# Pollinators in our Communities



#### Thanks to NACD members for supporting healthy, beautiful communities!

...and many excellent scientists, conservationists, and farmers

#### Financial support from

- Xerces Society Members
- NRCS East National Tech Center
- Turner Foundation
- Disney Worldwide Conservation Fund
- C.S. Fund
- Whole Foods Market & their vendors
- Organic Valley FAFO
- Organic Farming Research Foundation
- Nat'l Institute of Food & Agric., USDA
- Cinco
- Clif Bar Family Foundation
- Alice C. Tyler Perpetual Trust
- Sarah K. de Coizart Article TENTH
   Perpetual Charitable Trust
- The Edward Gorey Charitable Trust
- EarthShare (CFC #18360)
- Endangered Species Chocolate
- The Metabolic Studio
- The Ceres Foundation
- & many others...



## Talk Outline



#### Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation partnering with NRCS

Xerces-NRCS partner biologists support pollinator habitat protection and creation with Farm Bill Programs, which benefits other beneficial insects and wildlife

Since 1971, the Xerces Society has worked to protect wildlife through the conservation of invertebrates and their habitat.

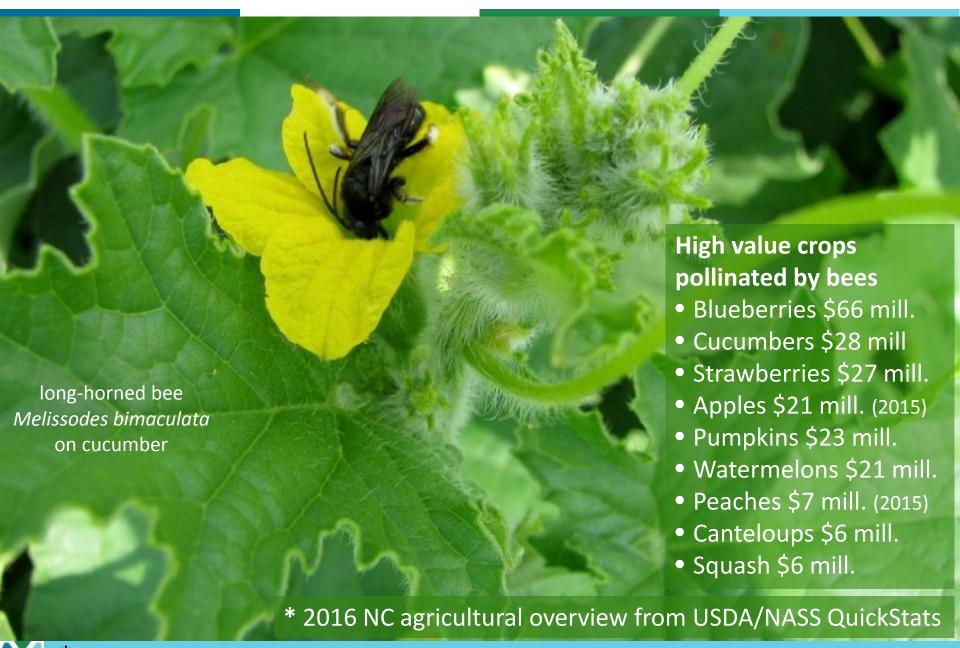


Xerces blue butterfly (*Glaucopsyche xerces*), the first U.S. butterfly to go extinct due to human activities.

www.xerces.org

meadow near Carthage, NC

# Importance of Pollinators: NC Agriculture Example\*



\*https://www.nass.usda.gov/

**Photo: Nancy Adamson** 

## Importance of Pollinators: NC Agriculture Example\*

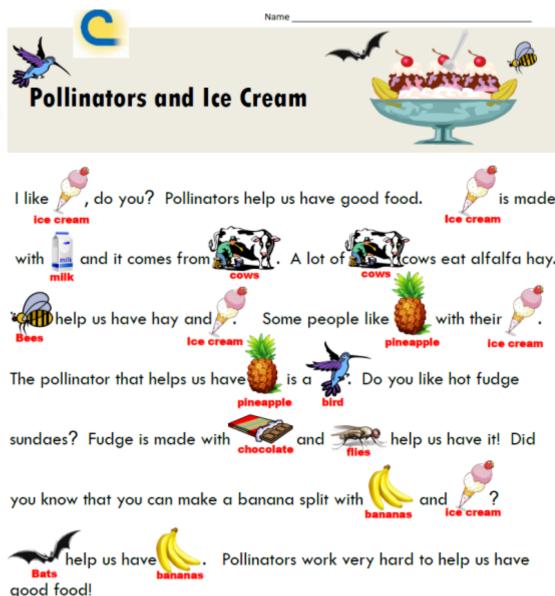


#### Importance of Pollinators: Pollinators and Ice Cream!



# Stewardship Materials c/o NACD

http://www.nacdnet.org
/generalresources/stewardshipand-educationmaterials/2015-localheroes-hard-working-bee
pollinators/



## Pollinator habitat also supports insects beneficial for pest control

**Conservation Biological Control**: The estimated value of pest control by wild insects is \$4.5–12 billion annually for U.S. crops, and \$100 billion worldwide.



