

MEDIA RELEASE

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For Immediate Release



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Honey Bee Health Task Force Funds 6 Research Grants Support from USDA APHIS and Pollinator Partnership Donors

Thanks to support from **Pollinator Partnership's (P2)** generous donors who have helped generate more than \$60,000 for honey bee health issues, there are 6 new research projects underway. With funding from USDA APHIS as well as contributions from generous individuals, these projects have the funding they need to conduct valuable investigations that will shed light on the plight of honey bees in the United States.

The Honey Bee Health Task Force of the North American Pollinator Protection Campaign (NAPPC), under the co-chairmanship of Dr. Deborah Delaney, University of Delaware, and Dr. Olav Rueppell, University of North Carolina-Greensboro, solicits proposals each year in January from University researchers and graduate students who are pioneering new approaches to honey bee nutrition, genetics, pathogen and pathogens, diagnostics and pesticide issues. Research topics are widely applicable and will improve conditions for bees and beekeepers.

This year the NAPPC Honey Bee Health Task Force assembled a distinguished panel to review the proposals which included Jeff Pettis, Ph.D., John Skinner, Ph.D., Olav Rueppell, Ph. D., Laurie Davies Adams, Vicki Wojcik, Ph.D., Robyn Rose, Ph.D., and Deborah Delaney, Ph. D. The panel funded 6 outstanding research projects that advance the science supporting practical applications in honey bee management and conservation. Chosen from the many qualified applications submitted to the NAPPC Task Force, the following projects have been funded and reported progress at the annual NAPPC International Conference in Riverdale, MD October 19, 2016:

- **Dr. Louis Bjostad at Colorado State University** is studying the effects of phytochemicals on longevity and pathogen resistance in honeybees.
- **Michelle L. Fearon at University of Michigan** is investigating how pollinator community context influences honey bee virus prevalence.
- **Dr. James C. Nieh at UC San Diego** is testing the effects of nicotine, a natural plant metabolite found in nectar, on honey bee nose mites.
- Ph.D. Candidate **David T. Peck at Cornell University** is focusing on virological analysis of the Arnot Forest survivor bee population for evidence of protective Deformed Wing Virus genotypes.
- Research on the Development of novel Nosema infection assays for diagnostics is being conducted by **Dr. Jonathan Snow at Columbia University**



Honey Bee Health Researchers presenting at the 2016 NAPPC Conference – USDA APHIS

- **Dr. David Tarpy** at the **North Carolina State University** is investigating a new way to combat viruses with RNA-targeting biotechnology in *Apis mellifera*.

The bulk of funding for the 2016 Honey Bee Health grants came from a research partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and APHIS with help from National Program Manager, Dr. Robyn Rose. Honey Bee Health Grants have been distributed for over 6 years, totalling more than \$360,000 in research support for 36 research programs in Canada, the United States, and Mexico. Additional funding is needed every year and tax-deductible donations are happily provided to those that would like to support this critical research. Every dollar received is leveraged significantly and makes a real difference for honey bees. Contact Kelly Rourke at Pollinator Partnership at KR@pollinator.org or at 415.362.1137 to join the campaign to increase knowledge about and action for the health of honey bees.

Applications for 2017 research projects are now being accepted and are due February 3, 2017. Visit www.pollinator.org/honeybee_health for more information.

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ABOUT THE NORTH AMERICAN POLLINATOR PROTECTION CAMPAIGN (NAPPC)

For over 15 years, NAPPC has brought together stakeholders from all sectors of the pollinator issue in a collaborative partnership to support pollinator health across the North American continent. More than any other single organization, the collective effort of these 150 plus organizations has made pollinator health a feature in conservation landscape management. From its many Task Forces, NAPPC affects change and moves solid science into real progress on the ground. Managed by the Pollinator Partnership, more can be found about NAPPC at www.napcc.org.

ABOUT THE POLLINATOR PARTNERSHIP (P2)

Established in 1997, the Pollinator Partnership is the largest 501(c) 3 non-profit organization dedicated exclusively to the health, protection, and conservation of all pollinating animals. Pollinator Partnership's actions for pollinators include education, conservation, restoration, policy, and research. P2's financial support comes through grants, gifts, memberships and donations from any interested party. Its policies are science-based, set by its board of directors, and never influenced by any donor. To make a donation or for information on events during Pollinator Week, visit www.pollinator.org.