



Pollinator Habitat

Management:

Reduced Mowing

This hillside is located above the office parking area at the Conservation District's property. For years, it was mowed regularly during the summer months, approximately every two weeks in response to vegetation growth rates. Then in early 2019, District staff developed a new land management plan for the property which called for a reduction in mowing of non-lawn and non-path areas around the grounds. This reduction is intended to promote the growth of new and better wildlife habitat, particularly for pollinating insects.

Regular mowing had stopped the year before in 2018, but that summer we saw only growth of the grasses and sedges which had already been established on the hillside. The second year also resulted in a sparseness of plant diversity. This past summer, however, the hillside produced a healthy community of pollinator-friendly wildflowers, including daisy fleabane, field goldenrod, New England asters, and New York ironweed.

A single round of mowing in the spring before these summer-blooming species put on a strong growth spurt ensures woody vegetation will not take over, and continued edge mowing along the bottom of the slope throughout summer keeps our parking area intact. This minor change in property maintenance is an easy way to provide for the needs of bees and butterflies as well as reduce the costs of labor, time, and equipment.