BIDDEFORD

BIDDEFORD, ME

Mayor Martin Grohman

Pledge Summary

Biddeford is a beautiful city on the Saco River, with miles of coastal beaches, a developed downtown, and rolling farmland. There are 14 public parks and four community gardens in Biddeford. In 2023, the city finalized its Climate Action Plan and will be forming a Sustainability Commission spring of 2024. Since our first Mayors' Monarch Pledge in 2021, we are committed to educating the public about the importance of the Monarch Butterfly by encouraging our citizenry to mow less, reduce or end the use of pesticides and herbicides, and incorporate more native plantings in their gardens. We are increasing education in the schools through garden and arts programming. And we will hold our third annual Spring Pollinator Festival in May.

Action Items Committed for 2024

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.
- 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.
- Create a community art project to enhance and promote monarch and pollinator conservation as well as cultural awareness and recognition.
- Create a community-driven educational conservation strategy, initiative, or practice that focuses on and benefits local, underserved residents.

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.

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- 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.
- 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 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.).

450

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.)

250

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.

5

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.

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Residences, city parks, community gardens, Main Street spaces

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

Through our 2024 Spring Pollinator Celebration

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

The City of Biddeford has recently adopted a Climate Action Plan and from that established a Sustainability Committee. Part of its mission is to preserve and protect urban and rural greenspaces, reduce or eliminate the use of pesticides. The NWF's Mayor's Monarch Pledge is a great way for us to stay up to date on new research about the Monarch Butterfly and on track with our commitments to do our part to protect them.

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 did not partake of NWF's offerings of printed materials. But next year, we would like to install informational signage in our public spaces, including city parks and school grounds.

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

Everywhere we planted or encouraged the growth of milkweed saw continual Monarch Butterfly activity.

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 (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only, 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).

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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:

May 7, 2024

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

Mayor's Monarch Pledge

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

MMP Order.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.

Wms Ct - Circle garden.jpg

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

Rotary Park CG - Beebalm & Milkweed.jpg

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

This year we had more volunteers, which meant more time and energy spent expanding our native wildflower areas in both our Williams Court and Rotary Park Community Gardens.

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.

RP Vista.jpg

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

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Biddeford Community Gardens Biddeford Public Works

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

In the RP Vista photo, the hillside beyond the raised bed garden area has traditionally been mowed. For the last two years, the city has allowed this area to rewild. Throughout the field and hillside you will find goldenrod, black-eyed Susans, and other native wildflowers growing.

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.

Brenda's Native Garden.jpeg

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

Monarch info sign.jpg

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

Master Gardener Volunteers University of New England's med students care for one of our city parks, including a flower garden that has many milkweed plants and other native wildflowers. Learning Works BLAST program (kids K-grade 4) visit our Rotary Park Community Garden and learn about the importance of pollinators, including the Monarch Butterfly. Cornerstones of Maine - a residential program for youth 18-24.

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

Through our Pierson's Lane Children's Garden, we work with certified Master Gardener Volunteers who help teach kids the basics of gardening and growing food, and the importance of pollinators, including the Monarch Butterfly. One of this year's MGV's has transformed her own gardens from traditional lawn and perennial and annual borders to a more eco-friendly native wildflower garden. The Biddeford Middle School's Garden Club planted native wildflowers, including milkweed in and around school grounds. Young adults from Cornerstones of Maine worked on an informational sign project in early spring this year, showing the various stages of the Monarch and other important pollinators. the signs were attached to the garden fence at Rotary Park Community Garden for the public to see. University of New England med students have adopted one of our city parks, which has a sizeable flower garden, which has many wildflowers and milkweed plants. They care for the garden over the school year and into summer.

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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.

SPC - Crowd.jpg

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

SPC photo.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)

275

What was the date of your festival?

May 18, 2024

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

Youth Full Maine, Biddeford's Sustainability Committee, York County Beekeepers, Saco Bay Garden Club, York County Headstart, Biddeford Middle School Garden Club, Sierra Club Climate Action Team, Wabanaki Alliance, APEX Youth Connection, Portland Chapter of the Citizens Climate Lobby

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).

Our 3rd annual Spring Pollinator Celebration was held from 12 to 4 on Saturday, May 18. We had for musical performances, foods prepared by local cultural cooks, myriad activities hosted by many local and regional non-profits and youth groups, and tours and activities in our largest community garden, all in celebration of our important pollinators and our environment.

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

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process, what partnerships were established, and how you engaged these groups. Provide a link, if possible.

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

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

Rotary Park - Wildflowers.jpg

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

Attendees at our Spring Pollinator Celebration.

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

100

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

Our Biddeford Community Gardens volunteer gardeners maintained existing patches of milkweed in all of our gardens. Through our annual Spring Pollinator Celebration, youth and adult attendees planted native wildflowers in Rotary Park.

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.

PLG - Abi & Brenda.jpg

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

Desper's Class.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)

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Biddeford Community Gardens continues to engage with students from K-12 in all of our gardens, through various garden activities, which involve education around healthy soils, growing vegetables and native plants, and the importance of beneficial insects including our vital pollinators. The students plant native wildflowers, including milkweed, and save and package seed collected from the gardens.

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)

5

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

Biddeford High School's Alternative Pathways Center Pierson's Lane Children's Garden summer program geared toward K-4 youth Biddeford High School's Farm and Food Production Class Cornerstones of Maine (a residential program for 18 to 24 year olds) Learning Works' BLAST after school program for kids K-4. Learning Works' Service Works program Biddeford Middle School's Garden Club

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

We work with Master Gardener Volunteers who provide hands on learning and educational support to students.

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).

200 students, 9 educators

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

York County Master Gardener Association

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.

.25

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

Our community gardens are staffed by volunteer gardeners and Master Gardener Volunteers twice weekly throughout the growing season.

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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?

Biddeford's Sustainability Committee

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.

Removing invasive plants, and efforts to plant more native plants and trees are part of our city's Climate Action Plan. Efforts are underway.

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?

Our Public Works department and new Sustainability Committee both have made reducing or eliminating the use of herbicides, pesticides in our community an important part of their missions. And Biddeford Community Gardens continues to use organic practices in all of our community growing spaces.

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.

Biddeford Community Gardens has been using organic practices since its establishment in 2018. Our Public Works Department has not provided an update. Our city's Sustainability Committee has just been formed, and it is in their work plan to address the importance of reducing or eliminating the use of pesticides, herbicides in Biddeford.

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

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

City of Biddeford Public Works Department

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.

As of this date, we have not received an update from our Public Works department on their efforts to date.

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