



SHARE SOME SPACE



A JENNINGS COUNTY COMMUNITY SUPPORTED PROJECT PROVIDING HABITAT AND EDUCATION ABOUT POLLINATORS.

OUR MISSION IS TO EDUCATE OUR COMMUNITY ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF POLLINATORS THROUGH INVOLVEMENT AND CREATION OF NEW HABITAT THROUGHOUT JENNINGS COUNTY.



BACKGROUND: On June 30, 2015, the Jennings County Soil and Water Conservation District decided to form a sub-committee to inform and educate the public about; 1) the importance of pollination, 2) the declining numbers of pollinators and 3) create new habitat throughout our community. Also, the Jennings County School Corporation has organized work teams to plant Monarch Butterfly areas on every school property and three other community sites. It will take individuals, groups, the media, businesses, parks, and organizations of the community to build this pollinator plan.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS: DAN MEGEL, BOB STEINER, RICHARD WINEGARDEN, PAMELA WINEGARDEN, JOSEY HUFFMEYER, DONNA STANLEY, DON BIEHLE, AMBER FIELDS, JOE ROBB, LES AMES, KAREN AMES, JIMMI BERKEY, KELLY KENT, RALPH COOLEY, ROB McGRIFF, JENNY VOGEL, ROB CHAPMAN, BRAD BRIGGS, AND ANDY ERTEL.

OUR GOALS FOR THIS PROJECT

1. **Inform** the Community about the declining Populations of Pollinators (esp. Monarch Butterflies and Bees).
2. **Educate** the Community of the importance of Pollinators.
3. **Apply action** in the form of creating new habitats and enhancing existing habitats.

Information about our concerns

Close to **75 percent** of the flowering plants on the earth rely to some degree on pollinators in order to set seed or fruit. From these plants comes **one-third of humankind's food and even greater proportions of the food for much of our wildlife**. Yet now, in many places, pollinators are at risk. We stand at a crossroad.

Research has shown large numbers of population decline of Honey bees and other native bees. Once common bumble bees are disappearing across North American.

The Monarch Butterfly is on the verge of being listed on the endangered species list.

There host plant, **common milkweed**, is needed for their survival, but often viewed as a weed to kill.

Heavily developed agricultural and urban landscapes lack the habitat to support a diversity and abundance of bees, butterflies and other pollinators. Did you know the number one irrigated crop in the United States is the lawn? Around 840 million acres are grassed down and sprayed to keep out those flowering weeds which to a pollinator, has the appearance of a desert.

Four factors – the loss and fragmentation of habitat, pesticide poisoning, and the spread of diseases and parasites – account for most of the decline in populations of bees and other pollinators.

Do we as consumers, recognize that the most nutritious and interesting parts of our diets – **apples, watermelons, blueberries, carrots, broccoli, almonds, orange juice, coffee, and chocolate**, to name a few – are the result of the insect pollination? Can you image having your blueberry patch or apple tree without any fruit to pick? That reality can be right here in our own back yards one day without those pollinators.

If this declining trend continues, the result will be disastrous not only for the insects but for humans as well.



The importance of Pollinators



Several animals can pollinate, such as birds and bats, but the four major groups of pollinating insects are: bees and wasps, flies, butterflies and moths, and beetles.

Pollination is the process by which plants reproduce. Pollination is central to the life cycle of flowering plants. Pollen must move from male to female parts of the flower for the plant to develop seed and reproduce. There are two types of pollination (self-pollination and cross pollination) and several ways a plant achieves in getting pollen (wind, water, pollinators). Since flowering plants are literally rooted to one spot, close to 75 percent rely upon animal pollinators to move that pollen.

Let's look at how important the bee is to the world we live in. Bees are the most important group of pollinators. Bees exhibit a behavior called flower constancy, meaning they repeatedly visit one particular plant species on any given foraging trip. This is important because pollen is wasted if it is delivered to the wrong species of flower. On a single trip, a female bee may visit hundreds of flowers, transferring pollen along the entire way.



The bottom line is, **without bees**, there would be **NO apples, pumpkins, strawberries and many other fruits and vegetables.**

We need all the groups of pollinator's present which provides more pollinating coverage from sun up to sun down. Some work in cooler temperatures and some have further travel ranges. Remember, we only have from spring to fall to grow all that food we need to eat.

Apply Action as a Community

If you could do something to help a butterfly or bee, would you? The good news is, any action is better than no action. By the year 2018, we would like to identify and/or plant over 300 pollinator protection areas.

