

Bee City Renewal - Entry #35

Name of City, Town or Municipality City of Guelph
Province Ontario
Applicant's Name Jay Cranstone
Applicant's Job Title Natural Areas Stewardship Technologist
Organization or Department Parks Operations and Forestry
Address 1 Carden Street Guelph, Ontario N1H 3A1
Applicant's Phone
Applicant's Email
Are you the primary contact person? Yes
Briefly summarize your Bee City experience during the past year. Please include information about challenges, feedback, and media responses. <p>2019 was the City of Guelph's first full year as a Bee City. Bee City status helped provide support for work that both community members and the City of Guelph implemented to benefit pollinators. Overall feedback from media and the community on being a Bee City was positive.</p> <p>One challenge we have found is that it can be difficult get a large turnout for volunteer community events specifically focused on pollinators. National Pollinator Week which typically takes place in late June is an especially busy time as it coincides with the end of the school year. Nonetheless education about pollinators is incorporated in a number of community events and volunteer plantings throughout the year so engagement on pollinators takes place in other ways. Many of these were part of larger volunteer initiatives but included some focus on pollinators.</p>

Pollination Guelph (a local partner) hosts an annual Pollinator Symposium, which focuses specifically on education and sharing knowledge about pollinators is also a very successful way to educate the community about pollinators.

Please tell us about your community's efforts to reduce the use of pesticides.

Our Parks, Forestry and Horticulture operations are making continuous efforts to reduce pesticide use and focus on Integrated Pest Management (IPM) methods.

- We do not use any neonicotinoid-based pesticides in our horticulture or greenhouse operations and follow an IPM based approach which includes biological control. Plant materials that we purchase are sourced from suppliers that do not use these kinds of pesticides.
- The only pesticide used by our Forestry department is TreeAzin (non neonicotinoid) for control of Emerald Ash Borer. It is applied by injection typically in July when many trees have finished flowering.
- Our Trails and Natural Areas Stewardship team has a management program for invasive species which is currently focused most heavily on Buckthorn, and to a lesser extent on Japanese Knotweed, Dog Strangling Vine and Giant Hogweed given they are not as well established in Guelph as Buckthorn. Our invasive management program includes the use of select herbicides, and in doing so we follow best management practices to help protect pollinators. Typically we use Garlon (i.e. basal bark application for sapling and mature Buckthorn). We also use Arsenal (i.e. low volume targeted foliar application for Buckthorn seedlings, Dog Strangling Vine), in combination with mechanical controls such as pulling/root wrenching, repeated cutting and solarization. We have been using Truvis to eradicate the small number of Giant Hogweed known in the city.
- Our Turf and Sportsfields team follows an IPM approach to turf management, and does not use pesticides for cosmetic reasons. The team includes two certified IPM specialists who have developed programs that focus on aeration, topdressing and overseeding sportsfields.

Outline community initiatives focusing on habitat creation and restoration. If possible, include a plant list.

Naturalization Plantings

In 2019 the City of Guelph worked with community partners including Trees for Guelph and Ontario Public Research Interest Group (OPIRG) to host 35 naturalization enhancement and restoration plantings at 31 sites in parks and school yards across the city. These events engaged over 7500 volunteers, who planted more than 6,300 native tree and shrub seedlings, and over 4,000 native wildflower plugs. These biodiverse plantings included more than 40 species of native trees and shrubs.

Native Plant Pilot Propagation Program

The City of Guelph also provided wildflower seedlings from its new 2019 native plant propagation pilot project Community Gardens located across the city to enhance the pollinator friendly sections in these gardens.

The native plant propagation program was successful in growing the following species in 2019:

- *Aquilegia canadensis* – Wild Columbine -
- *Asclepias tuberosa* – Butterflyweed
- *Asclepias syriaca* - Common Milkweed
- *Echinacea purpurea* - Purple Coneflower* for gardens not for naturalization
- *Eupatorium purpureum* - Sweet Joe Pye Weed
- Wild Bergamot -*Monarda fistulosa*
- Common Evening Primrose- *Oenothera biennis*
- Black or Brown eyed Susan- *Rudbeckia hirta*

Urban Forestry Program

In 2019, over 400 trees were planted as part of the city's ongoing urban forestry program. These trees also provide additional habitat for pollinators.

