



Bee City USA Annual Report Pollinator Conservation & Education 2019



Durham, New Hampshire

EDUCATION & OUTREACH

Durham Farm Day - Held annually in August (17 August 2019) this one-day event is organized by the Durham Agricultural Commission. It showcases the importance of farming and enlightened agricultural activities on both commercial and residential land/gardens in Durham. Key activities include tours and demonstrations at local agricultural and dairy farms, “Food Friendly Yards”, and University of NH and Cooperative Extension research project sites. An increasingly popular Farm Day activity is a wildflower honey tasting table whereby participants can sample examples of spring, summer, and fall wildflower honey produced by “Lee’s Bees”.



Memorial Day Parade – During this annual event (27 May 2019), the Durham Agricultural Commission has a “mobile spring vegetable garden” (aka a float) in the parade. Displayed prominently is the BeeCity USA logo along with an unoccupied beehive.

Pollinator-Friendly Yards – This PP Presentation briefly explains both the importance and benefits of making residential yards “pollinator-friendly.” The presentation is periodically updated and shown to local school and civic groups throughout the year.

“Bee-Friendly to Pollinators” Bookmark – At the suggestion of a Town Library Trustee, 1000 bookmarks were created to increase awareness about five (5) things that can be done. This includes: 1) re-think your lawn, 2) plant flowers/herbs in your garden, 3) planting fruiting trees and shrubs, 4) favor the growth of native trees and shrubs, and 5) “bee-aware” there are many types of bees. In addition to being available at the Town Library, this bookmark is now distributed during all Agricultural Commission programs and events.



On 31 July 2019 a “Bee-Friendly to Pollinators Demonstration” was given to participants in the Durham Summer Recreational Program (~25 youngsters). The event included inspection of a beehive, tour of pollinator-friendly lawn and gardens, and hands-on honey harvesting/tasting activities. Also during July, a tour of “Pollinator Meadow” demonstration plots (for native bumble bees) was conducted at the University of NH Woodman Farm Experiment Station.

POLLINATOR HEALTH & HABITAT

“Food-Friendly Yard” – The Durham Agricultural Commission established a program to encourage town residents to participate in home food production and small-scale farming. A “Food Friendly Yard”

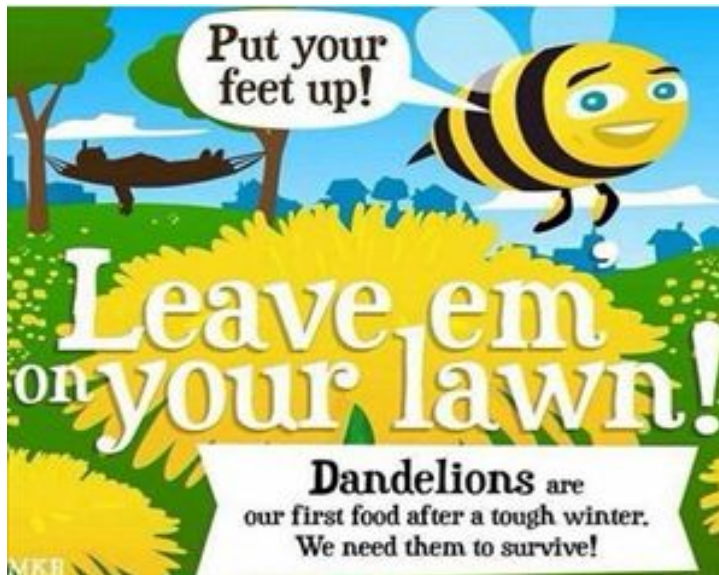
is a nourishing, chemical-free space for people, wildlife, and pollinating insects. Residents who commit to practicing food friendly yard activities are recognized by a “Food Friendly Yard” sign.

The “**Re-Think Your Lawn: Wildflowers are “Bee-utiful”**” initiative is based on the premise that you can create or maintain your lawn for multiple purposes including aesthetics, diversity, and concern for a healthy environment. A brochure has been compiled that provides specific recommendations are provided regarding planting/re-seeding, lawn mowing, and beneficial wildflowers that occur during spring, summer, and fall.



Multi-layered mowing (i.e., at different times and heights) encourages more clover than grass.

As part of this initiative, a 2nd Annual “**Dandelions are Bee-utiful**” contest was held during April – May 2019 to encourage town residents to recognize and demonstrate the importance of dandelions in early spring for honeybees and other pollinators. Ten residents sent photos of their lawn where dandelions were either allowed or encouraged to grow. All stated they liked having dandelions and other spring wildflowers, and delayed lawn mowing to encourage their growth. The owner of the lawn with highest density of dandelions was proud what could be accomplished by “purposeful inaction.” In particular, she likes it when dandelion blossoms become “seed heads,” and believes that a highly diverse lawn benefits both pollinators and songbirds.



Durham's 2019 "Dandelions are Bee-utiful" Contest Winner

POLICIES & PRACTICES

The *BeeCity USA* [Durham NH] Working Group reports to the Durham Agricultural Commission. The Durham Agricultural Commission was established in 2011 to encourage the development of regional agriculture that will lead to a working landscape of actively managed gardens, farms, and forests by town residents. The "**Bee Friendly to Pollinators**" is major program activity by the Commission.

A November 2018 **Article in American Bee Journal** described Durham, NH becoming the first *BeeCity USA* recognized town in New England. The article described both the types of activities and the key persons involved in Durham being a pollinator-friendly community where "residents share a strong belief in protecting and preserving their natural resources."

An October meeting was held at Durham Public Works Director about the pros and cons of creating and adopting an integrated pest management plan for Town of Durham owned properties. At the present time, some herbicides are used to control non-native/invasive species. However, no pesticides used on pollinator habitats that are located in town-owned properties.

Recommended Locally Native Plant Species List —

<https://extension.unh.edu/resource/wildflower-mixes-trial-new-hampshire>

Regional Native Plant Supplier List —

https://extension.unh.edu/resources/files/Resource006628_Rep9500.pdf

<https://extension.unh.edu/resource/pollinator-plants-northern-new-england-gardens-fact-sheet>

CONTACT US!

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Website — https://www.ci.durham.nhus/boc_agricultural

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