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New Paper Promotes Collaboration to Keep Pollinators Safe While Combating Zika, West Nile, Lyme and Other Vector-borne Diseases

Dr. Howard Ginsberg leads NAPPCC Task Force in release of paper on the ways to reduce adverse effects on pollinators in vector-borne disease management

The North American Pollinator Protection Campaign (NAPPCC) administrative organization, and the Pollinator Partnership (www.pollinator.org), announced the release of **Management of Arthropod Pathogen Vectors in North America: Minimizing Adverse Effects on Pollinators** in the *Journal of Medical Entomology*. Begun three years ago as the work of a Task Force of NAPPCC, the paper is a timely review of the critical importance of protecting pollinators and other beneficial insects while combating the increasing threats from tick and mosquito-borne diseases which are on the increase in North America. Val Dolcini, President and CEO of Pollinator Partnership underscored the critical importance of the paper, noting that “thanks to this broad-based collaboration, public health officials now have practical actions to begin important community dialogue and coordination well in advance of disease management response. This will help communities, people and pollinators.”

The NAPPCC Vector-borne Disease Control Task Force, headed by Dr. Howard Ginsberg (USGS) included participants with a broad range of expertise; tick and mosquito biologists, vector control experts, bee biologists, an ornithologist, a parasitologist, and experts on pesticides. NAPPCC is a consortium of stakeholders that includes university professors, government scientists, beekeepers, growers, and industry representatives who are working together to help preserve pollinator species. Dr. Ginsberg, who headed the NAPPCC Task Force, is a scientist with the USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center at a Field Station at the University of Rhode Island.

The key finding of the paper is that the best way to effectively control vector-borne pathogens while minimizing adverse effects on pollinators is to form collaborations between vector management personnel and people with expertise on pollinators at the local level. These collaborations work best during the planning stage of vector control programs. Individual locations often have different vector and pathogen species and different pollinator species. Vector control personnel know where the vectors are, when pathogen amplification occurs, and when during the year and day to intervene to interrupt the transmission cycle. Pollinator experts know where the floral resources and pollinator nesting habitats are, and the times during the year and day when pollinators are active. Working together, these experts can devise targeted vector management strategies that effectively minimize both pathogen transmission and harm to pollinators.

While many current vector control practices already minimize effects on pollinators because they are carefully targeted at vector species, pollinator protection is rarely considered in current vector control practice, and simple awareness of potential exposures can help avoid unnecessary effects on pollinator species. Collaborative working groups can develop these approaches based on local conditions. To link to the paper, go to http://pollinator.org/assets/generalFiles/Mgmt_Vectors_Pollinators.pdf.

ABOUT POLLINATOR PARTNERSHIP (P2) and NAPPCC

Established in 1997, Pollinator Partnership is the largest 501(c) 3 non-profit organization dedicated exclusively to the health, protection, and conservation of all pollinating animals. P2's actions for pollinators include education, conservation, restoration, policy, and research. P2's financial support comes through grants, gifts, memberships and donations from any interested party. P2's policies are science-based, set by its board of directors, and never influenced by any donor. One of P2's signature initiatives is the North American Pollinator Protection Campaign (NAPPCC). To make a donation or for information on Pollinator Partnership, visit www.pollinator.org. For NAPPCC information, visit www.nappcc.org.

Nymphal black-legged ticks.

PHOTOS: Please credit Graham Hickling of the University of Tennessee

