CHECKLIST OF ACTIONS
To Promote Pollinators In Yards, Gardens & Parks

XERCES SOCIETY for Invertebrate Conservation

KEY:

- Promotes foraging resources
- Helps protect pollinators from pesticide exposure
- Promotes nesting and overwintering habitat
- Contributes to pollinator conservation in your community

LANDSCAPING

- ☐ Plant a **native** wildflower garden that includes species that bloom in succession all season long and are high-value to pollinators (species with ★ on **Table 1**, page 12).
- ☐ Plant **native** bunchgrasses; these plants are food for rare butterflies and also help provide nesting sites for bees.
- ☐ Reduce lawn footprint by converting as much as possible to *flowering* habitat.
- ☐ Plant ***spring***-blooming **native** wildflowers, such as woodland ephemerals in shady areas.
- ☐ Plant ***spring***-blooming **native** shrubs and trees, such as willows (*Salix*), maples (*Acer*), and native fruit trees and shrubs.
- ☐ Plant ***summer***-blooming **native** wildflowers, such as blazing star (*Liatris*), bee balm (*Monarda*), and numerous others.
- ☐ Plant ***summer***- *or* ***fall***-blooming **native** shrubs, such as wild roses (*Rosa*) or meadowsweet (*Spirea*).
- ☐ Plant ***fall***-blooming **native** wildflowers, such as asters (*Symphyotrichum*), native sunflowers (*Helianthus*), and goldenrods (*Solidago*).
- ☐ Plant **native** trees that serve as important host plants for a wide variety of butterflies and moths (species with 🐛 on **Table 1**, page 12).
- ☐ Plant **native** milkweed (*Asclepias*), violets (*Viola*), pawpaws (*Asimina*), or other regionally appropriate plants that provide critical food for specialist butterflies and moths.
- ☐ Plant species known to provide food for specialist bees in your region (species with on **Table 1**, page 12).
- ☐ Gradually replace perennial and annual landscaping that provides little value to wildlife (e.g., daylilies, hostas, pansies) with more diverse **native** wildflower plantings.
- ☐ If non-native plants are included in landscaping, choose varieties that are known to have value to pollinators (e.g., flowers with ample pollen or nectar) **AND** that are not invasive or aggressive.
- ☐ Remove invasive species from your landscape, as well as any non-native species that appear to be spreading into wild areas (e.g., butterfly-bush).
- ☐ Ensure that new landscaping plants were not treated with neonicotinoids or other related insecticides.

LAWN & YARD CARE

- ☐ Avoid pesticides (including herbicides, insecticides, and fungicides) on lawns and other landscaping; choose less harmful alternatives such as non-chemical controls.
- ☐ For mowed areas, reduce mowing frequency and increase mowing height, allowing flowering weeds to flourish.
- ☐ Leave dead wood on site, including dead logs, snags, and brush; consider planting flowers around these features, to add intention and aesthetic value.
- ☐ Leave leaf litter on-site—keep a thin layer of leaves on lawn; use the rest to mulch trees/ shrubs/ garden and/or rake to woodland edges if available.
- ☐ Leave bare spots or areas with patchy vegetation in lawn; avoid thick turf and sod.
- ☐ Avoid plastic mulch/ weed barrier, heavy wood chips, and treated wood chips.
- ☐ Leave dead wildflower stems standing over the ***winter***; prune them back in ***early spring*** to 8–12" to create nesting sites for stem-nesting bees.
- ☐ Prune shrubs with pithy stems, to create nesting sites for stem-nesting bees.
- ☐ Leave some areas of lawn unmown to create tall grass habitat.
- ☐ Install a water feature (e.g., bird bath with stones to prevent insects from drowning) for pollinators that need water for nest building or other uses.
- ☐ Seed a "bee lawn" (incorporate clovers & other flowers into new or existing lawn).

FRUIT & VEGETABLE GARDENS

- ☐ Plant fruit trees and fruit-bearing shrubs, including **native** species when possible (e.g., blueberries [*Vaccinium*], currants and gooseberries [*Ribes*], elderberries [*Sambucus*], chokeberries [*Aronia*]—species with on **Table 2**, page 12).
- ☐ Plant **native** raspberries/ blackberries (*Rubus*); prune in ***early spring*** to create nest sites for stem-nesting bees.
- ☐ For more continuous fruit and flowers, plant ever-bearing varieties of strawberries (*Fragaria*), raspberries, and other fruits.
- ☐ Plant a tea or herb garden and allow plants like basil (*Ocimum*), mint (*Mentha*), and lavender (*Lavendula*) to flower; most herbs do very well in containers if space is limited (see **Table 2**, page 12).
- ☐ Plant bee-pollinated vegetables like squash (*Cucurbita*) and tomatoes (*Solanum*) **and** allow pollinator-attractive culinary garden plants—such as lettuce (*Lactuca*) and mustard (*Brassica*)—to bolt in order to provide additional floral resources (see **Table 2**, page 12).
- ☐ Avoid pesticide use on fruit and vegetable crops; manage pests by using prevention strategies (e.g., crop rotation or selection of resistant varieties) and non-chemical pest control methods (e.g., hand-picking or insectary plantings to promote beneficial insects for natural pest control).

COMMUNITY ACTION

- ☐ Organize a neighborhood **native** plant or seed exchange (**never** share non-native plants that are aggressive / potentially invasive).
- ☐ Create habitat in community hubs (e.g., libraries, post-offices, schools, or senior centers) or in unused spaces like sidewalk medians.
- ☐ Volunteer with a local park to improve habitat (e.g., removing invasive species or collecting wildflower seeds).
- ☐ Provide signage to explain your pollinator conservation actions to your neighbors.
- ☐ Host a tour of your pollinator friendly yard or garden.
- ☐ Talk about pollinators and their habitat needs to your neighbors, friends, family, local businesses, schools, library, church, etc.
- ☐ Talk to your city officials or local colleges about signing a bee friendly resolution and/or getting certified as a Bee City USA or Bee Campus USA.
- ☐ Participate in a community science project, such as bumble bee or monarch monitoring (see *Resources*, page 11).

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