Protocol for OSU Extension Perennial Pollinator Survey

Developed by Ellen Danford, Mary Gardiner, and Denise Ellsworth

Pollinator observations should be collected once every 2 weeks from June to October when one or more plants are in bloom. To collect your data, follow the steps below:

1. **SUNNY DAY:** Select a sunny day with little to no wind to collect data. Pollinator activity is highest between 11 and 3 in our area, so use this window for sampling. Before heading to your garden print several copies of the data sheet. You will record data on paper data sheets then upload it online.

2. **FIND OPEN FLOWERS:** When you arrive at the garden site determine which plants species have one or more open flowers. Data will only be collected from plants in bloom.

3. **FRAME YOUR PLANT:** You will observe one plant species at a time. Use your quadrat to frame a 0.5 by 0.5 m square area of blooming foliage to observe. One plant should be in the center of the quadrat. The total quadrat area might contain a portion of this plant, the whole plant, or multiple plants of a species depending on its growth habit.

4. **OBSERVE INSECTS:** Set a timer for 2 minutes. Find one that does not make clicking noises that may deter insects. For 2 minutes count and record the number of butterflies and moths, bees, wasps, and flies that visit flowers in the quadrat. When conducting your timed observations stand so that you do not shade the blooms under observation. Try to stay as still and quiet as possible during this time. If you see another flower visitor such as a hummingbird, you can record this as "other" and let us know what you saw. Note – If an insect comes in close contact to a flower but does feed it does not count as a visit. Note that if an insect remains in the quadrat and visits several flowers it counts as 1, but, if it leaves and comes back, it counts as an additional insect with each new visit.

5. **COUNT BLOOMS:** After completing your observation period count the number of blooms within the quadrat area. Note that we do not expect you to count the number of individual flowers on plants with compound blooms. For example, for allium record the number of umbels, count the number of panicles for goldenrod and the number of flower heads for all asters. Record your data on your printed data sheet.

6. **REPEAT:** After you complete your bloom count move on to the next plant species in bloom and complete your 2-minute pollinator observation followed by flower count. Repeat this process until all plants in bloom have been observed.

7. **UPLOAD:** After you complete your data collection, please upload your data our website: https://arcg.is/0OOPWn. Only data submitted online can be included in our analysis.

8. **QUESTIONS:** You can email Mary Gardiner (gardiner.29@osu.edu) with questions that come up when using this protocol.