

Bee City USA - Warner Robins

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, a total of 25 Tulip Poplars, 19 Black Tupelos, 25 Magnolias, and 10 Eastern Redbuds were strategically planted throughout city parks to enhance urban canopy cover and biodiversity. Additionally, a new pollinator habitat was established around a decommissioned playground caterpillar, with plans for expansion in 2025 based on the observed performance of plant species within the shaded understory of the surrounding hickory trees. As part of a community engagement initiative, summer campers participated in a pollinator planting project at Ted Wright Park, where they planted a variety of quart-sized pollinator-friendly species and dispersed seeds collected from the city's wildflower medians.

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

26

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

129

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

4

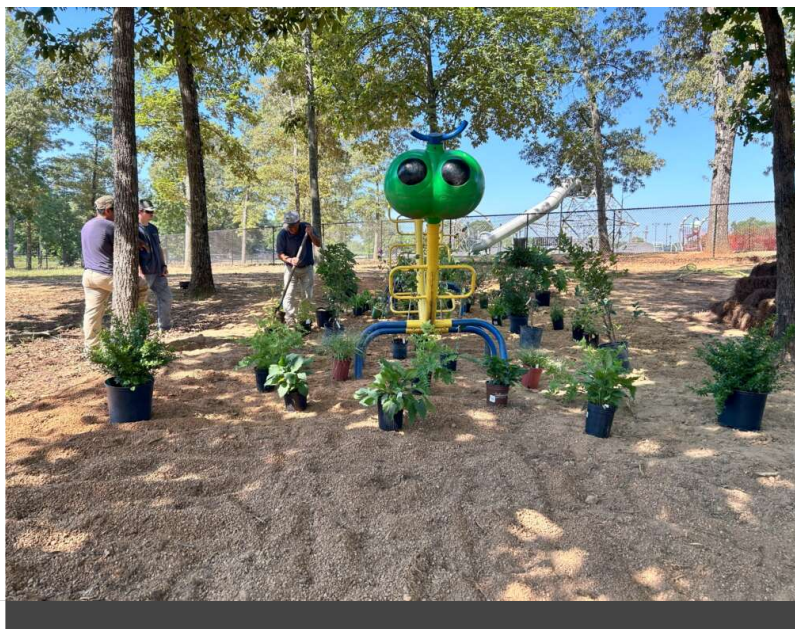
How many total square feet of habitat were created or enhanced?

588060

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...)
- Native milkweed planting for monarchs and bees (where appropriate)

- Native pollinator-friendly tree planting
- Roadside/rights of way planting
- School garden



Decommissioned playground caterpillar turned pollinator habitat side view (credit Tiffany Bowen)

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, 11 acres of pollinator friendly wildflower habitat were reseeded in the medians of Russell Parkway to continue the initiative that was established the year prior. Additional pollinator plantings continued to be added to the 23 beautification sites through the city. Keep Warner Robins Beautiful's Native Plant Education center (NPEC) has been very successful in its efforts to grow varieties of milkweed, and a long list of other pollinators. This endeavor allowed the committee to host two pollinator plant giveaways from the NPEC in 2024, once in June during pollinator week and once in the fall. Each giveaway was comprised of 300 various native pollinators grown out to 1 gallon containers. Other outreach activities included the giveaway of pollinator friendly trees during our three tree giveaways of 2024. Some of these varieties included the Tulip Poplar, Black Tupelo, Eastern Redbud, Catalpa, Willow, Maple, Magnolias, and Dogwood.

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

How many people attended those events (in total)?

2100

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

6



Summer Campers planting seeds harvested from wildflower meadows (credit Tiffany Bowen)



HCMG informative session on pollinator safe practices (credit Tiffany Bowen)



KWRB conducted a containerized tree giveaway, with several pollinator friendly species for residents of Warner Robins! (credit Tiffany Bowen)

Policies & Practices

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

Warner Robins has continued to implement best practices established in 2023 to enhance pollinator-friendly pest management. Key strategies include:

- Selection of Pollinator-Safe Pesticides:** Organic and natural alternatives, such as neem oil and insecticidal soaps, have replaced more harmful chemical treatments. Systemic insecticides are used at Keep Warner Robins Beautiful (KWRB) beautification sites only when absolutely necessary. There have not been any instances during the 2024 season deeming their use at any of these sites necessary.
- Targeted Applications and Reduced Use:** Pesticide applications are conducted on an as-needed basis, focusing only on affected areas to minimize pollinator exposure. Chemical pesticides have been significantly reduced and are considered a last-resort measure.
- Timing of Applications:** When pesticide use is necessary, applications are restricted to early morning or late evening hours when pollinators are least active, thereby reducing potential harm.
- Avoidance of Blooming Plants:** Pesticides are not applied to flowering plants that attract pollinators. If treatment is required, only non-blooming plants or non-pollinator-attractive crops are targeted.
- Establishment of Pollinator Habitats:** To mitigate the impact of pesticide use,

dedicated pollinator-friendly spaces have been integrated into managed landscapes. This includes planting native flowering species along the medians of Russell Parkway, where pesticide applications are strictly avoided. These ongoing efforts reflect the city's commitment to balancing pest management with the protection of essential pollinator populations.

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.

Efforts to further reduce pesticide use in Warner Robins, particularly in residential and business areas, are still developing. While municipal projects and public spaces have begun adopting pollinator-friendly pest management strategies, expansion into privately owned properties relies on community engagement and outreach. Some of these community engagement strategies include encouraging local gardening groups, Master Gardener Programs, and homeowners associations to promote IPM strategies and nonchemical alternatives in residential landscapes. Educating groups such as professional landscapers and lawn care providers along with residents on pollinator-safe practices such as reducing systemic insecticide use and applying pesticides during non-peak pollinator activity hours via informational sessions and presentations has been an effortless way to engage the community and spread awareness about the importance of pollinators and the role each person can play in the protection of pollinators.

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

In Warner Robins, formal policy initiatives to further protect pollinators, people, or waterways from pesticides remain limited, though more efforts are emerging each year through local beautification and environmental programs. While no citywide ordinance has been enacted to regulate pesticide use at this time, the following initiatives contribute to reducing chemical exposure: **Keep Warner Robins Beautiful (KWRB) Practices:** Public landscaping projects, including medians and parks, have shifted toward pollinator-friendly pest management. Systemic insecticides are only used when absolutely necessary, and organic alternatives such as neem oil and insecticidal soaps are preferred. **Integrated Pest Management (IPM) in Public Spaces:** City-maintained landscapes are gradually adopting IPM principles, reducing chemical applications and favoring targeted, minimal-use approaches. **Stormwater Protection Measures:** While not explicitly tied to pesticide reduction, local stormwater management policies help limit runoff contamination, indirectly supporting waterway health.

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

Committee members and city staff have participated in continuing education on selective application, native plant integration, and habitat restoration efforts.

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)

- Reduced the total area of city or campus-managed lands to which pesticides are applied
- 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
- Encouraged developers and private landscapers to source plants using “Buying Bee-Safe Plants” methods recommended by Xerces Society. (See <https://xerces.org/publications/fact-sheets/buying-bee-safe-plants>)
- Encouraged developers and private landscapers to source plants that were not treated with neonicotinoids

Committee Photo

Learn More

Integrated Pest Management Plan:

Recommended Native Plant List:

Recommended Native Plant Supplier List:

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