

Pollinators and Communities: A Partnership on the Land

Pollinator Partnership is excited to announce Project Wingspan: Community Connections (PWCC), a new program in IA, IN, IL, and OH helping urban and suburban communities create high-quality pollinator habitat. The program combines volunteer native seed collection and collaboration with parks, nature preserves, and others wanting support for pollinator habitat creation and enhancement.



Why are we doing this?

Pollinators are essential, pollinating over 90% of wildflowers and 75% of our major crop plants. However, pollinators are in trouble and populations are struggling and declining with some of the biggest problems being loss of habitat, exposure to pesticides (especially insecticides), pests and diseases, and climate change. Habitat loss is one of the biggest problems pollinators and other valuable wildlife are facing. Fortunately, we know that we can have a large impact and support pollinators and other essential wildlife by integrating habitat areas into our neighborhoods and communities.



These habitat areas also can be a direct benefit to the communities that surround them. They provide recreational opportunities and improve the scenic value of a landscape. They also improve soil health, sequester carbon, and reduce storm water runoff. Harnessing available lands to help pollinators can result in habitat corridors, linking together public greenspaces and private conservation lands, creating a thriving and healthy landscape for communities and wildlife.

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Why are we doing this?



PWCC will help secure and enhance 3,000 acres of pollinator habitat by working with land stewards to increase the quality, quantity, and connectivity of habitat patches within key spaces found in urban and suburban landscapes including community gardens, parks and recreation areas, urban agricultural areas, and rights-of-ways. This will be achieved through a combination of improved management activities and plant material awards. Project Wingspan volunteers will collect at least 50 lbs. of native milkweed and wildflower seed and our staff will propagate 7,000 seedlings for distribution to select project sites that apply for program participation. PWCC will additionally provide technical training to land managers to help them create, manage, and monitor pollinator habitat, as well as connect them with other programs and resources that can help with reaching their goals.

How can you get involved?

If you own and/or manage land and are interested in learning how to improve your site for pollinators: Apply to receive technical assistance and local ecotype native seed and/or plugs at: www.pollinator.org/wingspan/habitat-surveys



If you have a passion for nature and want to help imperiled pollinators: Become a trained seed collector and join a dynamic and fun team that is making a difference on the ground. Sign up to learn more: www.tinyurl.com/Wingspan-volunteer

If you have robust native plant populations on your land and are interested in the possibility to contribute towards local habitat improvement efforts as a seed collection site: Sign-up to get on our list of potential seed collection locations and a State Coordinator will be in touch soon to see if your site is a good fit and answer any questions. www.tinyurl.com/PWseedsite

Find out more about Project Wingspan and learn how you can get involved by visiting www.pollinator.org/wingspan or contact your State Coordinator:

- Illinois: **Eleanor Schumacher** - es@pollinator.org
- Iowa: **Gina Bartleson** - gbartleson@pollinator.org
- Ohio: **Kaleigh Obrock** - ko@pollinator.org
- Indiana: **Maraiah Russell** - mrussell@pollinator.org

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