

POLLINATOR PROTECTION





Overview

Pollinators are declining rapidly due to a number of factors, including loss of habitat, loss of forage and pesticides. Some pollinators such as bumblebees and Monarch butterflies may be on the verge of extinction. Many states have enacted or are considering legislation to acquire, restore and/or protect pollinator habitat, as well as to restrict the application of pesticides and other chemicals that are harmful to pollinators.

Legislation

States have taken several approaches to protect pollinators, including:

- Encourage development or replanting of residential, farm and agency land areas with native pollinator flowering plants and habitat, such as [CT SB 231](#)
- Increasing public education through a Pollinator Week ([PA HR 924](#)) or Bee Aware Day ([NM SM 103](#))
- Restricting or prohibiting specific pesticides, such as neonicotinoids ([MD HB 211](#))
- Establishing funding for pollinator protection, such as through state license plate fees ([VA SB 434](#))

For more information, contact NCEL Conservation Coordinator, Ruth Musgrave, at ruth@ncel.net

KEY POINTS

- Pollinators are essential to at least one-third of the crops grown for human consumption. .
- In 2015-2016 alone, 44% of honeybee populations in the United States died in one season. In some states, such as Maryland, losses exceeded 60%.
- Pollinators are responsible for between \$235 and \$577 billion in crops produced worldwide.

Other Resources

- North American Pollinator Protection Campaign with research, education and project partnerships: <http://pollinator.org/nappc/index.html>
- Xerces Society's Pollinator Conservation Resource Center, with habitat conservation guides, regional plant lists and fact sheets: www.xerces.org/pollinator-resource-center/
- US Forest Service pollinator-friendly practices and strategies: <https://www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/pollinators/>
- NCSL "Pollinator Health" article on what states are doing about pollinator declines: <http://www.ncsl.org/research/environment-and-natural-resources/pollinator-health.aspx>





State legislatures have implemented a variety of solutions to protect pollinator populations and increase public awareness.

Funding



- Fund native bee and butterfly surveys and study native bees and plants, such as [MN SF 2963](#)
- Establish pollinator license plates with funds to go to pollinator health projects, such as [VA SB 434](#)
- Funding for relevant state agencies to establish a pollinator habitat plan, such as [MD HB 132](#)
- Fund task force to produce recommendations and/or strategies to protect pollinators, such as [VA SB 356](#)



Healthy Habitat

- Create a task force to study and recommend actions for pollinator health and habitat, such as [RI H8265](#)
- Encourage development or replanting of residential, farm and agency land areas with native pollinator flowering plants and habitat, such as [CT SB 231](#)
- Provide tax credits for developing native pollinator habitat on undeveloped property, such as [NJ A 4603](#)
- Support beekeepers through the preservation of forage, such as [WA HB 2478](#)

Education and Study



- Declare a Pollinator Week, or a Bee Aware Day, to educate citizens on the importance of pollinators, such as [NM SM 103](#)
- Encourage more private native flower gardens where pollinators can “detox” from pollinating pesticide-treated plants and restore immunity, such as [NJ AR 216](#)
- Encourage or require “buffer strips” of native flowering plants around pesticide-treated crops or along streams, as suggested by the [Natural Resources Conservation Service](#)



Pesticide Restrictions

- Restrict or prohibit application of neonicotinoids on public lands or in outdoor residential areas, such as [IL HB 5900](#)
- Encourage or require nurseries to label plants that are good for pollinators and/or those treated with neonicotinoids, such as [CA SB 1282](#)
- Restrict use of pesticides such as neonicotinoids by consumers, such as [MD HB 211](#)
- Require information be provided to pesticide applicators and others on how to protect pollinators, and include in applicator education for licensing exams, such as [OR HB 4139](#)

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Pollinators

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What are pollinators?

Pollinators are insects and animals that move pollen from one part of a plant to another, allowing fertilization of the plant so that fruit and seeds can be produced. Pollinators include bees, butterflies, moths, birds such as hummingbirds, several species of bat, ants, and some species of beetle and wasp. In the United States alone, there are over 4,000 species of native bees. Honey bees are not native to North America.



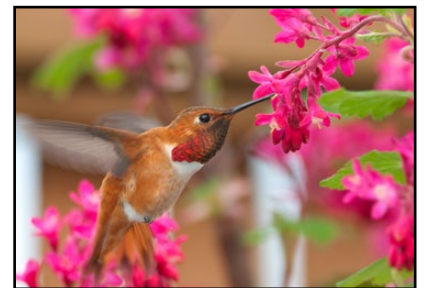
2. Why are pollinators important?

Pollinators are responsible for a full one-third of the crops that are grown for human consumption. Flowering crops cannot produce fruit and seeds without pollination. In fact, nearly 90% of all flowering plants on Earth require a pollinator to reproduce. Bees are also responsible for all the honey that is produced.



3. Why are pollinators in decline?

Pollinators are declining worldwide due to some of the factors that threaten all biodiversity. According to pollinators.org, pollinators are declining because of loss of habitat, improper use of pesticides/herbicides/fungicides, disease, parasites and invasive species. In 2015 alone, over 40% of honey bee colonies in the United States were lost. Bumblebees and Monarch butterflies may go extinct within a few years if their native flowering plants and habitats are not restored and protected.



