

Pollinator Gardens at Ridgefield

Recently during a meeting of the Grounds Committee, one of our members asked “*Why do we need pollinator gardens at Ridgefield? They’re colorful and add to our curb appeal but what else do these gardens say about Ridgefield grounds?*” Good questions!

What are Pollinators and Pollinator Gardens?

“Pollination” is the way many plants reproduce. Since plants are immobile, pollinators take pollen from one plant to another. The result are the flowers, fruits and seeds we’ve come to love and depend on for beauty and food. Besides the popular honeybee, pollinators include bumblebees, mason bees, butterflies, moths, bats, flies, beetles, hummingbirds, and wasps. Many of these pollinators are also a source of food for other insects, birds and small animals. Pollinator gardens, also referred to as butterfly gardens, are places that nurture pollinators.

An abundance of pollinators, like bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds, indicates a healthy Ridgefield ecosystem.

Why Pollinators Need Our Help

A combination of climate change, habitat loss, and the impact of highly toxic products used in agricultural and commercial products, have negatively impacted the number of pollinators worldwide today. Neonicotinoids - a class of pesticides registered with the Environmental Protection Agency in 1984 and at first considered improvements over older, more toxic pesticides, is now being linked to a decrease in healthy pollinators around the globe. Monarch butterflies, for example, are being impacted by all of this. Once very common, the Monarch butterfly population has fallen by an estimated 90%!

We can help our favorite bees, butterflies and hummingbirds by planting small pollinator gardens in our back yards (within our limited common areas) here at Ridgefield). Potted plants are great! In the case of butterflies our objective is to feed pollinators while also encouraging them to stick around for a while, laying eggs and creating a new generation of butterflies. To do this, choose plants that fall into two groups: nectar plants that will provide adult butterflies with energy and host plants that will feed caterpillars. With careful selection from these two groups, your garden will provide for the entire life cycle of butterflies. Of course, remember to stay clear of and not use commercial fertilizers and insecticides!

To learn more visit the following websites:

https://en.Wikipedia.org/wiki/colony_collapse_disorder – Bee colony collapse disorder and its many causes

www.Monarchwatch.org – Learn more on the future of monarch butterflies

<http://nababutterfly.com/start-butterfly-garden/> - The basics of butterfly gardening.

www.onegreenplanet.org – How the butterfly can shape an ecosystem and why we need to protect them.

www.diynatural.com/pollination-pollinators-need-help - Why Pollination is important and why pollinators need our help.

www.butterflywebsite.com/butterflygardening.cfm - Plants to attract butterflies, hummingbirds and wildlife.



Pollinator Garden on circle near 214



Three butterflies in Ridgefield garden



Did you know that ...

- Butterflies are found on every continent but Antarctica
- The American honeybee is of European origin
- There are 700+ different species of butterflies in the US alone
- Different species of butterfly can provide effective pest control, naturally keeping plant populations healthy and disease free
- We humans can help pollinators by planting a small pollinator garden in our back yards

Making a difference one nickel at a time.



Ridgefield bottle & can drive



Collection Dates:

1st Saturday of the month

Collection Place:

Next to the recycling bins.

What to bring:

Clean bottles (glass and plastic) and cans with the MA 5¢ on the container.

WELCOME COMMITTEE



The welcome meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 10th at 7:00 p.m. at 704B. Current members are urged to attend but anyone may come and join us. *Hope to see you then.*

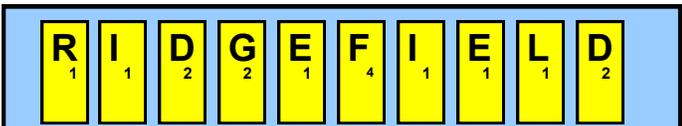
RIDGEFIELD GROUPS & CLUBS



Bridge Group

The Bridge Group continues to play every Thursday afternoon at 1:00 p.m. Call Joan Nierintz at (978) 368-0517 if you would

like to join the group. We play Contract Bridge on a casual basis.



Please call Pat Falcione at (978) 365-9966 to get details if you are interested in playing scrabble.



Bergie Aka "The Bergster"
I live in the 500's. I love to get treats and visit the office.



Murphy & Byron
We live in the 900's and look like twins



The next book club meeting is Tuesday, April 17th 7:00PM, Unit 109E

The March book selection is **"The Poacher's Son"**
By Paul Doiron

