

Marbletown Pollinator Garden Grows on Municipal Center Workers, Sprouts Jealousy on Rosendale Side



This spring, the Marbletown's ECC created a pollinator garden at the Municipal center. It provides an aesthetic boost to the grounds of the former Rosendale Elementary School, and has drawn praise from municipal workers and volunteers in offices around the garden and everyone using conference room M-15. It also offers learning opportunities to the community; and—most importantly—it provides a safe, chemical-free refuge and feeding ground for besieged beneficial pollinators such as the European honeybee, numerous species of native bees, butterflies, hummingbirds and other avian species.

The garden itself is composed of 4 raised beds, each measuring eight by eight feet, separated by a cruciform pathway. The beds were sited between existing trees and shrubs in the courtyard formed by the Marbletown and Ulster ARC wings of the complex. Within the raised beds are planted a mixture of flowering perennials and annuals, medicinal and culinary herbs, native plants, trees and shrubs—all selected to provide food and shelter for bees and butterflies and all donated by area gardeners and local businesses. Some plantings featured in the garden are various varieties of Milkweed (the favored food source Monarch butterfly caterpillars and other species), *Monarda* (Bee Balm), *Buddleia* (Butterfly Bush), *Silphium* (Cup Plant), *Cleome* (Spider Flower), Fennel, Dill, Catmint and Serviceberry.

ECC member and local garden designer Eric Stewart of Greenman Garden Design spearheaded the effort by securing donations of materials, and selecting and installing the plantings. ECC Chairman Tom Konrad and Marbletown Town Board member and ECC liaison Douglas Adams played key roles in creation of the garden beds and helped with other tasks.

Town Supervisor Mike Warren said, “Everyone comments on how beautiful the pollinator garden is and what a great addition it is to the building. Then they learn that it's also helps the bees and butterflies, and they could not be more pleased.”

The Marbletown ECC acknowledges the generous donation of organic topsoil and mulch by Croswell Enterprises, Route 209 in North Marbletown, purveyor of bulk landscape materials, as well as plantings donated courtesy of Davenport Farms, Stone Ridge, and Victoria Gardens in Rosendale.

Based on the attention the garden has thus far received, the Marbletown ECC is contemplating adding additional planting beds and permanent signage to the pollinator garden. Plans for a possible formal dedication ceremony are also in the works.

The beauty of the garden has led the Town of Rosendale to investigate constructing a pollinator garden on its side of the Municipal Complex. The bees and butterflies of the region are sure to be thrilled.