



Bring Back the Pollinators Publicity Kit: Op-ed

Submitting an op-ed (opinion editorial) to your local news outlet can be a good way to reach your neighbors and influence the local conversation about pollinators. We have shared an op-ed below that you can submit to your local paper under the existing byline, or use to inspire your own letter to the editor.

To submit an op-ed:

1. Identify the news outlet you'd like to submit to.
2. Check their op-ed requirements, including submission process and word count.
3. Send in your pitch (a short summary of your idea) or full essay for review – depending on which they request – to the listed contact.
4. Follow up in a few days if there is no response. If the outlet declines or does not get back to you, you can try pitching to another outlet.

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Pollinators Need Four Things to Stage a Comeback. Here's How You Can Help.

Authored May 21, 2026 by:

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Pollinators—the small bees, flies, butterflies and other creatures essential for the reproduction of over 85% of the world's flowering plants and two-thirds of the world's crop species—aren't doing so well. This is especially true for many of the native species we focus on at the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation. As we observe National Pollinator Week this June, the good news is that there are straightforward solutions to pollinator declines that we can all contribute to, quite literally, in our own backyards.

[Many countries face losses of over 40% of their bee and butterfly species](#) in the coming decades, a trend that has corresponded with a [massive uptick in the use of increasingly insect-](#)

[toxic pesticides](#). Nearly a third of North American bumble bee species are at risk of extinction and several [other species have shown evidence of decline](#). For every five butterflies seen in the U.S. in 2000, by 2020 there were only four, an [astonishing 22% decline](#). Habitat loss is one of the main reasons that pollinators are struggling, including the 40 million acres occupied by American lawns.

Conveniently, most of these small animals only need small spaces to thrive. You can create conditions to support the entire life cycle of pollinators in any location, whether you tend an urban patio or a suburban yard, work in a city park or on a farm.

It takes just four simple steps: grow pollinator-friendly flowers, provide nest sites and shelter, avoid pesticides and spread the word.

Happily, providing pollinators with food can also make our gardens burst with joy and color, since native flowers provide the nectar and pollen that pollinators feed on. Growing the right flowers, shrubs and trees with overlapping bloom times will support pollinators from spring through fall. [Pollinator-friendly native plant lists](#) are available to help plan your garden.

In addition to food, [pollinators need shelter](#). Most of the native insects in your yard will overwinter right there, creating small nests beneath the soil or within the shelter of hollow plant stems, cavities in wood, leaf litter and brush piles. To give them a home, leave some areas of your yard undisturbed with bare ground, brush or rock piles and plant stems. You'll be rewarded with abundant pollinators and natural pest predators next spring.

The third step, [avoid pesticides](#), requires us to save money and do less. More than \$3 billion are spent on home and garden pesticides each year in the United States, resulting in an estimated 60 million pounds of pesticides applied to homes and gardens annually. That includes 14 million pounds of insecticides, or 25 percent of total insecticide use nationwide. Insecticides usually kill the good bugs along with the bad and don't change the conditions that allow pests to flourish in the first place. [Eco-friendly alternatives exist](#) and are often simple.

Finally, we must put what we learn into practice in our communities by [spreading the word](#). If more yards, parks and gardens throughout a community contain pollinator habitat, it allows bees and butterflies to move throughout urban and suburban areas, connect to nearby natural areas and increases the overall amount of habitat in the landscape.

Together we can transform our neighborhoods and create healthier landscapes that will benefit us as well as pollinators. Find everything you need to get started at [BringBackThePollinators.org](#).

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