

# What's the Buzz? Toyota Indiana Volunteers Plant a Pollinator Garden

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Suspending the assembly of a new vehicle, as was the case last summer with the 2024 Lexus TX, is never a good thing. But team members at Toyota Indiana, which assembles the new three-row luxury SUV, recently found a way to turn that negative into a bit of a positive.

It all started when two team members — Production Team Member Jeremiah Tooley and Production Team Leader Jonathan Reimann — approached Environmental Engineer Manager Paul Delor and his team about the feasibility of converting 2,000 square feet of grass on Toyota Indiana’s grounds into a pollinator garden. If successful, the project would help promote the local population of bees and butterflies while it reduced the area that needed to be mowed on a regular basis.

“It was a great idea and aligned perfectly with one of the core objectives of the [Toyota Environmental Challenge 2050](#) to ensure we operate in harmony with nature,” Delor said. “Many people came together to make it happen.”

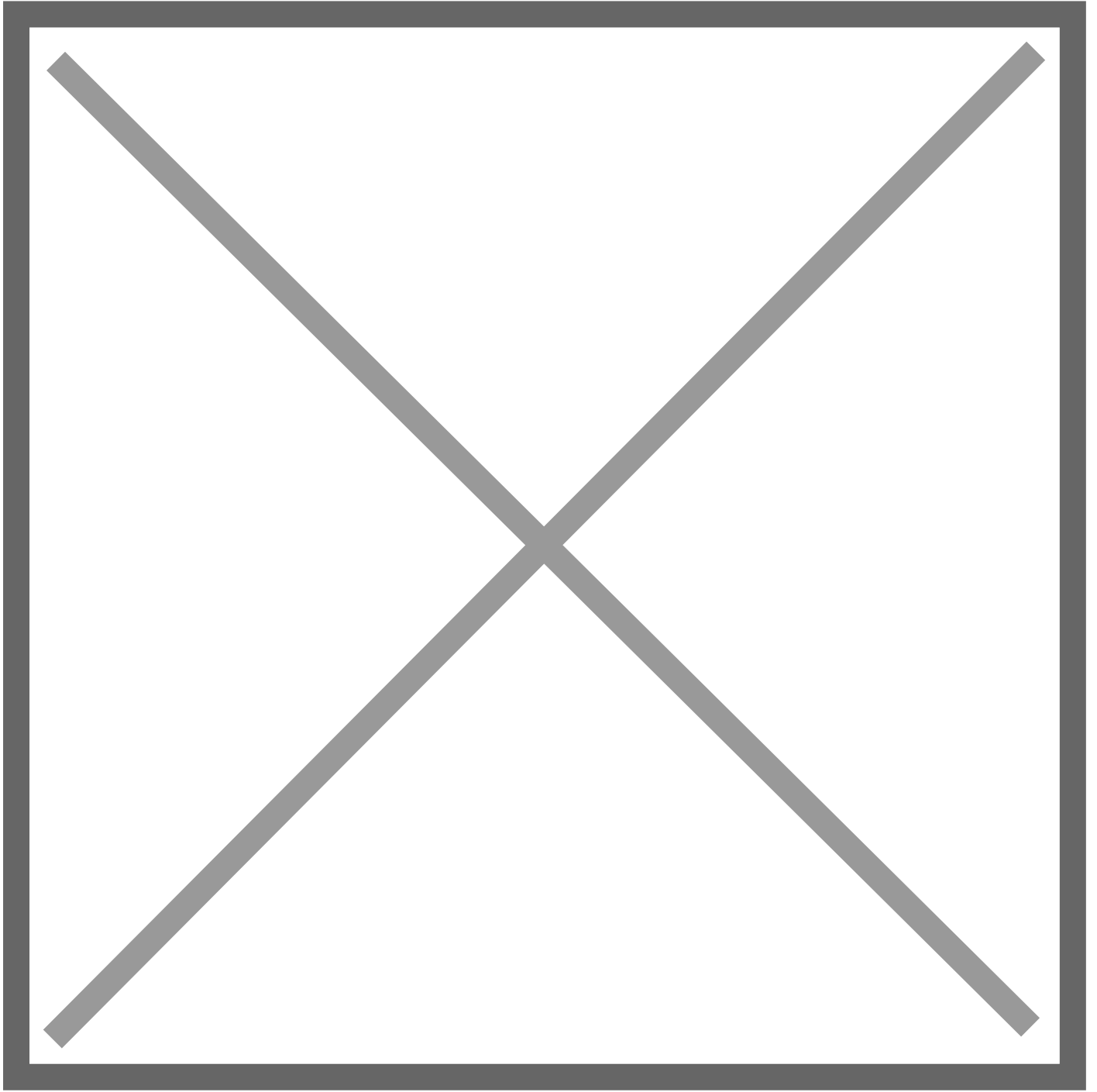


*Down and Dirty—Some 130 team members planted approximately 1,250 pollinator plugs over the two nights of the project.*

Some of those involved included 130 team members on Gold Shift of Toyota Indiana's West Plant who, with time on their hands unexpectedly, volunteered to help plant the 1,250 pollinator plugs needed to transform the designated space into a flowering garden.

Others across the organization — such as Human Resources, Safety, Security and Corporate Communications — also stepped up to help in many ways due to unique challenges of the project. For example, since Gold Shift works at night, one group facilitated temporary external lighting to be brought in to illuminate the work area. West Assembly Kaizen provided tools that helped minimize costs, and a relationship with the North Gibson School District led to the use of their school buses to transport team members from the plant to the planting site.

As a result of many helping hands, the area was fully cleared and planted in just two nights. The benefits, though, will grow into a lasting legacy.



*Mission Accomplished—Here’s a shot of the completed garden. All that’s left is for Mother Nature to do her work and transform it into a bed of blooming flowers this spring and summer.*

“We watered the plugs for two weeks after getting them into the ground to help them get established,” Delor said. “We don’t really need to do anything else to it, except look forward to seeing beautiful flowers bloom in the spring.”

Separately, Environmental contracted with an outside firm to seed a 6-acre site at a different location on the plant grounds. That will take longer to bed. In time, these initiatives will also help to support insects that transfer pollen between plants vital to biodiversity and, ultimately, our food supply.

“Many of us share a sense of excitement about watching these areas thrive and flourish, benefiting our native pollinators and wildlife while also supporting Toyota’s commitment to environmental sustainability,” Delor said.

Toyota Indiana’s President Tim Hollander echoed Delor’s enthusiasm and was an immediate supporter of the idea shared by Reimann and Tooley.

“This project was a great collaboration between many internal groups at Toyota Indiana and our community partners,” Hollander said. “It perfectly complements our afforestation efforts, too, with more than 130,000 native trees planted onsite over the years. It’s just incredible what can grow – literally – from the ideas of our team members.”