Tribal Pesticide Program Council Spring 2023

Spotlight on Endangered Pollinators

Importance of Pollinators

Pollinators such as birds, bats, butterflies and moths, native bees, and non-native honeybees are necessary for the planet's ecosystems, and provide a crucial service for both wild and cultivated flowering plants. It has been estimated that almost 90% of wild flowering plants and 75% of food crops rely on pollination to produce seeds and fruits, so it's not an overstatement to say that most wildlife and humans rely on the health of pollinator populations. Yet often people don't understand or acknowledge the important contribution of these species in relation to the natural and human systems that support us.

Threats

Studies show that pollinator populations are declining worldwide. Habitat loss due to agriculture, mining and other types of human development are having a detrimental impact on pollinator survival. Pesticides used to improve agricultural yields can have an adverse effect on pollinators, and often remain in the environment to affect future generations of pollinators. Invasive species spread around the globe by human movements can negatively impact pollinator populations through competition, predation, and other negative interactions. Climate change is also altering ecosystems and making it harder for pollinators to find suitable habitat to live and reproduce.

Species Affected

A wide variety of animal species can serve as pollinators, but the main players are birds, bats, and various insects such as native and non-native bees, butterflies, and moths. Over the past decade or so huge declines have been widely reported in populations of European honeybees, which are used in commercial pollination of food crops. While this is undoubtedly important, our native pollinators also provide crucial services to agriculture in addition to natural ecosystems, with some of them like native bees actually more effective than honeybees at pollinating many popular crops. And many of these native pollinators are also facing challenges that often go unreported. While we have all heard about the plight of the iconic monarch butterflies,

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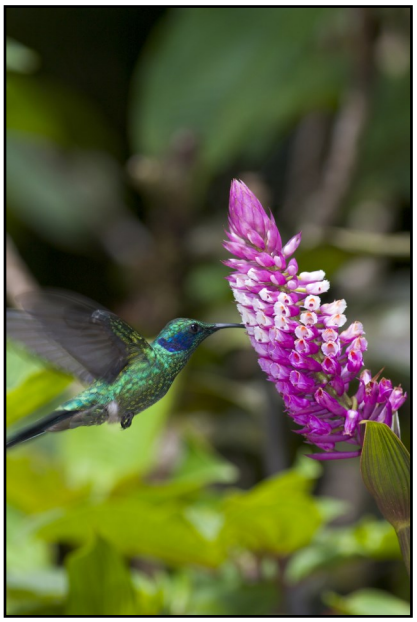
Endangered Pollinators *(continued)*



fewer people are aware that insects as a whole are facing huge population crashes due to many of the same factors affecting honeybees. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has recently indicated that several species of bumblebees, for example, which are highly effective pollinators, may need to be protected under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) due to dramatic population declines across the country. Bats are another group of species that provide pollination services to a variety of native plants, as well as the agave used to make tequila. More than half of the bat species in the U.S. are in severe decline or listed as endangered under the ESA.

What We Can Do to Help

Many of the factors impacting pollinators today are large-scale, national or even global phenomena such as destructive land-use patterns and climate change. Individuals can do their part to reduce their contributions to these problems through modifying their buying habits, reducing energy usage, etc.; but significant change will require persuading elected officials to implement policies that address the root issues. For a more direct and local impact, however, a great way to help pollinators is to make your yard into a haven for wildlife. Consider removing lawns and non-native ornamental plants and replacing them with native species used by local pollinators. It's also helpful to consider how you manage weeds and pests in your yard or garden, and see if there are ways you can reduce or eliminate harmful chemicals that can impact pollinators. Integrated pest management (IPM) is an approach to controlling pests that looks at all options for treating pest problems, starting with preventing them from becoming established in the first place, and prioritizes non-chemical means of treatment with pesticides used only as a last resort. There are lots of online resources to help you plant a native garden and manage it in a way that will make it a haven for pollinators and other native wildlife. See below for some examples. Happy gardening!

https://xerces.org/pollinator-conservation/pollinator-friendly-plant-lists

https://pollinator.org/guides

https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/campaigns/native_pollinators/pdfs/NativePollinatorGardeningGuide11-17-2014.pdf

https://www.usda.gov/peoples-garden/gardening-advice/ipm

TPPC SPRING MEETING RECAP

March 8-10, Arlington, VA

The TPPC met for 3 days of presentations, strategic planning and lively discussion on March 8-10 in Arlington, VA.

