

Walkkill Valley Pollinator Pathway

Restoring habitats for pollinators -- one backyard at a time

The Walkkill Valley Land Trust has joined a national movement of pollinator pathways in 2020 by forming the Walkkill Valley Pollinator Pathway in southern Ulster County to raise awareness of the severe threats facing native pollinators.

Pollinator Decline: Bees, butterflies, and other insects, are in sharp decline due to habitat loss, pesticide use, and climate change. We rely on insects to pollinate 30% of all our food crops, but even more important, 90% of all plants rely upon pollinating insects to reproduce. Songbirds, also in sharp decline, are dependent upon pollinating insect larvae (caterpillars and grubs) to feed their young. As the pollinator populations decline, the web of life has become dangerously frayed.

The Walkkill Valley Pollinator Pathway seeks to mitigate this decline and encourage pollinator awareness in southern Ulster County by:

- Forming a network of local home gardens and meadows planted for pollinators;
- Promoting other pollinator projects underway in the region;
- Partnering with organizations and municipalities to support pollinators; and
- Providing education, resources, projects and outreach in support of pollinators.

Homeowners with even the tiniest plot are encouraged to join this important movement to create a more positive environment for the survival of pollinators by planting natives, managing invasive species, avoiding the use of pesticides, especially insecticides, and creating a network with their neighbors of pollinator-friendly pathways.

Plant Native: Pollinators depend on nectar plants for food and “host” plants for their larvae or caterpillars to survive. Many of our native pollinators are “host-specific”, meaning they have evolved to depend on only “specific” native plants to “host” their larvae. These native plants are frequently unavailable in conventional landscapes where exotic plant species have become the norm. To save our pollinators, we need to start shifting from traditional exotic landscape plantings to mostly native species for our gardens and landscapes.

Pathway: Pollinating insects need to travel. Most of our native bees have a travel range of about 750 meters (or about ½ mile) before they need to refuel. Nature preserves, parklands and other wild spaces exist today in a fragmented world. By connecting our private gardens and meadows with each other and larger public spaces into a continuous patchwork of pollinator landscapes, we can provide a pathway for pollinators to successfully forage and migrate.

Please see the [Join Page](#) on our website for information on registering your property, no matter how large or small, and become part of the Pollinator Pathway.