City of Toronto

Toronto, ON

Mayor John Tory

Pledge Summary

With the goal of protecting the more than 360 species of bees and more than 100 species of butterflies and other pollinators that call Toronto home, the City of Toronto has adopted a Pollinator Protection Strategy. The Strategy identifies a set of guiding principles, six priorities and 30 actions that the City and community can take to protect our diverse native pollinator community. Toronto is home to more than three million people whose diversity and experiences make this great city Canada's leading economic engine and one of the world's most diverse and livable cities. As the fourth largest city in North America, Toronto is a global leader in technology, finance, film, music, culture, and innovation, and consistently places at the top of international rankings due to investments championed by its government, residents and businesses.

Action Items Committed for 2023

Communications and Convening

- Issue a proclamation to raise awareness about the decline of the monarch butterfly and the species' need for habitat. This proclamation must incorporate a focus on monarch conservation.
- Launch or maintain a public communication effort to encourage residents to plant monarch gardens at their homes or in their neighborhoods. (If you have community members who speak a language other than English, we encourage you to also communicate in that language; Champion Pledges must communicate in that language.)
- Engage with community garden groups and urge them to plant native milkweeds and nectar-producing plants.

Program and Demonstration Gardens

- Host or support a native seed or plant sale, giveaway or swap.
- Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.
- Earn or maintain recognition for being a wildlife-friendly city by participating in other wildlife and habitat conservation efforts (i.e., National Wildlife Federation's Community Wildlife Habitat program).

Systems Change

- Remove milkweed from the list of noxious plants in city weed / landscaping ordinances (if applicable).
- Change weed or mowing ordinances to allow for native prairie and plant habitats.

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- Launch, expand, or continue one or more ordinances to reduce light pollution to benefit urban wildlife.

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Olivia Chow	2026	1/15/2026	
Mayor Oliva Chow	2025	4/29/2025	Leadership Circle
Mayor Olivia Chow	2024	4/17/2024	Leadership Circle
Mayor John Tory	2023	2/14/2023	Leadership Circle
Mayor John Tory	2022	3/16/2022	Leadership Circle
Mayor John Tory	2021	3/19/2021	Leadership Circle

Action Items

In total, how many individuals have been reached through the Mayors' Monarch Pledge in your community this year (Jan-Dec)? Please limit your answer to only the number of individuals reached in the answer field below (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only.).

1600

Of the total number of individuals engaged, how many youth (0-18) were reached through the Mayors' Monarch Pledge in your community this year (Jan. - Dec.)? If none, please write 0." (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only.)

unsure

In total, how many acres of monarch habitat have been created in your city in the last 12 months? Please limit your answer to only the number of acres in the answer field below (e.g., 3). Note: 1 acre = roughly the size of a football field.

1.4

Where was the habitat created this year? Example locations may include residences, schools, places of worship, rights-of-way, roadsides, community gardens, shared public spaces, and more.

Schools, Boulevards, Spiritual Centres, City Parks, Community Centres, Front Yard Gardens, Balconies, Multi-Residential Garden (e.g. condos, co-ops, apartments)

How are you leveraging the Mayors' Monarch Pledge program to engage marginalized communities, such as low-income communities or communities of color?

PollinateTO funding for pollinator stewardship activities are prioritized for projects located in Toronto's Neighbourhood Improvement Areas (NIAs) and Emerging Neighbourhoods.

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What was your community's motivation for taking and continuing to work on the Mayors' Monarch Pledge?

Toronto was the first Bee City in Canada and proud to be part of the Mayor's Monarch Pledge. Being part of a community of other cities and towns dedicated to pollinator stewardship keeps us motivated to improve every year.

What resources have been most helpful to you thus far and what new resources would you like to see to help meet your goals? What resources would be useful to help expand equitable engagement in community processes and access to high-quality, usable nature?

Example actions and suggestions to expand our programming.

What else should we know about your monarch butterfly conservation efforts over the last year?

The PollinateTO program distributed 480 free native trees and shrubs and 500 native starter plants to PollinateTO grant recipients. Additionally, 1,550 native starter plants were given away to individual residents to celebrate National Pollinator Week in June.

Selected Action Items

Change weed or mowing ordinances to allow for native prairie and plant habitats.

What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to complete this effort?

What is the status of this action? Please limit your answer to either "complete" or "in progress" in the answer field below.

If this action is Complete, please include the date it was completed and share a 1-2 sentence description. Please include a copy of the policy by uploading or linking below.

If this action is In Progress, please describe your progress and a target date when you plan to complete action.

Issue a proclamation to raise awareness about the decline of the monarch butterfly and the species' need for habitat. This proclamation must incorporate a focus on monarch conservation.

