City of Lakeland

Lakeland, FL

Mayor Bill Mutz

Pledge Summary

Lakeland is a city in Central Florida with a current population of 117,281 and a population growth of 1.48%. Lakeland is located just south of the Green Swamp Wilderness Preserve and has 38 named lakes within its city limits. Lakeland prides itself in having 76 park facilities and an urban forest consisting of 65,000 plus trees. Hollis Garden, Lakeland's downtown botanical display garden, is a Certified Butterfly Garden with the North American Butterfly Association (NABA) and many other park areas throughout the city are dedicated to native plantings that provide habitats for Monarch Butterflies and other pollinators. Mayor Mutz of Lakeland, Florida has committed to saving the monarch butterfly and other pollinators by signing the Mayor's Monarch Pledge and looks forward to engaging residents in building more pollinator habitats throughout the city.

Action Items Committed for 2022

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 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

- Host or support a native seed or plant sale, giveaway or swap.
- Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.
- Plant or maintain a monarch and pollinator-friendly demonstration garden at City Hall or another prominent or culturally significant community location.

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.
- Launch, expand, or continue an effort to change municipal planting ordinances and practices to include more native milkweed and native nectar producing plants at city properties.

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Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Bill Mutz	2024	3/29/2024	Leadership Circle
Mayor Bill Mutz	2023	1/24/2023	Leadership Circle
Mayor Bill Mutz	2022	4/27/2022	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.).

82824

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.)

4141 youth and 78683 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.

.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.

Parks and city facilities.

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

The newest renovation/replanting of one of our butterfly gardens took place at the Coleman Bush Building. This recreation facility is located in a lower income neighborhood and provides after-school activities for the local neighborhood children. We have done butterfly releases for the children at this particular facility in the past.

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

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We have established butterfly gardens throughout the city limits. The mayor's pledge incentivized us to focus more specifically on Monarchs. This helped to reinforce what we were already doing.

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?

Local native plant nurseries have provided Monarch specific plants for our various butterfly gardens. We would like to find growers that could provide rarer Asclepias species and rarer nectar plants for our garden collections. Better advertising and understanding of our collaboration with the National Wildlife Federation, in regard to the Mayor's Pledge, would potentially help with community engagement.

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

1) Monarch specific plants (Asclepias perrenis, Liatris gracilis, Liatris spicata & Liatris tenuifolia) are currently growing on display at our downtown botanical garden, Hollis Garden. 2) The following Monarch specific plants are growing in situ at our City of Lakeland municipal nursery for the purposes of seed collection, propagation, and installation into municipal landscapes: (Asclepias incarnata, Asclepias perennis, Asclepias verticillata, Carphephorus odorotissimus, Carphephorus corymbosus, Flaveria linearis, Heliotropium angiospermum, Liatris gracilis, Liatris spicata, Liatris tenuifolia, Melanthera nivea, Silphium asteriscus & Symphyotrichum elliottii)

Selected Action Items

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.

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

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:

5/16/22

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

Mayors' Monarch Pledge Day

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

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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.

vlcsnap-2022-10-17-09h01m46s868.png

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

vlcsnap-2022-10-17-09h01m54s426.png

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

vlcsnap-2022-10-17-09h01m59s488.png

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

One organization - the City of Lakeland Parks Department, Lake Crago Maintenance Crew.

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

On 9/8/22 the Landscape Crew and Lake Crago Maintenance Crew dispersed Asclepias incarnata (Swamp Milkweed) in a retention area of Lake Crago Park. This area normally is bush hogged or mowed several times per year. Because of the seed dispersal, this will cease unless plants are in a dormant phase. We are currently monitoring this area.

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

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

Hollis Garden Plant Swap September, 2022 c.jpg

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

Hollis Garden Plant Swap September, 2022 g.jpg

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

Hollis Garden Plant Swap September, 2022 k.jpg

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

Hollis Garden Plant Swap September, 2022 l.jpg

How many plants were sold and/or given away at your event? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

Specifically, 30 Asclepias perennis (Aquatic Milkweed) were given away to the public at the 2022 Hollis Garden Plant Swap. Hundreds of other butterfly-attracting plants were swapped that day as well.

How many people attended your event? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

350

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

The City of Lakeland Hollis Garden (botanical garden) Crew.

Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.

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

Asclepias perennis Seeds.jpg

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

Asclepias Seedlings.jpg

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

Seed Collecting b.jpg

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

Seed Collecting.jpg

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

Seed collection Garden at City Nursery k.jpg

How many people attended your event? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

4

What species were collected or propagated?

Asclepias perennis & Silphium asteriscus.

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

The City of Lakeland Nursery Crew & volunteers.

Please describe the milkweed seed collection and propagation effort that you hosted.

On May 26th, 2022 we established a Monarch-specific garden at the City of Lakeland Nursery. This garden consists of Asclepias incarnata, Asclepias perennis & Asclepias verticillata for host plants and seed sources. We also planted an array of Monarch attracting nectar plants for seeds and vegetative production - they include the following : Carphephorus corymbosas, Carphephorus odorotissimus, Flaveria linearis, Heliotropium angiospermum, Liatris grcilis, Liatris spicata, Liatris tenuifolia, Melanthera nivea, Silphium asteriscus & Symphotrichum elliottii. Seeds were collected from the Asclepias perennis and Silphium asteriscus specimens in the afore mentioned garden and in Hollis Garden. The seeds were then sprouted and grown at the City of Lakeland Nursery for both distribution to the public and the city-wide landscape.

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

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

Tree Planting Log 2021-2022 - Mayor's Monarch Pledge.xlsx

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

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City of Lakeland Parks Department Landscape Crew

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

The Landscape Crew regularly plants throughout the city-wide landscape. See attachment - native species in the 'Tree Species', 'Hedge Species' & 'Palm/Lg. Herbaceous Perennials' columns will be highlighted in purple cells. The tally will be listed at the bottom of the spreadsheet under 'Native Species Planted'. Although not Monarch-related, the Florida Coontie is the sole host plant for the Atala Butterfly caterpillars (Eumaeus atala) which was once declared extinct in Florida. We have been planting the coonties back into the municipal landscape since the 90's.

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.

This action takes place continuously throughout the year.

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

This action takes place continuously throughout the year.

Launch, expand, or continue an effort to change municipal planting ordinances and practices to include more native milkweed and native nectar producing plants at city properties.

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

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

The Horticultural Specialist (Stacy Smith) of the City of Lakeland Parks Dept. along with Mayor Bill Mutz partnered in planting Asclepias perennis plants and Asclepias incarnata seeds at Crago Park (525 Lake Crago Dr.) and maintaining these species at this location by adjusting bushog-mowing frequency and planting/replanting as needed.

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

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below.

No Policy

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

The action will be continuous, but it is not likely that a 'policy' will be created at this time.

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

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

Coleman Bush Butterfly Garden 11-22-22g.jpg

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)

This butterfly attracting garden is loacated at the City of Lakeland Coleman Bush Recreation Facility located at 1104 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd in Lakeland. Butterfly attracting nectar plants are located throughout the landscape including milkweeds as host plants. this location is specified as one of our multiple Butterfly Gardens. Other areas dedicated to butterflies include Hollis Garden (702 e Orange St.), Common Ground Park (1000 E Edgewood Dr.) & City Hall (228 S Massachusetts Ave). All butterfly garden projects can be viewed at www.lakelandgov.net by searching "butterfly"

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

Gardens are maintained and planted by City of Lakeland Parks Dept. employees.

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

1.57

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