#### Common Beneficial Insects (Arthropods & Others)

#### **Pollinators**

Bees, flies, wasps, beetles, butterflies, moths, ...

#### **Insect Predators**

Beetles, bugs, flies, lacewings, solitary & social wasps...

#### **Insect Parasitoids**

Solitary wasps, tachinid flies...

#### **Non-insects**

Spiders, harvestmen, centipedes, mites, pseudoscorpions, nematodes, entomopathogenic fungi, ...

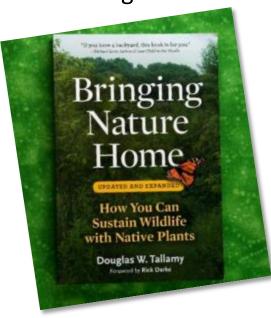
lacewing larva eating milkweed aphids (among mummies parasitized by wasps)



#### Bugs drive the system—more than 85% of plants require pollinators

#### **Benefits to Other Wildlife:**

- Pollinator-produced fruits and seeds comprise 25% of the global bird and mammal diets
- Pollinators=food for other wildlife
- Pollinator habitat supports other wildlife, such as songbirds





Ollerton, J., R. Winfree, and S. Tarrant. 2011. How many flowering plants are pollinated by animals? Oikos 120: 321-326. World Wide Fund for Nature and Zoological Society of London (ZSL). 2014. Living Planet Report 2014. <a href="http://bit.ly/1ssxx5m">http://bit.ly/1ssxx5m</a>





#### 2016 UN report highlights continued threats to pollinators & food supply

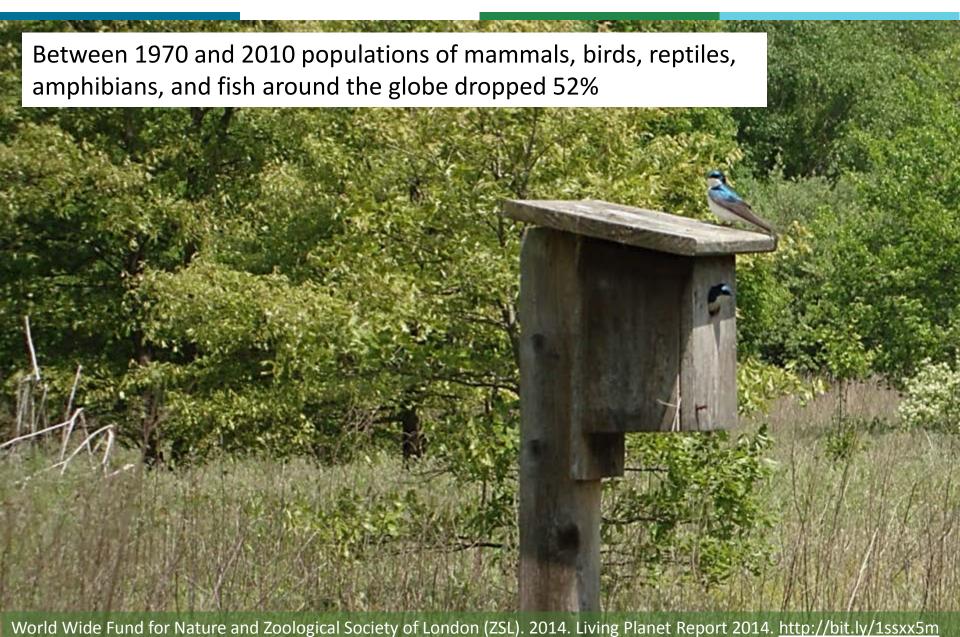
# Large scale loss of pollinator diversity

- 16.5% of vertebrate pollinators threatened with extinction globally.
- >40% of invertebrate pollinator species facing extinction, particularly bees and butterflies



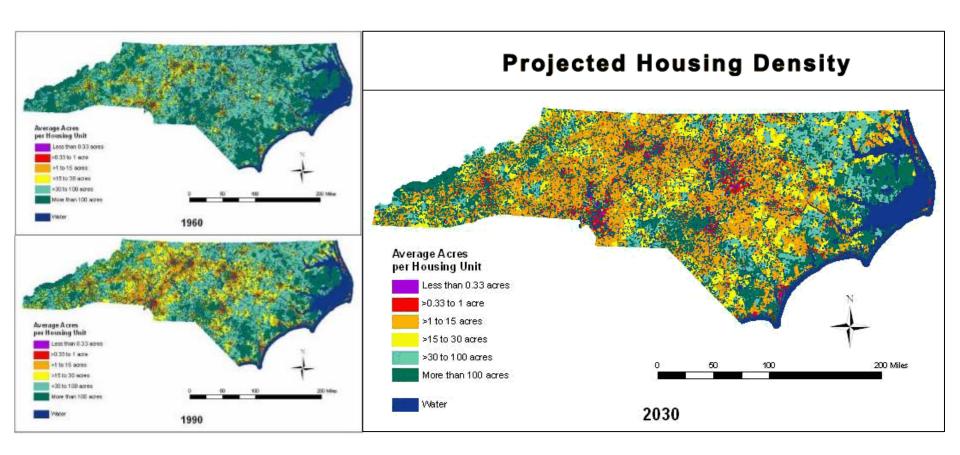
Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) <a href="http://www.ipbes.net/article/press-release-pollinators-vital-our-food-supply-under-threat">http://www.ipbes.net/article/press-release-pollinators-vital-our-food-supply-under-threat</a>

