



City of Decatur 2019 Annual Report

BeecaturGA.com

What We Do:



EDUCATION

Teach kids and adults about pollinators through engaging talks and events



CONSERVATION

Plant and maintain pollinator habitats on city property



ADVOCACY

Promote pollinators and sustainable practices with local decision makers

Urban environments like Decatur provide critical habitat for pollinators. In 2019, Bee City USA®-Decatur, GA (“Beecatur”) spearheaded a number of new programs and events designed to educate city residents about the importance of bees and other beneficial insect species, and to demonstrate how Decaturites can play an active role in protecting them.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING IN CITY SCHOOLS OF DECATUR

At the heart of Beecatur’s ongoing educational initiatives is programming related to bees and other pollinators presented to school-aged children. In March, we produced a program called “What If There Were No Pollinators?” for second graders at Oakhurst Elementary. During Renfroe Middle School’s 7th Grade Spring Science Day in April, our program “Collaboration Means Working Together” looked at how honey bees maximize their abilities through teamwork. In May, we visited Westchester



Elementary twice, talking about “Pollinator Power!” with the Kindergarten and 1st grade classes there.

Decatur during 2019 included:

- “Bee-Yond Honey Bees: Meet Your Native Bees,” at Avon Garden Club (Avondale, GA)
- “3 Spring Bees” at Little Forest Pre-School (Decatur, GA)
- “Pollinator Power!” at The Museum School, 6th Grade Environmental Education class (Avondale)
- “Pollinator Power!” at Oak Grove Elementary, pre-K classes (DeKalb County)
- “Bee-Yond Honey Bees: Meet Your Native Bees” at Delta Kappa Gamma Society International, Dekalb County Women Educators’ Honor Society

CITY & COMMUNITY EVENTS

Beecatur had the opportunity to answer questions, and distribute literature and information to passersby at a number of different community events during 2019.

- In February, we again participated in the city’s annual celebration of **Georgia Arbor Day**. We showed off a colony of honey bees in an observation hive to the great interest of many.

“The Importance of Bees to our Ecosystem” was the topic discussed with 4th graders at F.Ave and, later in the year, 2nd graders at Glennwood. In October, we spoke with F.Ave’s Lego Robotics Team to help them develop a team project related to bees and focused on creating more sustainable cities in the future. The superhero-themed talk “Marvel-ous Bees: Superheroes of the Natural World” was presented to 7th graders during Renfroe Middle School’s Fall Science Day in November.

ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING

Other programming presented to groups in and around

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NATIONAL POLLINATOR WEEK 2019



GREAT GEORGIA POLLINATOR CENSUS

In August, citizen scientists from across our state helped document pollinators during the Great Georgia Pollinator Census! As part of the event, organized by UGA's Cooperative Extension Office, Beecatur hosted counting locations at Wylde Center and the Willow Lane Pollinator Habitat. Statewide, 4,567 counts were submitted from 133 different Georgia counties, tallying some 133,963 insect visits!



Decatur's first ever National Pollinator Week Mini Festival was held on June 15th, kicking off the week-long annual celebration. Thirteen vendors representing a variety of environmental interests participated. Other events during the week included screenings of the films "Hometown Habitat: Stories of Bringing Nature Home" and DisneyNature's "Wings of Life," as well as the kids' talk "Marvel-ous Bees: Superheroes of the Natural World."



MOSQUITO SPRAYING ADVOCACY

Via a comprehensive position paper, a social media campaign, an editorial published at Decaturish.com, and a television interview with Fox5's Kaitlyn Pratt, Beecatur worked hard in 2019 to spread the simple message: **Backyard Mosquito Spraying Kills Bees.** Non-targeted, broad-spectrum insecticides like those used in residential mosquito control are deadly to almost all insect life and harmful to the larger ecosystem.

BeecaturGA.com/mosquito-spraying





DECATUR POLLINATOR PLEDGE

A new initiative for 2019, Decatur's Pollinator Pledge encourages residents to help support pollinators in urban settings like Decatur by committing to learn about and include more native plants in their landscaping; avoiding plants that have been treated with neonicotinoids; reducing or eliminating home insecticide and herbicide use; and foregoing mosquito spraying/misting. Homeowners can also elect to purchase a handsome sign to tell their neighborhood they're doing their part! Revenue generated helps support Beecatur's work throughout Decatur.

