

Conversation around Pollinator Conservation



Rachael Winfree

Associate Professor, Ecology, Evolution and Natural Resources

CURRENT RESEARCH

Understanding the ecology of pollinators and putting research into practice through collaborations

Pollinators are required by 90% of flowering plants worldwide and 75% of crops, thereby playing a critical role in maintaining ecosystems and food security. Recent declines in bee pollinators have drawn national attention to the need for enhanced pollinator conservation, including a recent White House memorandum recommending creation of a federal strategy for improving the health of pollinators such as bees. Despite their importance and these efforts, however, most of the ~4000 species of bees that are native to the United States are poorly known scientifically. Dr. Rachael Winfree, Associate Professor of Ecology, Evolution and Natural Resources at Rutgers University, investigates basic scientific questions involving pollinators and pollination. She then collaborates with the government and conservation-oriented NGOs to translate this ecological knowledge into on-the-ground pollinator conservation.

The lack of basic ecological knowledge about our native pollinator species has led to a lack of policy protecting bees. For example, no state in the USA has completely evaluated and characterized its bee species as rare or endangered. Moreover, at the national level, it is likely that several bee species have gone extinct in recent times, but no bee species is even listed under the Endangered Species Act. A pioneer in pollinator research, Dr. Winfree is helping to fill this gap in knowledge by collecting field data on hundreds of bee species at statewide scales. Researchers from the Winfree lab investigate natural habitats, cities and agriculture to discover what habitats different species use and which species might be in need of protection. In this process there have been exciting surprises; for example, Dr....

AFFILIATION



Rutgers University

EDUCATION

- Ph.D. in Ecology, Evolution and Behavior 2001, Princeton University
- B.A. in Government 1990, Dartmouth College

RESEARCH AREAS

Environment, Ecology, Global Policy

FUNDING REQUEST

Your contributions will support the continued research of Dr. Rachael Winfree at Rutgers University as she studies bee pollinators and advises government agencies and NGOs to implement effective conservation efforts. Donations will help fund the \$600K/year required to support personnel and field research, but any donation of \$50K-\$100K can make a very significant contribution towards protecting pollinators and as a result, our ecosystems and food supply.

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