

## Pollinator Friendly Habitat Group Minutes for Feb 13, 2017

Meeting opened at 6:02 pm at the Alliance Church in Menomonie room 314.

Attendance included: JG, VK, JH, GJ, NB, CA, and new member JK.

Jenny provided Nuseed Cobalt II sunflower seed to those present. The North Carolina State University is examining this sunflower pollen for it's potential benefit to honeybees in fighting dysentery. A Downsville farmer plants Cobalt II seed every year. Gordon Waller and Jenny Gruber collected 35 pounds of pollen in August of 2016. The pollen was sent to NC University for study.

Jenny provided an update on the round robin session 'More than Honey in a Hive.'  
Topics included:

- Honey to taste,
- Government programs (CRP / EQIP) funding assistance to plant PFH, contact local NCRS office.
- Wax candles and blocks of wax made from the wax cappings,
- Plants that are good for honeybees vs. bumble/native bees.
- Research site - The Lady Bird Johnson Wild Flower site is an excellent resource to use to research all native plants and their usefulness to bees for honey and / or pollen. Google 'Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center' or use this link <http://www.wildflower.org> to use the Native Plant Database.
- Flower construction – flat (Impatiens) and bushy (dandelions) petals have great landing pads for honeybees. Tulips or lilies are better for bumblebees.
- Catalogs from native seed/plant nurseries – most PFH mixes will have 'annual' seeds do that there is some flowering plants the first year. Check the mixes to insure there are many native seeds, which put down roots the first year and then grow flowers the second year.
- Sample of pollen gathered from the Nuseed Cobalt II sunflower and why there is an interest in this particular pollen.

Attendees gave updates on current apiary/hive status. Many have lost most of their bees already. Absconding, freezing, starving, and unknown were likely causes

Discussed approaches to preparing sites for native planting. Site preparation varies with terrain and soil type. Hilly land is harder to prepare. NCRS office is local contact to see if your land is acceptable as PFH under CRP or EQIP programs.

Meeting adjourned at 6:45 pm

Email address for the group is: [habitat@dunncountybeekeepers.org](mailto:habitat@dunncountybeekeepers.org)

Recorded by Jenny Gruber