

Southington encouraging creation of pollinator pathways



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By Jesse Buchanan, Record-Journal staff

SOUTHINGTON — Town leaders are looking for residents and businesses to join them in creating pollinator pathways – yards and other areas free of pesticides that have plants for bees, butterflies and hummingbirds.

On Thursday, the town's open space committee discussed the ribbon cutting for a pollinator garden at the Novick property on Flanders Road. During the unveiling this fall, residents will be encouraged to take similar steps on their own land, said committee chairman Dawn Miceli.

Val Guarino, a Planning and Zoning Commission alternate and open space committee member, said the pollinator pathway designation comes with three requirements – plant only native species, no use of pesticides and reduction of grass when possible.

While lawns with a lot of clover or other plants do have benefits, fields of grass offer little.

“The lawns are a biological desert,” Guarino said.

Without flowering plants, lawns often have little to feed various flying insects and animals.

“(Lawns) look pretty, but they don’t do a lot for the life cycle,” Miceli said.

Miceli said Sheri Guarino, a Conservation Commission member, has been selling pollinator pathway signs at the farmer’s market downtown. Sheri Guarino, wife of Val Guarino, has been organizing the effort to convince residents of the environmental importance of pollinators.

Miceli plans to have a sign at the Novick property.

“We are going to start bringing information to residents about pollinator pathways,” she said.

The effort also extends to areas along the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail. Businesses and residents will be encouraged to plant native species, according to Miceli.

The pollinator garden at the Novick property was created this summer with a grant from the Greater New Britain Community Foundation.



The butterfly and bee garden at the Quinnipiac River Watershed Association headquarters on Oregon Road in South Meriden Sept. 19, 2018. | Richie Rathsack, Record-Journal





There's also a pollinator garden near the YMCA created by Kelley School students and teachers.

"I'm happy that we already have a couple of official pollinator gardens," Miceli said.

A monarch butterfly caterpillar munches on the leaves of a milkweed plant in the Quinnipiac River Watershed Association Butterfly and Bee Garden on Oregon Road in Meriden Sept. 19, 2018. | Richie Rathsack, Record-Journal

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