

Why a Pollinator Garden?

- One out of every three bites of food we eat comes directly from plants that require pollination to bear fruit, vegetable, or seed. Pollinated plants also produce fibers, beverages, and many medicines!
- A flourishing, diverse – and pollinated – planting also provides essential food and shelter for wildlife.
- Honey bees are the celebrated pollinators, but hardy native bees are even more important, especially in springtime cold when honey bees stay in their hives rather than venturing forth.
- Just like honey bees, native bees are in decline – some to the point of extinction.



June 5

THE GOOD NEWS:

People are taking action to create pollinator-friendly backyards, schoolyards, and public spaces.

Up with bees, butterflies, birds, and beetles!

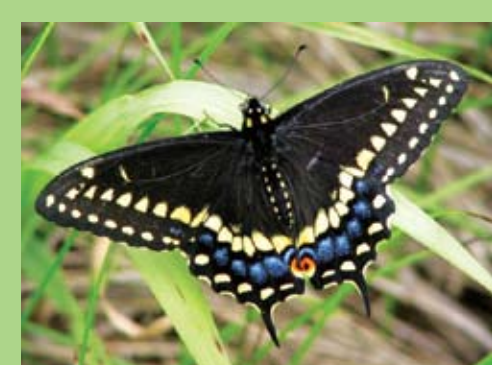
Planning the Harris Center Pollinator Garden

- We selected plants for their bloom time, ensuring constant flowers from early spring through late fall.
- Most are native, and therefore more recognizable to the native insects that evolved along with them. Suited to their region, these plants also require less care.
- Some were chosen as larval host plants. Just as monarch butterfly caterpillars feed only on milkweed leaves, there are many other specific pollinator-plant relationships.
- We planted flower types in clusters to encourage cross-pollination.
- We made sure to buy plants free of systemic insecticides.

Lots of volunteers helped – and still do!



July 27



BLACK SWALLOWTAIL LARVAE feed on members of the carrot family including dill (pictured above) and Queen Anne's lace.

Visit us online at harriscenter.org

Behold the Not-So-Humble Bumble Bee

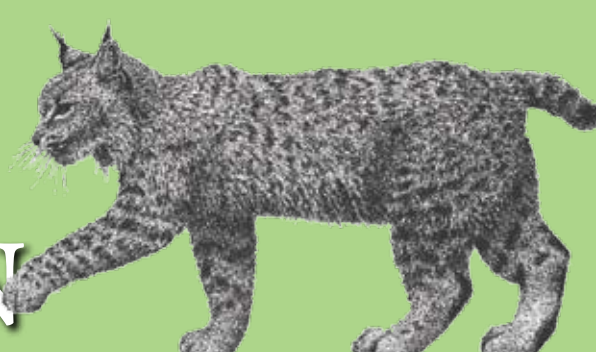
▲ Bumble bees pollinate 15% of all crops in the U.S., including tomatoes that are a challenge for other pollinators. Lacking a warm hive with food reserves, they're out working even in rain or cold that can deter other pollinating insects. Through "buzz pollination," they vibrate pollen loose from a flower and comb it onto their hind legs. They fly back to their underground nest, typically in a mouse burrow, where their larvae feed on the pollen they've collected.



April 4

◀ **PUSSYWILLOWS** are one of the earliest nectar and pollen sources in spring. Many shrubs and trees are included in the list of pollinator-friendly plants.

HARRIS CENTER FOR CONSERVATION EDUCATION



A member-supported, nonprofit organization, dedicated to promoting understanding and respect for our natural environment.



July 24

MILKWEED is hard to beat as a pollinator magnet – in this case attracting a monarch butterfly and great spangled fritillary butterfly.



August 28

GOLDENROD attracts many insects in late summer, including this honey bee, collecting pollen as well as nectar.



Food for a Life Cycle

The great spangled fritillary butterfly lays its eggs near violets, the only food its larvae eat. The eggs overwinter, hatch in spring, and the larvae start feeding on violet leaves. For the garden, we chose the lovely bird's foot violet.



