

## **Pollinator Partnership's Bioblitz**

**June 16<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2025**

### **Bath Pollinator Garden and Bugtel**

When we read about the Pollinator Partnership Organization's Bioblitz - a community-based science event where people work together across North America to find and identify as many species of pollinators as possible – we decided we wanted to get involved!



Our observations, once uploaded to software called iNaturalist, would not only contribute valuable data for scientific research and conservation efforts<sup>1</sup>, but would also tell us what kinds of pollinators and minibeasts were checking into our very own Bugtel.

Since we'd never taken an inventory before, we had no idea which pollinators would come to visit, if any! Would they be attracted to the 25+ native plant varieties in the Pollinator Garden and leave with their bellies full of nectar and their furry bodies laden with pollen? Would they inspect the logs we drilled for them to see if they were the right size for their offspring, and then fill them up with larvae and food?

Please read on to find out more about the pollinators and minibeasts who came to visit. We'll continue to find and identify more over the summer months as various flowers come into bloom at our Pollinator Garden.

To see our pictures and observations, please go to this link on iNaturalist:

<https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/bath-pollinator-garden-and-bugtel-2025>

If you'd like to take and contribute pictures from the PG, please send a message along with your iNaturalist ID to [info@bathgardeningclub.ca](mailto:info@bathgardeningclub.ca) and we'll add you to the project.



To see pictures taken across North America during the Bioblitz, go here:

<https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/pollinator-week-2025-pollinator-bioblitz>

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<sup>1</sup> More than 6,500 observations in iNaturalist have been used in scientific papers.

**Monday, June 16<sup>th</sup>**

**Time of Day:** 11 am - noon

**Conditions:** Sunny and Warm

**Who was there:** Don Taylor, Carol Cartier, Kim Bonner

**What was in Bloom:** Prairie Smoke, Catmint, Wild Geranium, Chives (finishing up), Virginia Spiderwort

**Feeding Observations:**

- The Virginia Spiderwort's flowers are a huge draw for pollinators right now. We saw:
  - A **Reddish Checkered Beetle**, which are predators as well as pollinators.
  - A dozen **Margined Calligrapher Hoverflies**. They don't sting but mimic the appearance of bees and wasps that do to deter predators.
  - Half a dozen **Pure Green Sweat Bees**, which display metallic tones that are usually bright green, but sometimes coppery or golden.
  - A **Red-Belted Bumble Bee**, which can vibrate its body to release pollen from flowers.
  - Too many **Long-Legged Flies** to count. They're good to have around as they eat mosquitoes.
- A **Bicolored Striped Sweat Bee** was seen on the Catmint. It has a short tongue which means it prefers flowers with short tubes.
- A **Black Swallowtail Butterfly** was seen in the field. Maybe later in the season we'll see it near the dill, which is a popular host plant for their caterpillars.

**Sheltering Observations:**

- A **Blue Metallic Mason Bee** was seen entering a hole in the drilled logs. Could this be one of the mason bees that Kim and Carol released at the Bugtel?!
- An **Aphid Wasp** was seen checking out the holes as well. Aphid wasps are a form of biological pest control, reducing aphid populations.
- A **Canadian Potter (Mason) Wasp** on the Bugtel structure. The name "potter wasp" derives from the shape of the mud nests built by this species.
- A **Northern Paper Wasp** was seen resting on the Bugtel structure
- A **Wolf Spider** crawling on the Bugtel structure. Unlike web-building spiders, wolf spiders actively hunt their prey.

## Wednesday, June 18<sup>th</sup>

**Time of Day:** 1 – 2 pm

**Conditions:** Cloudy earlier in the day, and then it turned sunny, hot and humid minutes before we got there

**Who was there:** Don Taylor, Carol Cartier, Kim Bonner

**What was in Bloom:** Prairie Smoke, Catmint, Wild Geranium, Virginia Spiderwort

### **Feeding Observations:**

- The Virginia Spiderwort continues to be a big draw for pollinators right now. On it we spotted:
  - a **European Wool Carder Bee**, an invasive bee that's known for its distinctive behaviour of collecting hairs from plants like Lamb's Ear to build its nest
  - a dozen **Margined Calligrapher Hoverflies**, also known as a flower fly for their role in pollination. (Saw them on the Catmint as well)
  - Half a dozen **Pure Green Sweat Bees**
- Saw a tiny bee on the Prairie Smoke but was unable to identify which species

