State of Wisconsin
2023 - 2024 LEGISLATURE

LRB-3694/1
MCP:cdc

2023 SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 59

July 13, 2023 – Introduced by Senators PFAFF, AGARD, CARPENTER, BALLWEG, HESSELBEIN, LARSON, ROYS and SPREITZER, cosponsored by Representatives SNODGRASS, CONSIDINE, C. ANDERSON, J. ANDERSON, ANDRACA, CABRERA, BALDEH, BEHNKE, CONLEY, EMERSON, HAYWOOD, HONG, JACOBSON, JOERS, MOORE OMOKUNDE, OHNSTAD, ORTIZ-VELEZ, PALMERI, RATCLIFF, SCHUTT, SHANKLAND, SHELTON, SINICKI, STUBBS, SUBECK and VINING. Referred to Committee on Senate Organization.

Relating to: designating June 2023 as Pollinator Awareness Month in Wisconsin.

Whereas, bees, butterflies, and other pollinator species have a critically important role in agriculture in the United States and help to produce a healthy and affordable food supply and sustain ecosystem health; and

Whereas, pollinators are responsible for the reproduction of 90 percent of the world's wild plant species by providing them with a healthy habitat rich in a variety of native plants that are free or nearly free of pesticides; and

Whereas, thanks to the more than 400 species of native pollinators in Wisconsin, along with honeybees, we have very diverse dietary choices rich in fruits, nuts, and vegetables; and

Whereas, pollinators help to produce an estimated one out of every three bites of food consumed in the United States and help reproduce at least 80 percent of flowering plants; and

Whereas, commodities produced in partnership with animal pollinators generate $6.5 million in annual production, with domestic honeybees alone

pollinating an estimated $14.6 billion worth of crops in the United States each year produced on more than two million acres; and

Whereas, there are approximately 20,000 bee species in the world, 3,600 in the United States, and 400 in Wisconsin; and

Whereas, in Wisconsin, pollinator–dependent crops are harvested on over 100,800 acres, with apple, cranberry, cherry, green bean, and pickling cucumber crops accounting for over $230 million in annual production; and

Whereas, bees and other pollinators have experienced population declines due to a combination of habitat loss, use of pesticides, and the spread of pests and diseases; and

Whereas, residents of Wisconsin have the opportunity to support bees and other pollinators on both public and private land; and

Whereas, the State of Wisconsin seeks to ensure a healthy environment and create policies that sustain our environment; and

Whereas, supporting native honeybees and other pollinators promotes environmental awareness, sustainability, and increases interactions among community stewards such as commercial and backyard beekeepers, farmers, children, educators, Master Gardeners, plant nurseries, municipalities, neighborhoods, and garden clubs and suppliers; and

Whereas, the ideal pollinator–friendly habitat provides diverse and abundant nectar and pollen from plants blooming in succession throughout the growing season; provides undisturbed spaces such as leaf and brush piles, un–mowed fields or field margins, and fallen trees and other dead wood for nesting and overwintering for wild pollinators; provides water for drinking, nest–building, cooling, diluting stored honey, and butterfly puddling; is pesticide–free or has pesticide use carried

out with the least ill effects possible on pollinators; is comprised of mostly, if not all, native species of annual and perennial flowering plants, grasses, vines, shrubs, and trees in landscapes because many wild pollinators prefer or depend on the native plants with which they coadapted; includes, where possible, designated pollinator zones in public spaces with signage to educate the public and build awareness; and provides for safe and humane removal of honeybees when required; and

Whereas, No Mow May, a municipal effort encouraging homeowners to reduce their mowing intensity to provide forage for native pollinators, began in Appleton in 2020 and has expanded throughout Fox Cities municipalities to include the communities of Appleton, Fox Crossing, Oshkosh, De Pere, Fort Atkinson, and Hortonville; and

Whereas, a peer–reviewed scientific study of the effects of No Mow May and the community–wide delay in early May lawn care, specifically mowing early growth flowering plants, revealed that these efforts precipitated a five–fold increase in bee species prevalence and a three–fold increase in bee species diversity; and

Whereas, possible declines in the health and population of pollinators pose what could be a significant threat to global food webs, the integrity of biodiversity, and human health; and

Whereas, it is in the strong economic interest of agricultural producers and consumers in Wisconsin to help ensure a healthy and sustainable pollinator population; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the senate, the assembly concurring, That the Wisconsin Legislature designates June 2023 as Pollinator Awareness Month in Wisconsin.

(END)