

# Town of Apex

Apex, NC

Mayor Jacques Gilbert

## Pledge Summary

The Town of Apex is a growing area located in Wake County, North Carolina. The Town is located in the piedmont region of North Carolina and serves as a critical waypoint for the eastern Monarch migration. Mayor Jacques K. Gilbert and Apex Town Council are committed to saving the monarch butterfly and other pollinators with their renewal of the Mayor's Monarch Pledge and look forward to engaging with Apex residents to continue to increase pollinator habitat throughout the Town.

## Action Items Committed for 2025

### Communications and Convening

- 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 art project to enhance and promote monarch and pollinator conservation as well as cultural awareness and recognition.

### Program and Demonstration Gardens

- Host or support a native seed or plant sale, giveaway or swap.
- Plant or maintain a monarch and pollinator-friendly demonstration garden at City Hall or another prominent or culturally significant community location.
- Launch or maintain an outdoor education program(s) (e.g., at schools, after-school programs, community centers and groups) that builds awareness and creates habitat by engaging students, educators, and the community in planting native milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants (i.e., National Wildlife Federation's Schoolyard Habitats program and Monarch Mission curriculum).
- Add or maintain native milkweed and nectar-producing plants in gardens in the community.
- Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.
- Launch, expand, or continue an invasive species removal program that will support the re-establishment of native habitat for monarch butterflies and other pollinators.

## Systems Change

- Reduce or eliminate the use of herbicides, pesticides, or other chemicals that are harmful to monarchs and pollinators and urban wildlife.

## Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Jacques Gilbert	2026	1/12/2026	
Mayor Jacques Gilbert	2025	3/28/2025	Leadership Circle
Mayor Jacques Gilbert	2024	3/6/2024	Leadership Circle
Mayor Jacques Gilbert	2023	3/30/2023	Signatories
Mayor Jacques Gilbert	2022	2/7/2022	Signatories
Mayor Jacques Gilbert	2021	4/1/2021	

## 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 (e.g., 50).**

300

**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." (Only allow numerical values.)**

200

**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).**

.5

**Where is your habitat being created? This may include residences (yards, containers, balconies, etc.), schools, places of worship, rights-of-way, roadsides, community gardens, culturally-significant locations, shared public spaces and common areas or parks.**

Our pollinator habitat at Apex Nature Park has continued to expand. We have plans to add native pollinator plants and new gardens in the coming years.

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

The Town of Apex's Strategic Plan ensures that programs engage marginalized communities and serve all of our residents. One of the Town's goals is to create "A Welcoming Community". The Mayors' Monarch Pledge helps us create community connections where everyone can be involved in efforts to support pollinators, especially the monarch butterfly.

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

The Town of Apex is committed to sustaining natural resources and environmental well-being as part of our Town Strategic Plan. The Mayors' Monarch Pledge helps us achieve objectives in this goal.

**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?**

We have connected with other municipalities to learn more about what they do to encourage and educate residents on the importance of protecting pollinators. We are excited to continue to see what community engagement initiatives others host as we create our own programs.

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

We launched a Pollinator Habitat Certification Program this year and are looking forward to continuing to grow the program.

## **Selected Action Items**

**Create a community art project to enhance and promote monarch and pollinator conservation as well as cultural awareness and recognition.**

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

**How many individuals were engaged in this effort? Please limit your answer to only the number of individuals reached in the answer field (e.g., 50).**

**Please describe the community art project that was implemented in your community and how it contributed to cultural awareness and recognition (e.g., number of art installations, type of art).**

**Launch or maintain an outdoor education program(s) (e.g., at schools, after-school programs, community centers and groups) that builds awareness and creates habitat by engaging students, educators, and the**

**community in planting native milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants (i.e., National Wildlife Federation's Schoolyard Habitats program and Monarch Mission curriculum).**

**What program was launched or maintained to complete this effort? If you are involved with another National Wildlife Federation program, please mention that below. (Please include a link to the program, if possible)**

**How many schools, community groups, leaders, or centers were engaged in this effort? How many of these collaborations and partnerships are "new"?**

**Please list the names of the schools you are working with.**

**What resources, if any, are you providing to educators?**

**How many students and educators would you estimate are being reached? Please limit your answer to only number of adults and youths engaged in the answer field (e.g., 200 students and 20 educators).**

