Town of Bedford

Katonah, Bedford Hills, and Bedford, NY

Supervisor Ellen Calves

Pledge Summary

The Town of Bedford, located in Westchester County just north of New York City, spans nearly 40 square miles, with 26% preserved as open land. Bedford has been at the forefront of environmental action on multiple fronts, including waste management and energy efficiency. The town enforces stringent leaf blower regulations and maintains a pesticide-free policy for parks and highways. Several public display gardens, cared for by town employees and dedicated volunteers, serve as models of sustainable landscaping. Additionally, more than 200 residents have committed their properties to the Pollinator Pathway program, supporting vital habitat for pollinators.

Action Items Committed for 2025

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

- 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.
- Plant milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants along roadsides, medians, or public rights-of-way.
- Initiate or support community science (or citizen science) efforts that help monitor monarch migration and health.

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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 and other pollinators.
- Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

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.
- Launch, expand, or continue one or more ordinances to reduce light pollution to benefit urban wildlife.

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Ellen Calves	2026	2/8/2026	
Supervisor Ellen Calves	2025	12/17/2024	Leadership Circle
Supervisor Ellen Calves	2023	3/23/2023	

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.).

80

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.)

20

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.

20

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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Pollinator Patheway addresses, meadow conversions, small display gardens

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

All the events are free and easy to participate in. Located in libraries, stations and parks

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

As a way to engage residents in more sustainable landscaping practices and healthier life styles

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?

Materials to share with landscapers

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

The answers that require numbers/acres are guess work, wish there was a better way to quantify our efforts

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:

February 5 2025

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

Monarch Resolution

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

Monarch Resolution.pdf

Launch or maintain a public communication effort to encourage residents to plant monarch gardens at their homes or in their neighborhoods. (If you

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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.

monarch pledge newsletter.pdf

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

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

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

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

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

WatershedAgriculturalCouncil.jpg

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

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

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

While not focused specifically on monarch butterflies, the Town of Bedford offers a variety of free flyers, digital resources, activities, and examples that promote butterfly-friendly habitats.

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

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

Bedford is home to three wonderful garden clubs — the Bedford Garden Club, the Rusticus Garden Club, and the Hopp Ground Garden Club — all of which have embraced sustainable landscaping. They offer programs for both members and non-members to promote butterfly-friendly gardening. Their activities are supported by the Town, and several public gardens are maintained by the clubs as examples of colorful, pollinator-friendly habitats. https://www.bedfordgardenclubny.org/public-gardens1.html. https://www.rusticusgardenclub.org/conservation.html https://hoppgroundgardenclub.org/about There are two other important gardens to which

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outsiders are welcome to engage, and both are great sources for gardeners to learn about ecological gardening. https://westchesterlandtrust.org/conserve-steward/farms/ https://bedfordaudubon.org/leon-levy-native-garden/ None of the above mentioned groups need to be encourafge to plant milkweed, they already do!

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.

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

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

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

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

Both the Recreation and Parks Department and the Department of Highways manage roadsides primarily for safety. Battery-operated equipment is used, and leaf mowing on lawns is standard practice. Milkweed seeds (Asclepias syriaca and A. incarnata) were dispersed this year in several locations, and a few roadsides are now managed specifically to encourage insect activity.

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

The department managers are fully engaged, but not all employees — especially short-term hires — show the same level of understanding or commitment.

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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.

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

Bedford-Playhouse-Web-Image-V2.png

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

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

The Town of Bedford actively supports and promotes and cooperated with numerous environmental events, films, and activities throughout the year. Around twenty organizations and groups in 2025, were engaged with action(s) that benefitted Monarch populations: Bedford 2030/Rooted Solutions Healthy Yards Lasdon Arboretum Bedford Farmers Club Leave Leaves Alone Rusticus Garden Club Hopp Ground Garden Club Bedford Garden Club Bedford Audubon Westchester Land Trust Wild Ones Lower Hudson Valley Chapter Pollinators Pathways Mianus River Gorge Westmore Sanctuary Bedford Hills Free Library Katonah Free Library Community Center of Northern Westchester Master Gardeners Cornell Westchester St Lucas Church Presbyterian Church Bedford Village Buxton Pond Food Center

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

All these organizations are aware of the challenges facing monarchs and, more broadly, the environmental issues that threaten our ecosystems. Their engagement ranges from hands-on activities, such as planting milkweed, to broader programs that encourage participants to adopt healthier landscaping practices and lifestyles.

