Blooming Boulevards

Connecting neighbourhoods to nature

Greatest Threats to Pollinators

- Neonicotinoids are broad spectrum insecticides that growers apply to both foliage and seeds and which growing plants absorb. The insecticide accumulates in nectar and pollen, which pollinators consume. Nursery plants are not typically labelled as treated.

- Earlier flowering times (plant-pollinator phenological mismatches) decrease the availability of food and forage.

- More frequent pesticide use is killing pollinators and non-target insects as well.

- Habitat loss from development removes essential nesting and foraging habitat.

How You Can Help Pollinators

What you do in your yard matters!

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1. **Stop mowing** part of your lawn and create a natural meadow.

2. **Plant native flowers, shrubs and trees** to provide food for wild bees, butterflies and other pollinators. Ask your nursery for neonicotinoid-free plants; neonic chemicals are systemic, and can poison or kill pollinators when they feed on flowers

3. **Avoid pesticides** and other lawn chemicals that kill pollinators.

If you want to do more, best-selling author and scientist Doug Tallamy advises:

1. **Reduce lawn by half**. If every homeowner did this in the United States, Dr. Tallamy says this 20-million acre Homegrown National Park would be larger than all of

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America's national parks combined! And this park would be connected, supporting more biodiversity than fragmented areas.

2. **Plant powerhouse performers.** Keystone species, such as native oak, cherry, willow and birch trees, support hundreds of caterpillar species, while asters, goldenrods and sunflowers are among the best herbaceous choices for biodiversity and local food webs.

3. **Decrease light pollution.** Change to motion sensor security lights or better, yellow LED bulbs for safer moth and bat habitat**.**

4. **Let caterpillars develop into adult butterflies and moths** by replacing lawn and cement underneath trees with natural plantings. Tallamy's research shows that 94 percent of moths drop off their host trees as they enter the third stage of development. They land under the cover of leaves bark and soil and pupate in cocoons, emerging as adults the following spring. In the typical yard, most cocoons are exposed to weather, natural predators, rakes and leafblowers.