### **Sheltering Observations:**

- Lots of bees (mostly **Pure Green Sweat Bees**) going in and out of the medium-sized holes in the drilled logs and in the side of the wooden garden surround. North side.
- About a dozen of the medium-sized holes in the drilled logs have been filled with larvae and plugged at the ends with mud and/or plant material
- There appears to be a vacated mouse nest in a cement block located in the west side of the Bugtel. Will keep an eye out for a bumble bee as they're known for taking over abandoned mouse nests for their own offspring.
- A couple of bees were going in and out of the sand-nesting bee shelter, but we didn't get a good shot of them.
- We saw a ferocious-looking **Bold Jumping Spider** on the Bugtel structure, not far from the ground. Bold jumpers have four pairs of eyes arranged in a semi-circle around their head, allowing them to see nearly 360° around them!
- There was a **Northern Paper Wasp** buzzing around the area
- 2 **butterflies** flew through the area, but we didn't get any pictures
- A **Thread-Waisted Wasp** was seen resting on an Autumn Joy Sedum leaf

**Friday, June 20<sup>th</sup>**

**Time of Day:** 2-3pm

**Conditions:** 23C but feels like 26C, sunny, wind W 16 km/hr, with gusts to 29 km/hr

**Who was there:** Don Taylor, Kim Bonner, Diana Wilkinson

**What was in Bloom:** Catmint, Wild Geranium, Virginia Spiderwort

**Feeding Observations:**

- A **Branded Grass Skipper** butterfly on the Chives. Its long tongue could be seeing probing the flowers for nectar.
- A **Two-Spotted Bumble Bee** bouncing around visiting all the flowers on the Wild Geranium
- A **Sweat Bee** on a yellow wildflower next to the PG
- A **Scissor Bee, also known as a Leafcutter Bee**, on the Virginia Spiderwort. They use their strong jaws to cut pieces of leaves used for lining their nests.

**Sheltering Observations:**

- A **Zebra Jumping Spider** on the Bugtel structure. It can jump 10-20 times its body length.
- A colourful **Ichneumonid Wasp** on the evergreen next to the PG. Despite looking rather ferocious they do not sting.
- A **Black Swallowtail Butterfly** in the field next to the PG, with rather ragged wings, possibly damaged by the wind. While they can't repair their wings, often they can still survive and thrive.
- An **Aphid Wasp** inspecting a hole in one of the Bugtel logs
- Lots of **Long-Legged Flies** resting on leaves.
- About 2 dozen holes in the drilled logs had been filled with larvae and plugged
- A **Cuckoo Wasp** was seen on the Bugtel structure. Because of their beautiful blue colour, they're also known as jewel wasps. However, they have a dark side – they lay their eggs in the nests of other insects, and their larvae then consume the host's larvae and/or their provisions.

**Sunday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>**

**Time of Day:** 9-10 am

**Conditions:** 26C but feels like 35C, mostly cloudy, wind SW 16 km/hr

**Who was there:** Don Taylor, Kim Bonner

**What was in Bloom:** Catmint, Wild Geranium, Virginia Spiderwort

**Feeding Observations:**

- Our first **Small Carpenter Bee** gathering pollen from the Virginia Spiderwort. They get their name from excavating wood, creating tunnels for their nests.
- A pair of **Margined Calligrapher Hoverflies** on a yellow wildflower next to the PG and many on the Virginia Spiderwort. Not only can they hover, but they can also fly backwards and dart quickly between locations.
- A **Two-Spotted Bumble Bee** feeding from the Virginia Spiderwort. The pollen baskets on its legs were bright orange with pollen. It is one of the few bumble bee species not in decline.
- A **Rampion Scissor Bee** feeding on the Catmint
- A **Picket-Boring Aphid Wasp** investigating developing Autumn Joy Sedum flowers

**Sheltering Observations:**

- An **Oblong Wool Carder Bee** on a Rudbeckia leaf
- A **Widow Yellowjacket** on the Bugtel roof. It gets its name from its largely black colour.
- Lots of **Long-legged Flies** resting on the leaves of Autumn Joy Sedum and other plants.
- A **14-spotted Ladybug**, an introduced species, on the Bugtel structure. It's not a pollinator but helps keep aphid populations in check.
- A **Canadian Potter Wasp** on one of the bricks in the Bugtel
- A **Zebra Jumping Spider** on the Bugtel structure. It can jump 10-20 times its body length
- A **Square-Headed Wasp** on an Autumn Joy Sedum leaf. They get their name for their wide and square head shape.
- An **Ichneumonid Wasp** on the Bugtel structure.