



MAKING STATE POLLINATOR HABITAT SAFE FOR BEES, BIRDS & BUTTERFLIES

#BEESAFAEHABITAT

PASS SB 386/HB 830: AMEND THE POLLINATOR HABITAT PLANS LAW

Maryland's pollinators are at risk, due in part to pesticides and a lack of sufficient habitat. The 2016 Pollinator Habitat Plans law aimed to restore and increase habitat for bees, birds, butterflies and other wildlife. This law requires that Maryland's Departments of Natural Resources, Environmental Services and the State Highway Administration establish pollinator habitat plans for lands owned or managed by each agency.

Unfortunately, nothing in the current law ensures that pollinators in these habitats are safe from toxic pesticides, including neonicotinoids, which are known to kill and harm bees, birds and other pollinators.

If neonicotinoid (neonic) pesticide-treated seeds, seedlings, shrubs and trees are planted for pollinator habitat on state land, and/or if neonic-containing pest control products or pest control products labeled "toxic to bees" are used, these well-intended plantings could harm the very pollinators we are trying to protect.

Luckily, there is a simple fix: a bill amending the Pollinator Habitat Plans law stipulates that neither pesticides labeled as toxic to bees or other pollinators, nor seeds or plants (including shrubs and trees) treated with a neonicotinoid pesticide, should be allowed in pollinator habitat on state lands.

Neonic-free seeds and plantings are widely available at wholesale and retail nurseries in Maryland and are no more expensive than plants treated with neonics. And numerous lower-toxicity [alternatives to pesticides labeled toxic to bees](#) are readily available.

Plentiful, pesticide-free habitats will allow bees, birds and other pollinators to thrive and remain a crucial part of our ecosystem.

NEONICS, POLLINATORS & HABITAT

- A preponderance of research confirms that "neonic" pesticides kill and harm bees, birds and other pollinators. Other pesticides are also known to be toxic to pollinators.
- Maryland bees are dying at alarming rates, which threatens our food supply, public health and environment. Last year, Maryland beekeepers lost 56% of their hives.
- Maryland passed the Pollinator Protection Act last year, restricting the consumer use of neonic pesticides.
- The 2015 White House [National Pollinator Health Strategy](#), which provides guidance for designed landscapes, advises that "chemical controls that can adversely affect pollinators should not be applied in pollinator habitats" and federal facilities use seeds and plants that do not contain systemic insecticides.
- The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service phased out neonic use and it is now prohibited on national wildlife lands.

www.smartonpesticides.org

The Smart on Pesticides Maryland coalition works to protect Marylanders and the natural systems we depend upon from the toxic impacts of pesticides. The coalition includes more than 78 organizations, and institutions representing communities, businesses, health care providers, farmers, environmentalists, Waterkeepers, interfaith congregants as well as environmental justice, public health and wildlife advocates.