

Intertwine Alliance Conservation Working Group
Pollinator Working Group
Meeting notes
5/5/2016



Attendees:

- Kate Forrester - Herrera
- Katy Weil, Peter Guillozet, Gaylen Beatty - Metro
- Laura Guderyahn, Janelle St. Pierre - PP&R
- Bruce Barbarasch, Kyle Spinks - THPRD
- Susan Laarman - Swarm Portland
- Mary Logalbo, Laura Taylor – WMSWCD

Agenda:

- History
 - The Regional Conservation Strategy came out in 2010 identifying pollinators as a key issue
 - "Pollinator Conservation in the Portland Metro Area- a Regional Stakeholders Report" came out in 2012 and discusses data gaps, recommendations, etc.
 - This discussion is part of an Intertwine Alliance conservation conversation to reinvigorate that energy and see what people are doing and what opportunities there may be.
 - Comes on the heels of the new Meadowscaping Handbook (WMSWCD)
- Context for Today
 - Key Questions we don't have answers to:
 - How much habitat is enough?
 - How do you measure it?
 - What do we know about the needs of different species?
 - What is the conservation status of various species?
 - What are people interested in/working on and what is possible?
- Post-it Note Exercise: The goal of the exercise was to get feedback from all the participants on the challenges, strengths, and current projects that address the needs of connecting habitat patches and evaluating project success. We summarized the trends in the exercise and posed additional questions to consider.
 - **Connecting small patches to larger ones**
 - Challenges
 - Money!
 - Maintenance- managing weeds within pollinator habitat, understanding why the long site prep time really matters, and addressing concerns for erosion control and desire for quick establishment.
 - Managing public perception of a tidy landscape
 - Materials availability and costs - seed sources, nurseries providing species we need
 - Can we scale projects up/down as needed?
 - If we are managing public landscapes, how to do we advocate for connectivity on adjacent private landscapes?

- Stop the mowing! Challenge of the perception that dead grasses/flower stalks creating wildflower risk - can we mow fire breaks without negatively impacting the habitat?
 - Recognizing that most restoration projects support pollinators even if they aren't planned specifically for that - look at ALL the types of habitats that benefit pollinators beyond wildflower meadows
 - Keep education as a component of EVERY project
 - Keeping funding going for a mission-based social enterprise.
 - Strengths you can share
 - Managing variety of sizes of lands, also urban to rural gradient
 - Backyard Habitat has a website with a meadowscaping photo gallery and tracks meadows on enrolled properties.
 - Both PP&R and THPRD have projects in progress that are accessible to the public
 - PP&R Environmental Education is completing a pocket guide to bees in Portland.
 - Metro has access to large parcels and basic funding for projects.
 - Meadowscaping handbook hot off the presses.
 - Experience working with lots of large linear projects incorporating pollinator habitats and with maximizing habitat quality on smaller sites.
 - Getting the word out with social media, media outreach, event planning, and creative thinking.
 - Current projects
 - Backyard demonstration sites in Baltimore Woods, Overlook Bluffs, Sellwood
 - Baltimore Woods maintains a 3 acre native meadow with connectivity to N PDX Greenway and St. John's Landfill
 - WMSWCD has private landowner demonstration projects
 - Metro and PP&R are working with BPA on a powerline corridor pilot project.
 - PP&R has projects underway in Willamette Park (Centennial Oaks), Woods Memorial Park, Gabriel Park, and Sylvania Natural Area Park
 - Metro Parks is looking at more pollinator habitat in high use areas like Blue Lake
 - ODOT adopt-a-Hwy project in Linnton on HWY 30
 - Working lands projects with BMPs for fence lines and hedgerows
 - Storm water/LID/ sustainable development project
 - Ecological pedestrian corridors projects in other countries
 - Hex-shaped raised beds of locally sources cedar and juniper to highlight/teach about pollinator friendly plants.
 - KelipiCamas project to create oak landscapes on private property in Clackamas area
 - Trends
 - Opportunity to create focal areas? With anchor habitats identified and then all jurisdictions/stakeholders in that area working to create a pollinator network and connectivity corridors around that anchor.
 - Where are their "deserts" with no habitat? How can we go beyond what each of us is doing independently and turn this into a larger-scale significant effort?
- **Evaluating pollinator project success**
 - Challenges
 - Protocols need to be volunteer friendly, for multiple pollinator species, and something that we can all agree on so that we can share data and make region wide comparisons.

- Does species ID really matter? Are there other (easier) ways to look at indicators of project success?
 - Experience: limited pollinator species knowledge
 - Timing: needs to be long-term to track changes over time, and need to consider changes in phenology with climate change impacts
 - There are more people interested in volunteering than groups have the capacity to train
 - Need to be able to link finding back to management practices
 - Finding public accessible areas that are not getting mowed
- Strengths you can share
 - Lots of experience with people connecting the public to natural areas through volunteering and community science opportunities.
 - Connecting with public via Facebook page with high school students for summer jobs.
 - 20 years of experience designing and implementing community science projects with volunteers (retired professional, grad and undergrad students, consulting biologists, and interested community members) for monitoring.
 - Expertise in creating pollinator habitat in projects with various habitat types and educating clients/public about importance of habitat and incorporating forbs.
 - Building relationships with key partners like the Xerces Society.
 - Success with using performance based criteria versus looking at what species show up.
- Current projects
 - Evaluating BMPs
 - Clackamas County Hedgerows and Washington County farm field enhancement
 - Creating a pollinator site on THPRD property
 - Public outreach project where people post their pollinator gardens
 - Pollinator monitoring community science project looking at bee and butterfly diversity and abundance on pollinator restoration sites
 - Metro pilot project with Xerces Society. One training on bees and butterflies for land managers and restoration staff, and a second for bumble bee monitoring
 - Bumble Bee Watch- online community science monitoring tool through Xerces
- Trends
 - What do we have to offer - what expertise do we have and then how can we pull in a technical expert to help us fill in the gaps?
 - What questions do we need to ask where the answer will tell us if we are successful?
 - Do we have a variety of types of pollinators at a site?
 - Do we have a specific set of species, where if we know we have those, we have success?
 - Is it enough to get a palette of plant species established - do we NEED to monitor pollinators?
 - Bumble bee watch - a way for EVERYONE to get involved and educated
 - Maritime NW Citizen Science Monitoring Guide for Bees and Butterflies - a resource for restoration practitioners to use to ask/answer questions
- **Next Steps:**
 - Monitoring protocol - opportunity for deeper conversation - what protocol options do we have - can we create a suite of protocols based on the question we are trying to answer?

- Habitat Connectivity - pick an area - do an experiment - do we have an area with a bunch of projects happening already?