

For all our sakes, protect the pollinators

MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Pollinators are key to Minnesota's environmental health. Without them, we wouldn't have some of our favorite foods. They are vital to a healthy environment. They're also beautiful and fascinating to watch. They're pollinators, and this week is dedicated to understanding, appreciating and helping them.

Bees, butterflies and hummingbirds are needed to pollinate plants that provide Minnesota

food crops such as fruits, vegetables and herbs. Some of these foods are important for wildlife, too. Black bears, for example, eat raspberries that are pollinated by bumble bees. Honey bees and native pollinators contribute millions of dollars to Minnesota's agricultural economy.

Pollinators play a critical role in keeping our environment healthy. They help maintain the health of the many plants that stabilize the soil and prevent erosion. These plants also buffer water-

ways, store carbon and provide habitat for other wildlife. Plus, flowering landscapes are beautiful. Without pollinators, our environment would look very different.

"Pollinators are so important, not just to flowers but to our whole environment, and there are many simple things Minnesotans can do to help pollinators," said DNR invertebrate ecologist Jessica Petersen.

TO HELP POLLINATORS

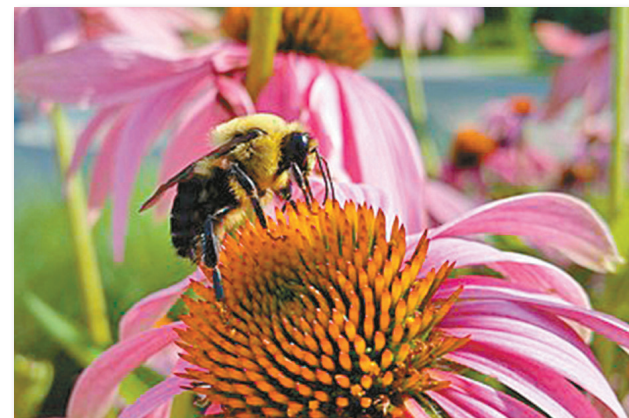
- Plant a variety of flowers, especially those

that are native to the area.

- Keep gardens blooming all season long; choose plants that provide pollen and nectar in the spring, summer and fall.

- Provide nesting sites by allowing dead branches and logs to remain, leaving bare earth for ground-nesting insects, or installing bee nesting blocks.

- Reduce pesticide use.
- Become a citizen scientist and help researchers collect data about pollinators and their



STOCK PHOTO

habitat.

- Tell friends and family about pollinators

and inspire them to take action.

Highway lines have specific meanings for driver safety

Question: In my city, there is a double yellow line on the main roadway and yet some motorists cross both lines to park against oncoming traffic, many at dark with headlights on. Why is this allowed without warning or a ticket?



Ask A Trooper
Neil Dickenson

Answer: A crash can occur anytime a driver chooses to cross over a solid or double yellow/white line. Engineers and safety personnel place these lane markers in areas where it's unsafe to pass.

Law enforcement take this type of violation very seriously, and we will educate the driver with enforcement action. If you are cited for this violation, it will go on your driving record and cost you out of pocket expenses for the fine and the possibility of increased insurance costs.

When a driver crosses into the other lane of traffic, against a double yellow/white line a head-on type of crash could result in injury or death.

SERGEANT NEIL DICKENSON is Minnesota State Patrol public information officer for the state's northeast region. If you have any questions concerning traffic related laws in Minnesota, please send your questions to: Sgt. Neil Dickenson - Minnesota State Patrol at 1131 Mesaba Ave, Duluth, MN 55811. Or reach me at neil.dickenson@state.mn.us

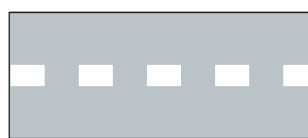
PAVEMENT MARKING MEANINGS



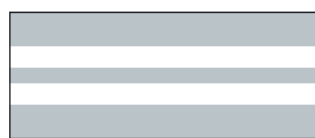
White lines separate lanes of traffic traveling in the same direction. A white line with dashes indicates that drivers can change lanes.



