ENVIRONMENT NEW MEXICO

Your Summer Report

You can help save America's bees

Our supporters like you know that bees are important pollinators. They help facilitate agriculture, allow many plant species to grow and thrive, and produce delicious honey. Our ecosystems rely on bees, and it's nuts that we're putting them in danger.

But bees are, in fact, under threat. Bee populations have declined massively over the last few decades. The spread of certain pesticides, known as neonics, has contributed to the plummeting number of bees. These insecticides, while used to target insect pests, often harm and kill pollinating bees. If the bees are to survive, and help feed millions of people each year, the bees need our support.

Where did all the bees go?

Today, you are nearly 50% less likely to see a bumblebee than you were in 1974. Of the 49 bumblebee species in the U.S., over a quarter suffer some degree of extinction risk. The population of the American bumblebee has declined by 90% in the last few years, and the Franklin's bumblebee has not been seen since 2006.

Many people know bees as pollinators, but their role is often understated. As a keystone species in our environment and agriculture, bees are responsible for making possible a third of all the food that we consume. Honey itself, of course, also cannot exist without bees. The United Nations estimates that 75% of fruit and seed crops depend on pollinators like bees.

In addition to spreading pollen, bees also spread plant DNA across a wide range of individual flowers. This increases the genetic diversity a plant has access to, making the plant healthier, more resilient and more fertile.

Our campaign staff are working to build public support across the country to help save the bees this summer.

The bees are in danger

Neonicotinoid pesticides, or neonics, are some of the most commonly used insecticides in agriculture, despite the fact that they also have a serious effect on the nervous systems of bees.

Bees can often bring nectar and pollen contaminated with neonics to the hive, where they are ingested by baby bees. The pesticides cause growth defects as the bee matures, leading to difficulty performing even simple tasks.

Continued on page 3

Photo credits: Andy Smith. Top photo: Dave Angelini

Thanks for making it all possible

Wildlife crossings save lives

Crossing the road might seem like an easy feat, but for Mojave desert tortoises it is life or death. As with many animals that have declined in numbers, the tortoises must cross busy roads due to the fragmentation of their habitat. The 2021 Wildlife Crossings Pilot Program seeks to reduce this threat.

Under the program, in November 2021, the U.S. Department of Transportation awarded $125 million to improve road safety and habitat connectivity through wildlife crossing projects in 16 states—offering a lifeline to critical species including the desert tortoise, the endangered Florida panther and the gray wolf.

Ben McMurtray via Shutterstock

Wildlife crossings make movement easier for animals, so that they don't have to risk their lives by attempting to cross busy roads.

Our research partners at Environment America Research & Policy Center released a report "Reconnecting Nature" that highlights seven case studies of proposed existing or corridor projects in the U.S., some of which are being funded by this law, and also offer an action toolkit to protect wildlife across the country. Join us in preventing species extinction by supporting the creation of wildlife crossings and corridors to make migration, mating and other movement easier for animals you love. Add your name to our letter on our website urging legislators to invest in wildlife crossings.

Court upholds Clean Air Act decision

After 15 years of legal wrangling, the federal Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals issued its fourth and final ruling in December that ExxonMobil must pay $14.25 million for violating the Clean Air Act, the largest Clean Air Act penalty ever in a citizen enforcement suit.

ExxonMobil was responsible for more than 16,000 Clean Air Act violations, more than one per day over an eight-year period. The violations occurred at its Baytown, Texas, oil refinery and chemical plant complex, potentially exposing thousands of nearby residents to carcinogenic and other dangerous pollutants. This ruling sends a powerful message that illegal air pollution comes with consequences.

"Among other things, this ruling affirms a bedrock principle of constitutional law: that people who live near pollution-spewing industrial facilities have a personal stake in holding those polluters accountable for non-compliance with federal air pollution limits, and therefore have a right to sue to enforce the Clean Air Act as Congress intended," explained Josh Kratka, managing attorney at the National Environmental Law Center, which represented Environment Texas in the case. Environment Texas is part of our national network of state environment groups.

Proposal offers hope for the monarch butterfly

The beautiful monarch butterfly has suffered massive population decline over the past few decades. A new proposal could help provide the protections it needs to survive.

May 12 marked the end of a public comment period on whether or not to designate the monarch butterfly as a threatened species, granting it new protections. We worked with our network of state groups to deliver more than 31,000 public comments to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service calling for this overdue designation.

