

Minnesota Honey Producers Association Habitat Hour with Dan Shaw

Our 2nd MHPA Habitat Hour webinar was held on May 4, 2022. Our speaker was Dan Shaw, the Senior Ecologist and Vegetation Specialist with the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR). Attendees learned how pollinators are being supported in Minnesota and opportunities to participate in these programs. We were happy to have 20 attendees online with us.

Here are some of the highlights of Dan's presentation:

The Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) has an initiative to incorporate pollinator habitat into their agency programs. They have also generated information rich pollinator habitat guides: <https://bwsr.state.mn.us/pollinator-toolbox-community-outreach>, <https://bwsr.state.mn.us/residential-pollinator-habitat> and <https://bwsr.state.mn.us/pollinator-habitat-guide>.

There are numerous key BWSR/Pollinator Partner efforts that include: Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program/Easements (300,000 acres in easements); Wetland Programs; Cost-share Programs; Habitat Friendly Solar Programs; Lawns to Legumes Pilot Program; Pollinator and Beneficial Insect Strategic Habitat Program; State Seed Mixes, Guidance, Resiliency Resources ([Pollinator Toolbox - Selecting Plants and Seed Mixes | MN Board of Water, Soil Resources \(state.mn.us\)](#)) and Pollinator Mapping.

A key initiative since 2019 is the Lawns to Legumes program. Numerous partners participate in operating the Lawns to Legumes program including Blue Thumb and the UMN Bee Lab. There are 3 components of this program that include: Public Education and Outreach Campaign; Individual Landowner Support; and Demonstration Neighborhoods. The program supports 4 Types of planting including the smaller Native Pocket Plantings, Beneficial Trees and/or Shrubs, Pollinator Lawns and Pollinator Meadows.

Beekeepers can support pollinators in partnership with BWSR in many ways:

1. The program needs volunteer coaches (<https://bluethumb.org/lawns-to-legumes/coaching-information/>);
2. You can plant and then map your Lawns to Legumes pollinator project! [Map Your Pollinator Project – Blue Thumb](#);
3. Share resources about Lawns to Legumes <https://bwsr.state.mn.us/l2l>.
4. Help track the rusty patch bumble bee on www.BumbleBeeWatch.org or [iNaturalist](https://www.inaturalist.org);
5. Follow and share @MNBWSR on social media #Lawns2Legumes.

Please save the date for future MHPA Habitat Hours. Registration information will be posted on the MHPA website in the summer (<http://minnesotahoneyproducers.com/>)

Wednesday, October 5th, 6:30pm-7:30pm- Dr. Jennifer Tsuruda, University of Tennessee Extension

Wednesday, November 2nd, 6:30pm-7:30pm- Dr. Katie Lee, Minnesota Extension