



Traci Pederson/Board of Adjustments

This is a request to exempt my property from ordinance section 17-7.4 and 17-7.6 for the following reasons:

I am attempting to convert my property to a wildflower meadow.
I am eliminating my need to use ground water for irrigation.
I am eliminating my need to use poisonous fertilizer.
I am eliminating the use of fossil fuels necessary to maintain a lawn.
I am attempting to provide habitat for insects, bees and butterflies.

Perhaps you are familiar with the growing popularity of "No May Mowing" movement and the reasons why. A lesser movement to no mow lawns period is gaining in popularity and you will see growing requests by scientists in the future partly to combat global warming and loss of pollinators.

I have spent hundreds of dollars on perennial wildflower seeds which take time to develop (at least 2 to 3 years). I am watching native grasses grow. I have a Biology degree from St. John's University. I was a science teacher in Pequot lakes from 1973 to 1978.

Enclosed please find a partial article outlining the reasons I am doing this.

Due to my age (76 this November) and failing health I have no means nor money to maintain a lawn and I am opposed to doing so for the above reasons.

I thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully yours,

David R. Hallbeck



How To Turn Your Lawn Into A Wildflower Meadow (& Why You Should)



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Published on March 17, 2020 - Last Updated on March 1, 2022



Remember when fireflies were flickering and lighting up the the night sky in the thousands, sometime around midsummer?

At present, that childhood joy is but a regional occurrence. The last time I saw just a few lightning bugs was three years ago in a marshy valley in rural Romania; before that – about a decade prior.

And in the daytime, have you also noticed a loss of insect diversity in the past thirty or more years?

If so, you are not alone. You may be able to judge by the cleanliness of your car windows/lights after a drive in the countryside or the amount of pollinators in your garden and orchard.

The killing off of insects is alarming!

A recent study suggests that **40% of all insect species are in decline** and could continue to die out in the coming years.

The following insects are most at risk:

- Butterflies and moths (*Lepidoptera*)
- Sawflies, wasps, bees and ants (*Hymenoptera*)
- Dung beetles (*Coleoptera sp.*)



Hoverflies on goatsbeard (*Tragopogon orientalis*).

Before we can understand how to begin to reverse this situation, we must explore the reasons for such a great loss.

Hard as the truth is to swallow, it turns out, that it is mostly the fault of humans.

Habitat loss is the number one culprit for the decline of insect populations worldwide.

This happens in large scale as small farms are eaten up by larger, more intensive agriculture.

With gigantic farms come more expansive fields (***and fewer edges!***), that are continuously fertilized and sprayed with insecticides, pesticides and other agro-chemicals questionable in origin. All for the sake of feeding the growing plant, some may proclaim, but what if we dared to be different, think up an alternative plan and foster insect populations instead?

Insect decline also happens because of planting non-native, invasive species that mess with flora and fauna alike.

Climate change also has a hand in insect decline, as does your perfectly maintained lawn.

The traditional lawn and why traditions need to change

Run a quick search for images of a traditional lawn and green is what you will find.



A carefully manicured lawn is beautiful in its own way. Short grass is comfortable to walk on, whether you are barefoot or in shoes. It lets you see where there may be danger lurking such as snakes, ants, spiders, or dog doo-doo.

It also happens to be a wonderful place to lay down a blanket and have a summer picnic, all creepy crawlies aside.

However, a traditional lawn comes with the downfall that it is devoid of insect life – outside of those ones with the high-pitched whining voices, otherwise known as mosquitoes.

And to keep it homogenously green and free of dandelions, “weeds” and moles?

Well that takes consistent mowing, irrigating, weeding, and of course a whole slew of chemicals.

Did you know that nearly 80 million pounds of pesticides are used annually on lawns in the U.S.? That is a staggering amount of toxic chemicals!



Not only are they bad news for insects, they are terrible for pets and children too. What is a childhood without playing outside, rolling

around on the lawn?

If we are to provide a safe place for all wildlife, we must rethink the “modern” lawn. Mowing being a concept that is less than 200 years old.

How to start changing traditions



Realize first and foremost that chemicals are not needed to grow grass. Neither is it useful, or practical, to use vast amounts of clean, drinkable quality water to keep your lawn green.

Nearly 1/3 of all residential water use in the United States goes towards landscape irrigation! Let that sink in for a second. That can be taken as a selfish act of humankind. ~~if there is HOWING WATER~~ let's use it!"

However, if you are living and gardening with sustainability in mind, reducing your water consumption may be, in fact, one of your top priorities.



Meadow in late summer.