Since the 1990s, populations of the eastern monarch butterfly have declined by 80%. The western monarch has suffered even more, falling around 95% during that same period. These butterflies face toxic pesticides and the loss of habitat for milkweed, a vital food source for baby monarchs.

Supporters like you have shown your support for protecting the monarch. Environment New Mexico and our national network are urging the Fish and Wildlife Service to grant the monarch butterfly threatened status and the protections this status entails.

Get more updates on our work online at https://environmentnewmexico.org.

Marek Mierzejewski via Shutterstock

Toward a greener future

Support our work to build a cleaner, greener, healthier future by including a gift to Environment New Mexico or Environment New Mexico Research & Policy Center in your will, trust or retirement accounts.

For more information call 1-800-841-7299 or email PlannedGiving@EnvironmentNewMexico.org

Dave Angelini

Page 1 story continued:

You can help save America's bees

Even in small quantities, neonics affect bees' ability to fly and walk. If disoriented, bees cannot properly navigate and do their job of pollinating flowers. Neonics can also affect the bee's immune system, leading to deadly and contagious diseases.

The bees need your help

It makes no sense to allow the widespread use of neonics when bee populations are crashing. One study found that a quarter of all known bee species have not been seen at all since the 1990s.

That's why Environment New Mexico and our national network have already successfully urged 12 states to take action to restrict the use of neonics, and helped persuade the hardware chain Lowe's to commit to stop selling neonics. We are also petitioning the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to extend endangered species protections to some native bees.

But the job isn't done yet. A loophole still exists that allows for the sale of neonic-coated seeds, products with just as damaging effects on bee populations. You can help by calling on your state governor to limit the use of neonics and neonic-coated seeds. With help from supporters like you, we can protect the bees for generations to come.

Help the bees from your backyard

Environment New Mexico has partnered with Environment America to create a bee-friendly garden kit so you can plant your very own habitat for the neighborhood bees, and help support our work to save the bees. Our kit includes wildflower seeds, a sturdy "Bee Friendly Garden" aluminum sign, and tips on how to create a pollinator garden. You can go to shop.environmentamerica.org to buy your own garden kit.

Another way you can help the bees in your own backyard is to make sure to leave good habitat for bees to shelter in during the winter. You can do that by leaving some bare soil, dead limbs, rocks, or grass clippings in your garden once it starts to wind down.

When you plant our bee garden kit, you'll grow a variety of wildflower species that will bloom at different times to provide full season support to our hard working bees.

Staff

Our mission

Environment New Mexico is a policy and action group with one mission: to restore and protect the natural world.

Learn more about us by scanning the QR code below:

Featured staff

Yazan Aboushi

Lisa Frank
Executive Director

Lisa leads Environment America's work for a greener, healthier world. She also directs The Public Interest Network's Washington, D.C., office and operations. A pragmatic idealist, Lisa has helped win billions of dollars in investments in clean energy and transportation and developed strategic campaigns to protect America's oceans, forests and public lands. Lisa is an Oregonian transplant to the Capital region, where she loves hiking, running, biking and cooking for friends and family.

6001 Menaul Blvd. NE #1028
Albuquerque, NM 87110
(505) 254-4819

Environment New Mexico

ENVIRONMENT
NEW MEXICO

Your 2025 Summer Report

Take action

Together we can advance policies that put our country and our world on a better path. To find out about the latest ways you can get involved, visit our online action center at: EnvironmentNewMexico.org/take-action.

We're calling on Trader Joe's to reduce plastic packaging

Each year, Trader Joe's uses millions of pounds of plastic to package its products. We're calling on the grocery chain to reduce plastic packaging and the waste it creates.

Millions of customers love Trader Joe's. But we could do without so many of the store's products being wrapped in plastic packaging that gets thrown away the moment it's opened. Reports show that only 5% of plastic gets recycled, while the rest ends up in our landfills, incinerators, streets and waterways.

Adopting just a few new practices could massively reduce the amount of single-use plastic flowing out of Trader Joe's. For example, introducing a bulk section would both cut down on packaging and provide more options for customers. Refillable sections where customers can bring their own containers for cereal, nuts or rice would provide another way to reduce plastic waste.

Join us in calling on Trader Joe's to reduce their single-use plastic packaging and reduce the amount of plastic that is in our environment, in our communities and harming our wildlife. Add your name to our petition on our website urging Trader Joe's to use less plastic packaging.

Adopting just a few new practices could massively reduce the amount of single-use plastic flowing out of Trader Joe's.

Printed on recycled paper