4. Do neonicotinoids harm pollinators?

Neonicotinoids are a relatively new class of pesticide linked to pollinator decline. Research on specific types of neonicotinoids has been mixed, but many assessments show negative impact on bee navigation, reproduction, immune function and growth rates. Neonics sprayed on plants have been banned in Europe.

5. Who supports and who opposes pollinator bills?

Beekeepers, environmental and science groups, fruit-growing associations and gardeners are often strong supporters of pollinator protection bills; those in opposition sometimes include chemical companies, pest management agencies and groups, and agriculture groups such as the Farm Bureau.

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NCEL

National Caucus of
Environmental Legislators

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Pollinator Legislation as of April 1, 2017

Alaska

Bill: [HB 19](#)

Title: An Act limiting the application of neonicotinoid pesticides.

California

Bill: [SB 602](#)

Title: Pesticides: neonicotinoids: labeling.

Georgia

Bill: [HR 422](#)

Title: Ama-Kanasta Garden Club of Douglas County; 50th anniversary; commend

Hawaii

Bill: [HB 1282](#)

Title: RELATING TO INSECTICIDE AND HERBICIDE USE.

Bill: [SB 810](#)

Title: RELATING TO ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION.

Illinois

Bill: [HB 613](#)

Title: SAVING IL POLLINATORS ACT

Bill: [SB 673](#)

Title: SAVING IL POLLINATORS ACT

Massachusetts

Bill: [H 457](#)

Title: An Act to promote pollinator forage

Bill: [H 2113](#)

Title: An Act to protect Massachusetts pollinators

Bill: [H 2926](#)

Title: An Act to protect pollinator habitat

Bill: [S 451](#)

Title: An Act relative to private right of action to preserve public safety

Bill: [S 589](#)

Title: An Act to protect pollinator habitat

Maryland

Bill: [SB 1158](#)

Title: Power Plant Research Program - Solar Generation Facilities - Pollinator-Friendly Designation

Maine

Bill: [LD 993](#)

Title: An Act To Protect Pollinators From Neonicotinoid Pesticides

Minnesota

Bill: [HF 170](#)

Title: Neonicotinoid pesticide presence in wild deer study funding provided, and money appropriated.

Bill: [HF 894](#)

Title: Governor's transportation and public safety budget established, motor fuels gross receipts tax and metropolitan area transit sales and use tax imposed, bonds issued,...

Bill: [HF 1265](#)

Title: Environment and natural resources trust fund money appropriated, and requirements for receipt of fund money modified.

Bill: [HF 1461](#)

Title: Urban agriculture development pilot grant program established, and money appropriated.

Bill: [HF 1717](#)

Title: Agriculture provisions policy and technical changes made, dairy law reorganized, and conforming changes made.

Bill: [SF 550](#)

Title: Environment and natural resources trust fund appropriation and receipt of fund money requirements modification

Bill: [SF 828](#)

Title: Plants and nursery stock labeling requirements modification

Bill: [SF 884](#)

Title: Governor's transportation budget and public safety activities appropriation, bond issue and policy provisions

Bill: [SF 1317](#)

Title: Urban agriculture development pilot program establishment

Bill: [SF 1674](#)

Title: Agriculture policy and technical provisions modifications

Montana

Bill: [SB 247](#)

Title: Prohibit neonicotinoid insecticides

North Carolina

Bill: [HB 363](#)

Title: The Pollinator Protection Act.

New Jersey

Bill: [A 3397](#)

Title: Directs DEP to classify neonicotinoid pesticides as restricted use pesticides.

Bill: [A 3403](#)

Title: Designates Common Eastern Bumble Bee as New Jersey State Native Pollinator.

Bill: [A 4603](#)

Title: Provides corporation business tax credit to taxpayers that develop qualified native pollinator habitat on undeveloped property.

Bill: [A 4604](#)

Title: Provides corporation business tax credit to public utilities that develop qualified native pollinator habitat in their rights of way.

Bill: [A 4605](#)

Title: Provides corporation business tax and gross income tax credits to farmers who develop qualified native pollinator habitat on farms.

Bill: [AJR 144](#)

Title: Establishes "Healthy Pollinators Task Force."

Bill: [AR 216](#)

Title: Encourages NJ homeowners to plant native plants that support bee populations and create habitat for all pollinators.

Bill: [S 2077](#)

Title: Directs DEP to classify neonicotinoid pesticides as restricted use pesticides.

New Mexico

Bill: [SJM 4](#)

Title: POLLINATOR-FRIENDLY PLANT LABELING PROJECT

Ohio

Bill: [SB 77](#)

Title: To amend section 4501.21 and to enact section 4503.4991 of the Revised Code to create the "KylerStrong Foundation" license plate.

Oregon

Bill: [HB 2535](#)

Title: Relating to noxious weeds; declaring an emergency.

Bill: [SB 814](#)

Title: Relating to noxious weeds; declaring an emergency.

Bill: [SB 928](#)

Title: Relating to product disclosures.

Bill: [SB 929](#)

Title: Relating to pesticides.

Texas

Bill: [HB 1535](#)

Title: Relating to the prohibition of certain pesticides on public road rights-of-way.

Bill: [HB 2600](#)

Title: Relating to the establishment of the Bee Pollinator Goals Task Force to develop and report on statewide pollinator goals.

Vermont

Bill: [H 229](#)

Title: An act relating to regulation of treated article pesticides