Cynthia Brown
Web Developer // Problem Solver

Web Writing

Problem

A popular VDOT program page was not written for the web.

Solution

- Write clear, simple, and effective conversational style content
- Put the most important content in the first paragraph
- Readers scan pages, you don’t want them to miss your main idea

Pollinator Habitat Program

BEFORE

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) creates naturalized areas with native plantings along state-maintained roadways and properties to provide habitats for threatened and dwindling pollinator species, such as bees and butterflies, through its Pollinator Habitat Program.

Pollinators — including honey bees, native bees, butterflies, birds, bats, and even flies and beetles — contribute substantially to the U.S. economy and are vital to keeping fruits, nuts and vegetables in our diets by moving pollen from one flower or plant to another for fertilization. Only fertilized flowers can make fruit or seeds.

The program also aims to decrease erosion and storm water runoff while providing sediment control, using fewer pesticides and increasing aesthetics. More economic savings accrue by reducing mowing and other vegetation costs, such as invasive species control and herbicide applications.

Over the past few decades, there has been a significant decrease in pollinators. "Pollinator Waystations" filled with pollinator-friendly plants provide those species the environment needed for survival. In 2014, the White House released a Presidential Memorandum titled "Creating a Federal Strategy to Promote the Health of Honey Bees and Other Pollinators."

VDOT's Pollinator Habitat Program started with four 900-foot Pollinator Waystation plots in 2014 in Northern Virginia. Since then, pollinator plantings have been added at 16 additional VDOT properties. The program will continue to grow throughout the state, focusing on naturalized gardens and meadows at rest areas, park and rides and additional VDOT facilities.

Pollinator Habitats Aid Transportation Priorities

In addition to providing habitat, the Pollinator Habitat Program has additional goals:

> Reduced mowing can allow plants to mature and produce seeds. VDOT has implemented a revised mowing standard in its Best Practices Manual which recommends no mowing between March 31 and November 1 each year.
>
> Native vegetation stabilizes slopes and reduces erosion. Their deep roots also decrease storm water runoff.
>
> Native plants defend against invasive species, reducing the costs of removing problem vegetation and the use of herbicides.

Contact Pollinator Habitat Coordinator Stacey Moulds for more information or with questions:
Stacey.Moulds@VDOT.Virginia.gov **or (804) 592-8520.**





Support the Program

The Pollinator Habitat program is funded through the purchase of the Wildflower plate and Protect Pollinators license plates through the Division of Motor Vehicles.

Learn more about Pollinators and Native Plants!

USDA Forest Service: Attracting Pollinators to Your Garden Using Native Plants - An illustrated guide explaining pollinators; their importance and how you can attract them to your own garden using native plants.



Pollinator Habitat Program

AFTER



VDOT's Pollinator Habitat Program creates natural areas of native plants along state-maintained roads and properties. These areas provide habitats to threatened and dwindling pollinator species.

The program began in 2015 when VDOT planted four 900-foot Pollinator Waystation plots. Pollinator Waystations, filled with pollinator-friendly plants, are highly effective in attracting pollinators.

The number of waystations continues to grow with a focus on natural gardens and meadows at rest areas, park-and-ride lots, and additional VDOT properties.

About Pollinators

Pollinators contribute to the U.S. economy by keeping fruits, nuts and vegetables fertilized through a process of moving pollen from one flower or plant to another. Only fertilized flowers can make fruit and seeds.

Pollinators include:

- Honey and native bees
- Butterflies
- Birds
- Bats
- Flies
- Beetles.

Pollinator Habitats Benefit Transportation Priorities

In addition to providing habitat, the program:

- Reduces mowing so that plants can mature and produce seeds. VDOT's "Best Practices Manual" recommends no mowing between November 1 and March 31.
- Increases native vegetation to stabilize slopes and reduce erosion. Deep roots of native plants also decrease storm water runoff.
- Decreases invasive species to reduce the costs of removing problem vegetation and using herbicides.

How You Can Support Pollinators

Wildflower and Protect Pollinators license plates fund the Pollinator Habitat Program. The plates are available for purchase through the Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV).





Learn More

USDA Forest Service: Attracting Pollinators to Your Garden Using Native Plants
An illustrated guide explaining pollinators; their importance and how you can attract them to your own garden using native plants

