

# Bee City USA - Roanoke

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.*

The Melrose Pollinator Garden was created by the Roanoke Valley Kiwanis Club within the Kiwanis Nature Park. The garden is 3879 square feet and is entirely planted with native species. There is a Bee City Sign within the garden and other interpretive signage on native plants and pollinators. Northwest Faith Partnership Native Plant garden was a partnership with Mill Mountain Garden Club representatives and the Northwest Faith Partnership, a partnership of 5 local churches. The native pollinator garden (2264 SF) in the Melrose Rugby Neighborhood in City-owned right of way and has gotten lots of great care and praise from the neighborhood. The Lick Run Riparian Buffer project in Washington Park was a stream restoration project with a robust riparian buffer covering 1.32 acres. The riparian buffer planting consists of hardwoods, shrubs, and herbaceous plant material including grasses, rush, and sedge. There are two interpretive signs that talk about the benefits of riparian plantings, habitat, and pollinators. The Glade Creek Riparian Buffer project along the Vinton Greenway has enhanced 4.41 acres of riparian buffer. There are at least five plants that directly support monarch butterflies and include milkweed species, wild bergamot, black-eyed susan, and common boneset.

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

4

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

145

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

4

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

255570

*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

- Native milkweed planting for monarchs and bees (where appropriate)
- Native pollinator-friendly tree planting
- Native pollinator-friendly shrub border/hedgerow planting
- Roadside/rights of way planting



Echinacea and Kiwanis Nature Park Interpretive Signage and Native Garden (photo credit - Leigh Anne Weltzenfeld)



Kiwanis Pollinator Garden (photo credit - Kiwanis Club)

## Education & Outreach

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

**Bee City Kick Off Event** (<https://youtu.be/eJwxsTgHPIA?si=Rxl-jjmg8Ur5nNRK>) The Bee City USA Kick Off Event was held in Vic Thomas Park where Roanoke was announced as an affiliate city in the Bee City USA Program. The first sign for Roanoke was unveiled in the garden. Several speakers from Mill Mt. Garden Club, Roanoke Valley Garden Club, and City of Roanoke staff members spoke of the importance of pollinators to our community and the need to protect and create habitat. The Bee City Committee hosted the event with ~150 people in attendance. Northwest Faith Partnership Bee City Sign Event Mill Mountain Garden Club representatives helped the Northwest Faith Partnership, a

partnership of 5 local churches, implement a native pollinator garden in the Melrose Rugby Neighborhood in city-owned right of way. The garden has turned out beautifully and has a Bee City sign. Members of the Bee City Committee were in attendance with ~40 people in attendance. Williamson Road Library Read and Ride Event City of Roanoke Sustainability promoted Bee City at this event with over 200 people were in attendance. Historic Garden Week in Roanoke Historic Garden Week attendance was over 1,200. The Mill Mountain and Roanoke Valley Garden Club's Bee City education table spoke with at least 400 of these attendees. Most of them took a Native Pollinator Plant Guide. Southwestern Virginia Bee Festival The 2024 Inaugural SWVA Bee Festival had an impressive turnout. Roanoke Valley and Botetourt Bee Keepers Associations sponsored the inaugural event in Elmwood Park. There were 49 vendors providing educational booths, or local honey and honey-related products. Educational booths included Clean Valley Council\*, Roanoke Sustainability with Parks and Rec/Bee City\*, Wild Ones, Master Gardeners, and Master Naturalists. The asterisk represents Bee City Steering Committee Members. The Craft Bee Company\* is also a Bee City Steering Committee Member. Over 2000 were estimated to have been in attendance. The Mill Mountain Garden Club and the Roanoke Valley Garden Clubs have been diligent in keeping the Native Pollinator Plant Guide at nurseries and garden centers around Roanoke during this reporting time period.

(<https://www.playroanoke.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/FINAL-Roanoke-Bee-City-Plants-Brochure.pdf>)

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

5

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

4490

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

14



Historic Garden Week Bee City Outreach Table distributed over 400 Native Plant Brochures



City of Roanoke's Bee City Kick-Off Event



2024 Inaugural SWWA Bee Festival (photo credit: Kandyce Sherman and Leigh Anne Weitzenfeld)



## Policies & Practices

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

Staff that applies herbicides do research into alternatives. Several alternatives were tried and needed to be reapplied several times especially in Park playground areas. Stronger pesticides are used as a last resort and staff prioritizes striking the delicate balance between less toxic chemicals and time realities.

*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.*

The City of Roanoke is contracting with Clean Valley Council to do a pesticide education campaign in 2025.

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

The Bee City Committee will engage city departments, beyond Parks and Recreation to adopt the IMP Plan.

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

Our committee as an entity did not participate in any continuing education regarding IMP.

*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



*Any lessons learned you would like to share?*

Bee City is a bright spot that generates excitement and has been a very positive area for the community to focus on.

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## Committee Photo



Mill Mountain Garden Club and Roanoke Valley Garden Club Members with City of Roanoke Staff - Partial Members of the Committee

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Learn More

Integrated Pest Management Plan: [City of Roanoke IPM Plan.pdf](#)

Recommended Native Plant List:

[https://nrvc.org/images/pdf/Plant%20SWVA%20Natives%20Guide\\_web.pdf](https://nrvc.org/images/pdf/Plant%20SWVA%20Natives%20Guide_web.pdf)

Recommended Native Plant Supplier List:

<https://www.plantvirginiannatives.org/where-to-get-native-plants>

<https://www.playroanoke.com/bee-city-usa/>  
roanokeofficeofsustainability@gmail.com