# Overall decline in wildlife populations around the globe



# ♥ital to protect and create habitat in our gardens and landscapes!

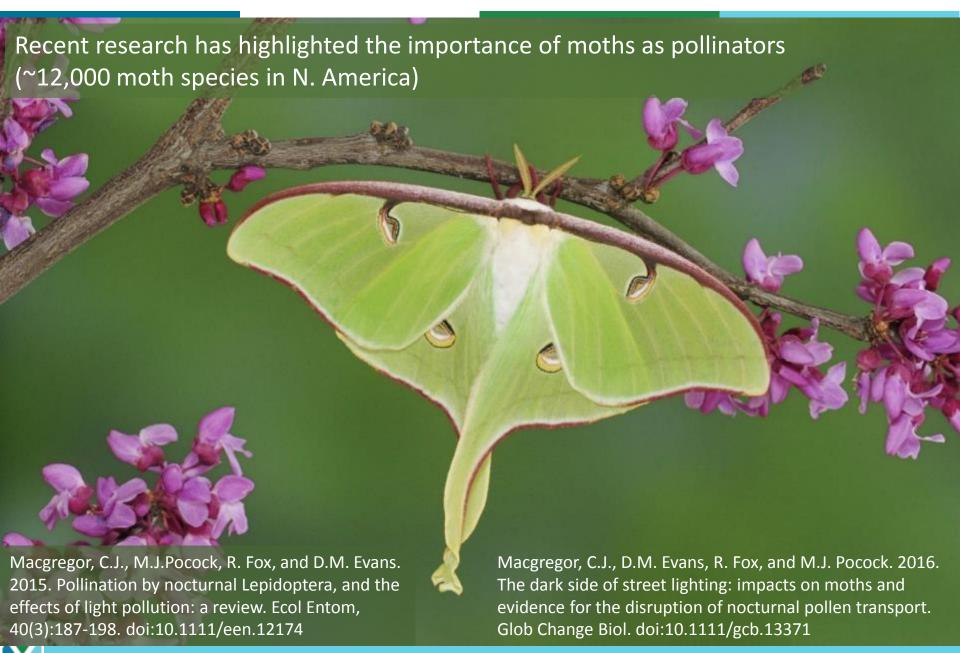
Ex.: North Carolina housing density in 1960 and 1990, and projected density in 2030.



Maps courtesy of the Conservation Trust of North Carolina and Dr. Volker Radeloff, University of Wisconsin-Madison, published in the NC Wildlife Resources Commission Green Growth Toolbox <a href="http://www.ncwildlife.org/Conserving/Programs/GreenGrowthToolbox/WhyGreenGrowth.aspx">http://www.ncwildlife.org/Conserving/Programs/GreenGrowthToolbox/WhyGreenGrowth.aspx</a>.



# tight pollution reducing moth pollen transport



# Climate change impact on pollinators—protecting corridors is vital!



# How can we better support pollinators & other insects?



#### Diverse flowers and structure is best--wildflowers, shrubs, and trees

Crop pollination by wild bees and natural enemy activity is greater in landscapes with diverse habitats

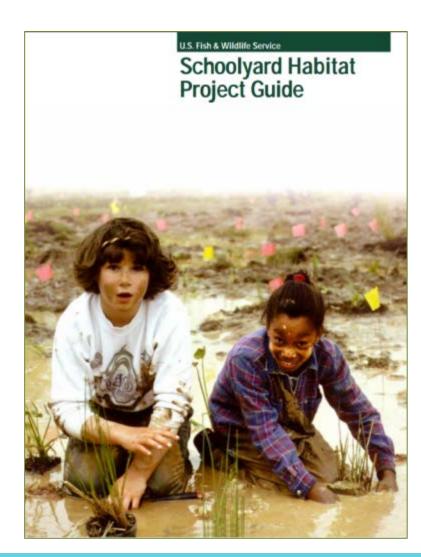


Bianchi, F. J. J. A., C. J. H. Booij, and T. Tscharntke. 2011. Sustainable pest regulation in agricultural landscapes: a review on landscape composition, biodiversity and natural pest control. *Proc. R. Soc. B* 273: 1715-1727. Forehand, L. M., D. B. Orr, and H. M. Linker. 2006. Insect communities associated with beneficial insect habitat plants in North Carolina. *Environmental Entomology* 35 (6): 1541-159.

