

October 17, 2023

For Immediate Release

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The North American Pollinator Protection Campaign (NAPPC) highlights some of the continent's most ardent and inspiring pollinator advocates, including farmers, landscape designers, electric power companies, high school students, and nurseries.

On October 17, 2023, this year's award winners from the United States, Canada, and Mexico were honored by Pollinator Partnership and the North American Pollinator Protection Campaign (NAPPC) during the NAPPC Conference Award Ceremony hosted at US EPA Headquarters in Washington DC. NAPPC hopes that in lifting up these remarkable individuals and organizations, others will be inspired to create real change for pollinators in their communities.

NAPPC is a collaborative body of diverse partners, including respected scientists, researchers, private sector stakeholders, conservationists and government officials working to find common ground to catalyze groundbreaking initiatives that benefit pollinators.

"Pollinator Partnership and NAPPC are thrilled to honor these individuals who are champions for pollinator conservation and are making a real difference on the ground to benefit these important species. These wonderful advocates, and the pollinators they support, deserve to be celebrated!" says Kelly Bills, Executive Director of Pollinator Partnership, which founded and facilitates NAPPC.

A brief description of award winners and their actions follows:

2023 NAPPC Pollinator Advocate – United States



Rebecca McMackin of the Brooklyn Bridge Park and Harvard University is a biologist and landscape designer with a M.Sc. in Biology from the University of Victoria and a M.Sc. in Landscape Design from Columbia University. She grew up on a farm in Connecticut and moved to Brooklyn at the age of 30 to work for NYC Parks. After working as head gardener at Washington Square Park, she became the Director of Horticulture at Brooklyn Bridge Park soon after it opened in 2010 and remained in that role until she was recently awarded the Harvard Loeb Fellowship. One of Ms. McMackin's most tangible and practical contributions is the transformation of Brooklyn Bridge Park under her leadership. To quote Lisa Collins of the New York Times: **"Under Ms. McMackin's direction, the park, built on East River piers, is now home to a growing population**

of rare bees, moths, pollinating flies, butterflies and birds."

Ms. McMackin shares her knowledge of pollinators and pollination ecology with anyone who is interested. She has taught classes at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden and the New York Botanical Garden and written for the New York Times, the Landscape Institute, and the Ecological Landscape Alliance. Her work has been featured on PBS's Garden Smart, Margaret Roach's A Way to Garden, and Jennifer Jewel's Cultivating Place. Her outreach includes being available to local organizations, sharing educational materials on social media, and publishing free online lectures on her website.

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2023 NAPPC Pollinator Advocate – Mexico

Led by **Maria del Rocío Meneses Ramirez**, **Paraíso Colibrí** is an organization focused on the propagation and divulgation of native pollinator plants. Based in Puebla, México, Paraíso Colibrí started in 2016 out of a need to supply the lacking market for native Mexican plants that offer food resources to hummingbirds and other pollinators in urban areas. Paraíso Colibrí became the first nursery specializing in producing pollinator plants in México. **Paraíso Colibrí also oversees an educational initiative that helps to spread awareness of pollinator importance, biodiversity green areas, and transform urban spaces into green places that offer**

native habitats for pollinators. Paraíso Colibrí offers

workshops and talks to public and private institutions, such as schools and industries, working with kids, young, and adults. The organization also collaborates with other groups and governmental institutions to train new producers and landscapers for producing and using native plants in urban green spaces. **The stated purpose of Paraiso Colibrí is to contribute to creating resilient cities for pollinators and sharing our knowledge about pollinator plants with others.**



2023 NAPPC Pollinator Advocate- Canada

Evan Howells is a 16-year old student from Whitehorse, Yukon who has always had an appreciation for nature and insects, especially bees! Evan conducted the first study comparing the pollen foraging patterns of native bumble bees and non-native honey bees in natural landscapes in Southern Lakes, Yukon. His study findings showed the bees' choices were similar for their most frequently-chosen pollen types, but bumble bees collected more diverse pollen than honey bees on each foraging trip. **This information will help guide further management practices (e.g., beekeeping, landscaping) to maintain native bumble bee populations on a local scale and raise awareness of their needs.** Evan presented his study at the Yukon Regional Science Fair in 2023, winning the Commissioner's Award for Best Project in Fair and was honored in May 2023 with a bronze medal in the senior category of the Canada Wide Science Fair. Evan presented his study to the City of Whitehorse Parks Department to encourage them to become a Bee City, demonstrating a commitment to conservation and awareness of native pollinators. Evan was successful at encouraging the City of Whitehorse to plant bee friendly gardens and planter boxes this past summer with a diversity of Yukon native flowers to bloom at different times throughout the season. He also asked them to consider the needs of native bumble bees when developing guidelines for management and placement of honey bee hives in the City. **To raise awareness about Pollinator Week, Evan created a bee-friendly fact sheet to encourage planting of Yukon native flowers by residents and promote websites such as Bee City Canada.**



