City of Toronto

Toronto, ON

Mayor Oliva Chow

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.

Action Items Committed for 2025

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.
- Engage with gardening leaders and partners (e.g., Master Naturalists, Master Gardeners, Nature Centers, Native Plant Society Chapters , other long-standing and influential community leaders) to support monarch butterfly conservation.
- Create a community-driven educational conservation strategy, initiative, or practice that focuses on and benefits local, underserved residents.

Program and Demonstration Gardens

- Host or support a native seed or plant sale, giveaway or swap.
- Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.
- 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).
- Initiate or support community science (or citizen science) efforts that help monitor monarch migration and health.
- Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

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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.).

4000

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.)

1500

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.

0.94

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.

Residences, schools, places of worship, rights-of-way, roadsides, community gardens, culturally-significant locations, shared public spaces and parks.

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

Funding distribution for pollinator habitat creation is prioritized by Neighbourhood Improvement Areas and Emerging Neighbourhoods, and for projects led by equity-deserving communities.

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

PollinateTO supports and advances the Mayor's Monarch Pledge by enabling community-led habitat creation, education, and stewardship projects that expand pollinator-friendly spaces across Toronto, helping the City meet biodiversity, climate resilience, and environmental education goals while empowering residents to take local action.

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?

Most helpful resources to date have included the Mayor's Monarch Pledge framework; City-led funding programs such as PollinateTO; technical guidance on native plants and habitat design; Canadian Wildlife Federation meetings and resources; Bee City Canada through Pollinator Partnership Canada; the David Suzuki Foundation's pollinator and biodiversity programming; and partnerships with grassroots, community-led organizations advancing pollinator stewardship at the neighbourhood level. Additional resources that would support our goals include culturally relevant and multilingual engagement tools, wider availability of true native species from local plant suppliers, improved coordination across relevant funding bodies, and shared monitoring and data resources.

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

Over the last year, the City of Toronto has continued to strengthen its monarch butterfly conservation efforts by annually reviewing and refining PollinateTO programming to improve accessibility, responsiveness, and community support. Key activities included hosting pollinator habitat site tours for World Environment Day in partnership with the United Nations, distributing over 2,000 native seedlings to residents at no cost, and delivering How to PollinateTO, a seven-week, place-based Pollinator Stewardship training focused on habitat creation, climate action, Indigenous land stewardship frameworks, site maintenance, and effective community habitat creation.

Selected Action Items

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)

2000

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

500

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

United Nations, North American Native Plant Society, Toronto Botanical Garden, Evergreen Brickworks

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, Canadian Wildlife Federation

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

Attended the Canadian Wildlife Federation's event on habitat creation in rights-of-way spaces, presenting the event as a featured municipality to share achievements and best practices. Toronto was the fist city to be recognized as a Bee City through Bee City Canada, and have continued to engage in actions promoted by Bee City Canada, as well as submitting annual reports on achievements and development of pollinator protection programming.

Initiate or support community science (or citizen science) efforts that help monitor monarch migration and health.

How many estimated individuals participated in your community science effort? Please limit your answer to only the number of individuals reached in the answer field (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only, e.g. 150).

100

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

EcoSpark

Please describe the community science program that you supported or initiated. Provide a link to any relevant programs, if possible.

The City of Toronto teamed up with EcoSpark to promote iNaturalist's City Nature Challenge 2025, a four-day global spring bioblitz, where cities internationally promote the use of citizen science through a competitive bioblitz event.

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Create a community-driven educational conservation strategy, initiative, or practice that focuses on and benefits local, underserved residents.

Please describe the process to create the strategy , the strategy goals and content, and/or results of implementation. Please also identify who was engaged in this process, what partnerships were established, and how you engaged these groups. Provide a link, if possible.