# Community & Schoolyard Habitat Resources

Maryland's Department of Natural Resources has created a great set of resources, working closely with the USFWS and Chesapeake Bay Trust

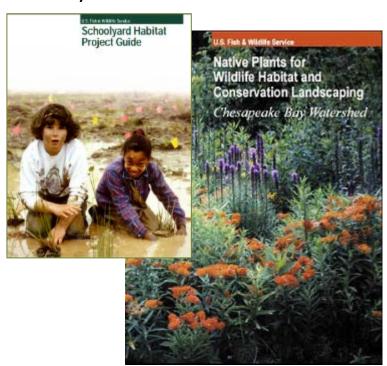
- **Set up a Habitat Team** Who will help with implementation?
- Create a Vision What are your site goals?
- Survey Existing Elements What do you already have in place? What can be improved upon?
- Assemble a Plan What needs to be accomplished? What is your budget and timeframe? Where can you find the resources needed to complete your project?
- Assemble the Elements Where can you find materials? How will you engage students and volunteers in the creation of the project?
- Integrate Learning What outdoor learning opportunities will students engage in? How can these activities fit in with classroom learning?
- Ensure Continued Success How will the site be maintained? Who will monitor the site? How can parents get involved?

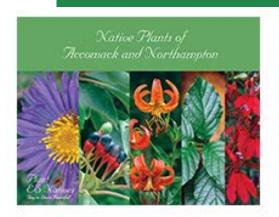


## Inspiration: Community & Schoolyard Habitat Resources

Chesapeake Bay Trust—Provides grants for restoration projects, environmental education, and community engagement and outreach

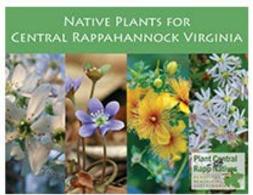
License-plate funded grant program--Mini-grants w/match (in-kind) Wetlands mitigation funds targeted at schoolyard habitat creation













Virginia Native
Plant Promo
www.PlantVirginia
Natives.org

#### Ex. Partnership: Proactive Native Plants for Beauty Campaign by Virginia DEQ

#### Regional Native Plant Marketing Campaigns

In spring 2009, the Virginia Coastal Zone Management (CZM) Program and its partners launched the *Plant ES Natives* campaign using proven social marketing tools and techniques with a focus on making planting natives fun, easy and popular. It has been a model for development of other regional campaigns initiated and funded by the Virginia CZM Program - *Plant NOVA Natives*, *Plant NNK Natives*, and *Plant Central Rapp Natives*. Components of the *Plant ES Natives* Campaign strategy, such as a regional plant guide, have been easily transferrable to address barriers common in all the regions to planting natives. Each region however is unique and the planning teams are continuously evaluating which place-based approaches are most effective in reaching their gardening population.











Local and beautiful messaging fits with local ag support!



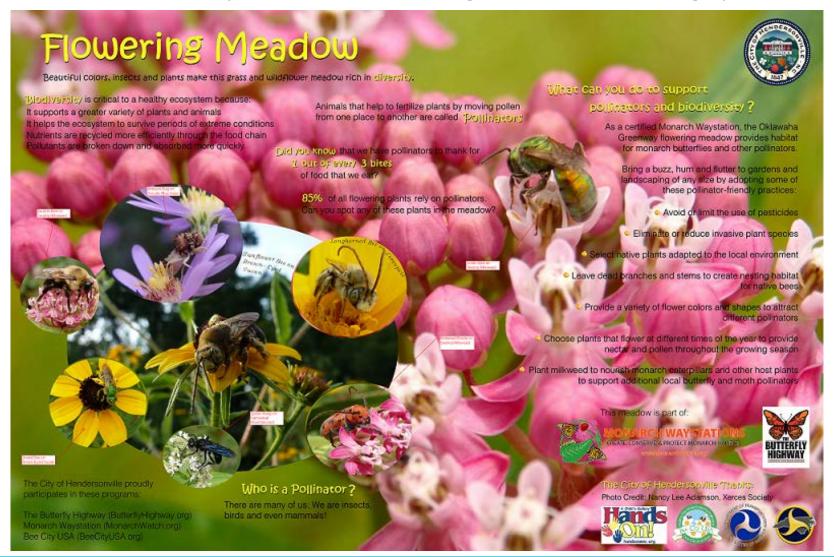
## Involve the grounds crew from the get-go for long term success

One of the hardest lessons to implement can be ensuring the landscape/ground maintenance team is part of the planning team—this benefits long term management



## Signage can be interactive

Signs start conversations, let people know unmown areas are cared for (intentional), can be interactive (link to podcasts, factsheets...games) & acknowledge partnerships



#### Art can be the best teacher & community builder

250 children from several schools made a journey across Black Mountain, NC, created art and haiku for an exhibit at the butterflies' destination (90% symbolized their loss)



Thanks to teacher Libba Tracy, the Black Mountain Center for the Arts, Bring Back the Monarchs Black Mtn!

