
From: Taylor Jean <bohemeandhawk@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, July 18, 2023 7:34 AM
To: Pesticides <Pesticides@maine.gov>
Cc: furrykidssitting@gmail.com; Pietroski, John T <John.T.Pietroski@maine.gov>
Subject: Testimony to board

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To Maine Pesticide Board,

I would like to express my deep concerns regarding pesticide use.

Nearly 70,000 square miles of lawn in the US, up from 49,000 in 2005. With this rapid rate of increase and the precipitous drop in insect populations, that sustain life on earth, can we really afford to keep the status quo. The argument is always, 'they have the right to do with their property what they want', but do they? "Your right to swing your fist ends where my nose begins". When did the rest of us consent to destruction of ecosystems. When did we consent to extinct bee and butterfly and amphibian species and bird species? When did I consent to having 1%(and let's be honest, what's happening is far worse) overspray of poison into the food I grow(leaving my food near a sprayed property line inedible), into my pollinator gardens, onto the ground I walk on barefoot or that my chickens dig worms from? When did I consent? We all need to be behaving like our hair on fire right now. How many screamed warnings do we need from scientists?!

It's a decent start that the rules state, "should not spray where pollinators are present", but that doesn't follow thru to practice. Plus, that's being defined as flowering plants and ends there, but even then it's not enforced. I watched it happen twice on the same property 2 months in a row and the "offender" had no consequences beyond a walk thru of the property. He also sprayed other peoples property twice with no consequence. Getting nothing but a talking to, doesn't discourage it encourages. Not to mention, the rare instance they do get fined \$500-\$1500, give me a break! That reads like a joke. But, beyond that there are a multitude of issues to consider. Bees don't only exist on flowers. Bumble bees nest in crevices, in holes in the ground, etc. On my property I cleared some invasives last year and made a large pile of debris, plant roots and dirt. When I went to turn it this year it started buzzing at me and I found one of my bumble bee nests in it. I left it as is. Had it been on the sprayed side of the property, it would have been hit as he was spraying straight up into trees 5' from my line with a too strong wind(again no consequences even tho reported and confirmed) blowing straight at my property. There's another nest in an old ground hog borrow next to my garage. Not to mention all the solitary ground nesting bees or those that lay their eggs in hollowed out stems. What of the wasps and the mud daubers, the predatory wasps? Or the canada swallowtail that hangs out in the trees behind and I haven't seen since spray day next door.

Copper hairstreak butterflies that hang out in old leaf piles. Or the moths that do the same. Oak trees host more caterpillars than any other plant. I watched bifrin get sprayed straight up into an oak tree and then I find out thats perfectly exceptable because caterpillars arent pollinators until they turn to butterflies. Monarchs can crawl away from milkweed to crystalis, so can be found anywhere. What about fireflies that are spending the day in the woodlot that just got doused? What about the wasp eggs in that rotting log? What of the little brown bats that are living on my property that need all these things for food? What of the mama wren with fledgling to feed?

I was so excited when I found out Maine had stronger rules than other states, until I found out they are rarely enforced, have semi-truck sized holes and the fines amount to a cup of coffee for these corporations.

We simply can't keep doing this. The planet is burning down around us. Look up, already!

Thank you for your consideration,

Luanne Timmerman speaking for all the voiceless species facing the 6th mass extinction event and the first caused, knowingly, by one species inhabiting the earth.

