



Our Future Flies on the Wings of Pollinators

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Laurie Adams (415) 362 1137 lda@coevolution.org
Kat McGuire (415) 362-1137 km@coevolution.org



Will a Butterfly Bloom in Kansas?

San Francisco, CA (April 18, 2007) A bold plan to publicize the importance and plight of pollinators in the U.S. is hoping to literally take root on a small farm in Kansas. Backed by a continental coalition of pollinator advocates, a program to raise funds for a unique blend of art and conservation advocacy is looking for “seed money.”

To draw attention to the importance of pollinators in ecosystems, agriculture, and biodiversity, a continent-wide campaign to protect pollinators, the North American Pollinator Protection Campaign (NAPPC), plans to partner with world-renowned Kansas-based crop artist Stan Herd to build a 50-foot butterfly out of natural materials.

“Pollinators are essential to our quality of life, and they may be in trouble,” said Laurie Davies Adams, who directs the North American Pollinator Protection Campaign (NAPPC). “Many people don’t realize that we depend on pollinators for 80% of the flowering plants in natural areas and for much of the food we eat. A world without pollinators is a world without strawberries, apples, almonds, berries, and even one-half of the oils in our diet.”

Convinced that public awareness and involvement are essential to pollinator protection, NAPPC Steering Committee member Professor Chip Taylor of the University of Kansas, and the head of MonarchWatch, has enlisted the help of acclaimed artist Stan Herd to publicize the issue. Herd specializes in large-scale earthworks, such as crop art and rock mosaics, and has been featured in publications such as *National Geographic*, *Smithsonian*, and *Wall Street Journal*. His previous work can be viewed at www.stanherdart.com, and a sketch of the crop art is available at <http://www.pollinator.org/pix/crop%20art%20sketch.jpg>. (See below left.)



Herd plans to replicate one of four *Pollination* stamps to be issued by the U.S. Postal Service, the Southern dogface butterfly, using only plants and other natural materials. The installation will be executed near Pendleton’s Country Market, a family farm off Kansas Highway 10 between Olathe and Lawrence. The resulting evanescent image will be viewed aerially for a brief few weeks. Flyovers originating from an airport three miles away are planned.

NAPPC hopes to raise the funding for this project this month – in time for planting. “Our goal is that the beauty and timeliness of this art inspire the public to take action to protect pollinators,” said

Taylor. “Small actions make a big difference at the collective level. Get in touch with nature by taking a walk; learn about animal-pollinated plants native to your area; and then plant a few. Another way to help is by donating to the pollinator crop art project, which will help bring much-needed publicity to the importance of pollinators.”

The crop art will coincide with National Pollinator Week, designated by the U.S. Senate and the U.S. Department of Agriculture to help publicize the vulnerability of pollinators and to call on the public to create pollinator-friendly habitats in their own landscapes.

The U.S. Postal Service block of four *Pollination* stamps, to be issued during Pollinator Week, will feature Morrison's bumble bee, the calliope hummingbird, and the lesser long-nosed bat, in addition to the Southern dogface butterfly that crop artist Herd plans to create in flowers.

"We are excited that the message we are trying to convey - the importance of pollinators to our society - will be amplified with this enormous and unique reproduction of our beautiful postage stamp," said David Failor, Executive Director of Stamp Services for the U.S. Postal Service.

National Pollinator Week will focus on information on actions that help pollinators. Through habitat destruction, misuse of pesticides, and pollution, humans have provoked a decline in many species of pollinators, such as birds, bats, bees and butterflies that play an essential role in the reproduction of flowering plants both on farms and in the wild.

National Pollinator Week comes at a time when pollinators have been in the news. Recently, much media attention has been focused on the mysterious disappearance of tens of thousands of honey bee colonies, a phenomenon known as Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD). Scientists are currently studying the extent, causes and remedies for this unexplained loss, and have put forth possible explanations ranging from new pesticides to persistent drought caused by climate change to persistent and cumulative effects of parasites, disease or fungus. Whatever the reason, CCD has proven particularly difficult for the farmers who depend on honey bees to pollinate their crops.

"Everyone loses when we lose pollinators," said Paul Growald, the Chairman of NAPPC. "When pollinators are in trouble, the plant species that depend on them are in trouble – the entire ecosystem suffers. When beekeepers are forced to charge farmers more for pollination services because of honey bee die-off, we all shoulder the burden in the form of higher food prices."

To make a tax-deductible donation to the crop art project, visit www.pollinator.org (click "Crop Art Donations") or Contact Laurie Davies Adams at (415) 362-1137 or info@coevolution.org. Donations are necessary to assure the project's timely completion; artist Herd hopes to complete the pollinator crop art by National Pollinator Week, June 24-30. NAPPC encourages all types of groups – classrooms, congregations, families – and individuals to use this opportunity to learn about pollinators as they fundraise to support this project. NAPPC gratefully welcomes donations of any amount, and will recognize contributors on www.pollinator.org.

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(ELECTRONIC RESOURCES at www.pollinator.org include: (1) Fact Sheets on Pollination and for Gardeners, Public Land Managers, Educators and Students, Food Industry, Farmers and Ranchers; (2) Full-color artwork on Pollination; (3) Information about events and activities planned for Pollinator Week, and ways to get involved; (4) **Crop Art Sketch** <http://www.pollinator.org/pix/crop%20art%20sketch.jpg>.)