Town of Whitby

Whitby, ON

Mayor Don Mitchell

Pledge Summary

Established in 1855, the Town of Whitby is situated on the north shore of Lake Ontario, 30 km east of Toronto. The Town maintains 125 parks with 950 acres of active parkland, over 1000 acres of passive open space, and approximately 75 kilometres of trails. The estimated population is 138,300 and Durham Region predicts the population of Whitby will be approximately 200,000 by 2033. The Town of Whitby's mission to create and maintain a sustainable, healthy, and safe community/environment can be achieved, in part, through the maintenance, restoration, and enhancement of the Town's green infrastructure. A healthy habitat for pollinators is an integral component of the municipality.

Action Items Committed for 2021

Program and Demonstration Gardens

- 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.

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.)

Systems Change

- Increase the percentage of native plants, shrubs and trees that must be used in city landscaping ordinances and encourage use of milkweed, where appropriate.

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Elizabeth Roy	2026	1/28/2026	
Mayor Elizabeth Roy	2025	3/3/2025	Signatories

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Mayor Elizabeth Roy	2024	2/23/2024	Signatories
Mayor Elizabeth Roy	2023	4/25/2023	Signatories
Mayor Don Mitchell	2021	12/16/2020	Signatories

Action Items

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.

10

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

The protection, restoration, communication and advocacy of the environment is important. Nature provides important environmental, social and economic benefits. These benefits include cleaning the air we breathe, helping us fight climate change, preserving/improving greenspaces, and beautifying our community.

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?

Guides and resources for reaching out to vulnerable populations would be helpful. The Town of Whitby is able to create and enhance pollinator habitat in public spaces such as in parks and along trails, although not all naturalization areas are physically accessible.

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.).

500

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.

Parks and open space, along trails, storm water ponds and around municipal owned facilities.

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

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The Town of Whitby is currently reviewing a community garden application (King Street Cooperative Community Garden) which includes a food forest permaculture garden that will enhance the local organic food supply chain. Volunteer planting events to create monarch habitat will continue to be a priority to engage the community and allow people of various backgrounds to participate in planting events. Allowing for habitat areas in public parks throughout Whitby allows people to enjoy the spaces at their leisure.

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

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

Staff led initiative to grow native locally sourced planting material (small in-house native plant nursery) from locally sourced seeds. The plant material will be used for planting events on Town owned land (e.g. celebrate earth day, pollinator week, youth planting events, staff planting events) . One project highlight was the town's waterfront trail project which allowed for 5.3 acres of native seed to be installed to enhance monarch habitat along the shoreline of Lake Ontario. A new trail project located in the open space southwest of Thickson Road and Dryden Boulevard allowed for the enhancement of 5.5 acres of monarch habitat through the addition of native trees, shrubs and seed.

Selected Action Items

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 22-28 2020

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

Pollinator Week

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

June 22-28 2020_Pollinator Week (002).pdf

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

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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).

Pollinator Week Celebrations Pollinator Week scavenger hunt Download the GooseChase App on your smartphone or tablet, search for 1GB9E6, then get ready to complete a series of challenges for the chance to win a pollinator-friendly gardening kit from the Local Enhancement and Appreciation of Forests (LEAF). “Bees Love Trees” webinar You know bees love flowers, but did you know they love trees too? Join Brian Millward, Stewardship Coordinator of LEAF on Thursday, June 24 at 7 p.m. for a webinar on how climate change threatens bees and how you can help. Register now. Visit one of the Town’s pollinators gardens Check out the Town’s interactive Parks map to locate pollinator gardens. Find one near you to visit and encounter bees, butterflies and other pollinators up close. Simply open the map and apply the “pollinator garden” filter. Recorded “From the Hive to the Honey Jar” presentation Watch a previously recorded virtual honey extraction presentation hosted by Alvéole urban beekeeper Taylor. Learn about the Town's urban beehive and all things honey. Plant a tree for a pollinator Now that you know pollinators love trees, why not plant your own? The Town offers plants, trees and shrubs at a subsidized price through our Backyard Tree Planting Program. Learn more. Seed Giveaway The Town of Whitby is developing customized native perennial mixes that include Milkweed to encourage residents to increase habitat suitable for Monarch Butterflies. https://www.whitby.ca/en/news/top-ways-to-support-bees-butterflies-and-other-pollinators-in-whitby.aspx

Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

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

1

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

Educational pollinator signage was installed in 2018 at Town Hall Civic Park. Accessibility signage strategy near completion to guide Town-wide signage. At a new District park (Des Newman WhitBEE Park) to be built in 2022, plans to incorporate an interpretive sign related to pollinators and habitat.

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

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

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and other pollinators.

What is the total acreage of land treated to remove invasive plants? Note: 1 acre = roughly the size of a football field.

1.0

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.

Invasive species removal in isolated areas of Bradley Park, Pringle Park, Ash Creek Trail, Willow Park, Prince Of Wales Park, Jack Wilson Park, Portage Park, Bassett Park, D'Hillier Park, and Darren Park. Invasive species were removed manually according to best practices set by the Ontario Invasive Plant Council. No herbicides were applied to manage invasive species in these areas. Species such as dog strangling vine, buckthorn, giant hogweed, wild parsnip, poison ivy, and phragmites. https://www.whitby.ca/2020-Sustainability-Annual-Report-Final.pdf

Increase the percentage of native plants, shrubs and trees that must be used in city landscaping ordinances and encourage use of milkweed, where appropriate.

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.

Completed the Landscape Plan Guidelines for Site Plan and Subdivision Development in 2021 https://www.whitby.ca/en/resources/Town-of-Whitby-Landscape-Plan-Guidelines-Complete---July-9,-2021.pdf. Requirements included that 50% native species identified in the site plan required for stormwater management block and private land development. Municipal Park development team aims to use native plant species. Increased pollinator gardens at Suse Eggert Park, Heydenshore Park and Bradley Park.

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

Wildflower Seed Packet.jpg

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

LEAF, Youth Council of Ontario Nature, WSAC

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

This is an ongoing action: In Spring 2021, The Whitby Sustainability Advisory Committee hosted Climate Conversations -A four-part webinar series to help increase knowledge and awareness of the natural environment and how it is impacted by climate change. Topics covered in the spring of 2021 included local food, the importance of wetlands, invasive species and Bees Love Trees. Climate Conversations are presented in partnership with Durham Farm Fresh, Central Lake Ontario Conservation(CLOCA), Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH) and Local Enhancement and Appreciation of Forests (LEAF). In 2021 Whitby Council approved continuing supporting the LEAF Backyard Tree Planting program for the next five years. This program enables residents to access a subsidized Backyard Tree Planting as well as access to other programs that LEAF offers including native plant kits and several educational tools.

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