



BEES IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES BEE MONITORING PROJECT

What's the buzz about bees?

Bees are important to us in lots of ways! In Canada, bees provide over \$2 billion worth of pollination services to commercial crops every year¹. Bees also pollinate many of our favourite wild food plants, like blueberries and cranberries². Bees play a really important role in natural ecosystems and contribute to native biodiversity. Did you know that in the Northwest Territories, there are at least 108 species of bees³? That's a lot of bee-odiversity!

Threats and population trends

Unfortunately, bees in Canada and around the world are struggling. Threats like climate change, habitat loss, pesticide use, and pathogens contribute to declines in bee populations³. Three bee species that occur in the Northwest Territories are now listed as at risk in Canada: the western bumble bee, yellow-banded bumble bee, and gypsy cuckoo bumble bee³. Little is known about the status of many of our bee species in the Northwest Territories³.

What are we doing about it?

To help us learn more about bees in the Northwest Territories, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources is monitoring bees during the summer months. Traps will be set in multiple locations in and around Yellowknife. The traps, called blue vane traps, are coloured to attract bees and other pollinators (see photo below). Traps are set for one week each month and then all collected bees will be identified. This work will help to monitor bee populations and improve our understanding of how they're doing here.

1. Standing Committee on Agriculture and Forestry. 2015. The importance of bee health to sustainable food production in Canada: report of the Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry/The Honourable Percy Mockler, Chair; The Honourable Claudette Tardif, Deputy Chair. Senate of Canada, Ottawa, ON.
2. Species at Risk Committee. 2019. Species Status Report for Western Bumble Bee, Yellow-banded Bumble Bee, and Gypsy Cuckoo Bumble Bee (*Bombus occidentalis*, *Bombus terricola*, *Bombus bohemicus*) in the Northwest Territories. Species at Risk Committee, Yellowknife, NT.
3. Working Group on General Status of NWT Species. 2016. NWT Species 2016-2020 – General Status Ranks of Wild Species in the Northwest Territories. Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Government of the Northwest Territories, Yellowknife, NT.



If you see one of our traps, please do not disturb it.

If you would like more information on this project, please email sara@gov.nt.ca. For more information on bees in the NWT, please see: www.enr.gov.nt.ca/en/services/insects-and-spiders/bees

