

MEDIA ADVISORY

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2020 North American Pollinator Protection Campaign (NAPPC) Award Winners

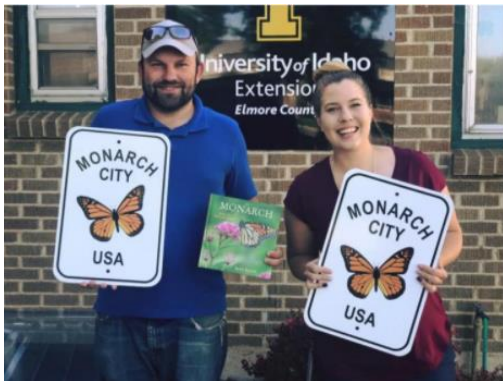
On October 20, 2020, this year's award winners from the United States, Canada, and Mexico were honored by Pollinator Partnership and the North American Pollinator Protection Campaign (NAPPC) during the first ever, *virtual* NAPPC conference. By recognizing individuals or organizations that have contributed significantly to pollinator species protection and conservation, NAPPC aims to encourage their activities and catalyze future action on behalf of pollinators.

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

“We are thrilled to honor the dedicated efforts of these special individuals, who are exemplary leaders in pollinator conservation. Each awardee is uniquely paving the way for pollinator protection and promotion across the North American landscapes.” says Laurie Davies Adams, President and CEO of the Pollinator Partnership, which facilitates NAPPC.

A brief description of award winners and their actions follows:

2020 NAPPC Pollinator Advocate – United States



Brad Stokes of the **University of Idaho** is the Extension Education and County Chair for Elmore County. As a trained entomologist and environmentalist, Brad has advocated for pollinator protection through education in the areas of insect identification, habitat, reproductive processes, and nectar producing plant lists. Brad is a published author who often provides “Ask an Expert” answers on insect identification questions on the national extension platform. As an **Idaho Master Gardener instructor**, he certified 15 volunteers in 2019. He is also a key collaborator on the **Just Bee-Cause project** that provided plant lists and seeds, generating bee kits that are

disseminated throughout southern Idaho to homeowners, government agencies, and agricultural producers. In 2018, Brad developed the **Elmore County Bee Survey Project**, which has collected over 1,900 bee specimens and documented all *Anthophila* species in Elmore County. He has also **declared Pollinator Awareness Day during National Pollinator Week and co-hosts Arbor Day events**, where he and his staff promote pollinator protection, distribute wildflower seed, and participate in other educational activities. In 2020, Brad authored and Mayor Rich Sykes of Mountain Home, MT signed the **City of Mountain Home Pollinator Appreciation Week Proclamation**.

2020 NAPPC-NACD Farmer-Rancher - United States



Jim Croskey and Family now have four generations living and working at **Dalroy Farms, Inc.** in Holmes County, Ohio. The Schlegel and Croskey families operate a **650-acre farm where they milk 180 head and grow hay and other crops.** Jim makes most of the cropping decisions, allowing him to work his growing passion of beekeeping into the operation. They now **manage over 20 hives**, and Jim's wife, Shirley, has become a spokesperson and advocate in their community for the health benefits of consuming local honey.

The farm has been **no-till for decades**, and **cover crops like clover** are implemented as forage for the cows and to improve soil health via nitrogen fixation. After years of these practices, Jim has also been able to **reduce his pesticide use** and is careful to time his applications to minimize pollinator exposure. Jim uses his appreciation for native plants to guide his management of buffer zones and pollinator patches, and has even **identified areas of poor crop production to be converted to bee forage areas.** Jim has also developed unique local partnerships, acting as a bee rescuer for nearby sawmills and installing a pollinator habitat and a hive for the Killbuck Wildlife Area.

2020 NAPPC Pollinator Advocate – Canada



Shelly Candel, inspired by Bee City (USA), started **Bee City Canada** in 2016. Under her leadership, the organization has grown extensively in 4 years, inspiring cities, First Nation communities, schools, college/university campuses, and businesses to take action to protect pollinators. Bee City Canada has 3 main programs that recognize communities and organizations that are taking steps or are committed to future initiative to help pollinators: **Bee Cities, Bee Campuses, and Bee Schools.** In each program, applicants must commit to helping pollinators through **habitat creation and restoration, pesticide reduction, and community outreach and education.** At a local level, these communities are challenged to make change for pollinators and empowered with the knowledge they need, inspiring others across the nation to follow their lead. Under Candel's leadership since 2016, there are now **42 Bee Cities, 12 Bee Campuses, 41 Bee Schools, and 18 Bee Business Partners.**