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2023 NAPPC Farmers and Ranchers- United States



Stuart Woolf at Woolf Farming has gone above and beyond to support pollinators in their operations. Stuart has served as Chairman of the California League of Food Processors, the Almond Board of California, and on the UC President's Commission of Agriculture and Natural Resources. Stuart currently serves on the board of the California Chamber of Commerce, Western Growers Association and Marrone Bio Innovations. Woolf Farming manages over 7,500 acres of almonds, along with thousands of acres of other crops, in the Central Valley of California. Their operations have quickly adopted pollinator friendly practices and this

effort has been led by Stuart, demonstrating by example that farming and conservation go hand in hand. **Under the direction of Stuart, Woolf Farming has planted over 550 acres of forage and habitat for pollinators.** This included both cover crops and perennial native plants. They have implemented Integrated Pest Management across all orchards, **including the use of mating disruption and other non-chemical intervention methods, directly benefiting pollinators by reducing pesticide exposure.** This work involved dramatically changing the way they organized their operations, from removing land to act as set aside habitat, to managing cover crop within the orchards to maximize their benefits to pollinators without impacting their operations. Stuart led the charge in the internal conversation within their operations to incorporate pollinators in many of the decisions being made in their fields. He has continued to provide resources and time for both himself and his staff to have this conversation with their partners and agriculture at large. This has extended to partnering with P2 and providing valuable insight and resources to continue creating change and generating awareness about pollinators in agriculture. **These farms also hold Bee Friendly Farming certification.**

2023 NAPPC Farmers and Ranchers - Canada

In his role as Agriculture Coordinator for the **Manitoba Métis Federation, Dustin Hoft** contributes to pollinator protection and conservation efforts through education, advocacy, and research. In this role, he has in 2022-2023 secured over \$7.2 million to support Red River Métis agricultural producers adopt and implement new on-farm beneficial management practices. **Dustin promotes and advances Indigenous agricultural lands conservation and provides a new vision for managing agricultural lands by enhancing conservation on large and small agricultural lands, protecting them from degradation and outdated intensive agricultural practices.** In 2022, Dustin led the site planning and coordination of a historical site garden, in which over 40 heirloom varieties of vegetables, fruits, and herbs were planted producing 1000 pounds of food distributed to Elder and Citizens in-need.



Milkweed was also highlighted as an important feature of the garden when tours were provided. Dustin is working to expand the horizon of what is possible, by striving for Indigenous-led agricultural research projects and developing partnerships with academic institutions, developing innovative Bison Rematriation projects, Three-Sister Planting Research, adopting and implementing beneficial management practices, food as medicine research, supporting food security, and **addressing systemic inequalities for Indigenous recognition and participation through Traditional Knowledge sharing and the advocating of a two-eyed seeing approach which integrates both western and traditional Métis practices.**

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2023 NAPPC Roadside Management



Since 2010, the **Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT)** Pollinator Habitat Program has been committed to promoting the growth, preservation, and conservation of pollinators throughout Tennessee. This initiative achieves its goals through various means such as education, partnerships, and environmentally sound practices. In 2010, the program introduced **Integrated Mowing Practices to enhance pollinator habitats** and in 2016, **TDOT 0.5-acre pollinator meadow and the installation of interpretive materials** at Welcome Center I-65 Ardmore exit in Giles County. Recognizing the importance of collaboration, TDOT formed the Partners for Pollinators Working Group. In 2020, TDOT completed the second Welcome Center

pollinator meadow, spanning 2.5 acres at the West TN Solar Farm Welcome Center. Situated along the highway, this meadow features educational signage and attracts approximately 300,000 visitors annually. **To assist designers, academics, and the general public, TDOT developed the Tennessee Pollinator Plant Database Tool and Map in 2021. This resource provides valuable information for selecting appropriate pollinator-friendly plants.** In 2022, TDOT introduced "Polli- The Bee from Tennessee!" The program aligns with Tennessee's K-12 academic standards for science and aims to promote pollinator education. Recently, in 2023, TDOT unveiled Project Milkweed, a response to the declining Monarch Butterfly population. As part of this project, TDOT offers free milkweed seeds to anyone in Tennessee, along with planting design and installation guidelines. **Overall, the TDOT Pollinator Habitat Program's initiatives have multiple positive impacts, including the provision of vital wildlife habitat, the creation of habitat connectivity, and the enhancement of people's experiences and understanding of pollinators.**

