



# Xerces Update

Donor Newsletter of the Xerces Society

*March 2022*

When it comes to invertebrate conservation, "Everybody has the potential to help. This is one of those cases where what one person does makes a difference," says Bee City USA founder Phyllis Stiles.

We couldn't agree more! We are excited for a new year here at Xerces where there are so many ways for all of you to get involved.

- Join a community science project, such as Xerces' inaugural year of the California Bumble Bee Atlas.
- Try out our new X Kids activities with a child in your life.
- Sign the pollinator protection pledge and put your habitat on the map.
- Learn more about invertebrates from our scientists by attending a Xerces webinar.
- Spread the word of invertebrate conservation!

We want to thank you all, however you choose to participate, for doing your part to make a difference in preserving the biodiversity of this beautiful planet.

**THANK YOU FROM ALL OF US AT XERCES!**



Meet Blue the butterfly, the feature of Xerces' new project, X Kids and the Incredible Invertebrates! We are pleased to focus our outreach and education efforts on the next generation. Blue and other invertebrate friends will take elementary school-age students on a wonderful adventure into the world of invertebrates. X Kids will use their superpowers to practice science and learn how they can protect these essential creatures. Read more inside this newsletter or visit [xerces.org/xkids](https://xerces.org/xkids).

(Illustration: Jessica Hildreth.)

## Connect, learn, discover

Our website contains a wealth of information about our work and what you can do to help invertebrates. Updates are posted to our blog and webinars to our YouTube channel. You can also connect with us @xercessociety on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter!

[xerces.org](https://xerces.org)

Please visit [xerces.org/donate](https://xerces.org/donate) or mail donations to:

The Xerces Society  
PO Box 97387  
Washington, DC 20090-7387

(855) 232-6639, option 2      [membership@xerces.org](mailto:membership@xerces.org)



## With your support, Xerces continues to expand our conservation efforts

Leading the charge on invertebrate conservation is no joke: Earth's tiniest animals are also its most diverse and overlooked, which is why Xerces founder Bob Pyle called it "the biggest job in the world." Xerces is the largest invertebrate conservation organization in the world and has the largest pollinator conservation team of any nonprofit. Your support has allowed Xerces to expand our conservation portfolio by adding new staff, focusing on new geographic areas.

Our expanded efforts include hiring two new staff with a specific focus on protecting the hundreds of butterfly and bee species that inhabit deserts, forests, and grasslands across the western United States. Many of these species are currently in decline or are threatened by habitat loss, insecticides, and the effects of climate change. We will collaborate with land managers and scientists to understand the conservation needs of butterfly and bee species, craft conservation guidelines, and advocate for their protection with agencies and policy makers at regional, state, and federal levels.

We have also hired an Endangered Species Conservation Biologist based in South Carolina to develop and launch a new nationwide Firefly Atlas initiative, with an initial focus on the Mid-Atlantic, Southeast, and the Southwest. This Atlas will provide much needed information so we can make informed conservation decisions and work to aid land managers in their conservation efforts. Additional staff will be coming on board this spring, including:

- A Wisconsin Pollinator Conservation Specialist that will work with farmers across the state to restore habitat for beneficial insects;
- A Colorado-based Pollinator Conservation Specialist that will focus on pollinator nature-based climate solutions in towns and cities;
- A Pollinator Conservation Specialist for urban and small farms in historically excluded communities to help improve pollinator habitat in the Upper Midwest and Southeastern U.S.;
- A Washington State-based Pollinator Habitat Specialist who will support Xerces' private-sector partners in designing and implementing cutting-edge conservation systems—including a focus on Bee Better Certified—for bees and beneficial insects on farms across the Pacific Northwest; and,
- A Pollinator Conservation Planner and NRCS Partner Biologist who will work with diverse partners through the Connecticut River Valley to support adoption of regenerative agriculture practices on farms and pastures.

These new positions will help us increase our proactive conservation approach—using applied science, community science, outreach and education and policy and advocacy to address the big challenges invertebrates face.

Xerces' Western Monarch Thanksgiving Count celebrated its 25th year of community science with a surprising and remarkable outcome: 247,237 monarch butterflies observed across western overwintering sites, which are mostly found along the California Coast, an over 100-fold increase from last year.



Monarchs overwintering at the Reserva de la Biósfera Santuario Mariposa Monarca, Mexico. (Photo: Candace Fallon / Xerces Society.)

# MONTHLY GIVING

No renewal notices,  
convenient payment options,  
a continued connection

*...and our deepest gratitude.*

Join the movement at  
**[xerces.org/donate](https://xerces.org/donate)**



Flutters the monarch butterfly joins Blue on X Kid adventures! (Illustration: c. 2021 by Jessica Hildreth.)

## OUTREACH & EDUCATION

### X Kids – An Adventure Awaits

The Xerces Society is excited to present X Kids, a new activity book to help children discover the wondrous world of invertebrates. Led by Blue, a lovable butterfly, X Kids uses storytelling and activities to help children explore the natural world and have fun along the way. They will find out about the invertebrates in their own neighborhood then begin a journey to meet Blue's friends, including Bubbles the freshwater mussel and Flutters the monarch. Blue makes a final stop in San Francisco to see where their relative, and our namesake, the Xerces blue butterfly used to live.

At each visit, kids learn about the superpower—that's right, a superpower!—of each invertebrate. An important component of the program is for kids to learn about their own abilities along with those of the invertebrates, so they use a superpower of their own to complete each activity.

Our goal for X Kids is to inspire kids to get outside and explore. Small critters can often be thought of as gross or creepy. But X Kids, aka Xerces Kids, will help students learn to love these important animals and take action to conserve them and their ecosystems.

As the final activity, each participant will pick two actions to help invertebrates, such as do a presentation on X Kids to their school, participate in Bumble Bee Watch, or volunteer to plant native plants at a local park. Once the activities are complete, kids will submit an online survey to order a badge they can wear proudly as an X Kid!

X Kids was designed for children in grades 3–5 and can be done individually, in a classroom, or in a group. The activity book is available in English and Spanish and does not require any materials beyond what can be found at home. We hope that you can help us spread the word about X Kids!

To download the booklet and to learn more, please visit [xerces.org/xkids](https://xerces.org/xkids).

Know a future X Kid? Help them download the activity book at [xerces.org/xkids](https://xerces.org/xkids). When they complete the adventure, they can get a fabulous wooden X Kids badge or sticker to proudly display.



Your donor newsletter from the Xerces Society!

We are here to help you learn, explore, create & protect.



## Join us for a webinar!

Coming up in the next few weeks:

Mar 24 — Stories from the Field: Surveys for Alpine Streamflies in Washington's North Cascades, presented by Candace Fallon

Apr 7 — Climate Change and Biodiversity: A Critical Nexus for Conservation, presented by Angela Laws

May 12 — What Bee is That? An Introduction to Commonly Encountered Bees in the U.S., presented by Matthew Shepherd

*"Each session motivates me to register for the next future date!" - Webinar participant*

[xerces.org/events](https://xerces.org/events)