



# Bee City USA Annual Report for 2018 Pollinator Conservation & Education



## GILLETTE, WYOMING

### EDUCATION & OUTREACH



The Pollinator Committee partnered with the Master Gardeners and Campbell County Extension to have a booth at the 2018 Campbell County Ag Expo located at Camplex, Gillette's premier events center. Over 700 3rd graders visited our booth to look at insect cases featuring native pollinators, and Master Gardener volunteers were on hand to discuss native pollinators and field questions. The children were also invited to take pictures with our bumblebee photo board and our new praying mantis display (the praying mantis might not be considered a pollinator, but it is a beneficial garden insect that can be supported by implementing pollinator-friendly gardening practices).

On April 21, the Pollinator Committee worked with the GLEE Planning Committee to host Gillette's second annual Gillette Pollinator Day in conjunction with the Garden and Landscape Educational Expo (GLEE). During this day-long educational event and pollinator celebration held at Camplex, over 500 community members attended workshops and lectures free of charge to learn about planting for pollinators, how to become a Habitat Hero, and how to make insect hotels. In between lectures, participants were invited to take pictures with our bumble bee photo board and praying mantis, and stroll through the Gillette Saturday Farmers Market where vendors displayed our Farmers Market Pollinator Posters. All attendees received a Be a Friend to Pollinators brochure, and seed paper made with native wildflower seed to plant at home. The Pollinator Committee worked with the Northeast Wyoming Seed Library and AVA Community Art Center to host a free seed paper making class. Community members and Master Gardener volunteers gathered together to create seed paper containing native wildflower seed donated from Wind River Seed. Class participants were able to make their own seed paper to take home and volunteers worked to make over 300 pieces of seed paper that could be given to GLEE attendees.

During National Pollinator Week, the Pollinator Committee teamed up with the Gillette Saturday Farmers Market in an effort to help reinforce the connection between pollinators and our food system. Farmers Market vendors displayed our Farmers Market Pollinator Posters at their booths, and customers were invited to take a picture with our bumble photo board and praying mantis display.

On September 19, the Pollinator Committee hosted a Pollinator Party at the Campbell County Extension Office for the local Cloverbuds, a 4H program designed for children ages 5-8. Over 20 children and their parents attended the Pollinator Party where they were able to view insect cases featuring native pollinators, learn about pollination by examining the parts of a flower and native insects under microscopes, make pollinator journey bracelets (a game we designed inspired by a Water Cycle activity from Project Learning Tree), and become pollinators by pollinating “cotton ball flowers” with “cheese puff pollen.”

During the months of May, June, July and August, the Pollinator Committee and Urban Orchard Committee hosted pollinator counts at the Urban Orchard, which involved counting the number of native bees, honey bees, butterflies/moths, flies, and wasps. We worked with the Sheridan, WY Food Forest to establish our transects and design our counting protocol. We are looking forward to conducting these counts again during the summer of 2019 to see if the newly installed pollinator garden helps increase the number of pollinators visiting the Urban Orchard.



The Pollinator Committee also participated in the 2018 Memorial Day Butterfly Count sponsored by the North American Butterfly Association, restocked the Northeast Wyoming Seed Library's pollinator collection with native wildflower seeds gathered from certified wildlife and pollinator habitat from around our community, visited the Smithsonian's Pollinator Garden in Washington, D.C., and provided information for the “Thank a pollinator for your next meal” article that appeared in the Thanksgiving edition of the Gillette News Record. ”

## POLLINATOR HEALTH & HABITAT



The Prairie Wind Demonstration Pollinator Rain Garden delighted residents with its season long display of blooms during its second growing season. In addition to being Gillette's first designated pollinator garden, the site was also certified as wildlife habitat by the National Wildlife Federation in 2018. The Pollinator Committee also hosted our second annual National Pollinator Week Celebration at the Prairie Wind Garden by planting milkweed, installing an insect hotel, and registering the site as a Monarch Waystation. The Pollinator Committee and the Campbell County Master Gardeners celebrated the coming of Fall at the garden by harvesting seeds from the native wildflowers that were donated to the Pollinator collection at the Northeast Wyoming Seed Library.



In 2018, the Pollinator Committee once again partnered with the City of Gillette Parks Division to encourage Adopt-A-Planter participants to select pollinator-friendly plants (those that provide season-long nutrition and shelter). Each summer, the City of Gillette invites local nonprofits, civic groups, businesses, and individuals to adopt and care for one of the community's 96 beautification planters throughout the summer. Adopt-A-Planter participants were able to easily locate pollinator-friendly plants for their plants by looking for the bee symbol placed next to pollinator friendly species on the pre-selected Adopt-A-Planter plant list, and they received an electronic version of our pollinator friendly planting guide.

The Pollinator Committee also worked to protect and create new pollinator habitat this year. Dalbey Memorial Park, one of

Gillette's premier city parks, was designated as a Monarch Waystation through Monarch Watch in an effort to recognize and preserve its population of native showy milkweed. We teamed up with Campbell County Parks and Recreation to install an insect hotel and plant a pollinator garden at the Urban Orchard, a community fruit tree orchard that residents can harvest from for free located in Complex Park. The pollinator garden at the Urban Orchard was also recognized as wildlife habitat by The Habitat Network. We worked with the Campbell County Conservation District, Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality, and Gillette College to obtain a \$50,000 grant to design and install a demonstration pollinator rain garden in front of the Gillette College Technical Education Center. This garden will not only increase the amount of urban pollinator habitat available in our community, but will also capture and filter water runoff from the parking lot of Gillette College before it reaches Donkey Creek.

## POLICIES & PRACTICES

Gillette's Pollinator Committee is comprised of Master Gardener volunteers, City of Gillette Parks Board representatives, County Extension Agents, City of Gillette Parks Division personnel, and concerned community members. Our committee members are dedicated to facilitating community-based pollinator conservation efforts in the City of Gillette and Campbell County.

The Pollinator Committee worked with the City of Gillette Parks and Beautification Board to add a new "Go Green" category to our city's annual Landscape Beautification Awards. This new category recognizes Gillette's status as a Bee City and Tree City and acknowledges those businesses, institutions, civic groups, and non-profit organizations that have made sustainability a key feature of their landscape design by incorporating



wildlife or pollinator habitat, water-wise gardening techniques (rain barrels, cisterns, drip irrigation), use of native plants, and low impact development practices.

On April 17 the City of Gillette proclaimed April 21st as Gillette Pollinator Day via the Bee City USA Proclamation, and in June 2018 Gillette College signed National Wildlife Federation's Campus Pollinator Pledge promising to protect bees, bats, butterflies, and other pollinators on campus.

**Recommended Locally Native Plant Species List**—To be developed.

**Regional Native Plant Supplier List**— To be developed.

**Pollinator Friendly Integrated Pest Management Plan**— To be developed.

## CONTACT US!

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