

POLLINATOR SAFE COMMUNITIES GUIDE



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PPAN STAFF & CONTACT INFO



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Joyce is the chief coordinator of PPAN. In this multi-faceted role, she directs organizational development and project implementation. She leads the organization's advocacy work, builds constituency and develops community outreach programs.



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Emily is a Pollinator Advocate and is completing her Colorado Native Plant Master certification this year. Emily has worked in both the nonprofit and for-profit sectors for 25 years focused on fundraising, grantmaking, and movement-building. She is devoted to cultivating biodiversity as a critical component of successful nature-based climate solutions and brings her passion as an artist, writer, and mother to realizing PPAN's vision of a world where both humans and our more-than-human kin thrive in perpetuity.



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Anna-Gray is passionate about environmental justice, community resilience, and finding the power and joy in food. Her work with PPAN is focused around engaging with community members, collaborating with PPAN's organizational partners, spearheading events, and supporting PPAN's outreach and education program.

For general inquires please email info@peopleandpollinators.org. Check out our wonderful board members on our [website](#). They play a crucial role in guiding our organization's mission and activities.

PEOPLE & POLLINATORS ACTION NETWORK

People & Pollinators Action Network's Mission

The **People and Pollinators Action Network (PPAN)** promotes pollinator-friendly land management and landscaping practices through **education, engagement, and advocacy** to preserve biodiversity and safeguard public health.

How do we create change?

- 1** **Work with government officials and state agencies** to adopt pollinator friendly policies and practices at the local and state level.
- 2** **Promote and connect widespread pollinator safe habitats** by creating Pollinator Safe Communities.
- 3** **Work with businesses, farmers, and beekeepers** to encourage pollinator safe product sales and practices.
- 4** **Educate and train residential, commercial, agricultural, and public land managers** on ways to protect pollinators and promote healthy habitat.
- 5** **Serve as a resource** for anyone interested in creating pollinator safe habitat.

What's at stake?

Pollinators, both native and introduced species, **are essential to overall ecosystem health and to agricultural productivity**. Protecting pollinators can be challenging in the face of habitat loss, along with climate change and pesticide misapplication and overuse. All of these issues contribute to lowered immune systems making pollinators more susceptible to pests and pathogens. **Loss of these essential creatures threatens ecological stability around the world.**

Creating Pollinator Safe Communities

People and Pollinators Action Network is encouraging land owners and managers to create pollinator refuges by converting backyards and other properties to pollinator safe habitats. The message is straightforward – **plant organic plants/seeds, use native plants wherever possible, eliminate the use of pesticides on the landscape, and speak to others about doing the same**. Where possible, it is also good to provide sites for nesting and overwintering. Safe havens for pollinators mean that there is healthy food and shelter for our pollinating wildlife. Through education we can encourage people to change their land management practices and become more active on this issue. By joining others that are doing the same we can change Colorado one garden or property at a time.

PPAN's Commitment to Pollinator Safe Community Leaders

Below is a list of PPAN's commitments to Pollinator Safe Community leaders:

- **Annual Packet Update:** We commit to sending leaders an annual packet containing updated suggested activities and resources.
- **Opportunities for Volunteering & Support:** We will consistently offer opportunities for leaders to volunteer with and support PPAN.
- **Open Communication Channels:** We prioritize open communication lines with leaders to ensure they have the support they need by promptly addressing any concerns or queries they may have.
- **Recognition & Appreciation:** We will recognize and appreciate any efforts and contributions of leaders, fostering a culture of acknowledgement and gratitude.
- **Feedback Mechanism:** We will establish a feedback mechanism to solicit input from leaders regarding their experiences, challenges, and suggestions for improvement.

POLLINATOR SAFE COMMUNITY LEADERS

Dear Pollinator Safe Community Leader,

Thank you for making a commitment to support pollinators! It is because of people like you that we are able to create habitat and change the way people think about and interact with pesticides. Neighbor to neighbor education and outreach is an effective tool in a time when residents feel powerless in the face of large-scale environmental threats. ***Pollinator Safe Leaders* are our strength around Colorado: you reach out to neighbors, community members, business owners and leaders, collect pollinator safe pledges, and employ outreach strategies that work best for you.** You don't have to know all the answers or know every person who lives in your neighborhood or community. You don't have to do all the work yourself. Being a *Pollinator Safe Leader* requires little more than dedication, drive, and a passion to grow the pollinator safe movement in Colorado.

This Guide includes a copy of the Pollinator Safe Pledge and ideas for conducting outreach and education in your community. Sign up to be a *Pollinator Safe Leader* and to receive resources and tips for creating a pollinator haven here:

[http://peopleandpollinators.org/pollinator safe/](http://peopleandpollinators.org/pollinator-safe/).