Pollinator Demonstration Garden Projects

Working with local partners, the City has installed several demonstration pollinator gardens throughout the city. Each garden features species native to Ontario and many also include educational signage describing pollinators and their critical roles within our environment.

A redesign of the courtyard in front of the recently renovated Victoria Road Recreation Centre progressed in 2019 with construction planned for 2020. The courtyard was experiencing drainage issues and staff saw this as an opportunity to create a demonstration rain garden. The design for the space includes butterfly basking rocks and masses of native herbaceous pollinator plant species. There is an opportunity to add interpretive signage in the future to help educate citizens on rain gardens and pollinator species

Pollination Guelph

Pollination Guelph, a local not for profit partner has been involved in efforts to create and enhance pollinator habitat in the city since its inception. A number of projects were ongoing in 2019. Some are featured on Pollination Guelph's website (<https://www.pollinationguelph.ca/gardens>) including a number located on city-owned land.

Land Use Planning and Development Review

Through the development review process the City's Environmental Planning department contributes to the creation of Secondary Plans and reviews land development applications to ensure conformance with natural heritage policies such as the Natural Heritage Strategy and the Natural Heritage Action Plan. The reviews provide the opportunity to protect, create and enhance natural habitat for wildlife including pollinators. In 2019 this resulted in plantings of many native woody plants and seeding of many meadow areas.

How did your community promote being a Bee City?

Bee city status was promoted in a number of ways including:

- Media release after initial bee city status was achieved <https://guelph.ca/2018/06/guelphs-abuzz-bee-city-designation/>
- Community event and webpage to highlight pollinator friendly green roof (June 2018) <https://guelph.ca/city-hall/city-hall/about-city-hall/city-halls-pollinator-friendly-green-roof/>
- 2019 horticulture displays in some city parks were Bee city themed. This included a central display of a bee on the city's flagship floral clock display in Riverside Park and a topiary bee in Royal City Park just south of the downtown. <https://www.guelphmercury.com/news-story/9507371-what-s-going-on-here-a-sight-to-behold-at-guelph-park/>
- An interactive map of pollinator friendly gardens in Guelph was created and posted to the city's website to raise awareness about Community and Pollinator gardens and encourage participation (<https://www.pollinationguelph.ca/gardens>)
- Social media posts on City of Guelph twitter and Facebook accounts during Pollinator Week (2018 and 2019), and hosted a Pollinator Week habitat creation and pollinator educational event at one of our local sites

Please tell us about your efforts aimed at educating your community, including residents, city employees, contractors, children and other groups.

Educational efforts include initiatives that target a variety of audiences. A number are City-led and others are led by partners with support from the City. Key initiatives are described below and include links to information available online.

- An online interactive map of publicly accessible community and pollinator friendly gardens in Guelph was created in 2019 and posted to the city's website to inspire residents to create similar gardens on their own properties, and / or join one of the local community gardens (<https://guelph.ca/living/recreation/parks/community-and-pollinator-gardens/>)

- Social media posts on City of Guelph twitter and Facebook accounts about pollinators are made year round and especially during Pollinator Week (2018 and 2019).

- The city hosts the Healthy Landscapes program (<https://guelph.ca/living/house-and-home/healthy-landscapes/>). It includes several elements that focus on pollinators including a speaker series that provides residents advice and information about water conservation and pollinator friendly native plant gardening practices. This program includes home visits by qualified staff to advise residents about gardening using native plants that provide the dual benefits of water conservation and providing pollinator habitat.

- The City of Guelph's Official Plan "recognizes that maintaining pollinator habitat is essential for supporting healthy ecosystems and encourages this in City-led and private development projects". Our planning staff uses this policy when reviewing applications for development to encourage opportunities for pollinator habitat enhancement and protection.

