

# Bee City USA - Bellingham

## 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 Parks Volunteer Program hosts weekly restoration work parties and other community work parties to remove invasive species and enhance native habitat. In 2024 the Parks Volunteer Program hosted and supported 104 work parties, school stewardship events, and community work parties which benefited ecological restoration efforts. 28 of these work parties directly benefited pollinator habitat through native flowering plantings and habitat enhancement. We planted 2,035 native plants in 2024 including 90 trees and 779 shrubs. At Galbraith Mountain, a large park in South Bellingham with an extensive trail system for mountain biking and hiking, we installed a pollinator garden around the parking lot and trail entrances. Across two work parties with 102 volunteers, we planted 312 native plants to keep invasives at bay and to establish native habitat. Additionally, we converted a large field in Van Wyck Park in North Bellingham to a no-mow meadow, providing over 200,000 sq ft of blooming flowers and meadow habitat to pollinators. By only mowing winding trails through the park, the space is utilized by dog walkers and bikers and provides an essential green belt neighborhood connection as well as expansive meadow pollinator habitat.

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

28

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

1279

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

28

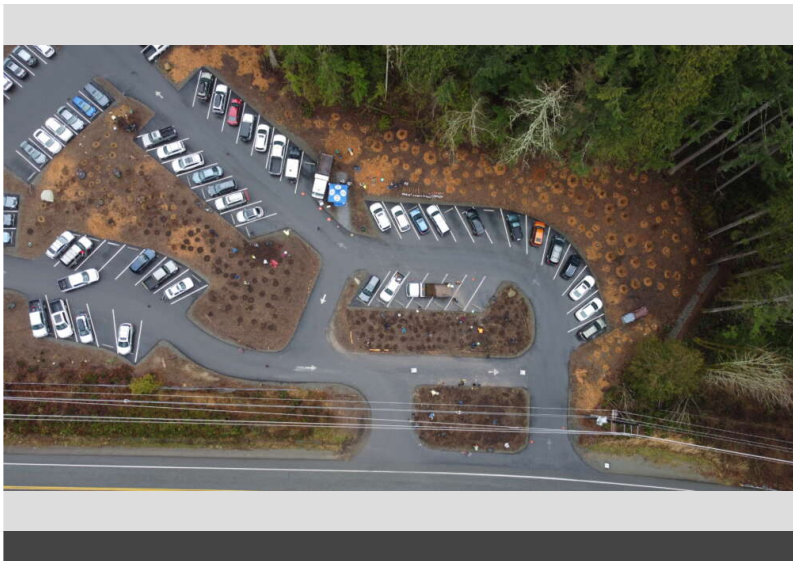
*How many total square feet of habitat were created or enhanced?*

311454

*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
- Invasive/exotic plant species removal for habitat improvement
- Native pollinator-friendly tree planting
- Native pollinator-friendly shrub border/hedgerow planting
- Rain garden/bioswale
- Roadside/rights of way planting
- School garden



Volunteer planting at Whatcom falls park - Eli Voorhies

## Education & Outreach

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

There are two outreach events hosted by the City of Bellingham Parks Volunteer Program we would like to highlight from 2024. In December we worked with volunteers in the Letter Streets Neighborhood to restore and replant a prominent little park called the Gossage Garden, in partnership with the Lettered Streets Neighborhood Association. This garden provides a central and visible space for flowering plants and pollinator activity. The importance of native planting, invasive removal, and pollinator habitat was discussed with volunteers throughout the work party. Rock Hill

Park, located in the central Bellingham York neighborhood, is a loved gathering spot. This quiet park hosts a pollinator garden which we tended in May with 38 enthusiastic volunteers in partnership with the York Neighborhood Association. The pollinator garden boasts an educational sign which highlights the important role that birds and insects play as pollinators in our ecosystem. At every work party we provide pamphlets and information about bees and noxious weeds, using non pesticide means to remove invasives, and native plants for pollinators. Bellingham residents are passionate about pollinator habitat and native plants. Outside of our city-hosted events, community members, non-profits and nurseries are hosting workshops, planting pollinator beds, and engaging students in pollinator efforts.

*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)?*

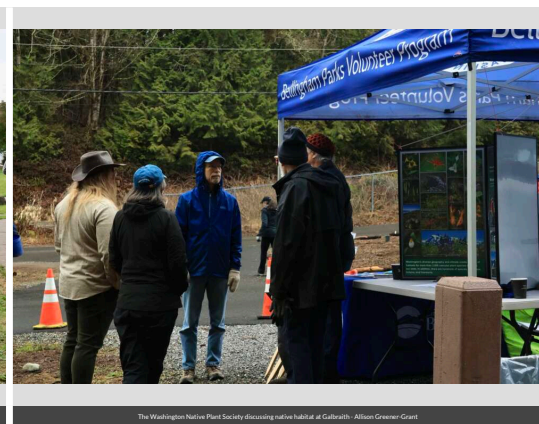
147



Volunteers at the York Pollinator Garden - Ryan Rabe



Outreach and education materials at Harriet Spauld Park - Allison Greener Grant



The Washington Native Plant Society discussing native habitat at Galbraith - Allison Greener Grant

## Policies & Practices

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

The city prioritizes nonchemical methods to remove invasive species. Our first line of defense is manual control methods. We teach and practice hand pulling, sheet mulching and mowing as methods of invasive species control and reduction. When pesticides are used, we avoid Neonicotinoids which are most harmful to pollinator species. We utilize nonchemical means to control noxious weeds such as horticultural vinegar.

*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 Bellingham Public Works department leads an initiative to reduce pesticide use in residential areas and landscaping called Natural Yard Care. This outreach effort is a regional campaign which provides education and

resources for maintaining pesticide free gardens and lawns. Public Works maintains the website with up to date resources and distributes business cards to direct people to those online resources as well as booklets about mulching for weed suppression and managing common nuisance weeds. There are over 14 community gardens in Bellingham and 25 School gardens which promote the importance of pollinator habitat and non-chemical methods of removing invasive species. These spaces provide essential and diverse pollinator habitats free of pesticides.

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

**We are working on finalizing and updating our IPM plan.**

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

**Every person who holds a WA state pesticide applicators license with the City has completed continuing education credits towards recertification. All of these continuing education credits highlight ecologically based Integrated Pest Management planning.**



Committee Photo

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Learn More

**Integrated Pest Management Plan:**

<https://cob.org/services/environment/lake-whatcom/pesticides>

**Recommended Native Plant List:** [Native-Plant-for-Native-Pollinators-booklet-FINAL-for-print.pdf](https://cob.org/wp-content/uploads/Native-Plant-for-Native-Pollinators-booklet-FINAL-for-print.pdf)

<https://cob.org/wp-content/uploads/Native-Plant-for-Native-Pollinators-booklet-FINAL-for-print.pdf>

**Recommended Native Plant Supplier List:** [native-seed-source-updated-feb-2024.pdf](https://www.wnps.org/content/documents/plants/gardening/native-seed-source-updated-feb-2024.pdf)

<https://www.wnps.org/content/documents/plants/gardening/native-seed-source-updated-feb-2024.pdf>

<https://cob.org/services/environment/bee-city-usa>

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