



# Field Notes

## **Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture**

### **E-Newsletter**

***E-Field Notes: Special Issue: Pollinator Workshop Registration Due May 28***  
**May 2015**

May 28 - next Thursday - is the final day to register for the June 6 "3 Bs" workshop. It covers bees, butterflies, and beneficials, along with a wealth of other practical information on native pollinators. Please have a look at the workshop description below, and be sure to sign up on time to catch the buzz!

## Save the 3 Bs (Bees, Butterflies and Beneficials): Workshop June 6



The beneficial bugs we know and love are in trouble.

A few numbers tell the story. In 1947 there were 6 million honey bee colonies; today there are 2.5 million.

The population of monarch butterflies is down by 80% over the last twenty years, with recent numbers so low that some fear the "flying flowers" are on the brink of extinction.

Other beneficial insects, like some bumblebee species, are disappearing.

That's the bad news. The good news is that people of all ages and walks of life- seniors, school kids, teachers, gardeners, farmers, and ordinary suburbanites - can do something about it!

Learn what you can do to bring back the 3 Bs-- bees, butterflies, and beneficial insects-- at a workshop Saturday, June 6, from 9-3, at the Kerr Center near Poteau.

Kerr Center staff and Anne Stine from the Xerces Society will cover how to identify

pollinators and pollinator plants; how to incorporate pollinator-friendly plants into a home landscape, garden, ranch, or farm; what to know about other beneficial insects and how to plant for them; and what to plant for monarch butterflies.

Participants will get outside to see pollinators and habitat on the Kerr Ranch, organic vegetable garden and office landscape.

Attendees will also receive an extensive packet of resources on pollinators and native plants to use at home or in the classroom. Included will be the 2014 book *Farming with Native Beneficial Insects* from the Xerces Society, a full reference with photos of beneficial bugs, lots of ideas for plantings and cutting-edge science.

In addition, attendees will get the Kerr Center's just published full-color guidebook *Native Plants for Native Pollinators in Oklahoma*. This book, loaded with photos and information, is the first of its kind in Oklahoma to bring together information on Oklahoma's native plants and pollinators in one book.

Insects are considered beneficial if they are pollinators or prey on insect pests. Beneficials play crucial roles in wild ecosystems and are absolutely essential to agriculture. Honey bees, native bees, and a host of other insects are important pollinators, while other bugs, such as lacewings, are effective in controlling insect pests.

Experts agree that by planting the right flowers, trees and shrubs, and by preserving wildflowers and wild patches, we can tackle head-on the loss of habitat (food and shelter) that is hurting the 3 Bs.

In addition to their value to insects, "beneficial-friendly landscapes and gardens can be an attractive outdoor space for the family to enjoy," says David Redhage, who heads the center's Native Pollinator Project.

And because they are planted with native plants adapted to local conditions, they can be drought-resistant and low maintenance, he adds.

Researchers have found that buffer strips or garden plantings of native plants attract a variety of beneficial insects, leading to healthier crops.

In fact, the value to agriculture of pollination and pest control by these insects is estimated to be at least \$22 billion annually in the U.S.

Workshop space is limited, so register early. Pre-registration is required by May 28. Cost is

\$50 per person; \$25 for spouse or child from the same family. (Families will receive one set of resources.) Registration includes lunch, drinks and snacks.

To register online or for more information [visit the events page](#), or call the Kerr Center at 918.647.9123.

## Quick Links...

[Kerr Center website](#)

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