Municipality of Whitestone

Whitestone, ON

Mayor George Comrie

Pledge Summary

Whitestone is a municipality in West Parry Sound District, within the Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve. Our population is small, but our geographic area is large and extensively forested, with many lakes and rivers. The character of our community is a mixture of rural and cottage country, with a strong culture of environmental conservation. Monarch butterflies frequent our area during the summer months, where they can find an abundance of suitable habitat. We have frequently observed butterflies and moths through their metamorphoses. Several years ago, our Municipality directed staff to avoid cutting milkweed during roadside grass cutting operations. Our Municipal Council has just taken the Mayor's Monarch Pledge.

Action Items Committed for 2021

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.)

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).

Systems Change

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

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor George Comrie	2025	3/30/2025	Signatories
Mayor George Comrie	2023	4/4/2023	
Mayor George Comrie	2022	2/3/2022	
Mayor George Comrie	2021	5/4/2021	Signatories

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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.).

1000

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.)

unknown

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.

0.5

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.

Yards and roadways

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

not applicable in the Municipality of Whitestone

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

To educate the community and ensure Monarch Habitat is maintained
https://www.whitestone.ca/p/mayors-monarch-pledge

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?

the Local Library has developed a seed exchange which includes milkweed and other native plants

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

1. The Municipality made the proclamation 3. The Municipality engaged with community groups -the Dunchurch Agricultural Society had their milkweed initiative this summer. They gave out several varieties of milkweed seed with directions on planting. The municipality supported this initiative and shared it in their social media and newsletter. 11. Our library has a seed exchange. It includes milkweed as well as other native plants. 20. Invasive program. Webinars and social media on invasive species. Encouraged planting native plants. Handouts for ratepayers on invasive species 24. Roadside mowing program -the Municipality has a policy with our roadside mowers to not cut milkweed patches where possible.

Selected Action Items

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)

The Dunchurch Agricultural Society sponsored a milkweed initiative this past summer. They gave out several varieties of milkweed seed with directions on planting. The Municipality supported this initiative and shared it in their social media and newsletter. Our library has a seed exchange. It included milkweed as well as other native plants.

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.

Whitestone Lake Public School

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

Handouts and Social Media posts

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

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(e.g., 200 students and 20 educators).

50 students; 10 educators

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

The Whitestone Library and Technology Centre, the After School Program and the Agricultural Society

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.

0.5

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

Ongoing community education where the habitat was planted on private property. The Municipality has mowing program. The Municipality has a policy with our roadside mowers to not cut milkweed patches where possible. This program is reviewed annually with staff and contractors.

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.)

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

The Mayors Monarch Pledge.pdf

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

Municipality of Whitestone Pledge Summary.pdf

Please describe the methods of public communication below (e.g., printed materials, social media, print media).

The Municipality undertook an Invasive Species education program. Webinars were made available for free and a serious of weekly social media posts were made on FACEBOOK and twitter over the course of five months. The Municipality promoted and communicated the Monarch Pledge to the community through social media. The Municipality encouraged

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planting native plants including milkweed. Handouts were and still are available on the Municipal website. https://www.whitestone.ca/p/mayors-monarch-pledge

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

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

Monarch Pledge.pdf

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

This is a Municipal direction and has been in place for a number of years. The Municipality has a policy with regard our roadside mowers to not cut milkweed patches where possible.

What is the status of this action? Please limit your answer to either "complete" or "in progress" in the answer field below.

complete

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.

yes

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

yes - annual education on the program for Staff and Contractors

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