

3.12 Enhance Pollinator Pathways

5 – 40 Points

Action Updates

This action was last updated in 2024. A version of this action from the prior program year is [available for comparison](#). Edits are highlighted in yellow.

Objective

Protect pollinators through education, policy, and planting.

What to Do

The more you do, the more points you earn.

1. Provide education to residents and local businesses to improve pollinator habitat, encourage native Connecticut plantings, reduce the use of insecticides on plants in flower, promote the addition of clover to grass lawns, and encourage the reduction of lawnmowing to once every 2 or 3 weeks. **(5 points)**

Outreach may include:

- Creating and maintaining a searchable, navigable space on your municipal website and associated social media outreach;
- Hosting educational events and workshops—which may be in-person or virtual—on pollinator friendly practices; or
- Educational signage on municipal, residential, and business properties.

Submit: A brief overview of outreach (suggested 5 sentences maximum); date of event (if applicable); and at least one example of educational materials disseminated in the last three years, which could include flyers, articles, letters, newsletters, presentations, or digital communications. For websites, submit both a hyperlink and a screenshot of the relevant webpage(s).

2. Create native pollinator gardens, upgrade existing gardens to be pollinator friendly and educate the public about the importance of pollinators to society. If the spaces developed through this program are not located on municipal property, you must demonstrate a significant partnership between the town and the initiative's administrators (in terms of in-kind and/or financial support). Pollinator gardens must have been created or upgraded in the last three years. **(15 points)**

Submit: A brief description of how the pollinator garden sites were selected, a list of plants used in the pollinator gardens, photos of each pollinator garden; and at least one example of associated outreach and promotion materials. If the garden is not located on municipal property, provide evidence of in-kind and/or financial support from the municipality to the initiative's administrators.

3. Pass a Native Pollinator Friendly Community resolution. **(20 points)**

Create a resolution that states your municipality's intention to protect pollinators that may support the following:

- Include native plant and tree species on town property;

- Collaborate with suppliers on sourcing plants free of neonicotinoids and other chemicals that may be harmful to pollinators;
- Incorporate the use of integrated pest management (IPM) techniques on town owned land;
- Include plans to maximize pollinator protection through education and outreach and creating pollinator gardens;
- Encourage the addition of clover to grass lawns and/or the reduction of mowing to once every 2 to 3 weeks; and
- Identify areas where lawns are not used for walking, playing, sitting, or other human recreation, and replace lawns with native trees, shrubs, or perennials offering resources for pollinators.

Submit: A copy of the resolution and documentation of the resolution's adoption (such as meeting minutes, a copy of the municipal zoning regulations with relevant portions highlighted, a link to municipal ordinances, or similar verification).

Engaging Partners

Sustainable CT encourages regional collaboration and other forms of partnership. For every action, please complete the "Partners" box in your submission, indicating the name(s) of any municipalities and/or organizations you partnered with (if any) and a brief description of your municipality's role. If you collaborate with other municipalities, each community will receive points. For additional information, please see the ["Partners Guidance Document"](#).

Potential Municipal and Community Collaborators

Staff from the town council, planning and zoning, public works, parks and recreation departments, agriculture and conservation stakeholders, local beekeepers, landscaping businesses, local farmers and farming advocates, watershed organizations, garden clubs, faith communities, and local land trusts could be helpful in implementing this action.

Funding

If available, below are potential funding sources specific to this Action. For a complete listing of potential funding opportunities to assist with implementing Sustainable CT Actions, please visit the [Sustainable CT Grants Portal](#), which is searchable by Action. Please also visit the [Support for Your Town](#) page for opportunities for technical assistance and other supports.

