



*Celebrating **150** years of agriculture*

Our Silent Workforce – Insect Pollinators

Jeffrey Skevington, Ph.D.

Abstract:

Pollination has been in the news a lot recently due to significant declines in populations of honeybees. Not only the media have been noticing this. Funding for pollinator research has increased and most importantly, there has been a push to learn more about non-honeybee pollinators. Jeff will briefly overview some of the honeybee issues but most of the talk will focus on our native pollinators. There are thought to be over 200,000 species of pollinators in the world and almost all of the research and attention has historically gone to honeybees. In this talk, you will learn more about the incredible assemblage of other pollinators that visit our crops, gardens and natural habitats. Flies and other non-bees do over one third of our agricultural pollination. Jeff conducts research on pollinator flies at the Canadian National Collection of Insects, Arachnids and Nematodes so you can expect a flies to get their share of the limelight in this presentation. If you have any pollinator flies in your garden that you have been curious about, bring in photos or specimens and Jeff may be able to tell you a bit more about them.

Biography:

My work on taxonomy provides the foundation for all biological research involving my research animals. I am the world expert on 3 families of flies that together include more than 8,400 described species and at least as many undescribed species. The animals that I work on are directly responsible for billions of dollars' worth of crop pollination annually and untold billions in natural and applied control of pests. My phylogenetic work underpins comparative research that supports work on pollination, biocontrol, climate change, mimicry, insect migration, etc. I am involved in many collaborative projects on these disciplines worldwide. I have trained 101 students, including co-supervision of 18 graduate students. Many of these people have gone on to important jobs in the field, including several scientists and technicians at AAFC.



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