The Pollinator Protection Strategy was developed through an iterative, evidence-based process that combines ecological research, City policy, and community feedback. Strategy goals focus on expanding high-quality pollinator habitat (including monarch habitat), improving ecological connectivity, advancing climate resilience, and increasing equitable access to nature through community-led action. Strategy action items and priorities are reviewed and programming to meet strategy goals is built on annually. Implementation is delivered through grants, training, technical guidance, and stewardship activities, with results including new and enhanced pollinator habitats, increased community capacity, and sustained engagement across diverse neighbourhoods. Engagement has included City Divisions, school boards (TDSB and TCDSB), conservation and sector partners (Canadian Wildlife Federation, Bee City Canada, Pollinator Partnership Canada, and the David Suzuki Foundation), Indigenous knowledge holders (ENAGB and guest workshop speakers), and grassroots community organizations. These groups were engaged through training programs, site tours, and ongoing project support.

Engage with gardening leaders and partners (e.g., Master Naturalists, Master Gardeners, Nature Centers, Native Plant Society Chapters , other long-standing and influential community leaders) to support monarch butterfly conservation.

How many community organizations and groups participated? Please list them below.

Toronto Botanical Garden, North American Native Plant Society, ENAGB, Landscape Ontario

Please describe the extent of engagement with these groups and their monarch butterfly conservation efforts.

North American Native Plant Society: Partnered for native plant kit contest, with pickup occurring at the annual native plant sale at Toronto Botanical Gardens where contest winners had the option of also attending the sale and purchasing more native plant material. The North American Native Plant Society is a renowned volunteer-led non-profit organization committed to native plant distribution and habitat creation. Toronto Botanical Garden: Events related to pollinator gardening and monarch conservation were promoted throughout the year on Toronto's "Events of Interest" section of the How to Help Wild Bees and Other Pollinators webpage. Toronto Botanical Garden provided space on-site for the native plant kit contest pick up and a native tree and shrub giveaway in collaboration with Urban Forestry for PollinateTO grantees. Eshkiniigjik Naandwechigegamig, Aabiish Gaa Binjibaaying - ENAGB Youth Program: ENAGB is a registered charity dedicated to providing cultural, employment, life skills, holistic wellness and recreational opportunities to

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indigenous youth. Programming is designed through youth participation and works to build self-esteem, confidence, skills, and self-determination. ENAGB supports habitat creation in Toronto through Memtigwaake Kinomaage Maawnjading (the forest we gather in to learn how to care for the Earth) along the Humber River including revitalizing rare urban riparian habitat, the creation of a pilot seed orchard project and reintroducing significant medicinal species along the river. This work supports the revitalization of Indigenous cultural practices and empowers youth to restore nature by offering resources and support such as seed starting, mentoring and specialized training. Landscape Ontario Congress: PollinateTO staff regularly attend the Landscape Ontario Congress to connect with landscaping industry professionals, plant nurseries, and suppliers, strengthening relationships that support the sourcing of true native species and the delivery of high-quality, pollinator-friendly habitat projects across 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).

• Printed materials – pamphlets, handouts and fact sheets distributed at all Live Green Toronto events across the City (Community Environment Days in each ward, the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair, the Home Show, etc.) • Social media – Ongoing campaigns for sustainable landscaping, native plant gardening, information on monarchs; postal code-targeted ads for residents in NIAs • Print media – Promotion of PollinateTO grant for community habitat creation in local newspapers, including translated newspaper ads "Rethink your Lawn" alternative lawn campaign video series: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mw4HFX74m_k

Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.

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

20

What species were collected or propagated?

Common milkweed, wild bergamot, aster

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

Pollinator Partnership Canada

Please describe the milkweed seed collection and propagation effort that you hosted.

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The City hosted a monarch conservation workshop with Pollinator Partnership Canada to educate participants on seed saving with hands-on experiential learning components to recognize, harvest and grow key monarch-supporting native species from seed.

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:

June 16-22, 2025; August 19, 2025

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

Pollinator Week; Flight of the Monarch Day

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

Pollinator Week_2025.pdf

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.

As part of PollinateTO-funded projects, all groups are required to plant native milkweed and goldenrod at their project sites. Since 2020, PollinateTO projects have been responsible for the planting of an estimated 2500 native milkweed plants in 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.

PollinateTO.jpg

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

500

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

PollinateTO grant recipients are provided free signage for their sites, and may use their grant funding to create signage, whether professionally printed or handmade. Each of

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PollinateTO’s 532 funded gardens have signage present, with some featuring educational labels for each species planted.

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