

080621

4/16/2009
Citizenment
Carrill
Hillel

Re: Criteria for Certification of Butterfly Cities

Submitted on Apr. 16, 2009, by Peter Johnson and Gabriel Hillel, for the Butterfly Education Project

The Butterfly Education Project is a grassroots association in Gainesville, Florida. This month, the Project has adopted criteria to be met by any city seeking certification as a Butterfly City. Butterfly species also encompass other Lepidoptera, including moths and skippers.

The certification concept is modeled on the established Tree City USA operation. Gainesville has met the requirements of the Tree City USA each year since 1991. On Dec. 4, 2008, Gainesville designated itself as The First Butterfly City. This year, in-kind support has been offered to the Project to assist the City in living up to its self designation.

The Butterfly City standards do not include a requirement for a monetary expenditure. The Tree Cities organization requires a municipality seeking certification to expend \$2 per capita for community forest management. Despite such differences, both the Butterfly City and the Tree City designations are intended to increase public awareness about the adjustments which need to be made to establish viable insect and plant life in urban environments and habitats.

Gainesville and other municipalities certified as Butterfly Cities will enhance their public image by display of a new symbol. The fresh logo is not intended to displace or change the Tree City concept. The Butterfly City image is intended to stimulate fresh enjoyment and knowledge locally about butterflies and encourage creation of more suitable habitats.

Butterfly Cities must demonstrate they are willing to educate the public about the real and potential harm to Lepidoptera and other life forms by indiscriminate use of pesticides. Ironically, human-made pesticides also destroy dragonflies, a recognized predator of many types of mosquitos. Gainesville, Florida, already educates the public about pesticides. The City also is prepared to popularize Lepidoptera through several City Departments.

Project representatives have met with Gainesville staffers representing the City's Parks and Recreation Department, Mosquito Control, the Community Redevelopment Agency, the Arts and Nature Office, the Regional Transit System (RTS), and Office of Communications. These agencies have added valuable insight to the steps Gainesville already has taken and the City's willingness to do more. These standards are based in part on those plans.

In formulating standards, the Project from the outset has had the cooperation and assistance of a staffer at the McGuire Center at the Florida Museum of Natural History. For the past three years, the McGuire Center has had annual activities on a weekend in October to promote enjoyment and knowledge about butterflies.

The Project has also consulted with the head of the North Central Florida chapter of the North American Butterfly Association (NABA). The standards could not have been developed meaningfully without that extensive input. The City of Gainesville, FL is the first to formally adopt the idea of requirements to justify its designation as the first Butterfly City.

Based on the foregoing steps, hours of discussion and e-mail messages among members and friends of the Butterfly Education Project, and independent research, which is being reported at the group's website, www.firstbutterflycity.org, we have determined what:

- Gainesville has been doing to qualify and
- other municipalities must do to be certified as

Butterfly Cities

(The Requirements Are Set Forth On the Next Page)

BUTTERFLY CITY REQUIREMENTS

Updated: May 8, 2007

1. Take political action by elected municipal officials to designate butterflies as a subject for protection and promotion.
2. Identify at least one butterfly site or event, which is intended to attract tourists, as well as area residents.
3. Involve, as appropriate, specific City departments to create and maintain butterfly and other garden habitats.
4. Foster creation and maintenance of butterfly and other forms of gardens in cooperation with public and private agencies.
5. Urge individuals, businesses, professionals, associations, organizations, fraternities, sororities, associations, garden clubs, and others to promote the community as a Butterfly City.
6. Provide means to register such actions and to reward those taking them. A Butterfly City offers the certified symbol for display by private participants. A Butterfly City also will authorize distribution of the logo and education materials about Lepidoptera as appropriate.
7. Work with media to let the community know about local and seasonal distribution of butterflies and other Lepidoptera and the appropriate plant life to sustain each stage of insect life.
8. Increase knowledge about and enjoyment of butterflies in segments of the local population which have not been oriented to those benefits in the past. Children, especially, should be included.
9. Educate people about the steps to be taken to limit harm to the Lepidoptera species when measures are used to eliminate mosquitoes and other insect pests.
10. Officially approve and proclaim a Butterfly Day or Days each year.