Presentations included:

National Marine Fisheries Service: Endangered Species Consultations and Species Determinations

Sustainable Food Lab Project: Working to Promote Sustainable Food Production in North Dakota

Gila River Indian Community-NEW Smartphone App for Aerial Application Notifications

Check out all the presentations on the TPPC Website.

https://tppcwebsite.org/meetings/

Updates and Announcements

Conferences & Meetings

Full SFIREG Meeting

SFIREG will hold it's semi-annual full meeting on June 2 (virtual) and June 5-7 in Jackson, TN. For more information see https://aapco.org/2015/07/30/sfireg-3/

Tribal Lands and Environment Forum

The Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals will be hosting its annual Tribal Lands and Environment Forum from August 14-17 in Syracuse, NY. Proposals for presentations are being accepted through May 19. For more information about the conference please visit https://sites.google.com/view/tlef2023/home

Trainings & Courses

Enforcement PIRT

The State of Massachusetts will host an Enforcement & Use Concerns Pesticide Inspector Residential Training (PIRT) on May 8-12 in Northampton, MA. For more information visit https://www.epa.gov/compliance/pesticide-inspector-residential-training-pirt

Federal Certification Training for Private Applicators of RUPs within Indian Country

The EPA will be holding its quarterly training for private applicators of restricted use pesticides (RUPs) virtually on May 10-11. For more information visit https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-applicator-certification-indian-country/training-private-applicators-under-epa-plan

Comprehensive WPS PREP

The Pesticide Regulatory Education Program (PREP) Network will provide a Comprehensive Worker Protection Standard course on June 26-29 in Davis, CA. For more information see https://agsci.colostate.edu/agbio/prep/comprehensive-wps-course/

Basic Pesticide and Use Concerns PIRT

The North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services will host a Basic Pesticide and Use Concerns PIRT on July 31-August 4 in Asheville, NC. For more information visit https://www.epa.gov/compliance/pesticide-inspector-residential-training-pirt

Federal Certification Training for Private Applicators of RUPs within Indian Country

The EPA will be holding its quarterly training for private applicators of RUPs virtually on August 9-10. For more information visit https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-applicator-certification-indian-country/training-private-applicators-under-epa-plan

Basic PIRT

The Georgia Department of Agriculture will host a Basic PIRT on August 21-24 in Savannah, GA. For more information see https://www.epa.gov/compliance/pesticide-inspector-residential-training-pirt

Compliance PREP

The PREP Network will provide a compliance and enforcement management course on August 28-31 in Denver, CO. For more information see https://agsci.colostate.edu/agbio/prep/compliance-and-enforcement-management-course/

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The TPPC is a member-based organization with more than 78 members from 45 Tribes and tribal organizations as of January 2023, whose activities are funded by a cooperative agreement with the EPA. The Council serves as a tribal technical resource, and provides a forum for dialogue between Tribes and the EPA on program and policy development relating to pesticides issues and concerns. Assistance provided to Tribes includes support in building tribal pesticide programs and conducting pesticide education and training, and the preparation of resources for Tribes interested in specialized issues such as Integrated Pest Management and pollinators. Through its interaction with the EPA, the TPPC keeps Tribes informed of developments in the regulation of pesticides and pesticide use, and provides feedback to the EPA on such matters from a tribal perspective (though it is important to note that communication between the EPA and the TPPC does not substitute for direct government-to-government consultation).

For information about how to join the TPPC, contact Mark Daniels at mark.daniels@nau.edu or (928) 523-8897.