Contact info@peopleandpollinators.org with questions.

Overview: Steps to Creating a Pollinator Safe Community

- **Designate a *Pollinator Safe Leader*** and gather a team that would like to build pollinator safe habitat in their communities.
- **Set short- and long-term goals to measure success.** A short-range goal could be holding an educational meeting/gathering on your block to explain the importance of pollinators. A long-term goal could be establishing a block of pollinator safe properties.
- **Provide resources to the community** regarding pollinator safe, region appropriate plantings and natural management strategies.
- **Ask neighbors or other property managers to sign PPAN's Pollinator Safe Pledge** (<http://peopleandpollinators.org/our-solution/psn-pledge/>). Pledgers can choose to have their property displayed on a public map (the address will not be displayed) on the PPAN website (<http://peopleandpollinators.org/map/>). Watching habitat expand is inspiring!
- **Display a pollinator habitat yard sign** to indicate that a pledge has been signed and to spark conversations with neighbors.
- **Determine what educational strategies work best in your community** (neighborhood presentations/tips, plant exchanges, kid-related activities, community plantings, partnering with businesses, etc.).
- **Continue to spread the message *by choosing at least three activities per year from suggested activities included in this Guide (found on page 9)*.**
- **Track the activities you complete each year** with a system that feels comfortable for you. It can be helpful to include the details of the activity's name/date/location, how many people you engaged, and who volunteered. You can make a copy of a sample tracking system [here](#). PPAN will request this information 1x/year in December.
- **Speak with neighborhood organizations** about creating pollinator habitat, nurseries about providing organic and native plants, and local leaders about what can be accomplished city-wide by using pollinator safe land management practices.
- **Let us know about your successes and challenges.** Send stories, photos, or videos to be shared in the PPAN E-News or on social media.

Getting Started

As a *Pollinator Safe Leader*, you are the point of contact for PPAN and for others in your community. There are many ways to have an impact locally. With experimentation and experience in the field, you will decide which strategies are most effective.

Below are suggested activities for engagement. We encourage you to select at least ***three activities to complete each year***. It can be helpful to create a team and seek out local partners to work together on these issues. Your team can meet regularly to set an action plan for completing the three activities you choose. Partners can support events and offer space for presentations.

Get started by selecting several activities from the list below and maintain momentum by coming up with ideas of your own! Be sure to track the activities you complete each year with a system that feels comfortable for you. You can make a copy of a sample tracking system [here](#).

A Pollinator Safe Community can include homes, businesses, schools, places of worship, parks, and any green spaces where there is potential for creating habitat.

Speak to PPAN staff about supporting your community outreach. We can send resources and tips. Let us know about your successes and challenges! Your experiences will help to guide others embarking on this project.



SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

Create a group chat for your community members. If you are a *Pollinator Safe Leader*, it is important to *stay in regular contact* with your community members. You could even meet about which three activities you want to do each year, or have a brainstorming session for activities not on this list. **Please use PPAN's Root Solutions Network to keep in touch.**

Ask community members to sign PPAN's Pollinator Safe Pledge (print out copies of the Pledge at the end of this guide or direct people to sign the Pledge on the PPAN website.) *Aim to collect ten new pledges each year.* Take photos or pass paper photos of the pledges to PPAN. Pollinator safe properties will be added to the website map. Watch the habitat areas grow!

Sign up new Pollinator Safe Leaders on our website at <https://www.peopleandpollinators.org/be-a-pollinator-safe-leader>.

Join a local PPAN chapter.

Host an informational gathering or potluck for community members to learn more about the issue.

Provide resources to your community such as plant lists and sources of safe plants and seeds.

Ask people to display the PPAN Pollinator Habitat sign. It's a good conversation starter! Contact PPAN to receive habitat signs for a suggested donation of ten dollars.

Speak with local and state leaders about the issue.

Encourage property owners/managers to transition from turf to pollinator habitat.

Track the amount of turf removed in your community and number of pollinator safe plants added.

Host a pollinator safe plant and/or seed exchange in the spring or fall.

Host a pollinator themed event.

Show a film about the importance of pollinators.

Host a PPAN educational table at a local event.

Host a native bee house-building workshop.

Be a community scientist! Organize a neighborhood pollinator bio blitz and/or use the iNaturalist app to identify and track pollinator species found in yards and communities. This is a fun, educational way to learn more about the diversity of pollinator species and encourage some friendly competition amongst neighbors. Track increased diversity of pollinating wildlife as pollinator habitat grows!

Speak to local nurseries about supplying organic plants/seeds and alternatives to pesticides.

Let PPAN know if you are aware of a local business that has a pollinator safe philosophy and we'll add them to our list of pollinator safe businesses.

