

Pollination Symposium – Saturday, March 27, Ignatius Jesuit Centre, Guelph

Mark your calendars! Our annual public pollination symposium will be held on March 27 at the Ignatius Jesuit Centre in Guelph, from 9-4pm. The theme is "Pollination Plantings, Great and Small", and will feature talks on the Eastview Pollination Park and other Pollination Guelph projects (Kevin Butt), the Canadian Pollination Initiative's projects and initial results (Dr. Peter Kevan), the Guelph Arboretum's Gosling Gardens (Sean Fox), the Butterflies of Waterloo Region and their Habitats (Jessica Grealey), Restoration of Prairie Landscapes (Mathis Natvik), the ALUS (Alternative Land Use Services) project (Bryan Gilvesy), and design plans for pollinator-friendly plantings at the Pickering Nuclear Facility's landfill site (Ana Crueru) and Guelph's well houses (Kendra Labrosse and Patricia Gooch).



Two examples of items in our 2009 silent auction.

The cost will be \$30 with pre-registration by e-mail to pollinationguelph@gmail.com, or \$35 without advanced registration. Lunch will be provided. There is only space for 100 people, so register early! Payment can be made at the door – cash only, please. We will be having a silent auction again this year, with all monies going directly to the work of Pollination Guelph. If you are interested in donating an item, please contact any of the board members or e-mail us at the address above.

Serious Decline in Monarch Overwintering Colonies in Mexico

Every year, all of the monarchs in North America migrate to Mexico. This year, the number and sizes of the monarch overwintering colonies in Mexico are at the lowest since data was first gathered in the late 1970s. The total area occupied by monarchs at the overwintering sites in December 2009 was 1.92ha, with only 7 colonies found. The three largest colonies constituted 78% of the total area. The lowest previous total, 2.19ha, was reported in 2004. This decline continues a trend that started in the late 1990s. In the 1990s the mean area occupied by monarch colonies was close to 9ha. The mean for the last 10 years is now below 5 hectares per year, with the three lowest ever monarch overwintering populations reported in this decade.



Monarchs born in Guelph during the summer will fly to Mexico in the fall.

Reasons for the low overwintering numbers start with high temperatures in Texas in March and April that limited production of first generation monarchs. Poor conditions affected these monarchs as they moved north, and drought conditions resulted in limited reproductive success of this generation. Cool and rainy conditions then further reduced the development and reproduction of this and the next generation. Habitat destruction along their migration routes is also a problem.

In spite of the recent cold snap that reached into Mexico, there have been no indications of weather related mortality at the overwintering sites. Even if there should be some mortality, our experience with the disaster of 2002, in which an estimated 80% of the population died as the result of a January storm, showed that, if at least 1 hectare of monarchs survives to move north and, IF they encounter normal conditions as they move north through Mexico and in Texas, the population can recover. Therefore let us hope for good weather and consider planting monarch-friendly plants in the spring.

Thanks to Chip Taylor of Monarch Watch for providing much of the above information. A graph of some of this data is at <http://www.learner.org/jnorth/tm/monarch/PopulationMexicoAnalyzeGraph.html>.

Value of Pollination Services in the Credit River watershed - \$4 Million/year

The Credit Valley Conservation Authority released a report in November 2009 on the value of ecological goods and services in the Credit River Watershed. This is an area of almost 1000 square km from Orangeville in the north to Port Credit and Lake Ontario in the south. Entitled *Natural Credit - Estimating the Value of Natural Capital in the Credit River Watershed*, it estimated the value of insect pollinators to agriculture to be almost \$4 million per year (of the \$371 million/year total value). The per capita value of pollination was estimated at \$5/year (of the \$490/year total value).

Visit www.creditvalleyca.ca for more information.



Apples are just one example of the many crops requiring pollinators.

Guelph Natural Heritage Strategy - Public Feedback Wanted by Feb. 24

The City of Guelph is providing an opportunity for members of the community and other stakeholders to provide input into the City's draft Natural Heritage policies. The draft policies are available at www.guelph.ca, with comments being received until February 24, 2010. Contact Michelle Mercier at michelle.mercier@guelph.ca for more information. These policies will have important impacts on the natural communities, plants, and animals around us, so take the time to give your feedback. Pollinator habitat is mentioned as something to protect, perhaps the first time this has occurred in an official plan!

Workshops and Courses

Guelph Arboretum Urban Wildlife Habitat Gardening - Friday, April 9

Discover how you can feed your soul and at the same time provide much needed sanctuary for a diversity of wildlife - right in your own backyard! In this session you will select native wild plants as well as common garden annuals, perennials, and shrubs to create gardens that are beautiful, and that provide food, shelter, and water for urban wildlife. You will learn how to cultivate evening magic with night-scented plants. Garden maintenance and bird nest boxes will also be covered. Each participant will seed a flat of habitat plants to take home. Guest Instructor: Leslie Work. Fee \$75.00. For more information or to register, visit <http://www.uoguelph.ca/arboretum/> or call 519-824-4120 ext. 52358.