If you live in town..... Get some free seed from the SWCD and plant a small area to pollinating flowers. We need hundreds of small flowering areas for urban habitat.

If you are a student Help out with the Monarch/pollinator projects at school.

If you are a farmer.....enroll in the USDA, CRP, filter strip program and plant flowers in your mix.

If you own a factory.....plant a small area of flowers around your picnic area.

If you are on a board that makes decisions about public lands.....plant a small area and educate the public.

If you mow a large yardGet some free seed from the SWCD or potted plants and plant a small area to pollinating flowers.

If you are a civil organization.....see what activity over the period of this project you can assist with.

If you have some idle space on your farm..... create a small pollinator habitat

If you own cropland along a creek or stream.....sign up for a filter strip with flowering plants through the USDA – Conservation Reserve Program.

If you have time volunteer.....join the Pollinator Committee and help us with our future activities.

Join our growing project

As the plan mentioned above, we want to create new pollinator areas and identify some permanent existing areas (just general locations on a Jennings County map). Visit our website www.jenningswcd.org, and under **Share Some Space**, go to our **Pollinator Map**. With 2015 and 2016 plantings (big or small) you can see all the newly created pollinator sites. If you planted one, call the office and we will add your name (regardless of the size) and pin it to our Pollinator Map. If you want to join the committee or work on a special project, give us a call. So join us as we become the **Number 1 Pollinator County in the state of Indiana!**

Signs of Success

The following are **project accomplishments** as of **December 2015**:

Goal 1: Inform the Community about the declining Populations of Pollinators and **Goal 2:** Educate the Community of the importance of Pollinators.

- A pollinator committee was formed and has more than doubled to 19 members within six months. This group continues to meet monthly.
- The addition of the Community Pollinator Project added to the SWCD website
- Radio programs are delivered in timely manner
- Newspaper articles are published in local papers
- SWCD Newsletter writes articles
- Presentation at County Council/Commissioner Meeting
- Pollinator Display at JC Public Library
- Pollinator Showcase at the Jennings County Wildlife Building (2015)
- Coffee Creek Conservation Club – provides financial support
- SWCD – provides financial support
- 5th Grade Ag day discussed “the Great Monarch Migration”
- County Outlook Meeting discussed the challenges of agriculture and pollinators.
- Pollinator Presentation to Muscatatuck Moderns Club
- Pollinator Presentation to Jennings County Farm Bureau Annual Meeting.
- 2000 potted plant sale fliers send home to everyone Elementary School Student about doing a family activity.
- Soil and Water Cons. District holds a Warm Season / wild flower workshop at SEPAC.
- SWCD hosts drill equipment workshop at SEPAC to provide knowledge about Warm Season Grass and Forbs.
- Pollinator Committee has built a **POLLINATOR PATHWAY** at the Jennings County Fair Grounds. You'll have to visit the Fair to believe what you have heard.
- Community Pollinator Project Field Day planned for July 26, 2016.

Goal 3: Apply action in the form of creating new habitats and enhancing existing habitats.

- 2500 acres annually burned to create new pollinator habitat at Big Oaks National Wildlife Refuge
- County Park planted 1/2 acre pollinator patch for public enjoyment
- 3.75 acres of new habitat planted at Middle School Property

- 150 areas around urban homes and several gardeners planted their gardens to pollinator plants
- NRCS State Office provides 500 Burpee Seed Packets for small pollinator areas
- Pollinator Committee closed out the plant order with over 2950 plants purchased for the homesteads. That will create 130 new pollinator habitat areas in rural and urban areas.
- NRCS at the National Level provides another 1000 Burpee Seed Packets for small pollinator areas.
- **In progress** -440 acres of filter strip areas, field borders, and wildlife planted fields will have added pollinator plants in these agricultural fields.
- ½ acre pollinator patch at Selmier State Forest
- Presentation to Women's Club in April 2016
- City Park plants ¼ acre pollinator patch by walking path
- 3 acre pollinator patch at SEPAC
- 6 elementary schools planted Monarch Butterfly Gardens to study
- High school FFA class plants Monarch Butterfly Garden and additional pollinator patch
- Vernon Commons, Eco Park, and County Park planted Monarch Butterfly Gardens.
- Distribute free seed at the Jennings County Farmers Market on Wednesdays this spring.

Reference: Attracting Native Pollinators;The Xerces Society Guide