

Pollinator Safe Communities Guide

People & Pollinators Action Network



PEOPLE & POLLINATORS
ACTION NETWORK

People & Pollinators Action Network's Mission

People and Pollinators Action Network (PPAN) works across Colorado to promote sustainable agricultural practices, safeguard public health, and improve our environment by fostering a strong movement to build community awareness, change policies and support best practices in the use of chemical pesticides and pollinator friendly habitat management. Our vision is to make Colorado a pollinator haven—a place where bees, bats and butterflies will thrive.

How are we creating 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 to find 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 to our biodiversity 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 habitat. The message is straightforward – plant organic plants/seeds and eliminate the use of pesticides on the landscape and speak to others about doing the same. 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.

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/>.

Contact info@peopleandpollinators.org with questions.

Overview: Steps to Creating a Pollinator Safe Community

1. Designate a *Pollinator Safe Leader* or gather a team that would like to build safe habitat in their communities.
2. 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 providing blooming plants for wildlife throughout the growing season and reducing and eliminating pesticide use. A long-term goal could be establishing a block of pollinator safe properties.
3. Provide resources to the community regarding pollinator safe, region appropriate plantings and natural management strategies.
4. 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 on the PPAN website (<http://peopleandpollinators.org/map/>). Watching habitat expand is inspiring!
5. Display a pollinator habitat yard sign to indicate that a pledge has been signed and to spark conversations with neighbors.
6. Determine what educational strategies work best in your community (neighborhood presentations/tips, plant exchanges, kid-related activities, community plantings, partnering with businesses, etc.)
7. Continue to spread the message by choosing at least three activities per year from suggested activities included in this Guide.
8. Speak with neighborhood organizations about creating pollinator habitat, nurseries about providing organic plants and local leaders about what can be accomplished city-wide by using pollinator safe land management practices.
9. Let us know about your successes and challenges. Send stories, photos or videos to be shared in the PPAN Enews 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 expanding pollinator safe habitat. 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!

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

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

Suggested Activities

1. Ask community members to sign PPAN's *Pollinator Safe Pledge* (print out copies of the Pledge from this guide or direct people to sign the Pledge on the PPAN [website here](#). Aim to collect ten new pledges each year. Pass paper pledges back to PPAN so pollinator safe properties can be displayed on the website map. Watch the habitat areas grow!
2. Sign up new *Pollinator Safe Leaders* [here](#).
3. Join a PPAN local chapter.
4. Host an informational gathering or potluck for community members to learn more about the issue.
5. Provide resources such as plant lists and sources of safe plants and seeds.
6. Ask people to display the Colorado Pollinator Habitat sign. It's a good conversation starter! Contact PPAN to receive habitat signs for a suggested donation of ten dollars.
7. Speak with local and state leaders about the issue.
8. Host a pollinator safe plant and/or seed exchange in the spring or fall.
9. Host a pollinator themed event.
10. Show a film about the importance of pollinators.
11. Speak to local nurseries about supplying organic plants/seeds and alternatives to pesticides.
12. 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.
13. 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.
14. 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.
15. 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.
16. Host a PPAN educational table at a local event.
17. Host a native bee house-building workshop.
18. Be a citizen scientist! Organize a neighborhood pollinator bio blitz and/or use the iNaturalist app to identify and track pollinators species found in yards and communities. This is a fun and 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!

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

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

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 and I am aware of these dangers, 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**

Sign the Pollinator Pledge online at <http://peopleandpollinators.org/our-solution/psn-pledge/>