

## **International Pollinator Week: June 21-27, 2010**

June 21-27, 2010 has been designated International Pollinator Week and events will be held across North America, including in Guelph and Toronto, in an attempt to raise awareness of the importance of pollinators and what can be done to help them. With gardening season upon us, take time to consider how you can incorporate pollinator habitat into your yard, such as by planting pollinator-friendly native plants, making bee-nests, leaving a downed tree or branch to decompose, or providing an area of exposed soil for ground-nesting bees. Don't forget to sit back and watch the pollinators do their thing though!

## **Pollinator Day in the Garden – University of Guelph Arboretum, Sunday June 20, 2010 12noon-4pm**

Pollination Guelph will be holding their second-annual Pollinator Day in the Garden at the Gosling Gardens section of the Guelph Arboretum on Sunday, June 20, from 12noon to 4pm.

There will be lots of things to see and do, making it a very family-friendly event, and a great way to spend Father's Day. Guided tours will be led by pollination biologist Victoria MacPhail at 12:30, 1:45, and 3pm, where different types of pollinators and pollinator-friendly plants will be pointed out, and a general discussion about pollination-related topics will occur. There will be honeybee and bumble bee colonies to see up-close, coloring for the kids, educational materials for the adults, and best of all, the chance to make your own mason bee nest using materials you probably already have at home. You might even be able to go home with a free pollinator-friendly plant!



*Watch for these signs to show you the way to a fun-filled, informative day.*

## **Pollinator Week Activities in Toronto**

Guelph is not the only one celebrating International Pollinators Week; this year, there are a number of events in Toronto too. For more information on these, contact Sabrina at [sabrinamalach@gmail.com](mailto:sabrinamalach@gmail.com).

*Urban Buzz: A Tale of Three Cities:* Monday, June 21- Sunday, 27, 12pm-5pm

The Gladstone Hotel, 1214 Queen Street West, Toronto

A photography exhibit exploring the lives of bees in Toronto, NYC and the San Francisco Bay area.

*The Pollinators Cabaret:* Thursday, June 24, 6pm-11pm (phone first for availability: 416-531-4635)

The Gladstone Hotel, 1214 Queen Street West, Toronto

An evening of storytelling, poetry, song, visual art, and dance to celebrate the pollinators.

*The Pollinator's Festival,* Sunday, June 27, 10am-5:30pm

Evergreen Brickworks, 550 Bayview Ave (between the Prince Edward Viaduct (Bloor/Danforth) and Pottery Road). For public transportation info see: <http://ebw.evergreen.ca/visit/bus>.

A full day celebration of pollinators with workshops from a diverse group of educators and a marketplace with local honey, bee houses made by local artists and scientists, books and other goods. A detailed schedule can be found at <http://ebw.evergreen.ca/cal/event/international-pollinator-week>.

## **Additional Up-Coming Events**

- June 26<sup>th</sup>: Guelph Arboretum Pollinator Workshop. Call 519-824-4120 ext. 52358 to register.
- July 1<sup>st</sup>: Canada Day festivities at Riverside Park. Pollination Guelph will have a booth.
- July 4<sup>th</sup>: Garden Tour. Pollination Guelph will have a booth at 4365 Watson Road.

## Pollination Symposium a Success!

Our annual public pollination symposium was held on March 27 at the Ignatius Jesuit Centre in Guelph, with more than 77 people in attendance. It was a great success! Thanks to everyone who came out, and a big thank-you to the silent auction donors (listed below). 33 items were auctioned off, raising \$1,411.

Alison Van Alten, Tuckamore Bee  
Company  
Healthy Landscapes Program, City of  
Guelph  
Nith River Native Plants  
Peter and Sherrene Kevan  
Wild Birds Unlimited

Bookshelf  
Dave and Natasha  
Kenny  
David Atkinson  
Judy Martin  
Laura Murr  
Lee Reinhart

Lisa Conroy  
Lynn Chidwick  
Planet Bean  
Tracy McEwen  
Vicki Beard  
Vicki Marin  
Victoria MacPhail



*At least 77 people attended our 2010 symposium.*

## Eastview Landfill - Pollination Park Temporarily on Hold

Turning the Eastview Landfill into a large-scale pollination park is a major project for Pollination Guelph, and is something the board has been steadily working towards. We have our design plans and required paperwork completed, but unfortunately implementation has been temporarily put on hold for 2010. Methane produced by the landfill is currently being collected and used to generate 1% of the City's electricity needs. The City has informed us that they are going to be prospecting for more methane this summer and potentially sinking some new collection wells. As this will involve heavy machinery moving across the entire site, any plantings are likely to be destroyed. Despite our disappointment over the delay to our planting plans, we appreciate the City keeping us informed of these developments, and realize that taxpayers in the City would like to obtain as much revenue from the site as possible. We are taking the opportunity to continue fundraising so that we can get started with a bigger plot than initially planned, as soon as it is possible to begin site preparations.

