

Projects Supporting Pollinators in Ann Arbor's Parks

NAP Projects:

- Ann Arbor is a signatory of the National Wildlife Federation's Mayors' Monarch Pledge, in which mayors commit annually to taking specific actions to protect the monarch butterfly and its habitat, and to educate the community about the importance of pollinators. Ann Arbor has been a signatory of the pledge since its inception in 2015. NAP submits an annual report to NWF detailing the action items taken each year.
- In 2018, NAP was awarded a grant from the National Wildlife Federation to purchase native pollinator plant seeds to be used to enhance existing pollinator habitats. The seeds were spread in wetland, prairie, and savanna habitats across five parks in the winter of 2018-19.
- Since 2015, NAP has partnered with the Michigan Butterfly Network out of the Kalamazoo Nature Center to facilitate an annual volunteer butterfly survey, whose data are contributed to a statewide database. Volunteers survey for butterflies in prairie, wetland, and woodland habitats in 16 parks and public-school properties.
- NAP partners with the Leslie Science and Nature Center to host an annual Monarch Migration Festival, in which attendees learn about the importance of pollinators and release tagged monarchs onto the LSNC grounds.
- In celebration of National Pollinator Week, NAP hosts volunteer workdays centered on removing invasive species from pollinator habitats throughout the parks.
- NAP collaborated with the Ann Arbor office of the National Wildlife Federation and a dedicated group of citizen leaders in order to establish a pollinator garden at West Park.
- In 2019, NAP coordinated with Project Wingspan, a project of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, to assess the quality of pollinator habitats in Ann Arbor's parks. An ecologist for Project Wingspan supplied NAP with site-specific recommendations for enhancing the quality of pollinator habitat. In addition, NAP collaborated with project leaders to allow specially trained volunteers to collect native seed from our pollinator habitats, which would be mixed with other collected seeds from our region and redistributed to organizations in our area for the purpose of habitat enhancement. In 2021, NAP was awarded some of those collected seeds to plant back in our pollinator habitats.
- NAP has coordinated with staff at the National Wildlife Federation office in Ann Arbor to distribute educational materials about pollinators at public events.
- NAP maintains an informational web page on pollinators on the City of Ann Arbor's website.
- NAP has provided guidance in the Benz and Traver Creek stream restoration projects at Huron Hills and Leslie Park Golf Courses, respectively, in the creation of pollinator habitat along those restored stream corridors.
- Similarly, NAP has provided guidance in the Malletts Creek stream restoration projects at Mary Beth Doyle and Huron Parkway Nature Areas, and in the Miller's Creek stream restoration

project in Glacier Hill Nature Area in the creation of pollinator habitat along those restored stream corridors.

- NAP staff participate in site plan reviews for major developments that have the potential to impact significant natural areas. Staff review plans in order to prevent planting of invasive species, to encourage native landscaping, and to minimize disturbance to natural features.
- NAP has developed an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) plan in order to control invasive plant species in the most efficient and effective way, while also minimizing impacts to non-target species.
- In 2020, NAP hosted a honeybee-themed workday at Ruthven Nature Area, during which a Park Steward led nature hikes focused on pollinators.
- NAP supports independent Park Stewards in the planting of native pollinator plant species at parks like Miller, Dicken Woods, and Buhr, as well as at AAPS sites like the Thurston Nature Center.
- NAP staff perform invasive species control and prescribed burns in some rain gardens maintained by the Office of Washtenaw County Water Resources Commissioner. These include plant species that support pollinators.
- In 2021, NAP applied to receive milkweed plugs from the Monarch Watch program at the University of Kansas, which would be used to enhance habitat for monarch butterflies in areas of 2 acres or more.
- NAP collaborated with an Adopt-A-Park volunteer to spread pollinator plant seeds at Ruthven Nature Area in 2021.

Parks Projects:

- The Ann Arbor Parks Golf Courses received milkweed seed from Monarchs in the Rough, a joint program of Audubon International and the U.S. Golf Association that promotes the restoration of monarch habitat in golf course rough areas.
- The Adopt-A-Park program facilitates the planting of native pollinator plants and the removal of invasive species in several gardens throughout Ann Arbor's parks, including the Rotary Club Butterfly Garden at Gallup Park.
- The Adopt-A-Median program facilitates the planting and maintenance of pollinator plants in medians and traffic islands throughout the city.

Outside of Parks:

- The Environmental Commission of the City of Ann Arbor includes a Pollinator Working Group to assist City Staff with developing and disseminating educational materials about how to implement the City's more sustainable Integrated Pest Management plan throughout Ann Arbor. The Working Group also helps to ensure accurate data reporting for the Mayors' Monarch Pledge and assists with exploring new pollinator initiatives.

- The Office of the Washtenaw County Water Resources Commissioner plants native pollinator plants in rain gardens throughout the city and county.

Previous Affiliations:

- In the past, Ann Arbor was designated a Bee City USA by the Xerces Society, a non-profit environmental organization that focuses on the conservation of invertebrates considered to be essential to biological diversity and ecosystem health. The Bee City USA program endorses a set of commitments, defined in a resolution, for creating sustainable habitats for native pollinators. Bee City requires that this effort be coordinated locally to include citizens and non-profit organizations. This initiative was ended when the volunteer who was managing the effort locally moved on to other projects, when the reporting requirements became too burdensome, and when Bee City USA wanted to start charging the City \$500 per year for its participation in the program.
- NAP supported concerned community members in the mobilization of the Bee Safe Neighborhoods campaign, sponsored by the Living Systems Institute. The purpose of the campaign was to discourage the use of pesticides on residential lawns, and to encourage the planting of pollinator-friendly plants. NAP's involvement in this program ended when the community members organizing and leading the effort moved on to other projects.