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.

WOLHV Plant Swap 5.jpeg

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

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

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

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

hundreds of plants thousands of seeds

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

200

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

Bedford Audubon, Wild Ones, Healthy Yards, Wild Woods Restoration Project, Hilltop Hanover Farm, B2030

Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.

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

100

What species were collected or propagated?

Incarnata, Syriaca, Verticillata, Tuberosa, Purpurea

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

See above (action 10)

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

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We offered free seeds and a workshop with container seeding

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.

qqqqqqqqqqq.jpeg

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)

The town has several Pollinator friendly gardens in cultural significant locations: libraries, town hall, TIOLI shed, station and memorial paks

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

Park employees, Village Improvement Society, Library employees, Garden clubs and others

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

Plant milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants along roadsides, medians, or public rights-of-way.

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

IMG_9759.JPG

Where are the medians, roadsides and public rights-of-way? (Please provide an address or coordinates, if possible, or describe the location)

Railroad avenue, TIOLI Shed, Katonah Avenue, Katonah Station. The town has a relaxed mowing policy and where-ever possible common milkweed is left standing.

How many milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants were planted? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

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0.25

What is the total acreage of median and public right-of-way that has been planted with milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants? Note: 1 acre = roughly the size of a football field.

Impossible to say. Our roadside are mostly wooded and shaded- More milkweeds can be found in open park areas

Please describe the maintenance schedule for these planted areas.

Once a year mowing for road safety.

Initiate or support community science (or citizen science) efforts that help monitor monarch migration and health.

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

iN.jpg

How many estimated individuals participated in your community science effort? Please limit your answer to only the number of individuals reached in the answer field (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only, e.g. 150).

1

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

The Biodiversity of Bedford Project has more than 1000 observers and butterfly observations are also monitored by the Pollinator Pathways

Please describe the community science program that you supported or initiated. Provide a link to any relevant programs, if possible.

https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/biodiversity-of-bedford-project

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

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

VineCutting-Recovered.jpg

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

Several acres over the last two years

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.

The crew cuts mostly vines to save trees. When needed an herbicide is applied to the Stumps. New native trees are planted

Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

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

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

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

8.jpg

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

Untitled-7.jpg

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

9x12 lawnsignBedford.pdf

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

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

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

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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).

These signs are made by different local environmental organizations and are handed out at town events. They have different texts.

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.

Untitled.jpeg

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

The town has met with code enforcers to ensure that 'Overgrown and unsightly conditions resulting from overgrown grass or vegetation on established lawns." is allowing for intentionally high grown grasses, and that when vegetation is purposely grown among the turf grass, this is no longer considered as lawn.

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

Bedford has no history of enforcing property maintenance laws on the basis of “unsightliness,” and the Town agreed that the benefits of reinterpreting the existing code outweighed the need for a new amendment.

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.

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-

Launch, expand, or continue one or more ordinances to reduce light pollution to benefit urban wildlife.

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

In the 2025 Comprehensive Plant For Bedford the town requires further exploring and strengthening its Dark Sky Ordinance

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.

The town, zoning board and planning board are adhering to the ordinance, but measures to reduce (increasing) residential light pollution need to be developed

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.

KATONAH-VILLAGE-STATION-GARDEN8.jpg

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

Conservation Board, Tree Advisory Council, Recreation and Parks

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.

Good native plant material, especially shrubs and trees, are hard to come by and not always suitable for our town (deer browsing, challenging requirements)

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Reduce or eliminate the use of herbicides, pesticides, or other chemicals that are harmful to monarchs and pollinators and urban wildlife.

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

Untitled.jpg

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

Westchester County has a

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

The town of Bedford Follows the measurements in the County Pesticide Reduction Law

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.

Since 2000 our Recreation and Parks department and The Department of highways are not applying pesticides in any form

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

For specific tree issues the town hires an arborist. The town is considering a more holistic approach to pest and rodent problems for the future

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