- [Urban Act Grant Program](#)
- [Sustainable CT Community Match Fund](#)
- [State Funding Readiness Project](#)
- [Urban Green and Community Garden Grant Program](#)

Resources

Toolkits, Calculators, Guidance Documents

- [University of Connecticut Plant Database](#)
- [US Fish and Wildlife Service - Pollinators Initiatives](#)
- [The Last Green Valley: Protecting Pollinators](#)
- [Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection: Pollinators in Connecticut](#)
- [Pollinator Information - Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station](#)
- [The Xerces Society: Reducing Pesticide Use and Impacts](#)
- [The Xerces Society Pollinator Protection Pledge](#)
- [Pollinator Conservation Resources: Northeast Region](#)
- [Pollinator Plants—Northeast Region](#)
- [Selecting Plants for Pollinators - Eastern Broadleaf Forest](#)
- [Native Plant Lists for Pollinators - Pollinator Pathway](#)
- [NOFA Organic Land Care](#)

- [Lawn Mowing and Bee Diversity](#)
- [Audubon Plant Native Species](#)

Organizations and Relevant Programs

- [The Last Green Valley](#)
- [The Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation](#)
- [Pollinator Pathway](#)
- [Bee City USA](#)
- [CT Bees](#)
- [Connecticut Audubon Society](#)
- [The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station](#)
- [Connecticut Butterfly Association](#)

Why This Matters

Pollinators such as bees, flies, butterflies, moths, bats, and birds play a vital role in upholding and enhancing the well-being of society. Crops pollinated by insects include many of our fruits (apples, pears, cherries, strawberries, raspberries), fruiting vegetables (squash, cucumbers, tomatoes, peppers), nuts (almonds) and sources of oils (sunflowers, canola). According to the [US Forest Service](#), over 1,000 of the plants we harvest and depend on for food, beverages, fibers and medicines require pollination. In the United States alone, bees and other pollinating insects produce \$10 billion worth of food products every year.

In addition to their value to human food security and the agricultural sector, pollinating animals play a critical role in maintaining ecosystems. In our region, about 75% of all flowering plants are pollinated by insects or other animals. Birds and other wild animals feed directly on caterpillars and other insects and also feed on fruits and seeds that are the products of pollination. The increasing use of herbicides in agriculture has decreased the floral resources available to pollinators, and the pesticides highly toxic to bees are another threat. In addition, honeybees and other pollinators suffer from the global spread of parasites and diseases. These factors have led to local extinctions of pollinator species. Creating pollinator habitat free from pesticides helps to counter these threats.

Benefits

Among the benefits to a municipality as a result of pollinator protection measures are enhancing agricultural production and local food supply/food security and protecting ecosystem services such as species protection and biodiversity. An important co-benefit of planting trees, shrubs and perennial plants is climate mitigation. Plants take up carbon dioxide, fix carbon as organic matter and produce oxygen as a result of photosynthesis, and pollinators are key to the reproduction of flowering plants that produce this vital service.

Other co-benefits of pollinator protection are the purification of water and prevention of soil erosion through sturdier roots and foliage to buffer the impacts of rain. Plants are needed to return moisture to the atmosphere and, of course, are dependent upon pollinators for reproduction. Creating pollinator pathways will also enhance community cohesion through new gathering places and educational opportunities that result from the creation of pollinator gardens.

CT Success Stories

- [Lyme - May 2022 Certification](#)
- [Cheshire - Oct 2022 Certification](#)
- [Essex - Oct 2022 Certification](#)
- [Goshen - Oct 2022 Certification](#)
- [Mansfield - Oct 2022 Certification](#)
- [New London - Oct 2022 Certification](#)
- [Rocky Hill - Oct 2022 Certification](#)
- [Wilton - Oct 2022 Certification](#)
- [Middletown - Sep 2023 Certification](#)
- [Stonington - Sep 2023 Certification](#)
- [Chester - Sep 2023 Certification](#)

- [Pomfret - Oct 2024 Certification](#)
- [West Hartford - Oct 2024 Certification](#)
- [Marlborough - May 2025 Certification](#)
- [Vernon - May 2025 Certification](#)
- [Guilford - Oct 2025 Certification](#)
- [Ridgefield - Oct 2025 Certification](#)
- [Preston - May 2026 Certification](#)