

Charitable status

Great news! Pollination Guelph has now obtained charitable status. Although we have been a federally incorporated non-profit organization for some time, this means that we can now issue charitable receipts directly to our donors. It also makes us eligible to apply for many different grants, enabling us to carry out our goals of education, research, conservation, community, and advocacy.

Riverside Park Pollinator Gardens

This summer marked a milestone for Pollination Guelph – our first pollinator-friendly plantings. With the permission of the City of Guelph Parks and Recreation department, and in partnership with the Healthy Landscapes program, we took over two of the old flower beds at Riverside Park, located along the path near the windmill and the fire station. We gave the lilacs a good pruning, cut or pulled out many of the weeds, laid down newspaper to prevent the weeds from growing, piled on some topsoil, and planted large numbers of native plants or closely related varieties. Examples included shrubs such as red-osier and grey dogwoods (*Cornus*), serviceberry (*Amelanchier*), chokeberry (*Aronia*), and herbaceous species such as purple coneflower (*Rudbeckia*), tickseed (*Coreopsis*), butterfly and swamp milkweed (*Asclepias*), Joe-Pye weed (*Eupatorium*), blazing star (*Liastris*), and many more.



One of our new pollinator-friendly flower beds at Riverside Park. The area was full of non-native species, which we removed to make way for more desirable ones.

To our amazement, immediately after planting, pollinators were observed visiting the beds, including a monarch which laid eggs on the milkweeds. Throughout the summer many monarch caterpillars were spotted: one evening over 12 caterpillars of various sizes (instars) were counted happily munching away on our milkweed plants. The area was later mulched to help keep moisture in and weeds out. Volunteers monitored the gardens all summer, watering them when needed. Thanks to Mike Darmon who came up with a low-tech solution to our water needs – a bucket attached to a rope which we were able to lower into the nearby Speed River and fill. Our next planned planting project will be this fall at the Guelph Centre for Urban Organic Farming (GCUOF), at the Arboretum at the University of Guelph. Watch for more news in our next newsletter and through our e-mail list.

Pollinator Day in the Garden

Our second-annual Pollinator Day in the Garden at the Gosling Gardens section of the Guelph Arboretum was held on June 20, 2010. At least 60 people attended, with the live colonies of bumble bees and honeybees attracting the most attention, and guided tours providing people with more information. Thanks to Seal Test for donating milk cartons for our home-made bee boxes, to BioBest and the University of Guelph for the colony of bumble bees, to the Bee Lab for the honeybee observation hive, and to the City of Guelph Healthy Landscapes program for providing free plants to everyone who came by.



People were challenged to see if they could find the Queen honeybee and Queen bumble bee.

Neat News

Cost of hand-pollinated apples 320x as much as using managed honeybees

A group of researchers in the UK have calculated the value of pollination of apples, using the example of hand pollination of apple trees in China that is currently going on because of the loss of natural pollinators in that area. They determined that apples would have to increase in price by 125% if they were to be hand-pollinated in the absence of pollinators, and that hand pollination would cost 320 times as much as using managed honeybee colonies (£540.34/ton vs. £1.69/ton). For more information, visit <http://www.apimondia.org/2009/pollination/symposia/Evaluating%20the%20role%20of%20pollinating%20honeybees%20in%20UK%20Apple%20Orchards%20-%20MARRIS%20Gay.pdf>



*Hand-pollination of apple trees.
Photo from ARS – USDA.*

New Sweat Bee found in Toronto

Scientists have been identifying species of plants and animals for hundreds of years, but perhaps surprisingly, new discoveries are still being made today, even here in Ontario. Jason Gibbs, a bee biologist formerly of York University, recently identified 19 new species of sweat bees in Canada. One of these, *Lasioglossum ephialtum*, was found in downtown Toronto. Sweat bees are named because they are attracted to sweat, often landing on gardeners working in the sun, lapping at the minerals and moisture in their perspiration. These bees may only be a centimeter or two long, and are often dark green or black in color. This bee has since been identified in the vicinity of Guelph.



This photo is actually of a leaf-cutter bee (Megachile sp.), but you can clearly see it licking the sweat on the person's skin.

PollinatorLIVE webcasts and web seminars

Join PollinatorLIVE on September 29, 2010, for a series of webcasts exploring “Native Bees, Honey Bees, Gardening, and More.” PollinatorLIVE will be webcasting from 11 a.m. to 1:45 p.m EDT, so BUZZ in to watch and participate in any or all of the program segments. Some highlights of this program include a tour of the Washington D.C. Youth Garden, learning about Bees (native and honey), Bats, Butterflies, and Other Insect Pollinators, followed by a Pollinator Kitchen Market and Café. To watch the programs live on September 29, go to <http://pollinatorlive.pwnet.org> and click on a link to register for the live webcast. Please visit the website prior to this date and click on the link to test your ability to view the live webcast.

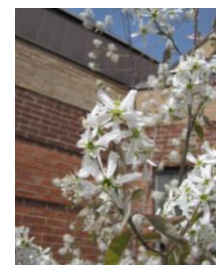
In May 2010, a webcast about “The Insect Zoo in Your Schoolyard” was held at the National Zoo in Washington, D.C. Visit the web-site above to watch the streaming video and learn about pollination, pollinators, participatory science projects, the latest about monarch butterflies, and how to attract pollinators to your schoolyard. Web seminars about “Schoolyard Gardening Basics” and “Meeting Standards by Studying Pollinators and Bees” can also be viewed on-line. PollinatorLIVE is geared to students in grades 4 to 8 in the US, but is full of information that people of any age may find interesting.



Two monarch caterpillars of different ages on a milkweed leaf.

How You Can Help

- Plant a pollinator-friendly tree or shrub this fall. For example, serviceberries (*Amelanchier* spp.) are an attractive, spring-flowering tree that would look great on your property. Our web-site, www.pollinationguelph.ca, contains a downloadable list of species that we recommend for attracting different types of pollinators: <http://www.pollinator.ca/guelph/index.php?n=Native+Plants+that+attract+Pollinators.pdf>.
- Make a donation to Pollination Guelph through a board member, through 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.
- Share this newsletter with others, and encourage them to join our e-mailing list by contacting pollinationguelph@gmail.com.



Serviceberries (Amelanchier spp.) can be planted now.

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, except for the photo of apple hand-pollination, which is from <http://www.ars.usda.gov/Main/docs.htm?docid=17871>.