2023 NAPPC Pollinator Electric Power

Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) owns and maintains several miles of high-voltage transmission lines that pass through the heart of Forest Park, a 5,200 acre park in Portland, Oregon. BPA and Portland Gas and Electric (PGE) maintain the vegetation along these rights-of-way (ROWs) according to agency and company requirements for safety and access, and in partnership and cooperation with Portland Parks and Recreation (PP&R). These ROWs provide some of the only open habitat in the park and provide important foraging resources and habitat connectivity for pollinators. To improve the ecosystem function of BPA ROWs, BPA partnered with Portland Parks and Recreation on a restoration project to specifically improve pollinator habitat within several sections of its ROW. **Project goals include the following: collaborating with local partners to determine whether and how habitat improvement strategies could be implemented in transmission line ROWs, evaluating the benefits of habitat improvements through monitoring, and developing a strategy for future work.** In fall 2019, three "showcase spots" of about 800 sq ft each were installed in the project area by PP&R to generate interest and excitement in park visitors, and to highlight the beauty of Oregon's prairie wildflowers that can provide pollinator and other wildlife habitat in a home garden. The locations were chosen specifically for their close proximity to trails and points of access where visitor



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interaction would be guaranteed. A monitoring project conducted with the Xerces Society found that pollinators are responding well to the project. **A growing gap was observed between the pollinator communities supported in the BPA ROWs compared to the status quo Portland Gas and Electric ROWs, considering natural variation in annual pollinator abundance. Significantly, the pollinator community in the BPA ROWs showed a response to restoration by increasing the proportion of native plants they visited through time.** There was also some evidence that the BPA ROW was able to support more butterflies and higher butterfly richness than the PGE ROW. These findings will allow Portland Gas and Electric to evaluate maintenance needs and methods (in partnership with BPA), and determine if additional seeding or other planting is needed to maintain the goals of the project.

2023 NAPPC Pollinator Electric Power – Runner Up

The mission of the **Headwaters at the Comal (the Headwaters)** is to strengthen the relationship between the community and nature by showcasing the significance of the Comal Springs. The Comal River is the heart and soul of the New Braunfels area, and for thousands of years it has been an important gathering place for people. The River and the springs that feed it are core to the identity of the New Braunfels community and are a critical natural resource for the region. **To ensure the conservation of this natural resource, the New Braunfels Utilities (NBU) established the Headwaters at the Comal in 2017,** and together, work to inspire the lifelong practice of experiencing, enjoying, and stewarding the cultural, ecological, and community resources that have made New Braunfels and the Hill Country region a special place to live.



In partnership with NBU, and with strong support from the community, the Headwaters is leading a grand metamorphosis; the complete transformation of a 16-acre site from an old utility facilities property that sits at the headwaters of the Comal River into the Hill Country's premier education and community center. **The Headwaters engages the hearts and minds of thousands of central Texas youth, business leaders, and community members in the conservation and stewardship of our beloved springs and rivers through programs that stretch across our four organizational pillars: education and demonstration, research, conservation, and community placemaking.** To monitor the native plant and pollinator species in the area, the Headwaters at the Comal participates in the Texas Butterfly Monitoring Network and organizers created the Headwaters at the Comal iNaturalist Project in which volunteers collect all plant, animal, insect, fungi, etc. observations through the iNaturalist app.

Information about pollinator award winners from 2023 and previous years is available at <http://pollinator.org/awards>.

ABOUT POLLINATOR PARTNERSHIP (P2) AND THE NORTH AMERICAN POLLINATOR PROTECTION CAMPAIGN (NAPPC)

Established in 1997, Pollinator Partnership, a 501(c)3 headquartered in San Francisco, California, was incorporated in 1997. P2's mission is to promote the health of pollinators, critical to food and ecosystems, through conservation, education, and research. Visit www.pollinator.org for more information.

P2 facilitates NAPPC, a tri-national collaboration working to promote awareness and scientific understanding of pollinators; to gather, organize and disseminate information about pollinators; to provide a forum to identify and discuss pollinator issues; and to promote projects, initiatives and activities that enhance pollinators. NAPPC's mission is to encourage the health of resident and migratory pollinating animals in North America. NAPPC partners gather from throughout the North American continent to raise public awareness and education and promote constructive

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dialogue about pollinators' importance to agriculture, ecosystem health, and food supplies. NAPPC encourages collaborative, working partnerships among participants and with federal, state and local government entities. The annual conference strengthens the network of associated organizations working on behalf of pollinators to promote conservation, protection and restoration of habitat, and to document and support scientific, economic and policy research. Information about NAPPC, including past accomplishments and highlights of past NAPPC conferences, is available at <http://pollinator.org/nappc>.