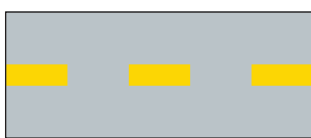
A solid white line indicates that lane changes are discouraged. Solid white lines also mark cross-walks, stop-lines at intersections, parking stalls and the edges of a roadway.



A line of shorter and thicker white dashes indicates that the lane will end.



Double solid white lines indicate that lane changes are against the law.



A line composed of yellow dashes indicates that passing is allowed.



A solid yellow line indicates that passing is prohibited. Passing in a no-passing zone is illegal.



A solid yellow line may appear on one-side of the roadway, while a line composed of dashes appears on the other. Drivers must obey the marking that is present in their lane of traffic.



Two solid yellow lines, one in each lane of traffic, indicate that passing is prohibited in both directions. Drivers traveling in both directions are prohibited from crossing the double solid center line in order to pass other vehicles.

EXPLORE MINNESOTA BIRDING UPDATE

MYTH: Mother birds will reject chicks touched by humans

CONTRIBUTED
EXPLORE MINNESOTA

This is a great time of year to rise before dawn to hear the chorus of birds. Many are still singing exuberantly as they continue to court (some species have multiple clutches each year) and establish territory.

Use the Minnesota Conservation Volunteer's interactive Minnesota Bird Songs web page (<https://bit.ly/2Wu2Y5R>) to learn the songs of 24 common backyard birds.

This is also the time of year when baby birds of various species hatch, including Baltimore orioles, house finches, American robins, gray catbirds, chipping sparrows, house wrens, mourning doves, barn swallows and tree swallows. Listen for the incessant chirping as hatchlings plead for their parents to bring them food. Broken eggshells on the ground are another indication that the babies have arrived.

NESTING

If you find a nest that you can peer into, look to see if all of the babies are of the same size

and color. If not, there's likely a cowbird chick or two mixed in with the brood. Brown-headed cowbirds do not raise their young. They lay their eggs in another bird's nest and let the other parents do the work. Since the young cowbird is generally larger, it gets fed first, hurting the chance of the other young to survive. This cunning yet cruel practice is known as parasitic nesting behavior.

In early to mid-June, check the shallow prairie marshes for a variety of waterfowl and water birds along with their young. Look for swans, geese, rails, grebes, coots and ducks. The Prairie Wetlands Learning Center in Fergus Falls is an excellent choice to view these birds. And be sure to check lakes in the northern two-thirds of the state for newly hatched common loon chicks. They can often be seen riding on their parents' backs. Minnesota has more loons than any other state, aside from Alaska.

If you love loons, the Minnesota Loon Monitoring Program is a great way to get involved



KIRSTEN FAURIE | TIMES

A migrating Cape May warbler eats fruit jelly at a Kanabec County home before traveling further north.

with wildlife studies on lakes near you. Volunteers are needed to visit each lake one morning during a 10-day period (late June through early July) and count the number of adult and juvenile loons. The observations are then shared with the DNR. Thanks to hundreds of volunteers, there is more than 20 years of data on more than 600 lakes.

The DNR is also asking for

help monitoring other species of birds associated with lakes, rivers or wetlands that are currently nesting, nest-building or with young. If you're interested in assisting, check out the DNR Nongame Wildlife Program.

DID YOU KNOW?

Occasionally, a baby bird is found on the ground. Some nestlings are inadvertently

pushed out by their growing siblings, yet others may be fledglings attempting their first flight. Would you know what to do?

According to the Wildlife Rehabilitation Center of Minnesota, featherless birds need to be in a nest. If possible, try to locate the bird's nest and carefully replace it - the parents will not reject it due to human contact or scent. If you cannot locate its nest, leave the baby bird on the ground so the parents can find it and continue providing care. Fledgling birds, however, often leave the nest before they're ready to fly. These fledglings should be left alone since their parents are usually watching over them.

The University of Minnesota Raptor Center also recommends leaving fledgling raptors alone since they are often unsuccessful on their first flight. They may remain on the ground a few days while strengthening their wings. However, if it appears that the fledgling is hurt and needs assistance then please contact the Raptor Center for advice.