## Art can be the best teacher & community builder

One of the art pieces & haiku





# Get to know and love your pollinators (kids can help us all with this)



#### Pollinators: Agricultural focus is bees--the great pollen movers

Bee diet (pollen & nectar) & hairiness make them especially effective pollinators bumble bee on squash

NEW: integrated crop pollination video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yMP5dTDRi6g

## Native bee diversity

>3,600 native bee species in the US—most are solitary species, not colonial



Specialist bees eat pollen only from one genus or family, but may collect nectar from other plants. Solitary bees *are not defensive* around their nests--no sisters, young larvae, or queen to protect. No bees, wasps or other insects are defensive on flowers—they fly away or hide if you approach.

#### Help educate your communities: Bees & wasps on flowers fly away

Only social bees and wasps are defensive near their nests—they have young larvae, a queen, and sisters living together



## Our main group of native social bees: Bumble bees, Bombus spp.

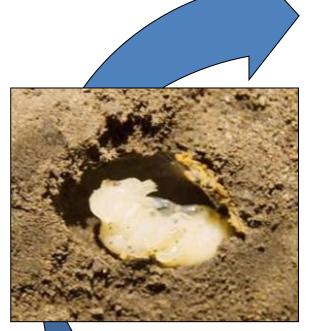


- 45 species in U.S.
- Social colonies founded by single queen
- Annual colonies--last only one season
- Nest may contain 25-400 workers
- Nests in abandoned rodent burrows or under lodged grasses

Conserve brush piles, un-mowed areas



# Life cycle of a solitary bee--ground-nesting species





Mining bee (Andrena sp.): a year in its underground nest as egg, larva, and pupa before emerging to spend a few weeks as an adult.



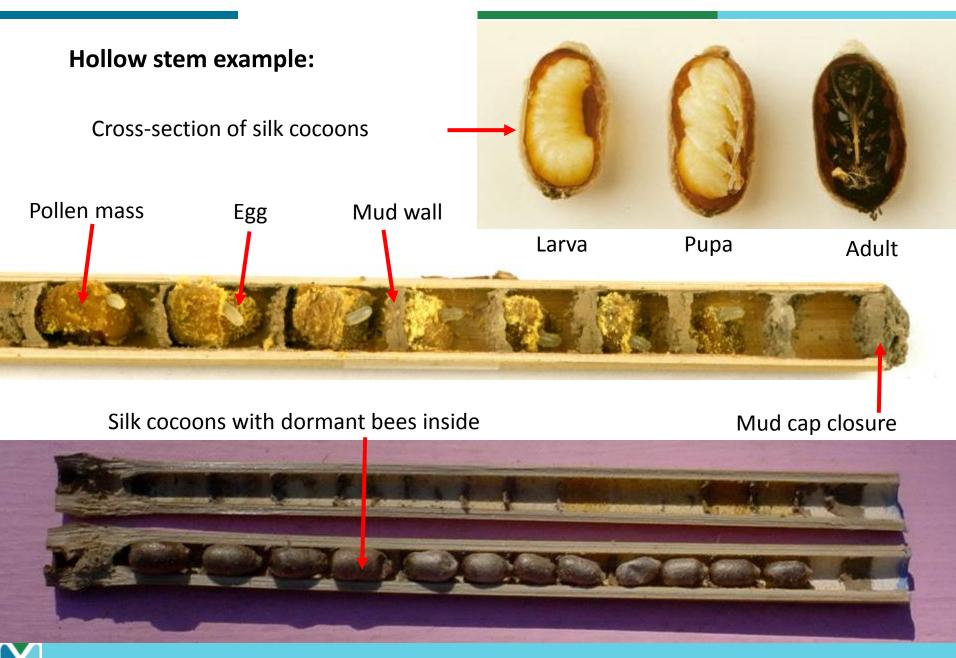




70 % of native bees are solitary and nest underground



# Life cycle of a solitary bee--cavity or tunnel nesting species



# 30% are solitary and nest in cavities (natural or provided)



## Help educate your communities: Solitary vs. social (or colonial) bees & wasps

**Solitary bees and wasps are single moms**—they collect food, lay an egg, seal closed the cell; repeat. They never see their young. No queen or live young to defend. No sisters to replace them. **Never defensive! Fun & safe to observe up close!** 