- The City of Guelph Parks and Forestry department has held internal staff discussions to consider ways that operations could be modified to benefit pollinators. As of 2019, the city horticulture staff have started exploring transitioning some of the display gardens in public parks to pollinator friendly native perennials or shrubs where appropriate. Where this is not feasible or appropriate staff are modifying designs of display gardens to include annual plants that have higher pollinator forage value.

- "Holler" the City's internal newsletter published every couple of months included articles profiling Bee City and pollinator initiatives in July-August 2018 and July-August 2019 (see uploaded files).

- The City of Guelph Park Operations and Forestry piloted a new native plant propagation program in city greenhouses in 2019. This program was started to support our Horticulture department's transition to using more native plants and to provide plants for naturalization plantings with community partners in parks.

- Over the 2019 growing season the City of Guelph partnered with Trees for Guelph, Ontario Public Research Interest Group (OPIRG) and other partners to host 37 community planting events at 40 sites focused on habitat creation (planting native trees, shrubs and herbaceous species) in natural areas in Guelph parks and schoolyards. All of these events included educational talks about the importance of these plantings and creating pollinator habitat (see uploaded files for a few examples of 2019 events)

- Several Guelph community organizations including the University of Guelph Arboretum and the Nature Guelph Waterloo-Wellington Wildflower Society hosted annual native plant sale that included a focus on educating the public about the importance of planting native plants to provide habitat for pollinators.

- Pollination Guelph, a local volunteer-run, federally incorporated charitable organization focused in promoting a better understanding of the importance of pollinators, also posts about pollinators year round on their social media. They have implemented / partnered with the City of Guelph to implement a number of pollinator gardens and sites throughout the city. Many of these are profiled on the Pollination Guelph website

<https://www.pollinationguelph.ca/gardens> , and several are located on city-owned properties. They hosts an annual

Pollinator Symposium to educate the public about pollinators. The 2019 symposium was held in February 2019 and included a full day of learning, networking, pollinator themed displays, a seed swap, sale table and photo contest. It also featured a keynote presentation by Annie White, PhD, about the value of cultivars versus native plants for pollinators. Presentations were provided by different members of the Bee City Canada Family (including City of Guelph staff), a Q & A with native plant growers, macro photography tips, an introduction to horticultural therapy, a look into butterfly conservation, and more.

- The City of Guelph and Pollination Guelph partnered to host a Pollinator Week habitat creation and pollinator educational event in Pollinator Park in June 2019 and to install a “bee condo” on the city hall green roof in June 2018.

Please tell us about your community’s participation in National Pollinator Week celebrations and other events.

- Social media posts on City of Guelph’s Twitter and Facebook accounts about pollinators are made year round and especially during pollinator week where a social media series of pollinator trivia is held (2018 and 2019).
- Pollination Guelph also posts about pollinators on social media accounts.
- The City of Guelph and Pollination Guelph collaborated to host a pollinator week habitat creation and pollinator educational event in Pollinator Park (Eastview Park) in June 2019. This involved planting a number of native wildflowers in the Remediate Garden, adding to the native seed blanket quilt on site, children’s activities, a tour of the large restoration site located on the former landfill and information about monitoring for pollinating insects.
- Over the 2019 growing season the City of Guelph partnered with Trees for Guelph, Ontario Public Research Interest Group (OPIRG) and other groups to host 37 community planting events at 40 sites focused on habitat creation (planting native trees, shrubs and herbaceous species) in schoolyards, natural areas and city parks. Events included educational talks about the importance of pollinator habitat, appropriate pollinator species and their care. The City of Guelph was also successful in getting a grant from TD Friend of the Environment Foundation (FEF) to help support these projects.
- Pollination Guelph hosts an annual pollinator symposium to educate the public about pollinators. In 2019 the symposium was held in February and included a full day of learning, networking, pollinator themed displays, a seed swap, sale table and photo contest. It also featured a keynote presentation by Annie White, PhD, about the value of cultivars versus native plants for pollinators. Presentations were provided by different members of the Bee City Canada Family (including City of Guelph staff), a Q & A with native plant growers, macro photography tips, an introduction to horticultural therapy, a look into butterfly conservation, and more.
- City of Guelph and Pollination Guelph attended a number of community events throughout the year and set up display booths that included information about pollinators.