Many animals could be attracted to your garden with a bit of planning.

Pollination Biology Field Course, Missouri Botanical Garden - April 19 - 30

NSERC-CANPOLIN is pleased to offer a 12-day intensive pollination biology field course at the Missouri Botanical Garden. The course will include daily lectures and discussions, field excursions, lab activities and demonstrations, and completion of an individual research project. A pollination background is not required for this course; however, priority will be given to CANPOLIN students and other biologists for whom the course will have significant impact on their research and/or teaching. The cost is \$680 CDN plus transportation to and from the course, food, and other incidentals. For more information or to register (deadline: March 1), please contact amcgrawa@uoguelph.ca or visit www.uoguelph.ca/canpolin.

Ontario Beekeepers' Association Workshops – May 2010 (various dates)

The Ontario Beekeepers' Association (OBA) and the OBA Tech-Transfer Team will be holding several workshops in Guelph this spring. Introductory Beekeeping will occur on Saturday May 15 (participants of all experience levels welcome), Beekeeping & Integrated Pest Management on Sunday May 16 (pre-requisite: intro beekeeping course or one-season beekeeping experience), and Introductory Queen Rearing on Saturday May 29 (pre-requisite: prior beekeeping knowledge and experience in maintaining colonies). The cost is \$105/workshop for OBA members, \$115/workshop for non-members. For more information, or to register, contact Janet Tam at 519-836-3609 or shrewless@yahoo.com.



A honeybee hive with the top cover removed, showing the frames.

Guelph Arboretum Pollinator Workshop - Saturday, June 26

Pollination 101 - this course will provide an introduction to the amazing world of pollination and pollinators. Over 90% of flowering plants require pollination in order to reproduce, yet how does this happen? Who are the players involved? Why should we care? These questions and many more will be answered through this workshop. Plus, learn how to identify major groups of pollinators and then conduct field-observations using Pollination Canada's citizen-science program. Explore The Arboretum to find pollinator-friendly plants, and discuss ways that you can help stop the decline in pollinator populations. Guest Instructor: Victoria MacPhail. Fee: \$65.00. For more information or to register, visit <http://www.uoguelph.ca/arboretum/> or call 519-824-4120 ext. 52358.



Bee or fly? Learn how to tell difference at this workshop.

Guelph Arboretum Identification and Biology of Butterflies - Wednesday, July 14

This workshop has been designed to educate you on butterflies and help you develop your identification skills. We will focus on butterfly natural history, capture techniques, field identification, tagging, migration and creating and maintaining butterfly habitat. Be prepared for the weather of the day. Guest Entomologist: Jessica Grealey. Fee \$75.00. Visit <http://www.uoguelph.ca/arboretum/> or call 519-824-4120 ext. 52358 for more information or to register.

Pollination Guelph Updates

We are currently very busy making plans for our upcoming symposium and our spring plantings. More information will follow on both in the near future.

Every year our board members make a variety of presentations on pollination and pollinators to groups, and bring our display to local events. If you would be interested in having us at your event in 2010, please e-mail us the details (date, group, desired topic, etc.) at pollinationguelph@gmail.com.



Education and Community are two important goals of Pollination Guelph.

Volunteers are needed to sit on our fundraising committee. With the assistance of board members, these individuals will work together to approach contacts in the community (incl. individuals, companies, industries) for funding, to apply for grants, and to brainstorm and implement other ideas. If you are interested, please let us know!

Thanks for the Donations!

Pollination Guelph would like to send a big thank-you to the Guelph Horticultural Society for their recent \$1000 donation, to the David Suzuki Foundation for their \$300 donation on behalf of Bob McDonald, Marjorie Harris, and Laurence Packer, and to all the other groups and individuals who have donated funds over the past few months. Your help is greatly appreciated. Donations to Pollination Guelph can be made through a board member, in person at Guelph City Hall, or by mail to Pollination Guelph, 144 Country Club Drive, Guelph, ON N1E 3K9. Cheques can be made payable to "Pollination Guelph". Tax receipts will be issued by the City of Guelph.

How You Can Help

- Register for our March 27th Symposium, and encourage a friend or co-worker to register too!
- Make a donation for the silent auction at our March Symposium.
- Consider volunteering to be on Pollination Guelph's Fundraising Committee.
- Start thinking now about what pollinator-friendly gardening methods you want to use this spring.

