

## Resolution to Make Conway a Pollinator-Friendly Community

**Citizen Petition: To see if the town will vote to approve the attached non-binding resolution to designate Conway as a pollinator-friendly community (as a number of nearby towns have done) and to prioritize native plantings in municipal landscaping and restoration efforts. See attached article for details.**

### PETITION FOR WARRANT ARTICLE

We, the undersigned, qualified voters of the Town of Conway, request that the article appearing below be placed in the warrant for the annual town meeting of June 3, 2023.

The purpose of this advisory, non-binding resolution is to encourage the appreciation and support of pollinators, including birds, bees, butterflies, moths and other beneficial insects, especially by prioritizing native plant species. It aims to support a resilient and diverse natural environment in Conway by joining in a commitment with other towns (including Ashfield, Plainfield, Cummington, Amherst, Great Barrington, North Adams, and Northampton). It also supports efforts initiated by Conway residents who developed *The Conway Pollinator Action Plan* as part of a larger plan for Franklin County.

WHEREAS, bees, moths, butterflies and other pollinators are an essential component of a healthy ecosystem and provide ecological services that support plant and animal life;

WHEREAS, locally grown fruits and vegetables, such as apples, blueberries, strawberries, squash, melons, and tomatoes depend on pollinators;

WHEREAS, most local bird species rely on vast quantities of caterpillars in order to thrive and reproduce;

WHEREAS, many native caterpillars and other beneficial insects have very specific feeding needs that can only be satisfied with the native plant species they have co-evolved with;

WHEREAS, considerable scientific research has documented the steep decline of many insect species;

WHEREAS, our local ecosystems that support pollinators are under tremendous threat from climate change, habitat loss and fragmentation, assaults by non-native invasive species, the expanded use of pesticides, light pollution, and the spread of pollutants, pathogens and parasites;

WHEREAS, the Town of Conway is cognizant of the need for safe and healthy landscapes for its residents and habitat for necessary pollinators.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Town of Conway is hereby declared a Pollinator-Friendly Community, and that the town urges Conway property owners, residents, town departments and committees, land trusts and business owners to adopt the following pollinator-friendly practices:

- Prioritize the planting of native species in landscaping, land management and restoration efforts;
- Avoid the use of insecticides, and minimize the use of other types of pesticides (including herbicides, fungicides and rodenticides);

- Avoid the planting of flowering plants or seeds treated with neonicotinoids or other systemic insecticides;
- Adopt practices of organic or chemical-free lawn care and landscaping, and pollinator-friendly outdoor lighting;
- Plant diverse seed mixes for lawns that include low flowering ground covers, and reduce lawn mowing schedules so as to allow these flowering ground covers to bloom, thereby lowering overall maintenance costs and pollution;
- Consider replacement of excess turfgrass with native plants including low maintenance, flowering ground covers, wildflowers, shrubs and trees;
- Limit mowing of non-cultivated fields to 1/3 of the acreage, rotating the mowing area on an annual basis and, when possible, only mowing after the first hard frost;
- Allow fallen leaves, pine needles, plant stalks, and seed heads to remain, especially along property borders under trees and shrubs, as they provide overwintering sites and food for insects and birds.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Town shall endeavor to sponsor or encourage educational programs and demonstration projects, such as pollinator gardens, to assist citizens and businesses in making Conway pollinator friendly.

The Town Clerk shall send copies of this resolution to Governor Maura T. Healey, Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources Commissioner Ashley E. Randle, State Senator Paul W. Mark, State Representative Natalie M. Blais, and U.S. Representative Jim McGovern, or to take any other action relative thereto.