

Contact

Beyond Toxics: Krystal Abrams, Pollinator Projects

Manager - phone: 541-465-8860

Email: kabrams@beyondtoxics.org

OR

Phyllis Stiles, Pollinator Champion, Bee City USA

at 503-395-5367 | Email: phyllis.stiles@xerces.org



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Eugene Becomes the 71st Bee City USA in the Nation

EUGENE, ORE. – The Eugene City Council has unanimously voted in favor of Resolution # 5240. In so doing, Eugene has become a Bee City USA®, joining more than a hundred other cities and campuses across the country united in improving their landscapes for pollinators. The Council’s action is the culmination of months of effort by the Eugene Pollinator Protection Committee* to accomplish this certification.

Bee City USA is an initiative of the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation, a nonprofit organization based in Portland, Oregon, with offices across the country. Bee City USA’s mission is to galvanize communities to sustain pollinators by providing them with healthy habitat, rich in a variety of native plants protected from pesticides. Pollinators like bumble bees, sweat bees, mason bees, honey bees, butterflies, moths, beetles, flies, hummingbirds and many others are responsible for the reproduction of ninety percent of the world’s wild plant species and one in every three bites of food we consume.

The Council’s vote came after a presentation by Councilor Mike Clark of Ward 5, to Eugene Council members. “Our City Council let it be known that we understand the importance of sustaining pollinators, and want to make the city more pollinator friendly,” said Councilor Clark. “We are grateful to Beyond Toxics for bringing the opportunity to our attention.”

“We are thrilled that the City Council shared our vision for Eugene to join the Bee City USA movement,” said Krystal Abrams, who played a leading role in the campaign for Beyond Toxics.

The application process was a collaborative effort, bringing together businesses, local government, educators, and conservation groups including Beyond Toxics, GloryBee, Eugene Parks and Open Space, Walama Restoration Project, the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation, and Lane County Audubon Society.“

“Along with our honeybees we have hundreds of native bees and other pollinators right here in Eugene. This is an opportunity for people in Eugene to help make a difference in our community for native pollinators!” says Michael France from GloryBee.

“The program aspires to make people more PC—pollinator conscious, that is,” said Scott Hoffman Black, Xerces’ executive director. “If lots of individuals and communities begin planting native, pesticide-free flowering trees, shrubs and perennials, it will create large-scale change for many, many species of pollinators.”

“How each city or county celebrates pollinators is up to them,” said Bee City USA founder Phyllis Stiles. “But to maintain their certification, each affiliate is expected to celebrate being a Bee City USA community every year.”

Bee City USA especially encourages school gardens and educational programs for children. “When a child falls in love with pollinators, they are friends for life,” added Stiles.

The City of Eugene has designated the Eugene Pollinator Protection Committee the facilitating committee for Eugene’s efforts to engage the community in promoting pollinator conservation.

For more information about Eugene’s Bee City USA program, visit www.beecityeugene.org and sign up to learn more about upcoming meetings, events, and educational activities.

*** Eugene Pollinator Protection Committee**

Krystal Abrams, Beyond Toxics (Chair)

Lisa Arkin, Beyond Toxics

Carolyn Burke, Eugene Parks & Open Spaces

Aimee Code, Xerces Society

Debra Schlenoff, Lane County Audubon Society

Michael France, GloryBee, Oregon Bee Project, Lane County Beekeepers Association

Kris Elsbree, Walama Restoration Project

For more information about Bee City USA, visit <https://www.beecityusa.org/>

For more information about the Xerces Society, visit <https://xerces.org/>

For information about 4 simple ways to help pollinators, visit <https://xerces.org/bringbackthepollinators/>

Beyond Toxics protects and enhances human and environmental health. We promote environmental justice engagement and community-based environmental grassroots organizing to ensure environmental protection and health for all communities. We empower communities to enact lasting solutions to environmental health threats.

www.BeyondToxics.org