. The Rapid City Sustainability Committee's website ([rapidcitysustainability.com](http://rapidcitysustainability.com)) provides introductory information on a variety of environmental issues and links to research, associated organizations, etc. You can find mentions of sustainability in landscaping – use native plants, harvest rainwater, reduce pesticide use, leave the leaves, etc.

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

None at this time. Initiatives of this type will likely come as we develop the Integrated Pest Management Plan for Rapid City Parks and Recreation.

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

Not this year

*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)

*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: [Rapid City IPM Plan\\_Feb 2024 Draft.pdf](#)

Recommended Native Plant List:

<https://www.pollinator.org/pollinator.org/assets/generalFiles/BlackHills.2020.ver2.pdf>

Recommended Native Plant Supplier List: [Recommended Native Plant Supplier List for Rapid City.pdf](#)