

Bee City USA - Virginia Beach

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 Mt Trashmore Pollinator Habitat was a collaborative project funded by a Memorium fund from previous Councilperson Reba McClannan & the Virginia Beach Beautification Council. Plants included Blueberries, Blackberries, Figs, Clover, Joe Pyeweed, and a host of native plants, vines and trees. The Bee City Committee collaborated with Salem High Art Students to create signage related to 4 key elements of the Bee City commitment goals. These educational signs are permanent educational signage for visitors to the park. On May 28th the pollinator habitat was dedicated and the Mayor, leadership, Salem High students, teachers, and the Bee City Committee were in attendance.

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

5

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

39

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

5

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

96070

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
- 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



Education & Outreach

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

The Bee City VB Committee participated in 16 official events and shared the Bee City Initiatives at the Annual Boardwalk Art Show, Autumn in the Air Festival, VB May 31st Memorial Seed Pop activities, Master Gardener Fall Festival, Bee City Pollinator Habitat Dedication at Mt Trashmore, Winter Wildlife Festival, just to name a few! Kathy Edwards wrote several articles in the Council of Garden Clubs Taproot publications. Those inspired by the Bee City VB team were age 6-100! The team continues to work collaboratively with Senior High School Artists at Salem High to create art installations at various Bee City Gardens & in 2025 they will create sculptures for a newly installed meadow.

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

16

How many people attended those events (in total)?

1065



Bee City VB Honey Fest at Farmers Market - Jessica Kay - Photographer Kathy Edwards



Bullington House Festival - Betty Ann Demaris & Rose - Photographer Unknown



Bullington House Festival - Betty Ann Demaris & Rose - Photographer Unknown

Policies & Practices

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

The City of Virginia Beach continues to use natives and hard plant material, decreasing the need for pesticides. Additionally, the Park & Landscape Services Division does not spray any insecticides and does not use any pesticides including herbicides with the pollinator gardens planted as a part of the Bee City VB initiative. The Bee City Committee is also very active communicating to the community that pesticide use is harmful to pollinators and encouraging individuals and groups to participate as 'Bee keepers' in their own gardens and landscapes. They created a Bee Happy Home Program, that promotes pollinator friendly habitats and if approved by the committee the property owners are awarded a sign displaying their commitment to providing Bee Friendly habitat.

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.

There are numerous organizations including VA Turf Association promoting planting Pollinator Habitat. The Chesapeake Bay Foundation and Lynnhaven River Now are strong proponents for creating or maintaining Pollinator habitat and work with various groups to create these environments in various neighborhoods and facilities.

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

At this time no policy initiatives are underway, however it is a goal that will be explored in the future and the Bee City VB team is enthusiastically promoting No Mow May, Leave the leaves, and Advocate for no pesticides.

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

City Park & Landscape team members participated in IPM related training and recertification classes City Park & Landscape team members met quarterly with other City departments engaged in pest management to share best practices and better understand established practices of each team.

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 that were not treated with neonicotinoids



Any lessons learned you would like to share?

We created a meadow utilizing annuals and it attracted so many different native species of pollinators and in 2025 the goal is to enhance that meadow with annuals and native perennials. The takeaway is that meadows in the right location should be encouraged in the years to come as they provide habitat and abundant food sources for all pollinators. Build it and they will fly in!

Committee Photo



Bee City VB Committee L-R Jessica O'Connor, Kathy Edwards, Kay Eckhardt, Betty Ann Des Roches, Barbie

Learn More

Integrated Pest Management Plan: [20210305 - IPM Plan - FINAL.pdf](#)

Recommended Native Plant List: [VB 2021 Grow Native Trees For Bees.pdf](#)

Recommended Native Plant Supplier List:

<https://vnps.org/native-plant-nursery-list/>

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