

Pre-Recorded Lightning Talks

Available via the NECTAR Hub
Virtual Partner Meeting Course



Virtual Partner Meeting Series

Alphabetized by organization name

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Latest Updates from Bee & Butterfly Habitat Fund

Pete Berthelsen, *Bee & Butterfly Habitat Fund*

Synergy for Conservation: 25 years of work in monarch butterfly conservation in Mexico

Eligio García Serrano, *Fondo de Conservación del Eje Neovolcánico A.C*

We will discuss the 25 years of work carried out by the Monarch Fund, with a special focus on the participation of ejidos and communities in the conservation, restoration, and protection of the forests where the monarch butterfly hibernates in Mexico. We will emphasize strategic alliances and financing needs to strengthen long-term community work.

PEP talk: A new Pollinator Evaluation Program using IMMP

Julia Leone, *Friends of the Mississippi River*

In 2025, Friends of the Mississippi River, an environmental non-profit based in St. Paul, MN, launched PEP (the Pollinator Evaluation Program), a participatory science program that recruits and trains volunteers to monitor monarchs using the Integrated Monarch Monitoring Program. We will share highlights, successes, and challenges from our first season, and discuss opportunities for participation and collaboration.

Removing Barriers to Native Gardening Through Collaborative Efforts

Mykayla Hagaman, *Iowa Monarch Conservation Consortium*

The Native Plant Network is a new collaborative outreach program between the Iowa Monarch Conservation Consortium (IMCC) and graduate students at ISU to grow native plants for the general public. The goal is to remove barriers to native habitat establishment by increasing the availability of plants, providing educational knowledge, and removing financial barriers. The native plants will be available, ideally for free, at various outreach events where participants will learn about plant care and pledge to plant their native plants. By helping participants register their plantings, we will create a network of native gardens, thereby increasing monarch habitat in Iowa.

Drone Monitoring of Pollinator Habitat on Minnesota Rights-of-Way

Alex Carroll, *Monarch Joint Venture*

If You Plant It, They Will Come: Butterfly Colonization of Urban Gardens

Emily Geest, *Oklahoma City Zoo and Botanical Garden*

Butterfly gardens are widely promoted as urban conservation tools, but their effectiveness depends on colonization and community dynamics over time. Using three complementary datasets from gardens at the Oklahoma City Zoo and Botanical Garden, we found butterflies colonized gardens immediately after planting. After 28 weeks, gardens adjacent to woody habitat supported more species than those embedded in impervious landscapes. By the first summer post-planting species richness was similar among gardens but community composition differed with beta diversity driven primarily by species turnover. These results show butterfly gardens can contribute to conservation, but success depends on landscape context and temporal dynamics.

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Cross Pollination - Not Just for Plants

Terry Smith, *Pollinator Posse*

The Native Habitat Collaborative based in Mercer County, NJ, is a collective of local community members, natural resource professionals, scientists, non-profit organizations, and land managers who meet monthly to discuss and share their work. The overriding purpose is to build on and amplify each participant's conservation and outreach efforts through cooperation, collaboration and support. Getting out of our respective silos has led to connections and conversations that benefit both members and the development of native habitat.

Pinged on the Wing from Utah to Arizona: What Wandering Wanda & Artie reveal about the monarch migration

Gail Morris, *Southwest Monarch Study*; Natasha Hadden, *Ashley National Forest*

Recent advances in Bluetooth radio-tagging technology by CTT are transforming how we study the monarch butterfly migration in the Western United States. By deploying lightweight Bluetooth tags (Blu+ & BluMorpho tags), we are gaining unprecedented insights into the movement patterns, stopover locations and migration corridors that were previously undocumented. One tagged monarch, affectionately named "Wandering Wanda," traveled an extraordinary 501 miles from northeastern Utah to southern Arizona, highlighting the scale and connectivity of the western monarch migration. In addition, a monarch named "Artie" reveals the importance of Arizona as a migration and wintering area gateway. These initial data demonstrate the power of new emerging technology and the importance of citizen science to fill crucial data gaps to inform and strengthen conservation efforts and strategies for a species in decline.

Building Institutional Buy-in for Habitat Conservation

Anne Jansen, *University of Illinois Chicago*

For six years, the Rights-of-Way as Habitat Working Group has surveyed transportation, utility, and other industry professionals to understand what drives organizational buy-in for pollinator habitat conservation. This annual survey tracks changes in awareness and engagement, identifies barriers, and highlights strategies for increasing buy-in and communicating habitat value to decision-makers. This presentation will discuss how findings from this survey have guided the Working Group's efforts to create resources, strengthen communication, and foster collaboration across industry to advance habitat conservation. These insights can also inform future strategies for expanding buy-in for habitat conservation work beyond the energy and transportation sectors.