

**TRIBAL PESTICIDE PROGRAM COUNCIL (TPPC)
TRIBAL POLLINATOR PROTECTION WORKGROUP
NOTES**

TPPC website on pollinators: <http://tppcwebsite.org/pollinators/>

Teleconference Number: 202-991-0477; Code: 5471071

Webinar link: <http://epawebconferencing.acms.com/r7f9wh4hbhb/>

Date: February 14, 2018; 1-2:30 PM EDT

Attendees:

Kelly Gill-Xerces/NRCS
Mary Clock Rust-EPA OPP HQ
Kelly (?)
Joe "Cricket" Herrera-Yakama Nation
Jasmine Brown-Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes
Crystal Davis
Eugene Thilsted
Larry Scrapper-Cherokee Nation
Nick Hurwit-EPA Region 10
Holly Ragusa-EPA Region 3
Kurt (?)
Ryan Evans-?
Brittani Clairmont, CSKT
David Newman-Pechanga Band of Luiseno Indians
Wayne Samphier-St. Regis Mohawk Tribe
Willie Keenan-Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes
Mark Leshner-EPA Region 7

- ❖ Kelly Gill is an outreach specialist with Xerces, and she works out of an NRCS office in NJ. Kelly presented slides via webinar. Her slides are available on the TPPC website.
- ❖ Mary's Notes:
 - Xerces is a member-funded organization
 - Xerces has been around for 45 years
 - Pollinators are an ecological keystone species
 - Butterflies, moths, flies, bees, wasps are pollinators
 - Caterpillars feed on foliage, bees and butterfly feed on flowers, wasps are carnivorous
 - Some wasps evolved into bees. Provision their nest with prey.
 - Bees are designed to pollinate and carry pollen (female-provisions her nest with pollen and nectar). Furry. They actively transport pollen-like a Swiffer, the pollen sticks to them! Really beneficial for plants. They become more efficient with flowers as they repeat visiting the same kind of flowers.
 - Forage is important for habitat and for food.
 - There is a tremendous diversity of wild bees. 4000+ species of wild bees in USA. They differ by size, colors, patterns, texture (fuzzy or shiny), tiny or large, black or colorful.

- Research shows wild pollinators can help fruit set twice as effectively as honey bees. Because they have different behaviors such as waking up earlier or buzz pollination (tomatoes and eggplants, for example) Honey bees can't buzz.
- Kelly used to be a beekeeper for ARS. Fascinating animals. But they require someone to take care of them, they suffer lots of pests and diseases and problems and depend on a beekeeper.
- Don't think about native bees being an insurance program for honey bees, think of honey bees as insurance for native bees.
- Bumble bees-25% are at threat for extinction, many of the same problems as honey bees.
- Monarchs-one of many butterfly species. 17% of all butterfly species in N.A. are at risk.
- Since 1970, there has been a decline of 50% in vertebrate populations on Earth. Alarming!
- 90% native bees are solitary. They don't have helpers! Most are single mom homes. Males don't even sleep in the nest.
- 70% are ground nesters. Looks like ant nests from above.
- It's really hard to create ground nests, so we have to protect them where they exist. Pivotal.
- Bee nests are lined with waxy glandular secretions to resist flooding.
- 30% of native bees nest in tunnels, plant stems, hollow spots in wood, available cavities
- Leaf cutter bees, mason bees (*Osmia*) are native bees.
- To put together one pollen ball, the female needs to visit thousands of flowers.
- Bumble bees are social and annual, they don't overwinter. Sweet gentian is an example of a flower that requires buzz pollination. For the bee who visits, the reward is sweet nectar.

❖ Creating New Habitat

- Shelter-nest sites, refuge, overwintering
- Food-nectar pollen and host plants (caterpillars)
- Protection-BMPs
- Bumble bee nests need to be protected-maintain field borders, unmown areas
- Ground nesting bees like warm sunny spaces of exposed soil
- Reduce tillage, retain snags are practices that help
- Maintain canes, stumps, and rotting logs, pithy stems
- Might not see them but they might be there.
- Plant selection-focus on permanent plants and succession of bloom periods across season, pesticide free
- Xerces provides a service to analyze land as habitat for pollinators
- Seed lists suggest seeds that are sometimes too expensive or hard to get; or hard to get seeds not treated with pesticides.
- At the end of the season, don't mow-leave the stems and seeds! The mulch contains larvae and also birds use the mulch.
- High value trees and shrubs: serviceberry, sumac, button bush, elderberry
- Plant hedgerows -very helpful for pollinators
- 96% birds feed their young with caterpillars
- Ephemeral wildflowers-wildflowers that appear only for a short time and are very fragile-spring beauty, wild geranium, VA bluebells, trout lily, all very useful to native bees

- Pesticides-neonics are most popular now, systemic and harmful in small doses, as well as many others. Database on their website: <https://pesticideimpacts.org/>
- Some organic approved pesticides are toxic. Pyrethrins, spinosad, beauveria bassiana (pathogenic fungus)
- Some insecticidal soaps can also harm bees

- ❖ Examples of NRCS-Environmental Quality Information Program (EQIP)-standards of practice
 - Look them up by number-conservation cover (327); Hedgerows Practice standards (422); cover crops (340), much more. (buckwheat is a huge one for fallow fields). All can be eligible for financial assistance!
 - Focus is to boost pollinator use
 - Using Farm Bill Practices-many more available on their website or email Kelly. She can share the pdfs
- ❖ In NJ, they just passed a bill that requires DoT to use native plants along roads. Xerces has best practices for highways managers as well as ground crews
- ❖ Kelly will send Mary the publications to share with the group.
- ❖ Kelly will share the contact information for the Xerces regional specialists.
- ❖ Tentative future meeting dates: 3/14/18, 4/11/18, 5/9/18, 6/13/18, 7/11/18, 8/8/18, 9/12/18, and 10/10/18.
- ❖ Our meetings are each second Wednesday of the month at 1 PM EDT.