Describe your plans for creating, improving and maintaining pollinator habitat during the next year.

The City of Guelph, partners and community organizations will continue ongoing projects to create improve and maintain pollinator habitat during the next year. Some of plans for 2020 include:

Naturalization and Plantings

- The City will be creating and enhancing habitat in a number of park and natural areas throughout Guelph. Many of these involved the treatment / removal of invasive Buckthorn in 2019 which will be gradually replaced with native trees, shrubs and herbaceous species which benefit wildlife and enhance pollinator habitat. This work will be completed in part by city crews and also in partnership with community members and partners such as Trees for Guelph and OPIRG.

- Plans for the active management of a meadow area in the north end of the city are being developed. Over 3ha in size this initiative includes the removal of invasive buckthorn while still at an early stage, infrequent mowing (e.g. every 2 – 3 years) to perpetuate herbaceous meadow species and potential enhancement with additional native pollinator species.
- Pollination Guelph will continue its work on ongoing projects including a number of city lands
 - ongoing long term habitat restoration project located at Pollinator Park (the former Eastview Landfill site)
 - enhancements to the Remediate Garden at Pollinator Park
 - maintenance of several demonstration gardens located throughout the city including the Clair Road Emergency Services Centre garden, and Hospice Wellington
 - plans for the development of a pollinator demonstration / display garden in Pollinator Park
- Pollination Guelph will host the annual Pollinator Symposium in March 2020. City staff will be in attendance and will have a table at the event with information about the Community Gardens, the Pollinator program, Bee City membership and our Healthy Landscapes Program.

City of Guelph Horticultural Operations

- Some of the city's horticultural display gardens will be modified to include native pollinator friendly perennials. We are also reviewing the design of annual flower beds to see what opportunities are available to include annuals with high pollinator value.
- For 2020 we are expanding our native pollinator plant propagation pilot is being expanded to include greater species diversity and a larger number of plants (plugs). Some of our seed for 2020 was purchased from the North American Native Plant Society, and some was collected locally. Plants will be used in city projects, and made available for our community gardens and pollinators program and other community partners on their planting projects.

Land use Planning and Development Review

- The city's Environmental Planning department will continue to contribute to secondary plans and review development applications. These reviews will help to ensure conformance with natural heritage policies and identify opportunities for habitat protection, enhancement and creation.

Continue Working with Partners

The city will continue to work with community partners to facilitate the installation of new community and pollinator gardens in public parks and open space, and to enhance gardens that already exist. We are also continuing to work with community partners such as Trees For Guelph to install native tree and shrub plantings as part of the implementation of our Natural Heritage Action Plan. For some of these projects (e.g. school yard plantings) a native pollinator perennial is planted alongside the woody plant which provides immediate visual impact and an early indicator of when the woody plant needs water.

Provide information about any events, activities or initiatives that you have organized and would like highlighted through our social media channels.

See the uploads for a few examples

File Uploads

[Bee-City-Images.pdf](#)

File Uploads 2

[CofG-HollerAug-2019_excerpt.pdf](#)

File Uploads 3

[CofG-HollerAug-2018_excerpt.pdf](#)

Has your City/Town/Municipality created a Bee City website or webpage?

No

Bee City Renewal Fees

100,001 – 250,000 population - \$500

We welcome your comments and suggestions to help us improve Bee City Canada.

The 2018 Bee City summit was a very useful event. We suggest holding a similar event on a semi regular basis as another helpful resource for bee city members. For example we recently attended the CWS/TRCA workshop: Restoring Pollinator Habitat on Rights-of-Way and found it to be an excellent opportunity to learn, share information and network with others in this community of practice

A suggestion: It would be helpful if the annual renewal form was saveable so one can come back to it to edit / add to prior to submitting.

Please note that the City previously submitted the annual renewal fee and understand that it was received by Bee City Canada

[Bee City Canada](#)