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

**How many acres of monarch and pollinator habitat have been planted through this effort? Please limit your answer to only the number of acres in the answer field below (e.g., 0.5 acres). For reference, 1 acre = 43,560 square feet and is about the size of a football field without the end zones.**

**What is the maintenance schedule to ensure planted habitat is maintained?**

**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).**

Social media campaign during National Pollinator month to invite community members to our annual pollinator event, An Evening in the Garden. Launched Pollinator Habitat Recognition Program and Pollinator Pitstop Tour on Town website, email newsletter, print flyer, and social media.

**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.**

NC State Extension Master Gardeners, SWANEC, Rachel's Native Plants

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

We continue to partner with NC State Extension Master Gardeners on the pollinator garden efforts. Rachel's Native Plants provided all plants for our native gardens. We also partnered with a volunteer group who grew 100 native milkweed plugs and added them to the garden. The same group also hosted a monarch butterfly release in the garden.

**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.**

We shared information on the importance of protecting pollinators and the Monarch Butterfly with groups and individuals at tabling events such as EarthFest, PeakFest, and An Evening in the Garden. Volunteer Coordinator also shared about benefits of milkweed with volunteer groups in the garden and at speaking engagements at schools and with scouting groups.

**Reduce or eliminate the use of herbicides, pesticides, or other chemicals that are harmful to monarchs and pollinators and urban wildlife.**

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

Parks and Recreation Department, Facilities

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

The Parks and Recreation Operations team has limited their use of pesticides in spaces that they maintain. We hope to explore an Integrated Pest Management Plan in the future to provide best practices for pesticide usage across Town Departments.

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

**How many plants were sold and/or given away at your event?**

400

**How many people attended your event?**

500

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

Hosted Earth Day event on Town Hall Campus and gave out native seed packs of Black Eyed Susan and Purple Coneflower with information on Town pollinator efforts to attendees. Seed packets and information were also shared at other events such as PeakFest, Touch a Truck, and An Evening in the Garden.

## **Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.**

**How many garden signs are being displayed and where are they located?**

6

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

Signs include information on what pollination is, why it is important, and how the viewer can help pollinators. There is additional signage with information on a bee hotel and native plants. Temporary signage is installed during winter to educate community members on nesting habitat for pollinators and explain why we leave the garden untouched after all blooms and greenery has fallen.

## **Plant or maintain a monarch and pollinator-friendly demonstration garden at City Hall or another prominent or culturally significant community location.**

**Where is the demonstration garden located and how does this location relate to the cultural significance of the monarch (if relevant)? (Please provide an address or coordinates, if possible)**

Apex Nature Park - one of Apex's largest and most visited parks. The park is located at 2500 Evans Road, Apex, NC.

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

Apex Youth Council, Apex High School, Rachel's Native Plants, Town of Apex staff, Scouting Troops

**What is the size of the demonstration garden (in acres)? Please limit your answer to only the number of acres in the answer field below (e.g., 0.5 acres ). For reference, 1 acre = 43,560 square feet and is about the size of a football field without the end zones.**

0.1

**Add or maintain native milkweed and nectar-producing plants in gardens in the community.**

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

ECHHS Milkweed & Monarch Butterfly Club

**How many plants were planted?**

100

**Please describe your effort in completing this action.**

A local non-profit propagated common milkweed plugs and donated them to be planted in the Pollinator Garden. Volunteers installed and watered all the plants.

**Launch, expand, or continue an invasive species removal program that will support the re-establishment of native habitat for monarch butterflies and other pollinators.**

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

[SWANEC\\_group\\_working\\_\(002\).png](#)

**What is the total acreage of land treated to remove invasive plants?**

1

**Please describe the extent of revisions or maintenance to invasive species removal programs, as well as the practices or techniques used to remove the invasive plants.**

We launched an invasive species removal program this year! We have partnered with a group of local high schoolers from SWANEC to host volunteer workdays to remove invasives at Apex Community Park. This year, we have hosted 6 workdays and have

removed over 50 bags of invasive species from the park, focusing on Japanese Stiltgrass that has overtaken the sides of the greenways.