

Local Architecture and Building Firm Makes Buzz-Worthy Homes, Wins International Award

The Pollinator Advocate Award recognizes individuals who have contributed significantly to pollinator protection, conservation, and issue outreach resulting in increased awareness of the importance of pollinators and pollination. For their successful development of pollinator bee hotels and their ongoing commitment to sustainability, Sustainable.TO Architecture + Building was named this year's recipient of the Pollinator Advocate Award in Canada.

Without pollinators local ecosystems would collapse, plant species would become extinct and the biosphere would stop filtering air and freshwater. Factors such as agricultural intensification, chemical misuse, and pathogen introduction are decimating pollinator bee populations. Research shows that the main factor driving pollinator decline is the loss of habitat. By readily providing plants found in their natural ecosystems, their nesting grounds can be duplicated and reinstated. This task can be complicated in city environments, as many of the natural habitats that bees would nest are unavailable as a result of urbanization. In response leading brands Burt's Bees and Fairmont Hotels & Resorts Resorts, long term supporters of bee initiatives, collaborated with Sustainable. TO Architecture + Building, to develop and build five ecological bee hotels across the GTA and Guelph to combat the issue.

By using pollination biology, architects at Sustainable. TO Architecture + Building were able to develop fashionable yet functional designs for the bee hotels with a collection of nesting materials (wood, twigs, fallen branches, soil and pith-filled holes) designed to attract, support and protect native, lost and solitary bees by replicating their natural nesting sites. This type of habitat allows wild bees to breed, lay eggs and seek protection from predators. Currently there are four pint-sized bee "hotels" located in Toronto. They can be found at The Fairmont Royal York, The Toronto Botanical Garden, Black Creek Community Farm and The Kortright Centre for Conservation as well as one in Guelph at the Eastview Pollinator Park.

A larger outreach campaign supported by *Wild for Bees*, Burt's Bees' signature bee support initiative, engaged urbanites in pollinator advocacy and encouraged ways to help this program flourish. Since their development, these buzz-worthy homes have drawn in diverse crowds and even prompted a visit from Prime Minister Stephen Harper's wife, Lauren Harper. The success of this program will continue to be the driving factor through the installment of plans for Phase 2 developments in 2015.

The team at Sustainable.TO Architecture + Building will be honoured for their unique effort and initiative at the NAPPC VIP reception held at the USDA Whitten Patio in Washington D.C. on October 21, 2014. They will share the evening spotlight with Tri-National Pollinator Advocate Award winners The American Bee Project (USA) and Dr. Pablo F. Jaramillo (Mexico) as well as the Farmer-Rancher award winners Grass Roots Family Farm (Ferintosh, Alberta) and Heikes Family Farm (Vermillion, South Dakota). A subsequent local award ceremony will be held in conjunction with the Aster Awards at The Toronto Botanical Garden in late November.

For further information on pollinators or The Pollinator Advocate Award:

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MEDIA RELEASE



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NAPPC is a collaborative effort of over 120 organizations within the U.S., Canada and Mexico whose common goal is to promote awareness of the essential role that pollinators play in food systems and ecosystems. Their goal is to provide the public with simple, yet effective ways to engage in environmental stewardship.

The **Pollinator Partnership** is the largest organization in the world dedicated to the protection and promotion of pollinators and their ecosystems. It is a non-profit 501(c) 3 organization headquartered in San Francisco, California. Pollinator Partnership has offices and activities in Washington D.C., Louisiana, Nebraska, Iowa, Montana, Ohio, Arizona, Washington, and Canada.

For further information on the NAPPC or the Pollinator Partnership:

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