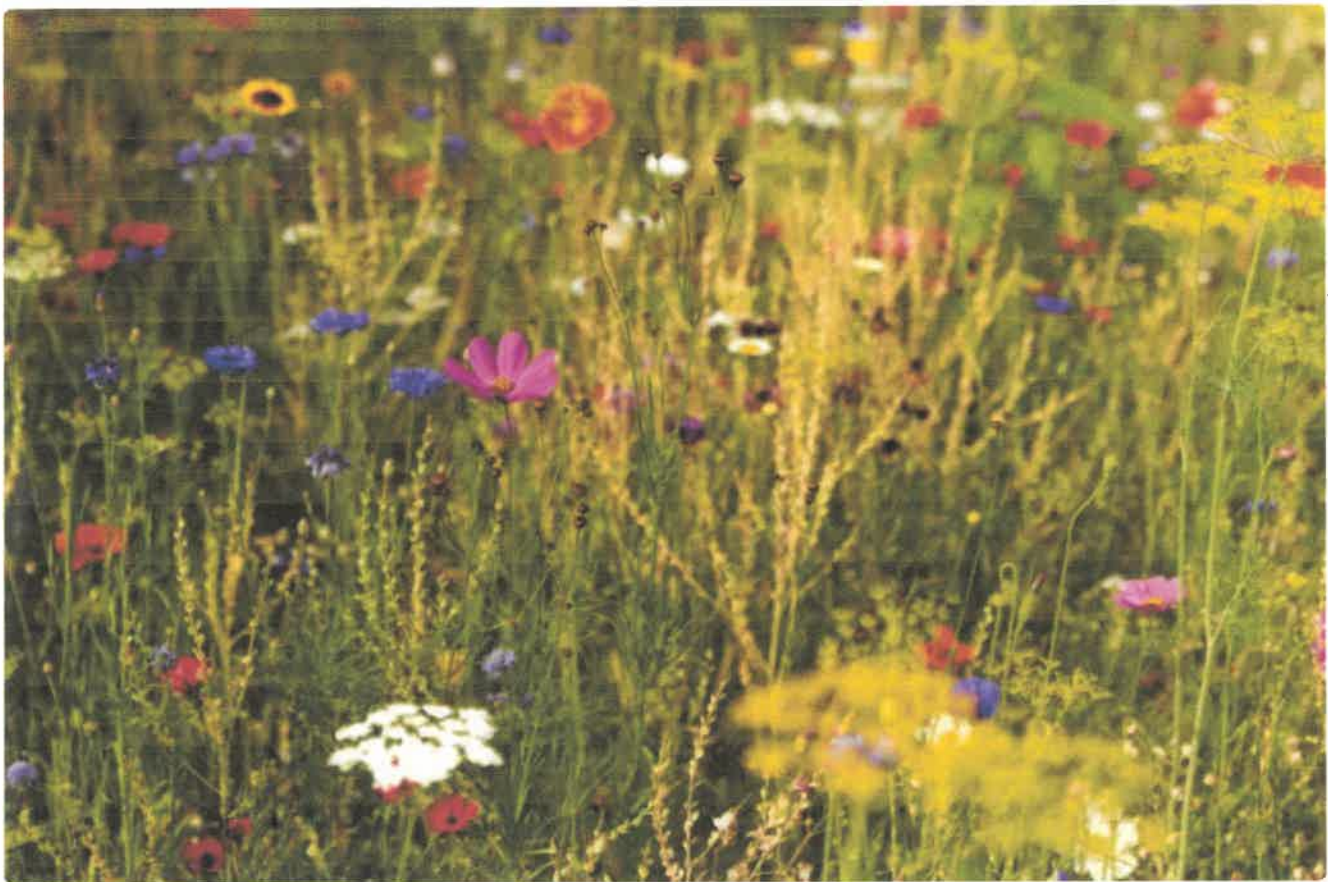
Stop using chemicals, reduce your need for irrigation and develop ways to promote diversity in your lawnscape.

That's all there is to it!

Refrain from spraying chemicals on the land, in the hopes that now you won't hurt anything downstream, anymore – there is always something, someone, some bird, insect, fox, owl, mouse, frog or fish downstream. We are all connected.

Be the positive change that nature desires and convert your lawn to a wildflower meadow, starting today!

Basics of turning your lawn into a wildflower meadow



Now, that you are convinced that your lawn should embrace diversity and include multiple shades of green with splashes of crimson, violet, yellow, bronze, ochre, blue and mauve, the next step is to choose native species that will best grow where you are.

It is also important to note at this point that planting a meadow is not quite the same as planting a garden. When you plant garden seeds, you will see – and harvest – results in the same season.

With a wildflower meadow, you'll often have to wait two seasons, or three, to reap the most benefits. See, natural meadows evolve over years and years. It takes time to develop intricate relationships between animals, plants and microorganisms.

While a wildflower lawn may never be a “true” meadow, there is a time and place for it – and that time is now. If you want to attract bees, increase insect populations and decrease your time spent tending to the grass, then you can safely know that a wildflower lawn is worth the time and effort you are just about to take.