



## Ashford Pollinator Pathway News

By Jennifer Sterling-Folker, April 2022

Hello Ashford! I'm the town coordinator for the Pollinator Pathway PP Initiative, a grass-roots movement to support pollinators -- bees, butterflies and hummingbirds -- by adopting pollinator-friendly practices in our own gardens and property. It encourages using more native plants and reducing both empty lawn spaces and pesticide/fungicide usage. Even a small patch of pesticide-free wildflowers in a window box or left to seed on the edge of fields or lawns is beneficial to pollinators.

Registering your pollinator-friendly gardens and efforts with the regional organization demonstrates your commitment to pollinator-friendly practices and helps us map out Ashford's pollinator pathways. It's also an honors system -- no one will monitor your property or pass judgement on it. Thanks to the Ashford Conservation Commission, we also have free Pollinator Pathway medallions to give you when you register!

I'll be doing a monthly feature about pollinator activities, registered gardens and local partners in town. Numerous public events are already being planned, some in coordination with surrounding towns (events and other information will be posted to our Facebook page). I'll also be introducing you to the volunteers on our town's coordinating committee -- myself, Melinda MacDonald and Heather McKelvie -- and their registered pollinator gardens. Email if you'd like to join the committee and help plan events.

I've been an Ashford resident since 1994 when I began teaching as a Professor of International Relations at UConn. I was a member of the Board of Education (two years as Chair) and am currently a member of Ashford Garden Club. My own garden is a woodland shade garden with a mix of cultivars and native plants. It is registered with Pollinator Pathways and as a National Federation of Wildlife habitat. Once the weather is warmer, I'd be happy to give you a tour of my garden and/or provide site/plant advice for your property.



If you are unsure how to support the effort, how to register (or want your medallion), or wonder what a native plant even is, we are here to help! We are happy to answer questions, provide site/plant advice and exchange ideas. Contact Info:

Email: [AshfordPollinatorPathways@gmail.com](mailto:AshfordPollinatorPathways@gmail.com)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/AshfordPollinatorPathway>

### FAQs, Info & Events

#### **Looking for Native Plant**

**Seeds?** Ashford Library has got them! We are supplying the Library's annual seed bank with easy-to-grow native plant seed packets!

#### **Looking for reputable places to buy native plants?**

Email us for a list of local nurseries. Local plant sales will also be posted on our Facebook page.

#### **Looking for advice on how to grow a native plant garden?**

We have a DIY handout for that! We can also do site visits to provide advice.

#### **Want to see what a pollinator-friendly native plant garden looks like?**

The town garden area running along the metal fence near the parking lot (closest to Cumberland Farms) is dedicated to native plants. You are also welcome to come see my garden once it is in bloom.

#### **Upcoming Free Talks:**

**4/6, 7PM** -- "Including Native Plants," Speaker Lydia Pan of Wild Ones CT. Woodstock Town Hall lower level

**4/18, 6PM** -- "Gardening for Pollinators," Speaker Margery Winters of Roaring Brook Nature Center. Stafford Community Center