Date of Proclamation:

August 19, 2023 & June 19, 2023

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Title of Proclamation (i.e. – Monarch Day or Pollinator Week):

Flight of the Monarch Day & Pollinator Week

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

Flight of the Monarch Day_August 19 2023 - Final.pdf

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

Pollinator Week Proclamation_June 19-25 2023 - Final.pdf

Earn or maintain recognition for being a wildlife-friendly city by participating in other wildlife and habitat conservation efforts (i.e., National Wildlife Federation's Community Wildlife Habitat program).

What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to complete this effort?

Bee City Canada, Pollinator Partnership Canada

What program was launched or maintained to complete this effort? (Please include a link to the program, if possible)

Bee City status - Toronto was the First Bee City in Canada! In 2016, Toronto City Council showed its commitment to raising awareness of the importance of pollinators by adopting a resolution designating Toronto a Bee City. With that decision, Toronto became the first Bee City in Canada. Since then, Toronto has gone on to declare an official bee and to create its Pollinator Protection Strategy that identifies guiding principles, priorities and actions that the City can take to protect Toronto's diverse native pollinator community. To further its commitment to pollinator wellbeing, Toronto launched the PollinateTO Grants Program, which provides funding, training and technical support for community-led pollinator habitat creation projects that educate and engage communities and increase pollinator habitat in Toronto. https://beecitycanada.org/city/toronto/

Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

Upload any relevant documents, images, or other attachments related to your effort on this action.

DS-23-0048-PollinateTOGardenSign-16x12-PRINT.pdf

How many garden signs are being displayed and where are they located? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

1256

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Please describe the educational information on the sign(s), and provide any links to externally purchased sign(s).

Please see sample sign attached.

Remove milkweed from the list of noxious plants in city weed / landscaping ordinances (if applicable).

What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to complete this effort?

N/A

What is the status of this action? Please limit your answer to either "complete" or "in progress" in the answer field below.

complete - https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/public-notices-bylaws/bylaw-enforcement/turfgrass-prohibited-plants/

If this action is Complete, please include the date it was completed and share a 1-2 sentence description. Please include a copy of the policy by uploading or linking below.

July 2021 - https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2021.PH24.3

If this action is In Progress, please describe your progress and a target date when you plan to complete action.

N/A

Launch, expand, or continue one or more ordinances to reduce light pollution to benefit urban wildlife.

What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to complete this effort?

FLAP (Fatal Light Awareness Program) Canada

What is the status of this action? Please limit your answer to either "complete" or "in progress" in the answer field below.

in progress

If this action is Complete, please include the date it was completed and share a 1-2 sentence description. Please include a copy of the policy by uploading or linking below.

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N/A

If this action is In Progress, please describe your progress and a target date when you plan to complete action.

The Infrastructure and Environment Committee recommends that: 1. City Council direct the City Manager to resume the cost-saving and bird-life-saving practice of turning off unnecessary lights on city property during bird migration seasons. This will be considered by City Council on Dec 13, 2023. For more information please see: https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2023.IE9.10

Engage with community garden groups and urge them to plant native milkweeds and nectar-producing plants.

Please describe the groups you engaged with and how you engaged with these groups below.

Toronto offers the PollinateTO Grants to support pollinator habitat creation projects to help protect Toronto’s diverse pollinator community and educate and engage communities in pollinator stewardship. Since 2019, 150 community-led projects have been supported through the grants, resulting in more than 400 pollinator gardens (about 24,000 square metres) across Toronto, including 41 projects in Neighbourhood Improvement Areas and 66 projects on school grounds. The grants are a component of the City’s Pollinator Protection Strategy, adopted by Toronto City Council in 2018 to support the more than 360 species of bees and more than 100 species of butterflies and other pollinators in Toronto.

Launch or maintain a public communication effort to encourage residents to plant monarch gardens at their homes or in their neighborhoods. (If you have community members who speak a language other than English, we encourage you to also communicate in that language; Champion Pledges must communicate in that language.)

Please describe the methods of public communication below (e.g., printed materials, social media, print media).

Toronto's PollinateTO program communicates about pollinator habitat creation via a variety of methods including web content, printed materials, social media, news letters, online info sessions, in-person events and more. Our key content can be found at toronto.ca/wildbees. Social media campaigns via @LiveGreenTO

Host or support a native seed or plant sale, giveaway or swap.

How many plants were sold and/or given away at your event? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

2050 native plants and 480 native trees and shrubs were given away in 2023.

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How many people attended your event? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

350

What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to host the event?

Project Swallowtail, North American Native Plant Society

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