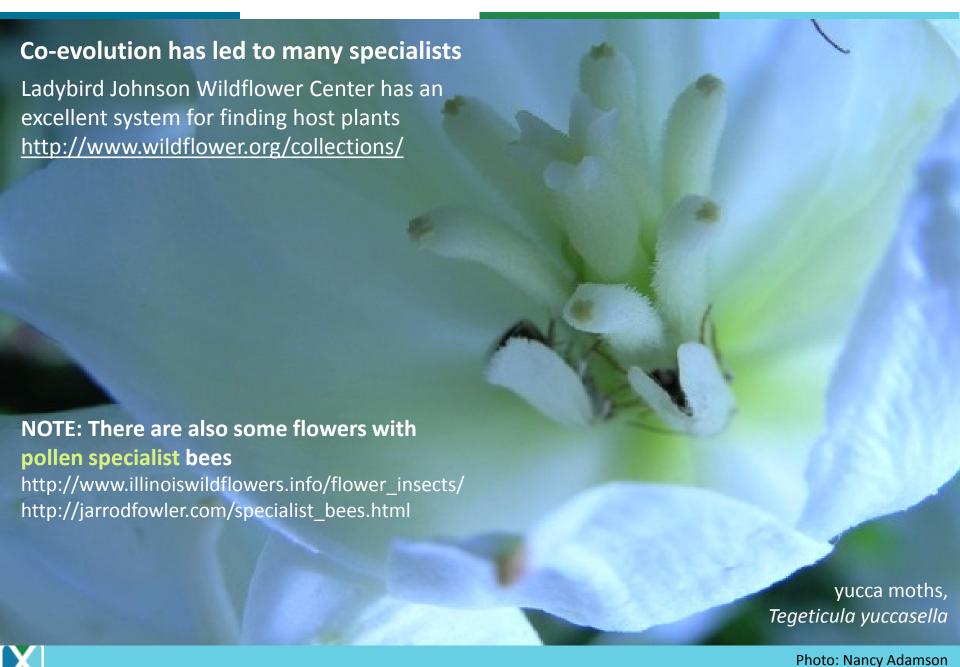
# Other cavity-nesters: solitary predatory & parasitoid wasps—not defensive!



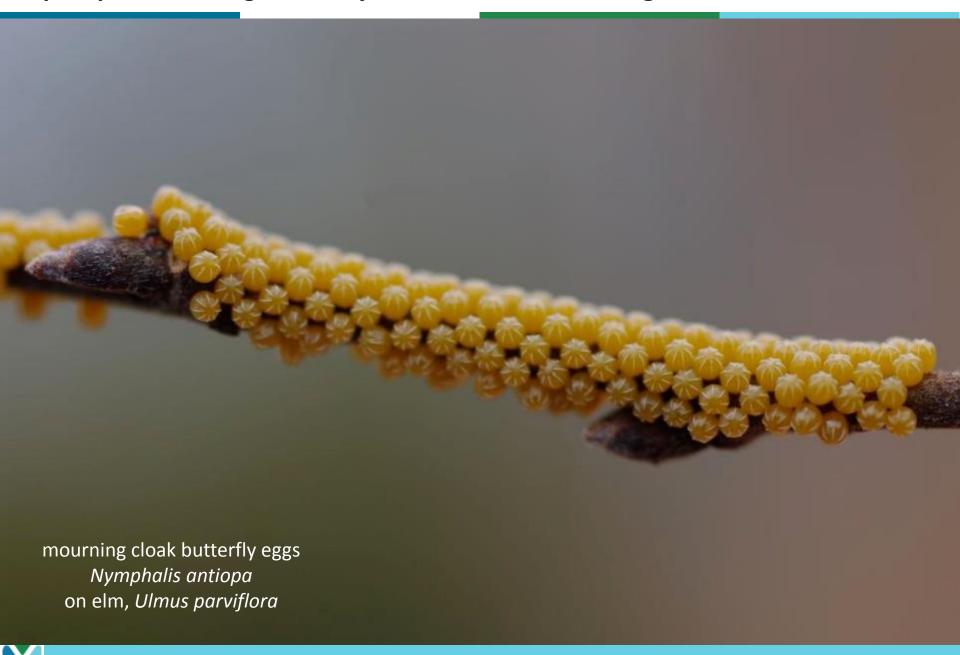
# Lepidoptera food needs: Adults need nectar plants



# Lepidoptera food needs: Many caterpillars are host specific



# Lepidoptera nesting—as easy to miss as bees nesting...more fire sensitive



# Remember: It's easy to miss some of the life we're supporting...





# Reducing harm from neonicotinoids & other pesticides

- Avoid prophylactic use
- Avoid applying before or during bloom
- Avoid repeat annual use, esp. in perennial crops (applications can persist 4-5 years)
- NOTE: Some recommended neonic product rates on household vs. ag products 100X ag rates, so lethal (homeowners don't realize home products less regulated than ag)
- Stop "cosmetic" (vs. ag) use (<a href="http://www.beecityusa.org/">http://www.beecityusa.org/</a>)



# Habitat through the growing season—native trees, shrubs, and wildflowers



Pollinators, predators, & parasitoids need **food (nectar, pollen, or prey) and refuge** when crops are harvested or pesticides used.



# Common cover crops, herbs, & annuals for beneficials



#### **Cover crops**

- Legumes: red, white, crimson clover; Austrian winter pea; alfalfa; alfalfa, vetch, soybean
- **Broadleaf forbs**: buckwheat, phacelia
- Grasses: rye, oats, Sudangrass

#### Herbs

- Annual: basil, borage, tulsi (holy basil), dill, cilantro
- **Perennial**: catmint, spearmint, oregano, sage

#### **Annuals**

 Annual sunflower, zinnia, cosmos, scarlet sage



# Help educate your community: About pollen and allergies



**Photo: Nancy Adamson** 

## Help educate your community: About pollen and allergies

Plants that cause hay fever are wind pollinated, with dry light pollen

- Trees in spring such as pine and oak
- Grasses when in flower in spring and early summer such as ryegrass and Timothy
- Herbaceous plants in fall such as ragweed
- Molds/fungal spores depending on weather conditions



Bees and other pollinators may collect pollen and nectar from some wind pollinated plants.

