

Welcome to the Spring 2009 Edition of Pollination Guelph's newsletter. We hope that you are keeping pollinators in mind as you plant your gardens and go for walks in your community and natural areas.

Pollination Symposium a Success!

Our Pollination Symposium was held on April 18, 2009 and was quite a success. At least 64 people attended the day-long event to learn more about pollination and pollinators.

Thanks to the Delta Guelph Hotel and Conference Centre for providing a "milk and cookies" break and the conference room at no charge, to Planet Bean for providing the coffee for our three breaks, to everyone who attended or donated items for the silent auction, and to our volunteers: Tom Ashby, Pat Cathers, Melanie Kempers, Anne McKee, Bryan McPherson, and the Pollination Guelph board. Nearly \$2000 was raised in total, \$1126 of which came from the silent auction, so thanks again to all of our silent auction donors:



Brock Road Nursery
Daisy Kurp
David Atkinson
Delta Guelph Hotel &
Conference Centre
Grand Moraine Growers

Jacque Fortin
Lee Reinhert
Marg Peters
Ontario Beekeeper's
Association Tech
Transfer Program

Oxanna Adams
Planet Bean
Rufus Isaacs
The Stone Store
Tracey McEwen
Vicki Beard

Wild Birds Unlimited
Wire to Weave



Spring has Sprung and the Bees are Buzzing, but How can you Identify Them All?

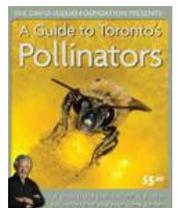


Now that spring has arrived, bees and other pollinators can be found on many flowers. They are usually seen busily collecting pollen or nectar, but if you're lucky, you may spot them mating, such as what two small carpenter bees (*Ceratina*) are doing on a coltsfoot flower in the photo on the left, or laying their eggs in underground tunnels (photo on right) or in hollow stems (photo on next page). But how do you know if what you are seeing is a carpenter bee, a bumble bee, a honeybee, or something else altogether?



There are a number of web-sites out there with information on how to identify pollinators, but <http://nature.berkeley.edu/urbanbeegardens/> and <http://www.greatsunflower.org/en/guide-sunflower-bee> are two good basic ones, while <http://www.biology.ualberta.ca/bsc/ejournal/ejournal.html> uses more formal identification keys. One distinguishing feature between bees and flies are the number of wings: bees have 4 wings (2 pairs) while flies only have 2 (1 pair). Bees are usually hairier than flies, but there are exceptions. Hover or syrphid flies have short stubby antennae and make quick darting movements between periods of hovering in mid-air. Large "bumble bees" may be queen bumble bees (*Bombus*), but if their abdomen is shiny black and nearly hairless, they are actually large carpenter bees (*Xylocopa*).

The David Suzuki Foundation recently produced "A Guide to Toronto's Pollinators", which is filled with beautiful photos and easy-to-read descriptions of many bees and "wanna-bees" (see http://www.davidsuzuki.org/Conservation/Endangered_Species/pollinators/). Pollination Guelph is selling this book, as well as the accompanying "Toronto Plant Guide for Attracting Pollinators", for \$5 each to raise funds for its various activities. Watch for them at an event near you, or contact us at pollinationguelph@gmail.com for details on purchasing copies.



Pollination Park Plantings



We are currently in final discussions with an ecological restoration company to implement most of our first 1.5ha demonstration plot. An estimate has been obtained, and an implementation plan is being written to show to the Technical Advisory Committee (members of the City and Pollination Guelph). Some of the suggested species for this meadow include *Rudbeckia* and *Ratibida* (Black-Eyed Susans, Coneflowers), *Monarda* (Bee-balm, Bergamots) *Coreopsis* (Tickseed), *Penstemon* (Beardtounge) *Solidago* (Goldenrods), *Aster* (Asters), *Verbena* (Vervains), *Bouteloua* (Gramma grasses) *Sporobolus* (Dropseed grasses), *Asclepias* (Milkweeds), *Liatris* (Blazing-Star), and more. We also hope to have a more formal section with examples of other plants for your garden, including fruits and vegetables that require pollination; this is the area where we will be looking for volunteers to help, so stay tuned!

Thanks for the Donations!

A big thank-you to Dr. Karen Houle and her Philosophy of the Environment Class at the University of Guelph; the students collected funds amongst themselves, surprising us with a \$300 donation! The Environmental Sciences Resource Initiative at the University of Guelph gave us a \$1000 donation, while Guelph Hydro provided us with a \$2000 cheque in the names of the speakers at their recent Eco Days event. Donations to Pollination Guelph can be made through a board member, in person at Guelph City Hall, or by mail to Finance Dept., City of Guelph, 1 Carden St, Guelph, ON N1H 3A1. Cheques can be made payable to the “City of Guelph”, but you must indicate “Donation to Pollination Guelph” in the memo section. Thanks to the City for handling the donations until we get our charitable status.

Pollination Guelph Updates

- CTV (Southwestern Ontario) did a news story on the pollination park on May 10. Watch it at <http://www.swo.ctv.ca/news.php?id=4599>. Global National has also been in touch with us – we’ll let you know when the interview airs.
- Golden Griddle on Woodlawn Rd in Guelph will be hosting a breakfast fundraiser for us in the near future. More details will follow soon.
- We are continuing to work on obtaining a licensing agreement with the City, fleshing out our strategic plan, preparing for plantings at the park, and educating the public about pollination.
- Pollinator sampling and monitoring will be starting at the pollination park very soon so that we will be able to show how the numbers of bees and other pollinators change as the Park develops.



News from Other Groups

Join the Hunt for Bees – the Great Sunflower Project

Are you interested in helping researchers understand the challenges bees face? Would you like to grow some (free!) sunflowers in your garden or on your patio? If the answer is yes, check out <http://www.greatsunflower.org/>. People from across North America are participating in this study by growing the same species of sunflower and seeing what bees visit them. No knowledge of bees needed!

Be a Pollinator Observer with Pollination Canada

Want to learn more about the pollinators in your area? Pollination Canada is looking for volunteer citizen scientists to carry out pollinator observations in their backyard or other favorite location. More information and an observer’s kit are available from their web-site: www.pollinationcanada.ca.

How You Can Help

- Choose pollinator-friendly plants for your planters and/or gardens this spring.
- Join our mailing list so you will be the first to learn of volunteer opportunities at the pollination park and elsewhere in the City.
- Make a donation or purchase any of our fundraising items (books & posters).



Please note that this newsletter is intended for anyone interested in keeping up with the work of the Pollination Guelph board and volunteers. For more information, or to be added to our mailing list, contact pollinationguelph@gmail.com. All photos © V. MacPhail.