## Additional Pollinator Friendly Planting Sites in Guelph

Pollination Guelph is pleased to announce that progress has been made towards securing additional sites for pollinator-friendly plantings around the City. More information will be included in upcoming newsletters, but one project we are particularly excited about will be at the Guelph Centre for Urban Organic Farming (GCUOF), at the Arboretum at the University of Guelph. The GCUOF offers a unique site to educate the general public and current and future commercial growers about the importance of pollinators and their habitat to the production of food and eco-system health. Pollination Guelph is proposing to create an ornamental pollinator habitat garden to demonstrate how to create pollinator habitat in a residential garden using native plants, and a pollinator habitat hedgerow to demonstrate how pollinator habitat can be restored and fostered in the rural landscape.

## Pollination Guelph Board of Directors Update

Our Board of Directors has recently had a slight shuffle. Bob Wildfong and Chris Earley have completed their terms on the board, and we thank them for their efforts over the past year. Lorne Widmer has taken over the position of Treasurer from Victoria MacPhail, who is continuing in her role as Director of Publicity and Public Outreach for another year. Karen Landman, Karen McKeown, and Judy Martin have all been re-appointed to their positions for a two-year term; Vicki Beard, Kevin Butt, Sean Fox, Peter Kevan, and Clare Irwin are also continuing with their positions. We now have a fundraising-committee and other committees will be established in the coming months. If you are interested in joining a committee, please let us know.



*Our group may be small, but like this bee, we do lots of cross-pollinating and sharing of ideas! (Lasioglossum sp. on marsh marigold)*

Pollination Guelph has been busy over the past few months attending special events and giving presentations about the importance of pollinators and what people can do to help. We will try to post all of the public events, and many of our handouts, on our web-site, so check it out at [www.pollinationguelph.ca](http://www.pollinationguelph.ca).

## Neat News

### *Status of Honeybees in Guelph, Ontario, and Canada*

The Discovery Channel's Daily Planet recently featured Ernesto Guzman and Paul Kelly talking about how the honeybees at the Bee Lab at the University of Guelph fared over the winter, and the status of honeybees in Canada in general. They found that the Varroa mite was the major cause of honeybee declines in Canada. This mite crawls all over the bees and sucks their haemolymph (blood), which weakens the bees and makes them susceptible to diseases. Beekeepers are doing their best to control the mite, but resistance to many of their treatments is building. Watch the clip at

<http://watch.discoverychannel.ca/daily-planet/april-2010/daily-planet---april-26-2010/#clip294530>.



The red specks on the white larvae are Varroa mites.

### *COSEWIC Committee recommends Rusty-Patched Bumble bee for 'Endangered' status in Canada*

The COSEWIC (Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada) met recently and, amongst other species, recommended the Rusty-Patched Bumble bee (*Bombus affinis*) be considered for 'Endangered' status in Canada. This used to be one of the most common bumble bees in Southern Ontario, but only three individuals at one site have been found over the past decade. For more information on bumble bees, including *Bombus affinis*, visit <http://www.xerces.org/bumblebees/>. An interesting clip from Oregon is at <http://www.opb.org/programs/ofg/segments/view/1684>: replace the western bumble-bee with the Rusty-Patched Bumble bee and everything else fits for Ontario. Quirks & Quarks also has a segment on the disappearing bumble bees here in Ontario: <http://www.cbc.ca/quirks/archives/07-08/apr26.html>.

### **What Bumble bees are in Ontario? How can I identify them?**

Bumble bees belong to the genus *Bombus*. They are a very recognizable group of bees because they are large, fuzzy and carry pollen in 'pollen baskets' on their hind legs. There are approximately 250 species of bumble bee globally and about 25 in Ontario. Bumble bees can generally be identified by the pattern and colors of hairs on their bodies, and the number of segments on their abdomens, amongst other features. <http://www.discoverlife.org/20/q?guide=Bumblebees> has an interactive guide that allows you to select the characters you know, and it will give you species suggestions and links to more information. <http://bugguide.net/node/view/3077/bgpage> has pictures of identified bumble bees, and if you have an unknown one, you can post it and have a volunteer expert identify it for you. [http://www.xerces.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/02/affinis\\_pocketid.pdf](http://www.xerces.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/02/affinis_pocketid.pdf) has diagrams of the most common bumble bees.



*Bombus ternarius*  
on a willow.

Two bumble bee species are shown in the photos on the right. *Bombus ternarius* workers have a red band across their middle, and a black open-umbrella-shaped black spot near where the wings join the body. *Bombus impatiens* workers are mostly light colored until part-way down the abdomen, when they are usually black, or sometimes with very tiny light-colored bands.



*Bombus impatiens*  
on a dandelion.

Bumble bees are able to fly in cooler temperatures and lower light levels than many other bees, and they perform a behavior called "buzz pollination," in which the bee grabs the pollen producing structure of the flower in her jaws and vibrates her wing musculature causing vibrations that dislodge pollen that would have otherwise remained trapped in the flower's anthers. Some plants, including tomatoes and peppers, require buzz pollination in order to produce fruits.

### **How You Can Help**

- Incorporate pollinator-friendly gardening practices on your property.
- Attend our Pollinator Day in the Garden event on Sunday, June 20 from 12-4pm.
- Make a donation to Pollination Guelph through a board member, in person at Guelph City Hall, or by mail to Pollination Guelph, 144 Country Club Drive, Guelph, ON N1E 3K9.
- Educate families, friends, and co-workers about the importance of pollination.