



# Bee City USA Annual Report Pollinator Conservation & Education 2019



## Asheville, North Carolina

### EDUCATION & OUTREACH



A group of 2nd graders, led by Peter Menzies, embrace their inner butterfly by acting out the egg stage of a monarch's life.



Over 50 Ashevilleians gather to learn about moths from environmental educator Jonathan Marchal during Pollination Celebration.

Between the Asheville GreenWorks education department and the rest of the Bee City Asheville leadership committee we held 4 school programs, 4 talks, 12 tabling events, and 16 other events all related to pollinator conservation.

Some highlights are as follows: on February 15th, co-chair Phyllis Stiles gave her talk "People, Pollinators, and the Planet: a Love Story," to 175 attendees. On April 27th, we tabled at the Mountain Science Expo, reaching roughly 500 people, and adorning hundreds of children (and some adults) with antennae of various pollinating insect orders. Throughout the spring and summer we did a tabling series at the North Asheville Tailgate Market, offering monarch butterfly and general pollinator education. In late May, committee members and volunteers "swarmed" the most popular areas in the city to put up bee stickers and spread the word about Pollination Celebration. In June, we spent the entire month promoting, and in some cases hosting, 13 different pollinator-related events - roughly 500 people attended in total. August 17th, we teamed up with BCU - Hendersonville to table at the inaugural Bee Bold Pollinator Festival at Bold Rock Cidery, contacting roughly 150 people. We teamed up once

again with BCU - Hendersonville to table and provide educational arts and crafts for Monarch Butterfly Day at the NC Arboretum on September 28th, contacting 200 people.



Asheville's Street Creature Puppeteers show their love for monarchs outside of a "Wings of Life" showing during Pollination Celebration

Bears, Bees, and Brews, a local organization led by Roni Hidalgo of the Bee City USA - Asheville Leadership Committee, held an educational evening on June 1, called "Bears, Banter, and Brews", in which pollinator conservation was a focus of discussion. They also co-hosted, along with the Center for Honeybee Research: "Pollinators: Secret Superheroes." This was a Pollination Celebration event, and a dining experience that highlighted the role pollinators play in the culinary world - it also featured talks from a number of pollinator conservationists. On October 19, Bears, Bees, and Brews hosted their self-titled festival at New Belgium Brewing with tremendous attendance and a number of speakers and activities related to pollinators.

The Buncombe County Extension office offered two educational pollinator programs as part of their Gardening in the Mountains series. The office also has an educational garden thanks to help from Master Gardeners Barbara Neuses and Curtis Coates.

In addition to co-hosting "Pollinators: Secret Superheroes," the Center for Honeybee Research also put on their annual Black Jar Honey Tasting on June 13th. Black Jar is a fundraiser for honeybee research and an opportunity to garner interest and support for pollinators - and taste honey from around the world! Much of this work is thanks to Terri Lechner, a member of the Bee City USA - Asheville Leadership Committee.

Reems Creek Nursery hosted a pollinator gardening workshop as part of Pollination Celebration in addition to a number of other workshops that focused on native plants and highlighted the importance of pollinators.



Amy Brown, a media specialist at Claxton Elementary, along with other passionate teachers celebrated their annual bee day with educational bee activities and by honoring the colony of honeybees in the observation hive located in their media center. She also created an entire monarch butterfly unit for their 2nd graders and partnered with Asheville GreenWorks for several interactive monarch programs.

During 2019 we worked on educational "pollinator packs" that will be completed in 2020. These are backpacks filled with books, activities, and toys aimed at teaching children about pollinators and cultivating an appreciation for them. Our goal is to make them available at public libraries and schools to be accessible by anyone in the community.

## POLLINATOR HEALTH & HABITAT



A young monarch caterpillar munches on a recently planted swamp milkweed.



Another bare patch of public land adopted and converted to pollinator habitat through the efforts of Asheville GreenWorks and the City of Asheville.



Claxton Elementary students plant swamp milkweed for their new butterfly garden.



Young volunteers help out at our native plant nursery.



A group of college students spend their spring break giving back by helping out at our native plant nursery.



We installed pollinator patches at 7 highschools, facilitated the adoption of 11 "spots" (underutilized pieces of public property turned pollinator habitat), maintained the quality of our 5 urban orchards, and gave away 550 native trees to county residents (most of which were either nectar and pollen sources or larval hosts).

The Earth Team at Jubilee Community Church, along with the help of Costa Farms, gave away over 1000 milkweed starts to community members.

Amy Brown of Claxton Elementary teamed up with Asheville GreenWorks to create a butterfly garden with native milkweed species.

We also spent roughly 6 months of 2019 building our pollinator garden certification program from the ground up. It will roll out in March 2020. We hope this program will encourage residents to create and improve habitat around the city.

## POLICIES & PRACTICES

We have printed forms that allow residents to opt out of herbicide treatment below power lines adjacent to their property, and made them available at various tabling events.

### Recommended Locally Native Plant Species List —

<https://www.ashevillegreenworks.org/native-pollinator-plants-and-nurseries.html>

### Regional Native Plant Supplier List —

<https://www.ashevillegreenworks.org/native-pollinator-plants-and-nurseries.html>

**Pollinator Friendly Integrated Pest Management Plan —** Under development

## CONTACT US!



Phyllis Stiles speaks to the first gathering of our current leadership committee.



The committee celebrates Phyllis Stiles' retirement and her massive impact on the world of pollinator conservation.



Committee co-chair Peter Menzies speaks at Asheville's inaugural Buzz Gathering - an assembly of our community's pollinator conservationists and advocates.

**Committee** — Bee City USA - Asheville Leadership Committee, Peter Menzies, peter@ashevillegreenworks.org, Phyllis Stiles, beesneedflowers@gmail.com

**Website** — <https://www.ashevillegreenworks.org/bee-city-usa-asheville.html>

**Social Media** — <https://www.facebook.com/beecityasheville/>