



White Plains Beautification Foundation, Inc.

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White Plains Beautification Foundation Promotes Pollinator Pathway Participation

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by Jeanne Wilcox

Pollinators are all the buzz these days! Bees, birds, butterflies, bats and other pollinators are vital to our food supply, yet all are in decline from habitat loss and pesticide overuse. The Pollinator Pathway - www.pollinator-pathway.org - is part of a major movement to create corridors of pollinator-friendly habitats and food sources for pollinating insects and wildlife up and down the East Coast and elsewhere in the country and throughout the world.

White Plains Beautification Foundation - www.WPBF.org - which provides colorful public gardens and parklets throughout our city, has joined the Pollinator Pathway movement and is gradually adding native plants to its more than 65+-sponsored public gardens. This initiative has the full support of the City of White Plains and its Recreation & Parks and Public Works Departments. Both the City of White Plains and WPBF are encouraging residents to help our pollinators by including native plants in their gardens and avoiding pesticides.

According to WPBF Board Member Nancy Giges who spearheaded this project: "White Plains Beautification Foundation has been making our city beautiful for more than 50 years, and we hope to be a resource for any resident or business that wants to create safe and welcoming habitats for the creatures responsible for one of every three bites of food we eat."

The Pollinator Pathway is designed so that every city, town, and village can adopt a program that works best for its local community. In White Plains, Pollinator Pathway initiatives include activities and opportunities for everyone to participate, including educational programs, advisory garden visits, a speaker's program, and much more. Everyone is welcome! Get involved as a volunteer in your neighborhood, your child's school, other youth organizations, your faith community, or elsewhere.

If you already have a garden of native plants, contact Pollinators of White Plains to see if you are eligible for a special "This property is on the Pollinator Pathway" sign and, if so, WPBF will put you on a poster-sized map of White Plains to identify all the properties, pockets, parks, pots and pathways of native plants throughout our city.

Want to volunteer? Have questions? Need more information? Email Pollinators of White Plains at pollinatorsWP@gmail.com. Any business or organization wanting to collaborate in this effort can also play a role. The White Plains Public Library is already on board with additional books about pollinators and native plants that will comprise a special display.

For more information, visit <https://www.pollinator-pathway.org/whiteplains>.

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Photo caption: *The pollinator garden of White Plains resident Sue Fragala includes these lovely coneflowers (Echinacea purpurea), which attract bees, butterflies and birds. Photo courtesy of Nancy Giges.*

SIDEBAR: How to attract butterflies, bees, birds and other pollinators to your garden? Offer a steady supply of nutritious foods throughout the growing season. Perennial plants, shrubs and trees that bloom and set seed at different times during the season provide nectar, pollen, seeds, and shelter for pollinators and also beauty for human visitors. Here are some native perennials for USDA Zone 7 (White Plains) gardens: Agastache foeniculum (Anise Hissop); Asclepias tuberosa (Butterfly Weed); Aster (Symphyotrichum spp.); Baptisia australis (False Indigo); Coreopsis lanceolata (Tickseed); Echinacea spp. (Coneflower); Eutrochium maculatum (Joe Pye Weed); Liatris spicata (Gayfeather); Monarda fistulosa (Bee Balm); Solidago speciosa (Goldenrod).

About White Plains Beautification Foundation: Incorporated in 1965, after its start in 1952 as a small committee, WPBF is a not-for-profit organization, whose many projects include extensive tree-planting, establishing 60-plus gardens, building two fountains, a summerhouse and gazebo. WPBF has also provided two street clocks and over 90 teakwood benches throughout city parks. It receives no government funding and relies solely on business and individual donations. It also provides water and maintenance of gardens through its Adopt-a-Park program, supported by individuals and commercial enterprises. Its structure consists of a board of directors and a group of associate volunteers. Those wishing to attend monthly meetings and learn more about becoming involved are most welcome. White Plains residency is not a requirement.

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