

Town of Amherst Pollinator Protection Resolution

A non-binding resolution endorsing the protection of pollinators and enhancement of pollinator habitat (unanimously endorsed by Amherst Town Council on June 15, 2020)

WHEREAS, bees and other pollinators are a crucial component of a healthy ecosystem and a vital link in our food system, providing the pollination responsible for over three quarters of the world's plant species, and for one out of every three bites of food that we eat¹; and

WHEREAS, pollinator populations are in sharp decline due to human land use practices that are causing ongoing habitat loss and fragmentation, the expansion of pesticide use by consumers and professionals,^{2,3,4} the spread of pathogens and parasites, and global climate change; and

WHEREAS, extensive research has documented that neonicotinoids⁵ and other systemic pesticides have been shown to cause illness and death to honey bees, native bees, butterflies, moths, other insect pollinators, and beneficial insects; and

WHEREAS, guidelines for land management best practices are available that allow residents, businesses, farms, towns, and land trusts to manage their land in ways that increase pollinator forage and nest sites while decreasing maintenance costs;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by this Town Council that the Town of Amherst is hereby declared a Pollinator-Friendly Community and that the town encourages the adoption of policies and practices that support pollinator health by minimizing the use of insecticides;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Town of Amherst will set an example by adopting the pollinator friendly practices below and encourage property owners, residents, town departments, business owners, and land trusts to adopt pollinator-friendly practices including:

- * Avoiding the planting of flowering plants that are treated with systemic insecticides and avoiding the use of seeds coated with systemic neonicotinoids;
- * Avoiding the use of insecticides, including systemic insecticides, on their property.
- * Adopting organic or chemical-free lawn and landscaping practices.

The Town Clerk is requested to send copies of this resolution to Governor Charlie Baker, Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources Commissioner John Lebeaux, State Senator Josephine Comerford, and State Representative Mindy Domb, or to take any other action relative thereto.

1. <https://www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/pollinators/importance.shtml>

2. <https://www.commondreams.org/news/2020/02/07/consistent-mass-extinction-new-study-warns-climate-chaos-driving-rapid-decline>
3. https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/campaigns/native_pollinators/pdfs/Pollinators_in_Peril.pdf
4. <https://www.commondreams.org/news/2020/04/24/silent-spring-already-here-global-study-shows-nearly-25-drop-insect-population-over>
5. <https://www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2019/08/06/747646197/new-evidence-shows-popular-pesticides-could-cause-unintended-harm-to-insects>
6. <https://xerces.org/pollinator-conservation>
7. https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/PA_NRCSCconsumption/download/?cid=nrcseprd1431219&ext=pdf
8. <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/CAES/DOCUMENTS/Publications/pollinators/ACitizensGuidetoCreatingPollinatorHabitatinConnecticutpdf.pdf?la=en>