

Bee City USA - Lynchburg

Report on 2020

Pollinator Habitat Creation & Enhancement

The Blue Ridge Conservation (BRC), in cooperation with the City of Lynchburg, created a large pollinator bed as part of the LEAF (Lynchburg Expressway Appearance Fund) program. The pollinator bed contains 1,300 plants that will bloom at different times during spring, summer and fall. This planting was a joint project with members of the Hillside and Lynchburg Garden Clubs, Public Works, a volunteer architect – Cabell Crowther, who provided the planting design for these expansive, visually impactful beds and Irvington Springs Farm, who helped procure the native plant material and ensure native non-GMO/non-neonicotinoid. The hope is this pollinator bed, in a prominent place, will draw attention to the Bee City initiatives and spark interest in others. LEAF also planted three beds on the expressway using pollinator seed mix. The City's Public Works Department planted several varieties of native pollinator shrubs and perennials at the Jefferson Park Community Center. Many Monarch Butterfly caterpillars were seen on the Milkweed plantings and hanging around the building. Amazement Square installed a new pollinator garden which utilizes a variety of seasonally blooming plants to create a year-round environment for pollinators and created two new outdoor bee hives that are replications of their two buildings. This garden and the one of a kind top bar hives have gained lots of attention from museum guests and trail walkers. Parks & Recreation replaced and added native perennials and pollen and nectar rich annuals in existing and new pollinator beds. Where possible, due to COVID, vegetable gardens were planted with vegetables. Parks & Recreation and Buildings & Grounds ensured that our native ground dwelling bee nests went undisturbed while construction was being done nearby at Riverside Park. Students from James River Day School alongside neighbors spent two days sowing seeds and planting native plants with the help of the BRC. This wildflower meadow fits into the New Perennial Movement as a form of planting termed, wild-scaping. Wild-scaping is planting for the primary purpose of supporting wildlife. Signage designates "Habitat Restoration Area" and a "No Mow Zone." Pollinator Pioneers is a beekeeping club of passionate students at Heritage High School who are working toward community awareness and engagement about the importance of pollinators by maintaining over twenty active beehives, and through this project, enriching the environment. Over a dozen native sapling trees and shrubs that attract bees and create food sources for many pollinators were planted.

Education & Outreach

The Bee City Lynchburg committee presented Disney's Wings of Life Movie at the Academy Center of the Arts in Downtown Lynchburg in March 2020. This event featured a Sunday matinee and a Monday showing attended by students from local schools. Positive feedback was received from both students and teachers as it tied in with their curriculum. This provided a beautiful portraying of the value of pollinators. The Blue Ridge Conservation (BRC), a committee member, together with the James River Day School hosted a socially distanced perennial planting for Earth Day. BRC provides



information regarding the importance of pollinators and planting natives on their website, BRC launched the Blue Ridge Conservation Pollinator Garden Certification Program in which certification demonstrates knowledge and the commitment to plant natives and provide food for pollinators. For two Saturdays in December, BRC manned a booth at the Mistletoe Market located at the local Farmer's Market. Along with selling bee houses and pollinator garden kits, they educated attendees about the importance of native plants and protecting pollinator habitat. The Nature Zone, a committee member, launched the Pollinator Crossword Scavenger Hunt. Visitors are given a blank crossword puzzle upon entry to the Nature Zone. At the instructional station, visitors are tasked with finding a specific pollinator hidden somewhere in the Nature Zone. Once they find said pollinator, they are given one answer to their crossword as well as information on either pollinators or the process of pollination. Visitors continue finding clues and filling out the crossword in this fashion. At each station, they learn a little more about the world of pollinators and the process of pollination. Amazement Square, a committee member, enjoyed a very exciting year launching their pollination programs. The year kicked off with a viewing of the film, *The Pollinators*. Two programs, 'Meet a Beekeeper' and 'What's the Buzz with Melissa the Bee', were created. Both programs took place on Saturdays in the 'Bee in the Know' exhibition gallery, attracting participants to learn more about beekeeping from community beekeepers. The museum had to close due to COVID and a new series of virtual programming, 'Amazement Square, Any Where!' was created featuring a virtual Meet a Beekeeper video and a Honeycomb Tessellation video which takes a closer look at the Bee in the Know exhibition and highlights the honeycomb.

Policies & Practices

We have not published our IPM policy on the City's website yet. In practice, however, we do follow the principles of IPM. We are not able to maintain our public areas completely without the use of pesticides, but when used they are used strategically and (we believe) necessarily. We almost never use insecticides of any kind. In the past few years we really have not had to control any insects other than spot treatments for hornets and wasps that were a hazard to park visitors. In the landscape, we rarely ever have a need to control insects. About seven years ago, I controlled a scale infestation on the cherry laurels at City Stadium with dormant oil and selective pruning. A few years ago, we got an infestation of bagworms on the arborvitaes at Riverfront Park. The first year we controlled them simply by picking off the bags as we found them. We never could get them all, so the next couple of years we used pheromone traps and biological control (*Bacillus thuringiensis*) in addition to manually removing the bags. Unfortunately, we eventually lost that fight and had to remove all of the evergreens. Even so, IPM let us extend the life of the trees without using any chemical pesticides. Other than the athletic fields, we don't make broadcast applications of herbicides. We spot-treat landscapes and hardscapes as needed. We began using organic herbicides (clove oil, etc.) in certain areas in the parks, such as playgrounds and walkways near the recreation centers. We manually remove weeds as much as we can, especially in our rain gardens. That's labor-intensive and requires training for new people. In fact, it's so labor-intensive that finally, last year, we hired a contractor to handle most of that work for us at the Riverfront and the Stadium. Volunteers hand-weed the butterfly gardens at Riverside.



Integrated Pest Management Plan:

Recommended Native Plant List: [Native Plants of Central Virginia latest.pdf](#)

Recommended Native Plant Supplier List: [Source of Native Plants in the Central Virginia Area.docx](#)

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