



GARDEN CLUB
O F V I R G I N I A

**GARDEN CLUB OF VIRGINIA
RESOLUTION TO LAUNCH A
POLLINATOR PROTECTION INITIATIVE
IN THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
JULY 2019**

WHEREAS, the mission of the Garden Club of Virginia is to celebrate the beauty of the land, to conserve the gifts of nature, and to challenge future generations to build on this heritage; and

WHEREAS, the Garden Club of Virginia is made up of over 3,500 individual members of 47 clubs in the Commonwealth of Virginia; and

WHEREAS, the Garden Club of Virginia hereby mobilizes these members and clubs across the Commonwealth to protect and assist pollinators, responsible for the reproduction of nearly 90% of the world's flowering plant species, by providing them with a healthy habitat, rich in a variety of native plants and free to nearly free of pesticides; and

WHEREAS, increasing the amount of native vegetation in Virginia can protect water quality and quantity, increase carbon dioxide absorption, enhance wildlife habitat, and improve aesthetics and quality of life; and,

WHEREAS, thanks to European honey bees and the many species of native and introduced pollinators in the Commonwealth of Virginia and around the world, we have diverse dietary choices rich in fruits, nuts, and vegetables; and

WHEREAS, local native plants support more wildlife species than non-native plants, and native plants host specific insects and are essential for pollinators and the local and migratory birds, mammals, and invertebrates that rely on these insects to survive; and

WHEREAS, our native pollinators are in a population decline because of habitat loss, poor nutrition, pesticides, insecticides, fungicides, herbicides, parasites, diseases, and climate change; and

WHEREAS, an ideal pollinator-friendly habitat provides diverse and abundant nectar and pollen from native plants blooming in succession throughout the growing season; provides undisturbed spaces such as leaf and brush piles, unmown fields or field margins, fallen trees and other dead wood for nesting and overwintering; provides water for drinking, nest-building, and butterfly puddling; is free to nearly free of pesticides, as many pesticides can harm pollinators and/or their habitat; and is comprised of mostly native wildflowers, grasses, vines, shrubs, and trees, since many wild pollinators prefer or depend on the native plants with which they co-adapted; and provides connectivity between habitat areas to support pollinator movement and resilience; and

WHEREAS, pollinator-friendly communities can benefit local and regional economies through healthier ecosystems, increased vegetable and fruit crop yields, and increased demand for pollinator-friendly plant materials from local growers; and

WHEREAS, supporting pollinators across the entire Commonwealth of Virginia fosters an understanding of environmental awareness and sustainability; and

WHEREAS, the Garden Club of Virginia hereby supports the ideals of protecting and assisting pollinators in the Commonwealth of Virginia by improving the landscape and environment through, but not limited to, the following efforts, which collectively seek to protect our natural resources for the benefit of our Commonwealth:

- Encourages member clubs to initiate pollinator protection programs in their communities by planting pollinator-friendly gardens, trees, shrubs, and other native species in concert with their local city governments or through their own programs;
- Encourages member clubs to work with their local government to become a Bee City USA, an initiative of the Xerces Society;
- Encourages our members to plant their own pollinator-friendly gardens and consider joining the Million Pollinator Garden Challenge, part of the National Pollinator Garden Network;
- Encourages our members to utilize their local native plant list, which can be found on the Virginia Native Plant Society and the Plant Virginia Natives websites;
- Encourages our members to use pesticides, herbicides and fungicides only when no other method is feasible or effective and to encourage others in their communities to do the same;
- Encourages our members to purchase the VDOT *Protect Pollinators* license plate to fund VDOT's efforts to plant pollinator beds along Virginia highways;
- Encourages our members and member clubs to engage in any other efforts they can think of to support pollinators; and

WHEREAS, by mobilizing our over 3,500 members in 47 clubs across the state, thus providing connectivity between habitat areas to support pollinator movement and resilience, we will be creating a statewide pollinator network;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Garden Club of Virginia will launch a Pollinator Protection Initiative to improve the outlook for our local pollinators.

ADOPTED by the Garden Club of Virginia Board of Directors on this twentieth day of July, 2019.

Note: The Garden Club of Virginia wishes to acknowledge Bee City USA, the Xerces Society, the National Pollinator Garden Network, the Virginia Native Plants Society, Plant Virginia Natives and VDOT in the creation of this document.