## Help educate your community: About pollen and allergies

Plants needing a pollinator have sticky, heavy pollen

You will never see an insect pollinated plant (such as apple or goldenrod) listed in the newspaper's pollen forecast



See goldenrod pollination video at <a href="http://www.discoverlife.org/goldenrod/">http://www.discoverlife.org/goldenrod/</a>

# Unmown grass covers (not just corn) provide food and shelter

**Cool & warm season grasses are multipurpose:** Fibrous-rooted, some deep-rooted, attract beneficials, provide green manure & living mulch



#### **CAUTION:** Keep adjacent crops or crop rotation in mind

Dunbar, M.W., O'Neal, M.E. and Gassmann, A.J. 2016. Increased risk of insect injury to corn following rye cover crop. Journal of Economic Entomology, 1-7. DOI: 10.1093/jee/tow101.

## Native plants support natural enemies of pests

Sand wasps feed brown marmorated stink bugs to their young (research in progress at Penn. State University)

Nectar sources include milkweed (*Asclepias* spp.), mountain mint (*Pycnanthemum* spp.) & spotted bee balm (*Monarda punctata*); **solitary wasps** not defensive







PENNSTATE

College of Agricultural Sciences

# Simply leaving fallow areas can support pollinators & increase production

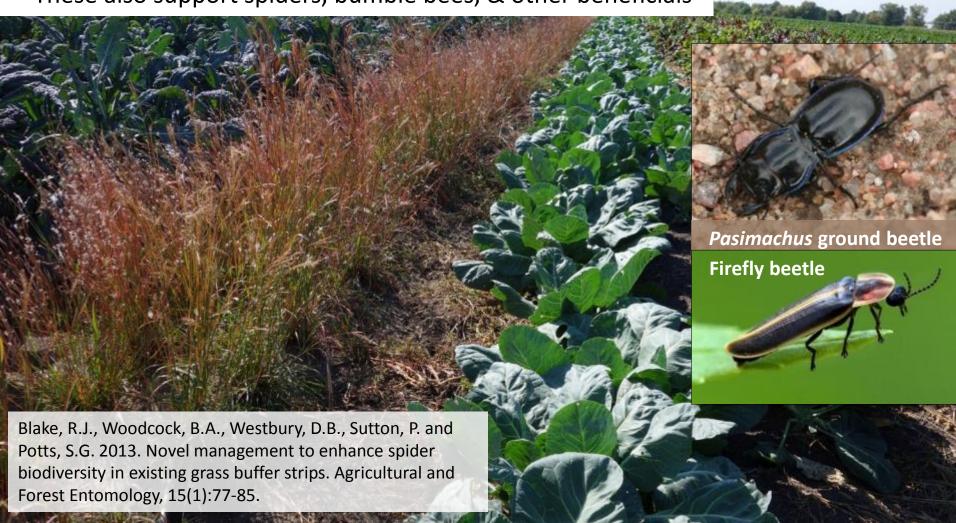


## Beetle banks with perennial grasses reduce weed pressure & reduce pests

#### **Example: Grinnell Heritage Farm Beetle Bank, Iowa**

Permanent native grass strips intercropped with vegetables

These also support spiders, bumble bees, & other beneficials

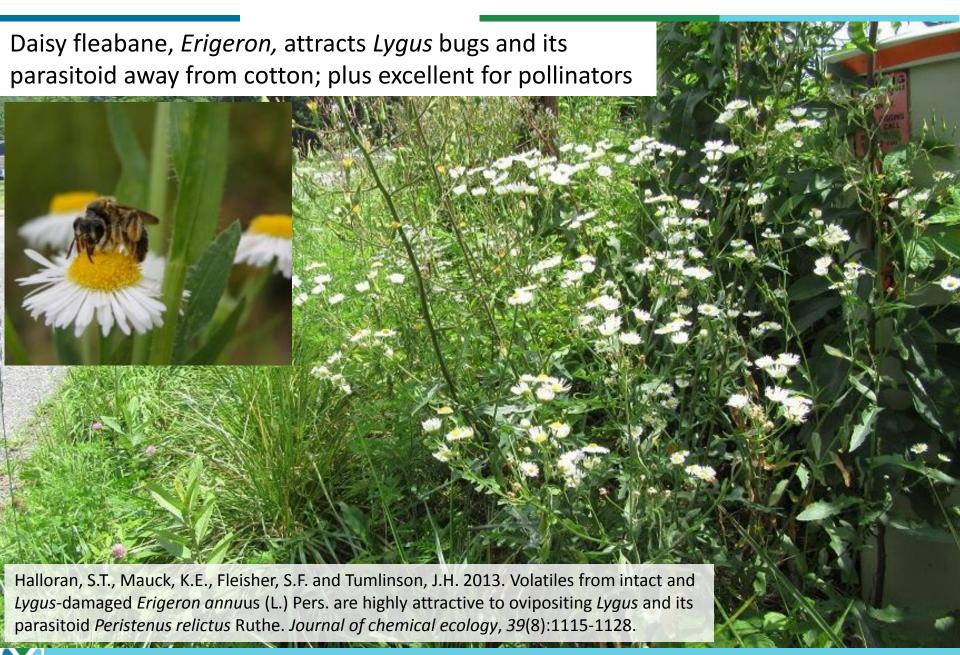


## Reduce tillage or tillage depth to support groundnesters

- Tillage negatively impacts both larval & adult ground beetles that eat weed seeds
- Tilled areas reduced egg-laying rate by female ground beetles
- Reducing tillage also benefits groundnesting bee populations



