

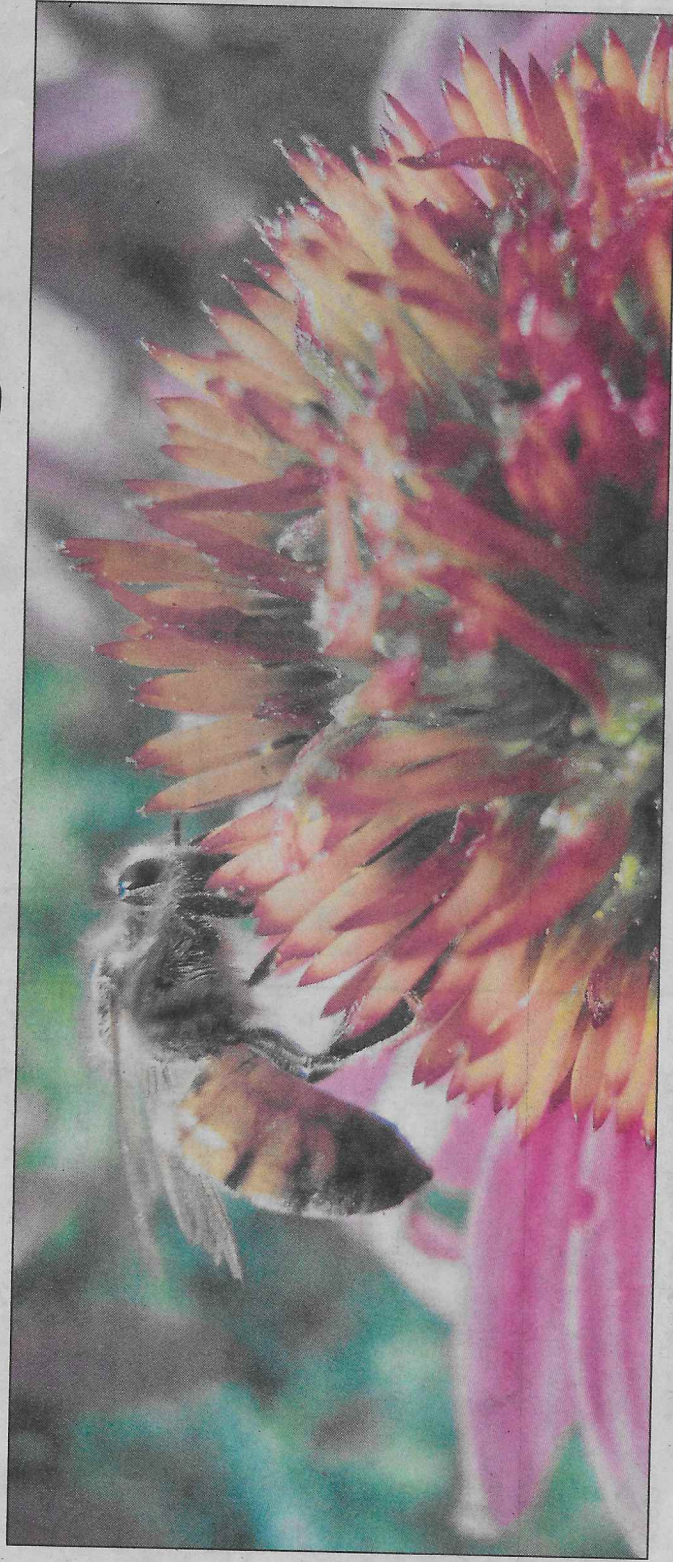
Carson City is Bee City USA



JoAnne Skelly
In the Garden

Carson City is a Bee City USA as of October. When I first saw the sign, I didn't know what it meant. It's fitting the state capital should be the first and only (so far) Bee City in Nevada. The city is now the 76th Bee City in the USA. The national nonprofit organization, the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation, is the creator and supporter of the Bee City USA initiative. Its goal is teach people to be "PC" — pollinator conscious. Many thanks to the Great Basin Beekeepers of Nevada, a grassroots group based in Carson City, for contacting Mayor Bob Crowell in 2017 to encourage the City to become a Bee City USA and for their continued education efforts.

The goal of a Bee City is to promote a healthy habitat that supports pollinator populations. This includes having a variety of native plants that are free or nearly free of pesticides. Honeybees, bumblebees and butterflies, along with vertebrate pollinators, are threatened and declining.



WENDY HANSON MAZET

Carson City has been named a Bee City USA.

Since they're responsible for most of the food we eat, our food supply could be at risk if we lose these beneficial creatures.

I applaud Carson City and the Board of Supervisors in their acknowledgement of the importance of pollinators and their commitment to supporting bees and other pollinators not only in their parks and open spaces but also on private land. Their Bee City USA Committee will hold quarterly meetings and the public

is welcome to offer their ideas for pollinator-friendly initiatives.

What can we as gardeners do to promote a healthy, sustainable habitat for pollinators? We can plant native flowers, flowering trees and shrubs and maintain them without pesticides. We can teach children to appreciate pollinators in our home or school gardens. We can attend the Bee City USA Committee meetings and support the city in these Bee City efforts.

A pollinator-friendly habitat has diverse and abundant nectar and pollen native plants that bloom successively through the growing seasons. Water sources for drinking, diluting stored honey, cooling and building nests are necessary. Leaving some piles of leaves, brush, fallen trees and dead wood undisturbed provides nesting and overwintering sites.

The city will implement more bee-friendly maintenance practices on its public spaces

including reducing pesticide use, to least toxic methods and also choosing non-chemical practices. It will incorporate bee-friendly practices into its Master Plan where appropriate and applicable. Hurrah for Nevada's first Bee City USA!

JoAnne Skelly is associate professor and Extension educator, Emerita at University of Nevada Cooperative Extension. She can be reached at skellyj@uncc.unr.edu.