If you are a resident of a Homeowner's Association **speak with the board and/or land managers about their current landscaping practices** and your concern for human and pollinator health.

Host a natural lawn care management workshop. It can be challenging to convince homeowners and other property managers that the landscape can be managed without the use of harmful pesticides. *Providing simple steps for success can support the transition away from synthetic pesticide and fertilizer use.*

Schedule a field trip for your community. Tour a regenerative farm, apiary, pollinator garden, Denver Botanical Gardens, etc. PPAN staff is happy to suggest places to visit.

Encourage people in your community to sign up to volunteer with PPAN.

Host a pollinator arts and crafts day. Be sure in any activity you do, there is a space for *youth involvement*.

Create competitions for your community members based on some of the suggested activities. For example, whoever can get the most PPAN Pollinator Safe Pledges signed or talk to the most nurseries about pesticide use in a month wins a prize! Coordinate with PPAN for prize options.

Help PPAN fundraising efforts. We always need help raising money for our Bumble Bee Bash, general funding, CO Gives Day, etc.

Wherever possible, **plant native plants that provide food** for Colorado pollinators.

Attend PPAN events. We would love to see you and your community members at our seed swaps, fundraising events, and more.

No matter which activities you decide to do each year (*minimum of 3*), PPAN is here to help! Please never hesitate to reach out to a PPAN staff or board member. We would love to assist you in any needs you have with building your *Pollinator Safe Community*.



HOW TO TALK TO YOUR NEIGHBORS

Creating a pollinator safe community is a collective effort that starts with a single conversation. By engaging your neighbors in discussions about the importance of pollinators, we can foster a safer and healthier environment. Approaching this topic with enthusiasm and in a spirit of collaboration can make all the difference. Below are some practical tips and conversation starters to help you share information about the benefits of pollinator-friendly practices, and to inspire your neighborhood to take collective action for the good of our communities.

Who To Talk To

1

Engage with your community and neighborhood leaders.

- If you live in an HOA, start by meeting with HOA board members. **Engaging with neighborhood leadership will be important**, as they have the influence to transform landscapes and management practices.
- **Seek community members actively involved with pollinator, sustainability, and gardening initiatives.** These individuals can play a key role in building a community of pollinator advocates and can help support your pollinator safe landscaping practices.
- Forming a core group of advocates can help you gain traction more quickly.
- **Remember to use *PPAN's Root Solutions Network* to connect.**

2

Leverage neighborhood platforms.

- Reach out to neighbors using sites like Nextdoor and other social networking platforms made for neighborhoods. **PPAN can also help connect you with other advocates in our network.**

What To Talk About

1

Education is a great starting place.

- Talk about why pollinators are important, the benefits of native plants, why turf is a desert for pollinators, and why pesticide applications are harmful to families and pets. See where the conversation takes you and keep it positive!
- **Display a PPAN Pollinator Habitat Sign** in your front yard to spark conversations around pollinator habitat.

2

What's in it for them?

- Be sure to explain "what's in it for them." For example, avoiding pesticides will benefit you and your neighbors/pets/kids' health while attracting native pollinators to help your yard bloom beautifully. **People are more likely to take action if it directly benefits them.**

3

Start small

- It is best to start small. **Encouraging neighbors to convert a small portion of their yards to a pollinator safe area is easier to manage and allows for a gradual transition.**

4

Keep it positive

- While it is important to discuss the harmful effects of pesticides on our health, pollinators, and planet— **keeping it positive is usually the best route.** For example, emphasize the alternatives to pesticide use and the benefits of boosting neighborhood biodiversity, climate resilience, and pollinator habitat.

5

Bring everyone to the table

- **Do your best to lean on the people in your neighborhood.** What are they most interested in? What is the best approach to get neighbors on board? Are there any specific action items in this guide people are excited about?

6

Be a resource (with PPAN's support)

- Let your neighbors know that you are available as a resource if needed. Grow your core team of resource experts!
- Your neighbors are also welcome to reach out to PPAN if they have any questions or need any additional resources.

Scripts (if you need them)

Some *Pollinator Safe Leaders* go door to door to talk to neighbors about what is involved with signing a Pollinator Pledge. If you intend to use this method of education or if you would like some ideas for conversation starters, please read through this section.

Introduce Yourself

Hi [Neighbor's Name]!

How are you? I'm [Your Name] from [Your Address/Street]. Do you have a few moments to chat about how we can work together to create pollinator habitat in our neighborhood? [Add in your own conversation starters. It is helpful to establish a baseline of understanding about their interests before diving into your pollinator discussion.]

The Importance of Pollinators

Did you know that pollinators like bees, butterflies, and other insects play a crucial role in our ecosystem? They help pollinate many of the plants we rely on for food, including fruits, vegetables, and nuts. Unfortunately, pollinator populations are declining due to habitat loss, pesticides, and other environmental stresses.

