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Introduction to Urban Pollinators and Community Gardens Issue

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Introduction to Urban Pollinators and Community Gardens Issue

Introduction

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Editor's Introduction – Urban Pollinators and Community Gardens

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This issue is devoted to a single theme and a series of papers focused on the role of urban pollinators in relation to community gardens. Historically, the critical roles that pollinators play in agricultural systems have been well studied. However, relatively little is known about pollinator ecology in urban landscapes and their impacts as drivers in community gardens. In this latest issue of CATE, we explore these questions with six papers that help to provide a foundation for our understanding of urban pollinators and set some compass points for both future research and management interventions.

We begin with a review of urban bee ecology by Hernandez et al. that serves to ground our considerations of the tremendous potential for research and practitioner activity in urban pollinator ecology. From there, we investigate a wide range of related questions, from bumble bee population analysis (Matteson and Langelotto) to the spatial consideration of gardens and pollen deposition (Werrel et al.). We address some key practitioner questions by considering green roofs as bee habitat (Colla et al.) and the dynamics of garden design as key variables in pollinator attraction (Pawelek et al.). Finally, as part of our mission to link urban ecology to the teaching of science, we offer a paper on the role of community gardens as centers of learning and stewardship (Krasny and Tidball).

The body of work presented in this volume was fully peer-reviewed. Although the theme was developed in collaboration with the authors and they were invited to submit manuscripts, publication was not guaranteed. What we have presented in this volume are the fruits of that iterative process of outreach, collaboration and judicious peer review.

CATE is fortunate to have the efforts of our Editor, Dr. Paige Warren as a resource to prepare this edition. Paige is an Assistant Professor at the University of Massachusetts Amherst and serves in key research roles in both Baltimore and Phoenix, where major longitudinal studies in urban ecology are underway. Her efforts and oversight are evident throughout the edition. Paige was particularly meticulous in the

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peer review process. Her efforts have resulted in a journal for which the quality and impact continue to grow. I am particularly grateful for the energy and capacity our Managing Editor Anne Cumming and Copy Editor Jess Schmierer have brought to this edition of CATE.

This is an exceptionally prescient moment in the study of the social, physical and biological ecology of cities. The National Science Foundation, in cooperation with the USDA Forest Service is in the process of awarding the first round of exploratory grants in urban ecology. Over 90 proposals were submitted to the Urban Long Term Research Areas exploratory grant program (ULTRA-Ex) from cities across the United States. As we go to press, at least 14 teams of researchers and practitioners, working in metropolitan areas around the country, will be receiving these grants. Each of our editors serve as Principal Investigators or Co-Principal Investigators on various ULTRA-Ex programs that have been recommended for funding. We are delighted to participate in this unique research adventure and will be dedicating an upcoming issue of CATE to the ULTRA Network effort.

The editors of CATE invite additional ideas that you might have for special editions of the journal. Upcoming editions will feature the ULTRA Program, urban canids and urban science education.

As we go to press, we acknowledge our debt of gratitude to Boston College, The USDA Forest Service and our editorial staff for their commitment to this mission. Enjoy this volume and we hope that you will consider a submission to Cities and the Environment.

Best wishes,

Eric G. Strauss

Senior Editor, Cities and the Environment