BIDDEFORD

BIDDEFORD, ME

Mayor Alan Casavant

Pledge Summary

Biddeford, Maine is a city of approximately 22,000 people. It is located on the Saco River, as well as the Atlantic Ocean. Possessing a robust downtown, the city has undergone a renaissance, with many new shops, restaurants, and breweries. The city is home to the University of New England and Southern Maine Health Care, and it is recognized as the youngest city in Maine. The Mayor and the City Council have signed onto the Monarch Pledge in recent years, and it has done so in a partnership with a hugely successful community garden program. City departments are aware of the need to protect pollinators, and they have adapted to changes in the way their typical activities and programs are done.

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.
- Engage with city parks and recreation, public works, sustainability, and other relevant staff to identify opportunities to revise and maintain mowing programs and milkweed / native nectar plant planting programs.
- 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.

Program and Demonstration Gardens

- 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.

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u336:v1.14.0.49966]

- Host or support a monarch butterfly festival that is accessible to all residents in the community and promotes monarch and pollinator conservation, as well as cultural awareness and recognition.

Systems Change

- Change weed or mowing ordinances to allow for native prairie and plant habitats.
- Increase the percentage of native plants, shrubs and trees that must be used in city landscaping ordinances and encourage use of milkweed, where appropriate.
- Integrate monarch butterfly conservation into the city's Park Master Plan, Sustainability Plan, Climate Resiliency Plan or other city plans.

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Liam Lafountain	2026	2/27/2026	
Mayor Martin Grohman	2025	3/10/2025	Leadership Circle
Mayor Martin Grohman	2024	2/1/2024	Leadership Circle
Mayor Alan Casavant	2023	2/18/2023	Signatories
Mayor Alan Casavant	2022	2/25/2022	Leadership Circle
Mayor Alan Casavant	2021	4/27/2021	Signatories

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.).

475

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.)

200 youth and 275 adults

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.

1.0

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.

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u336:v1.14.0.49966]

Four community gardens, Main Street pocket garden, Mechanics Park, Williams Court Park

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

Through our 2023 Spring Pollinator Festival

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

We believe in the importance of saving the Monarch Butterfly by planting new habitat and maintaining existing habitat through a community awareness campaign.

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?

Online resources that can be shared with the general population.

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

We would like to increase the public's awareness of the lethality of pesticides and herbicides on our pollinators. There is still so far to go. Every little bit of information we can provide is a step in the right direction.

Selected Action Items

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).

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.

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u336:v1.14.0.49966]

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.

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 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.

Integrate monarch butterfly conservation into the city's Park Master Plan, Sustainability Plan, Climate Resiliency Plan or other city plans.

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:

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u336:v1.14.0.49966]

06/20/2023

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

National Wildlife Federation's Mayor's Monarch Pledge

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

2023 MMP Proclamation.pdf

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

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

Sandy's Meadow.jpg

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

At an early spring 2023 meeting of the Saco Bay Garden Club, I spoke about the importance of planting and maintaining native wildflower gardens, including milkweed, to support Monarch Butterflies and other important pollinators. As a result of this presentation, at least two of the garden club members created small wildflower meadows on their properties.

Engage with city parks and recreation, public works, sustainability, and other relevant staff to identify opportunities to revise and maintain mowing programs and milkweed / native nectar plant planting programs.

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

Milkweed 1.jpg

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

Milkweed 2.jpg

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

3 Worked with our city's public works department, our Adopt a Park program and Biddeford Community Gardens to encourage less mowing and more rewilding in our city parks, gardens, and community gardens.

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u336:v1.14.0.49966]

Please describe the extent of engagement with these groups and revisions/maintenance implemented for mowing or planting programs.

Monthly conversations at our Adopt a Park meetings about reducing the amount and frequency of mowing, and allowing for more native landscapes in our city spaces. Weekly summertime children's garden programming with York County Master Gardeners included cultivating a bumper crop of milkweed.

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.

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

PLG Milkweed.jpg

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

PLG Milkweed 2.jpg

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

2 Saco Bay Garden Club Master Gardener Volunteers

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

York County Master Gardener Volunteers provide weekly staffing support for our children's summer gardening program at Pierson's Lane Children's Garden. Although the space is small, we maintain many areas of milkweed and other native wildflowers throughout the gardens.

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?

Biddeford's Adopt a Park program, Biddeford Community Gardens

How many plants were planted? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

100

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u336:v1.14.0.49966]

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

Worked with Adopt a Park program volunteers and Biddeford Community Gardens to raise awareness about the importance of Monarch butterflies and other pollinators. Milkweed was growing everywhere -- in our city parks, in each of our four community gardens. We also planted many native plants such as coneflower, red clover, black eyed susan, coreopsis, bachelor buttons, and nasturtium.

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).

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

BLAST 1.jpg

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

BLAST 2.jpg

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

SPF 2023 1.jpg

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

SPF 2023 2.jpg

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)

Held our 2nd annual Spring Pollinator Festival with over 250 in attendance. Also kicked off a Learning Works BLAST program summer event at our largest Community Garden. Over 60 kids K-4 attended. The kids learned about planting veggies and wildflowers, they helped with a pollinator count, and tried their hand at dying fabric with natural plant dies from a wildflower garden. This will become a three X's per season event in 2024 and beyond. Also continued with the Biddeford Gardens Series partnering with McArthur Public Library - a monthly series, which included an event called 'Planting a Native Wildflower Garden.'

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u336:v1.14.0.49966]

How many schools, community groups, leaders, or centers were engaged in this effort? How many of these collaborations and partnerships are "new"? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

15

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

JFKennedy School (Learning Works BLAST program) Biddeford Middle School Biddeford High School's Farm/Agriculture Class

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

On hand support in our community and school gardens. Hands on activities through our Spring Pollinator Festival and summer BLAST garden programming.

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).

100

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

Biddeford Community Gardens, Learning Works' Service Works and BLAST programs, Biddeford Adopt a Park Program

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. Note: 1 acre = roughly the size of a football field.

1.0

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

Some of our native habitat is maintained by our Volunteer Gardeners in our community gardens. Other areas were planted as meadows. We will monitor them for invasives.

Host or support a monarch butterfly festival that is accessible to all residents in the community and promotes monarch and pollinator conservation, as well as cultural awareness and recognition.

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

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u336:v1.14.0.49966]

SPF 2023 3.jpg

How many estimated individuals attended the event? Please limit your answer to only the number of individuals reached in the answer field ((Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only), e.g. 500)

250

What was the date of your festival?

05/13/2023

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

Biddeford Community Gardens, Biddeford Teen Center, Learning Works BLAST Program, The Ecology School, York County Beekeepers, Bike Part Art, Hydra Art Collective, McArthur Library, Youth Full Maine, Biddeford Adult Ed ELL Class Cooks, our city's Climate Action Task Force

Please describe the details of your monarch butterfly festival and how you ensured the event was accessible by all residents in the community (e.g., events, length, notable successes, outreach, location).

This was year 2 of Biddeford Community Garden's Spring Pollinator Festival, which ran from noon to 4 p.m. It was held at Rotary Park (one of our city's largest public parks). Attendees were able to tour Rotary Park Community Garden, listen to world music, participate in environmentally-friendly hands on activities, learn about the importance of saving the Monarch Butterfly and other vital pollinators through our No Mow May initiative, shop at a sustainable makers' market, and eat food prepared by some of our New American neighbors. It was a total success.

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u336:v1.14.0.49966]