2020 NAPPC Farmer-Rancher – Canada



Ian Stepler is the president **Stepler Farms Ltd**, a farming enterprise that manages over 3,500 acres of arable land as well as a few thousand acres of pasture near Miami, Manitoba. Stepler Farms breeds and sells purebred Charolais cattle and operates a commercial honey bee operation of approximately **1,200-1,500 hives.** Ian's land management philosophy focuses on protecting flowering plants and grasses in order to provide year round nectar and pollen resources. Pastures are seeded with a grass seed and pollinator mix, including white and yellow sweet clover. **Grazing rotations allow the flowering plants to bloom**

again, extending the overall flowering period. Ian always considers pollinators in his pest management decisions, and is passionate about not spraying ditches to the point that he **works with his local municipality to mow 15 miles of ditches in his area.** He is the vice-president of the Manitoba Beekeepers Association, a director of the Deerwood Watershed Authority, and leads the committee to establish the Knowledge and Research Transfer Program for the beekeeping industry in Manitoba. Ian also regularly shares his farming and beekeeping philosophy with others through his **YouTube channel with 50,000 subscribers.** In 2019, he spoke at 12 conferences outside the province and was the keynote speaker for the Manitoba Watershed Conservation Association's annual conference.

2020 NAPPCC Pollinator Advocate – Mexico



Dr. Ricardo Ayala Barajas is a researcher at the **Instituto de Biología, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México** at the **Biology Station in Chamela**. He is also **Titular researcher A of the National Research System level 1**. Dr. Ayala has dedicated more than 3 decades to research, teaching, and the dissemination of pollinator knowledge, specifically on the native bees of Mexico. He has more than **80 articles in indexed magazines, 6 books, and 26 book chapters** about native bees and their importance. Significantly, Dr. Ayala has contributed to the knowledge of a large number of bee species and their importance, not only in Mexico, but in other countries as well.

2020 NAPPCC Electric Power



American Electric Power (AEP) Prairie Research Project, conducted in collaboration with The Dawes Arboretum in Newark, Ohio, demonstrates the feasibility of economically incorporating native plants and pollinator habitat into utility right-of-way (ROW) sites through prairie establishment. AEP is now **developing guidance on the best management practices to successfully establish and maintain prairie habitat within ROWs based on long-term monitoring of 3 acres of pollinator habitat under AEP transmission lines**. AEP has developed a native prairie seed mix consisting of 25 regionally native species and an annual cover crop for revegetation use

after construction activities and is evaluating the influence of mowing on pollinator-plant community establishment. **The habitat plots have documented visits from 33 butterfly species, 16 beneficial insect families, 14 bee taxa, and 48 bird species**, demonstrating their ecological value. AEP has conducted site visits to educate its employees on the value of pollinator vegetation, created a publically available video to illustrate the benefits of native vegetation, and has hosted multiple Pollinator Week events. They have also engaged many arboretum volunteers and made the habitat sites available to the Ohio Bee Team and professional workshops hosted by the Ohio Chapter of the Wildlife Society.

2020 NAPPCC Roadside Managers



The **Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT)** has demonstrated their commitment to environmental stewardship and pollinator habitat through **reduced mowing practices, limited pesticide use, and uses 23 native seed mixes in roadside vegetation management**, including 3 milkweed species. The agency currently uses native seed in 57% of management plans, with the target 75% of plans by 2025. Additionally, **MnDOT utilizes prescribed fire** to enhance native habitat and plant diversity while controlling invasive species, and the

agency supports research projects related to pollinator health. **MnDOT also helped lead the development of the Monarch Butterfly Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances** – the first nationwide voluntary agreement with USFWS to support monarch conservation on energy and transportation lands. Minnesota is one of the first states to enroll in the agreement, committing to long-term management for monarch butterflies on more than **20,000 acres along more than 11,000 miles of highway**. MnDOT regularly engages the public with through educational social media outreach, participation in National Pollinator Week, and the creation of monarch waystations along I-35 rest areas.

The NAPPCC conference, hosted virtually by Pollinator Partnership and the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History, took place October 20 – 22 and topics included the status of pollinators after 20 years of NAPPCC; plant-pollinator interactions; the conservation of specialist bees; grassland conservation and pollinators; the Founder Remembrance video series; the effects of climate change on pollinators; pathogens, pesticides and pollinators; the current state of the monarch butterfly; the importance of pollinators for agriculture; and reports from honey bee health researchers on projects funded through NAPPCC. Task forces worked to select consensus-based projects and desired outcomes for the coming year.

Additional information about pollinator award winners from 2020 and previous years is available at <http://pollinator.org/awards>.

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

Established in 1997, P2, 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. Interviews with P2 President and CEO Val Dolcini are available by request.

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 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>.