The Benefits of a Pollinator-Friendly Yard

I am passionate about creating a pollinator safe habitat in our own neighborhood. What we do in our yards can have a big impact. Here are a few reasons why pollinator safe habitat is beneficial:

- *Environmental Impact:* By planting native flowers and plants, we can provide essential food and habitat for pollinators, helping to support their populations. Supporting pollinator populations will support our families through the availability of healthy food and a healthy planet.
- *Biodiversity:* Pollinator gardens contribute to greater biodiversity, making our local environment more resilient. Greater biodiversity would even benefit our own yards by making our plants more successful, and by giving them a greater chance of staying cool during our hot, Colorado summers.

- *Beauty and Enjoyment*: Pollinator gardens are not only beneficial for the environment, but they are also beautiful. They attract a variety of colorful butterflies and hummingbirds, making our yards more enjoyable.
- *Community Health*: By reducing pesticide use and fostering natural habitats, we create a healthier environment for ourselves and our families.

Simple Steps to Create a Pollinator Habitat

Getting started is easier than you might think! Here are a few simple steps:

1. **Plant Native Species**: Choose flowers and shrubs that are native to our region. They are more beneficial to local pollinators. I can send you a [guide](#) that has some great recommendations for Colorado native plant species.
2. **Avoid Pesticides**: Reduce or eliminate the use of chemical pesticides, which can harm pollinators and humans.
 - a. Once this transition is complete, sign [PPAN's Pollinator Safe Property Pledge](#). It is a good way to hold yourself and others accountable.
3. **Provide Water**: A shallow water source, like a birdbath with stones for landing, can help keep pollinators hydrated. Remember to replace the water regularly in order to eliminate a potential mosquito breeding area.
4. **Create Shelter**: Leave areas of your yard a bit wild to provide nesting and shelter for pollinators and other beneficial insects. Leave areas of bare ground for ground nesting bees.

Community Impact

If a few of us start making these changes, we can create a network of pollinator-friendly habitats right here in our neighborhood. This could significantly help local pollinator populations and set an example for others.

Getting Involved

I plan to convert part of my yard into a pollinator garden, and I'd love to have you join me! We can share tips, plants, and even have a little planting party [here you can add the activities you have selected from the guide]. If you are interested, I can provide more information and resources to help you get started. Thank you so much for considering this. Together, we can make a positive impact on our environment, right here at home. Feel free to reach out if you have any questions or want to chat more about this idea. My email address/cell phone number is [your email address/cell phone number].

PPAN POLLINATOR SAFE PLEDGE

PPAN Pollinator Safe Pledge

The goal of *People and Pollinators Action Network (PPAN)* is to create safe zones for bees, pollinators, pets, and people one garden or landscape at a time. Please go to www.peopleandpollinators.org for more information.

How you can help

- Eliminate and reduce the use of synthetic pesticides and fertilizers on your property.
- When purchasing plants or seeds, ask nursery or garden center staff if the plants or seeds were treated with pesticides.
- Encourage your city or park district to use alternatives to pesticides whenever possible.
- Create patches of pesticide-free, pollinator-friendly flowers in your garden or neighborhood.
- Share this information with your neighbors, businesses, and community!
- Show your commitment to providing safe pollinator habitat by signing the Pollinator Safe Property Pledge and displaying a habitat sign!

As a *Pollinator Safe Leader*, you can print out copies of the pledge below to give to your community members. Make sure to collect the pledges once they have been signed. You can also encourage your community members to sign the pledge online at <https://www.peopleandpollinators.org/pollinator-pledge>.



Pollinator Safe Property Pledge

As pollinators and people are endangered by the use of pesticides and other harmful chemicals in the environment, and there is a critical lack of safe healthy food for pollinators to eat, I pledge to help reduce the amount of pesticides in the environment and to increase the amount of pollinator safe habitat.

I am committed to maintaining a pollinator friendly property. I do not use pesticides and I do my best to plant pollinator safe plants.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Can we show your pledge on a public map?	Yes	No
Would you like to receive action alerts?	Yes	No
Would you like to volunteer with PPAN?	Yes	No



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Want to Learn More? We've Got You Covered!

Check out the links below for more information around pollinator safe gardening, pesticide use, lawn care, and more.

[City of Boulder Organic Lawn Care Guide](#)

[Landscaping with Native Plants](#)

[More Play, Less Spray](#)

[Native Plant Recommendations](#)

[NOFA Standards for Organic Lawn Care](#)

[Plant Guide](#)

[Resources for a Pesticide-Free Community](#)

[Rethinking Weed Management at Home](#)