BeecaturGA.com/pledge



GIFTS THAT GROW

Beecatur's Gifts That Grow giving program is the perfect way to help nourish and support Decatur's vital pollinator species without spending a lot of green! For a donation of \$15, \$25 or \$50 (or more), Beecatur will install a native plant, shrub or tree in one of Decatur's dedicated pollinator habitats. On planting day, gift recipients receive a photo of their plant gift being installed. One size fits all bees, butterflies, hummingbirds and more!

BeecaturGA.com/giftsthatgrow



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- The **City of Decatur Employee Wellness Breakfast** in March provided an opportunity for us to share local honey over a healthy morning meal and discuss how honey bees produce this sweet superfood.
- We again brought an observation hive of bees and answered bee-related questions during Decatur's **Earth Day Celebration** at Decatur Rec Center in April. The event was presented by the city's Environmental Sustainability Board.
- The 3rd Annual **"Walking Past The Dead" Tour of Trees** in Decatur Cemetery in November gave us a final opportunity to table with literature and Pollinator Pledge signs and information.

ONGOING POLLINATOR HABITAT DEVELOPMENT

The city's first pollinator habitat (115 Willow Lane) has continued to flourish. Multiple work days were held at the site during 2019, including installation of new native plants purchased with funds from our Gifts That Grow donation program. A monthly "Wine & Weeding" program was begun to encourage volunteer participation in maintenance



WINE & WEEDING

SUNDAY, OCT. 20
3-5 PM @
115 Willow Lane
Pollinator Habitat



chores. A Decatur resident built a beautiful arbor entrance as well. In April, Beecatur broke ground on a second habitat site, installing 60 native, flowering plants at 811 Bell Street near the entrance to historic Decatur Cemetery.

WYLDE CENTER MASON BEE WORKSHOP

“Backyard Builders: Make a Home for Mason Bees!” was the title of our annual children’s Mason Bee Workshop presented in conjunction with Wylde Center in February. Thirty-two participants were introduced to the Mason Bee, one of metro Atlanta’s most important early-Spring pollinators. Covered were topics like how to spot them, where they live, their unique life-cycle and how they are similar to and different from other bees. Participants then assembled and decorated a simple Mason Bee house to hang in their yards at home – just in time to provide a home for the emerging bees!

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

To strategize and plan our events and activities, the Beecatur committee convened for meetings ten times in 2019. The committee meets at the Wylde Center.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Reaching the wider Decatur community can be a challenge for a group with limited resources. To share our mission and message with large numbers of residents, Beecatur participated in two community parades in 2019, distributing honey candies and tips on bee-friendly yard practices along the way. For the Mead Rd. Mardi Gras Parade in February our theme was “Stayin’ Alive!” “Don’t Turn Your Backyard Into A Graveyard” was our theme for the Haints & Saints Halloween Parade in October, a reference to our ongoing efforts to reduce residential backyard mosquito spraying.





OUR WORK IS SUPPORTED BY:



DEPT. OF DESIGN,
ENVIRONMENT &
CONSTRUCTION



FISCAL AGENT



2019 GRANTOR



2019 GRANTOR

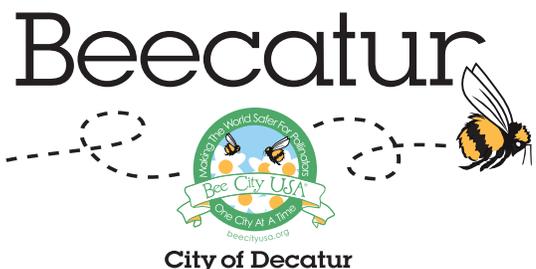


SITE PREPARATION
ASSISTANCE

ABOUT "BEECATUR" AND BEE CITY USA®

In July 2016, the City of Decatur became the first Bee City USA® in Georgia. As a Bee City, Decatur affirms its support for creating sustainable habitats for pollinators and educating residents about the critical role bees play in our ecosystem. The "Beecatur" committee plans and presents bee-related educational events and programming throughout the year.

Bee City USA® (beecityusa.org) is an initiative of the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation (xerces.org), an international nonprofit organization that protects wildlife through the conservation of invertebrates and their habitats. The Bee City USA® program endorses a set of commitments, defined via city resolution, for creating sustainable habitats for pollinators, which are vital to feeding our planet.



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