



## NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

Town Hall, 525 Washington Street, Wellesley, Massachusetts 02482-5918

Raina McManus, Chair  
Laura Robert, Vice Chair  
Allison Burson  
Jay McHale  
Bea Bezlaminovic

Brandon Schmitt, Director  
Telephone: 781.431.1019, Ext. 2298  
Website: [www.wellesleyma.gov/NRC](http://www.wellesleyma.gov/NRC)

### ***Pollinate Wellesley Initiative Aims to Improve Our Ecosystem***

*Town preps for National Pollinator Week in June with a native plant sale, webinars, Pedals to Petals bike tour*

**March 24, 2021 (Wellesley, MA)** - After a winter of hibernation, as residents plan gardens and turn sights to warmer days, the Natural Resources Commission, Wellesley Conservation Land Trust, and Sustainable Wellesley are teaming up for *Pollinate Wellesley*, a series of programs and activities aimed at making the town more hospitable to pollinators, birds and other wildlife essential to a healthy ecosystem. Native insects rely on native plant species, and “pollinator corridors” help butterflies, hummingbirds and other beneficial insects travel through the landscape by providing them with food and shelter along their way. The goal of the *Pollinate Wellesley* initiative is to make it easy for residents to create this healthy habitat in their own yards and expand these pollinator corridors.

“Conservation starts in our yards,” according to renowned entomologist Doug Tallamy, and “we are nature’s best hope,” in building food corridors to sustain our important pollinators, which in turn sustain us.

#### **Upcoming Activities**

*Pollinate Wellesley* activities will kick off with a plant sale hosted by Sustainable Wellesley in conjunction with the Native Plant Trust, the country’s first plant conservation organization. Beginning now through April 9, residents can pre-order carefully chosen plant collections at a 15% discount, and conveniently pick the plants up in Wellesley on June 19. Visit [SustainableWellesley.com](http://SustainableWellesley.com) for more information.

A three-part educational speaker series on native gardening featuring topics on the unique ecological relationships between species, creating a native garden, and healthy yard care practices will take place via Zoom at 7PM on April 29, May 6 and May 13, respectively, and are available for registration at [Wellesley Conservation Land Trust](http://Wellesley Conservation Land Trust).

Downloadable maps will lead the way for a *Pedals to Petals* self-guided biking and walking tour of residents’ native gardens throughout Wellesley, which will also include stops at the Town’s Church Park and Wellesley Police Department pollinator garden when flowers are in full bloom later this summer.

No room or time for a garden but still want to help our pollinators? The NRC will be offering planters in exchange for participation in a fun citizen-science documentation project suitable for all ages. Contact [NRC@wellesleyma.gov](mailto:NRC@wellesleyma.gov) for more information.

### **Green Zones**

The Department of Public Works has designated several open spaces in town as Green Zones, which will be cared for with electric landscaping equipment to eliminate the harmful carbon emissions associated with gas-powered mowers and leaf blowers. The transition to Green Zone maintenance practices will start this spring and summer with the purchase of additional battery powered equipment. These Green Zones, along with all other Town-owned properties, will include a preference for native plantings and will be maintained with a lighter hand whenever possible and practical. Leaving some leaves in garden beds, as well as leaving plant stems and seed heads intact over the winter, provides valuable food and habitat - especially for soft, protein-rich caterpillars - which birds rely on to feed their young in the spring. Years ago the Town also eliminated the use of pesticides on town-owned land without a waiver, which are extremely harmful to delicate pollinators as well as children and pets. Now the hope is that more households will follow these earth-friendly practices, as well.

*Pollinate Wellesley and be part of Wellesley's Pollinator Corridor!* To learn more about events, email [NRC@WellesleyMA.gov](mailto:NRC@WellesleyMA.gov) or visit [WellesleyMA.gov/NRC](http://WellesleyMA.gov/NRC)

