

Create an Insect Hotel!

One fun way to help our insects is to create an insect hotel. The beneficial insects will help your garden and our native plant species. Solitary bees may use the insect hotel as a place to lay their eggs. The eggs will hatch, and the larvae will overwinter in the hotel, emerging the following spring.

You can create your insect hotel from materials such as wood blocks, hollow bamboo pieces, stems, twigs, pinecones, and wood shavings.

Rusty Patched Bumble Bee

Bombus affinis



Photo: Johanna James-Heinz, BugGuide.net

The Rusty Patched Bumble Bee is listed as endangered. Since 2000, this bumble bee has been reported from only 13 states, Illinois being one of them!

There are populations of this bumble bee at Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie!

Monarch Butterfly

Danaus plexippus



Photo: Emilie Janes

Monarch populations have been steadily declining, and need your help!

Visit monarchwatch.org to learn how you can create a monarch "waystation" - providing resources for reproducing and migrating monarchs!

Common Eastern Bumble Bee

Bombus impatiens



Photo: Bob Peterson, accessed from iNaturalist.org

The Common Eastern Bumble Bee is one of the most frequently found bumble bees across the eastern half of North America.

The bee pictured here is visiting Wild Bergamot, commonly called "Bee Balm"!

Metallic Green Sweat Bee

Halictidae family



Photo: Molanic, accessed from iNaturalist.org

Sweat bees belong to the Halictidae family, and are valuable pollinator species.

These tiny bees range from less than a 1/4 inch to 3/4 inch in length and have bright, dark or metallic coloring. They aren't aggressive, don't worry!

Western Honey Bee

Apis mellifera



Photo: Emilie Janes

Honey bees are smaller and more slender than bumble bees. They are the world's most important single species of pollinator in natural ecosystems.

All sorts of fruit and vegetables are pollinated by honey bees—squash, broccoli, almonds, and apples to name a few!

Great Golden Digger Wasp

Sphex ichneumoneus



Photo: Emilie Janes

Large solitary wasps like the Great Golden Digger Wasp are not aggressive towards humans. This wasp will paralyze its prey, and bring it back to her burrow as a source of food for her offspring.

Wasps pollinate while they feed on flower nectar.

Black Swallowtail

Papilio polyxenes

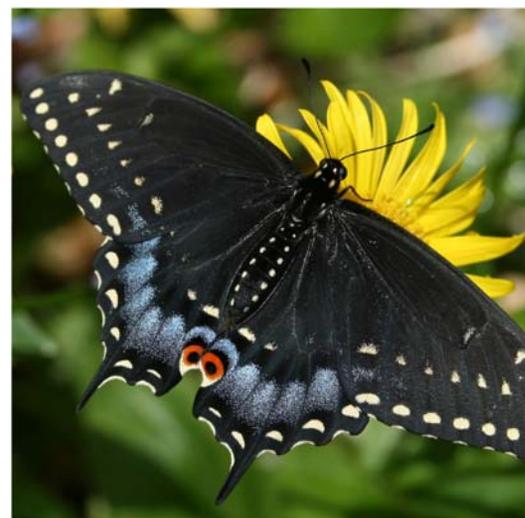
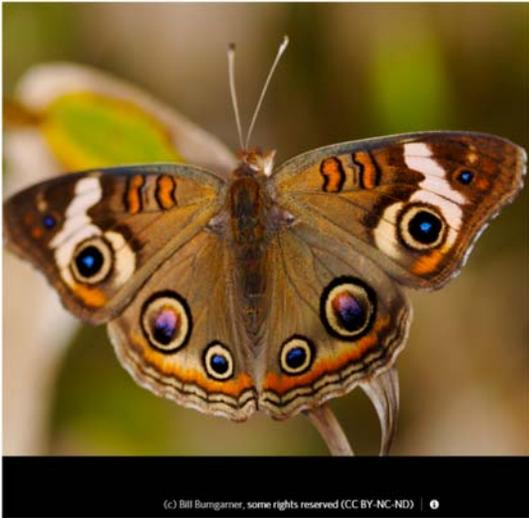


Photo: Dean Morley, accessed from iNaturalist.org

The Black Swallowtail butterfly's host plants include carrots, parsley, dill, fennel, and Queen Anne's Lace. A host plant is a plant that provides a site for the butterfly to lay eggs, and acts as a food source for caterpillars!

Common Buckeye

Junonia coenia



This butterfly is starting to make an appearance around Perry Farm right now! (Sept.-Oct.)

The Common Buckeye has eyespots on its wings that scare off predators.

Photo: Bill Bumgarner, accessed from iNaturalist.org

White-lined Sphinx Moth

Hyles lineata



Don't forget about moths—they're important pollinators, too! Most moths are nocturnal, coming out at night to feed on flower nectar.

Sphinx moths are large moths that are often mistaken for hummingbirds!

Photo: Greg Lasley, iNaturalist.org

Syrphid Fly or "Hover Fly"

Syrphidae family



Is this a bee?! Hover flies, often mistaken for "sweat bees", are great pollinator species. These neat flies mimic bees to deter predators.

When in doubt, count it out! Flies, like the one pictured, have 2 wings, while bees and wasps have 4 wings!

Photo: Laurence Livermore, iNaturalist.org

Goldenrod Soldier Beetle

Chauliognathus pensylvanicus



Beetles may pollinate flowers as they travel from flower to flower looking for food!

The Goldenrod Soldier Beetle is an important pollinator that also feeds on other small insects, like aphids.

Photo: Sankax, accessed from iNaturalist.org