# Messy" edges provide great habitat (add a habitat sign!)



# Grasses are host plants, provide shelter, and are fuel for prescribed fire





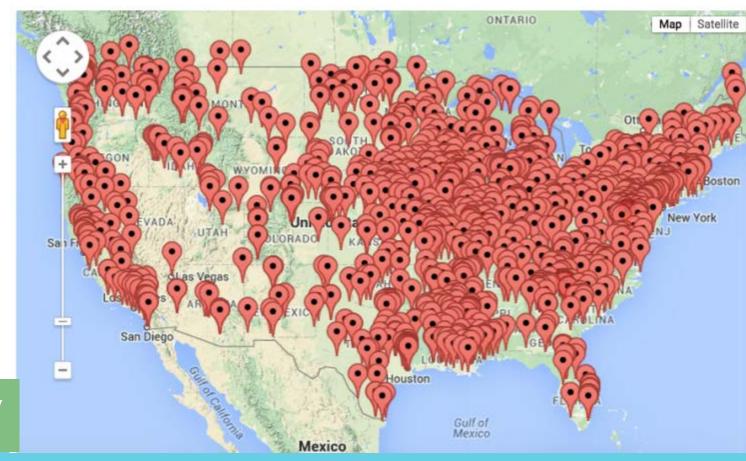
# The People's Garden Initiative\*

A collaborative effort of over 700 local and national organizations all working together to establish community and school gardens across the country.\*

NRCS Plant Materials Centers established demonstration gardens and technical resources at <a href="http://go.usa.gov/3PVzd">http://go.usa.gov/3PVzd</a>

- Plants for insects and pollinators
- Community garden guides
- Urban conservation and sustainable landscaping

Find a Garden in Your Area



\*Started by Secretary Vilsack in 2009

# The Million Pollinator Garden Challenge



Home

lee Counter

Partner

Resources

FAQs C

LET'S M VE

In parallel with the White House's Pollinator Health Task Force, Michelle Obama launched this challenge in 2015 when students from "Let's Move" organizations around the country came to help harvest vegetables from the White House Kitchen Garden.

Let's Move encourages children and their families to eat healthy & get active.



Plant a <u>pollinator</u> <u>garden</u>



Support pollinator friendly businesses



Register your Garden to BEE Counted



Plant sustainably

Reduce or eliminate the impact of pesticides on



Keep an eye out for free seeds



Spread the word

Let everyone know you've taken on the Million



#### Further Information: the Xerces Society

#### www.xerces.org

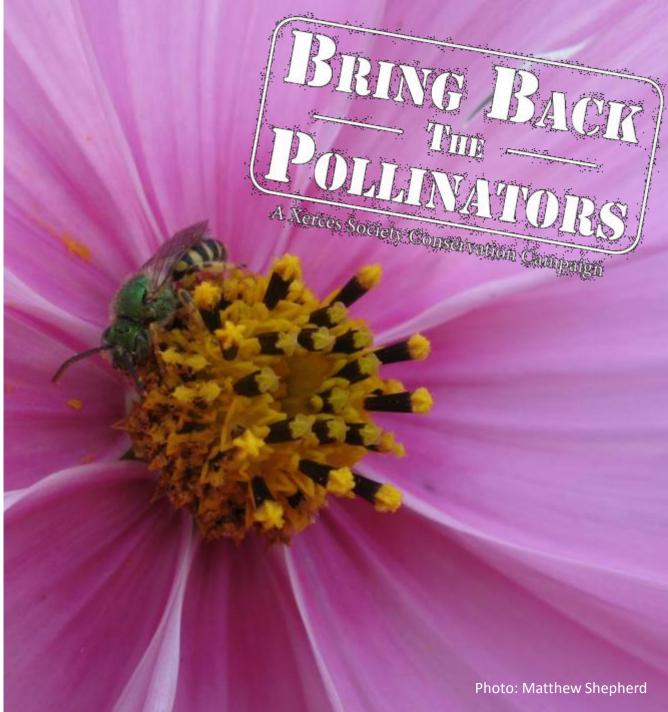




# Three Steps You Can Take to Bring Back the Pollinators

- 1. Sign the Pollinator Protection Pledge.
- Install a Pollinator Habitat sign.
- 3. Spread the word!





# The Xerces Society: Citizen Science

#### Bumble Bees



#### Aquatic Invertebrates



#### Migratory Dragonflies



Overwintering Monarchs