August 8

Mud Matters

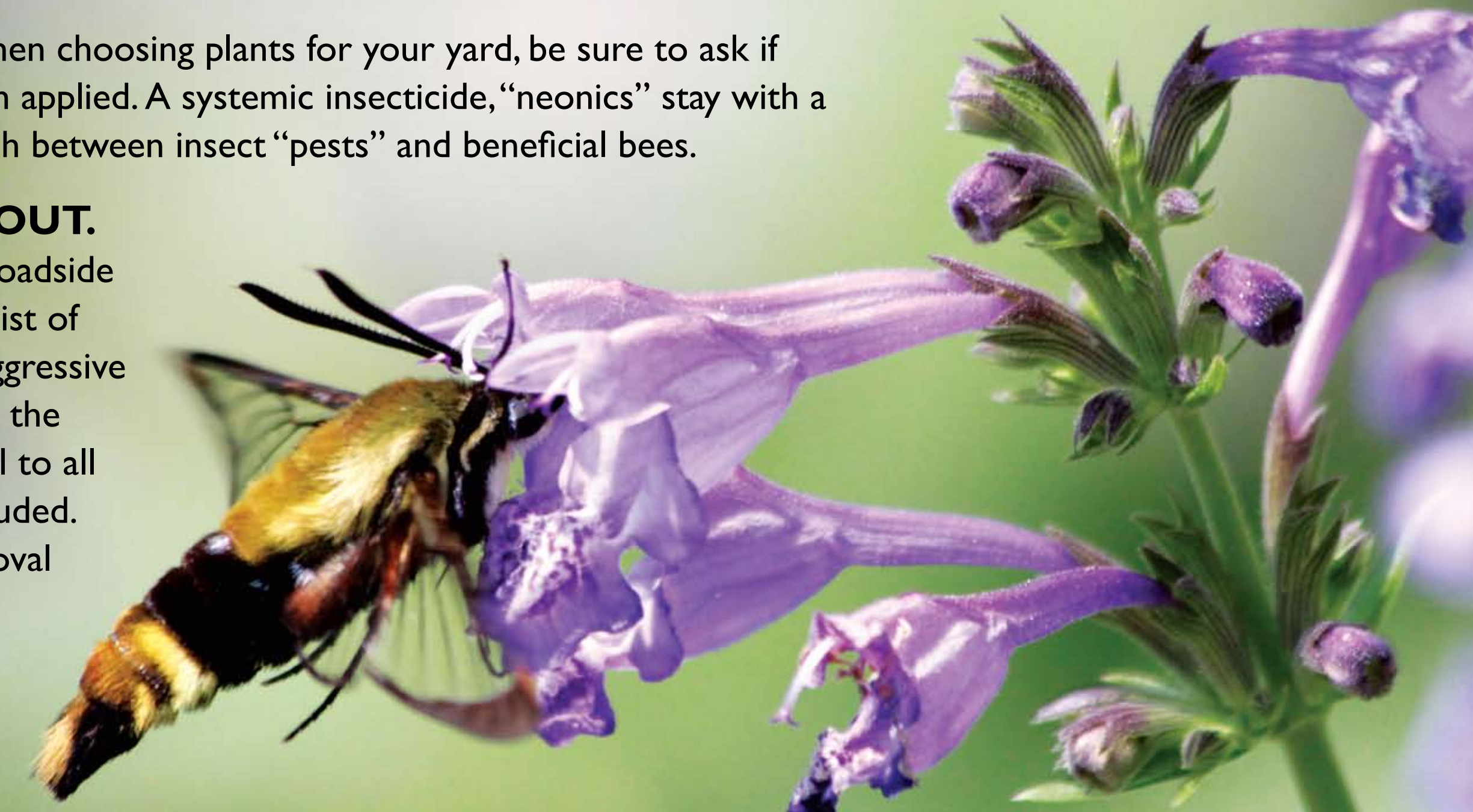
Butterflies and other insects extract minerals and nutrients from moist soil. This behavior is known as "mud-puddling."

An **ILLUSTRATED LIST OF THE PLANTS** in this pollinator garden is available at harriscenter.org and at the Harris Center office. ▶



What You Can Do:

- **CREATE HABITAT.** Let your backyard go a little wild. Fallen leaves and even bare soil provide areas for pollinator nesting, mud-puddling for nutrients, and overwintering. Milkweed and goldenrod are among the many pollinator-friendly "weeds" (also known as wildflowers!) that colonize yards and field edges if given a chance.
- **GO ORGANIC.** When choosing plants for your yard, be sure to ask if neonicotinoids have been applied. A systemic insecticide, "neonics" stay with a plant and don't distinguish between insect "pests" and beneficial bees.
- **BE ON THE LOOKOUT.** Monitor your yard and roadside for plants on the state's list of invasive plants – super aggressive species that outcompete the natural diversity essential to all wildlife – pollinators included. Early detection and removal work best.



HELP SPREAD THE WORD:

Bring back the pollinators!

July 16