

SUMMER 2023

# HORIZONS

## THE VOICE OF THE FRIENDS OF HAVENWOODS



### **Birds, bees, butterflies: preserving our pollinators**

Havenwoods State Forest welcomes visitors this summer with a busy calendar of events. One focuses on the critical role of pollination in our lives. **Pollination Appreciation Day, June 24**, explains the daily work of pollinators and shows their impact on the food we eat and the wildflowers we enjoy.

The Pollinator Partnership says, "pollinators are responsible for bringing us one out of every three bites of food." The United States Department of Agriculture recognizes bees for pollinating about 75% of fruit, nuts and vegetables grown in the U.S.

However, studies by the international Xerces Society found that some native species of bees are in rapid decline. Some 28% of all North American bumble bees are at risk of extinction. Threats facing bees, butterflies and other pollinators include habitat loss, pesticide use, disease and the changing climate.

Inside, meet Elizabeth Braatz, an insect ecologist speaking for the bees at the June 24 event. Please join us! The insert lists more details about pollinators and this fun day of hikes, kids and craft activities.

### ***Bee sensitive***

You can help stop the loss of pollinators and preserve \$217 billion of contributions to our global economy!

- **Provide flowers** all growing season, using native plants.
- **Forgo insecticides.**
- **Protect nesting sites** (found in chipmunk holes, compost piles, at the base of tall grasses or near basements).
- **Minimize spring yard disturbance:** Pile garden debris onsite and leave last year's stems, dried flowers and leaves until mid-April's 50° temps.

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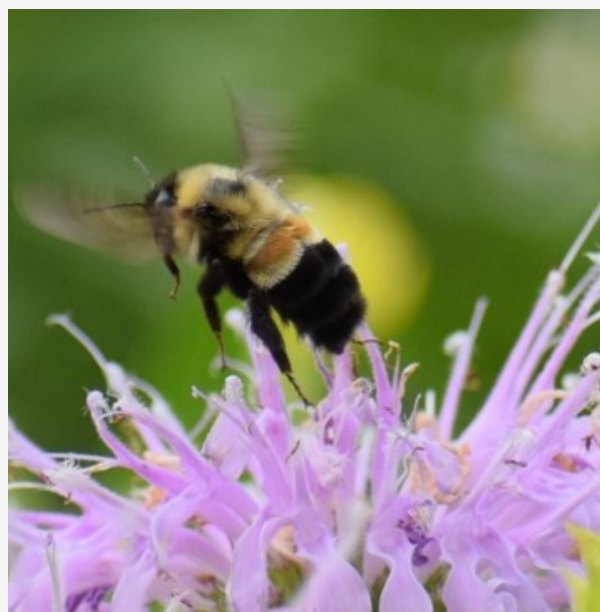


## Bees need our help

Wisconsin is home to more than 400 species of native bee, a fascinating diversity state residents might find surprising. Most of our bees buzz through solitary lives, while only 15% of species are social and more likely to be seen by us, since they stay together in family groups or colonies.

All species are important pollinators, playing a vital role in sustaining flowering plants and bringing food to our tables as they go about routine tasks of collecting pollen and drinking nectar, said Elizabeth Braatz (below), a terrestrial insect ecologist with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR).

Yet bees are declining in numbers, and Braatz never tires of showing the rest of us how we can help bees so they can continue to help us. She'll be leading three public presentations at the June 24 pollinator program at Havenwoods State Forest.



*Rusty patched bumblebee*

Braatz will focus on bees' lives and how we can provide backyard homes for them; the need for residents to assist in the statewide search for bees as members of the Bumble Bee Brigade, and instructing educators on how to give pollinator presentations. Braatz is coordinator of the WDNR's Bumble Bee Brigade.

Of all the native bee species in Wisconsin, only 20 are bumble bees, the larger and more robust of bees with hairy bodies. Most bumbles are social and live in colonies. We asked Braatz to tell us more.

### **Why do Wisconsin's native bumble bees need our help?**

More than 25% of North America's bumble bees face some risk of extinction. The Rusty patched bumble bee's population has declined nearly 90% in recent years, and it was declared endangered in 2017.



## What can I do for them where I live?

Bumble bees primarily nest in the ground, especially in clumps of native bunchgrasses and sedges, and abandoned rodent burrows. Bumble bee queens hibernate under piles of brush and dead leaves in the winter. You can plant native bunchgrasses, rake leaves in fall to the back of a garden or start a mulch pile of leaves.

And since you care about pollinators, you can be a citizen scientist, sharing information from where you (and the bees) are by joining the Bumble Bee Brigade.

## How can I assist bees as a member of the Bumble Bee Brigade?

If you join, all you need to do is send photos of neat bumble bees with locations and dates to the WDNR.

In 2022, the brigade's 227 volunteers confirmed 18 species of bumble bees after visiting 1,858 sites in 63 of the state's 72 counties. The Rusty patched bumble bee was reported at 226 sites.

For information on the brigade, go to the website: <https://wiatri.net/inventory/bbb/>



*Youth learning new skills at MOHEE 2023.*

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## Milwaukee youth embrace MOHEE

Thank you to all the volunteers, partners, sponsors and donors who helped make the first Midwest Outdoor Heritage Education Expos (MOHEE) in Milwaukee a huge success. MOHEE provided around 30 outdoor recreational activities for youth at Havenwoods State Forest on May 10, and we look forward to MOHEE returning here May 8, 2024.

More than 700 fourth through seventh graders, as well as teachers and chaperones, attended the event coordinated by the Outdoor Heritage Education Center in Hazel Green. A large majority of the students were from Milwaukee schools.

The joy expressed by students learning archery, fishing, wildfire suppression, wildlife identification and the other activities may lead them to future interests in hunting, fishing, other outdoor recreation and natural resources. ~ Angela Vickio, Superintendent



Friends of Havenwoods, Inc.  
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### Nature Center Hours

**8:30 a.m.—4 p.m.**

**Tuesday thru Saturday**

The grounds are open 6 a.m.—8 p.m. If you will need to enter the building please call 414-527-0232 to make sure the staff are not busy elsewhere.

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