



# PHEASANTS FOREVER & QUAIL FOREVER

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## NEWS RELEASE

### Collaborating for bumble bee research in Missouri

Joint effort will produce online state distribution atlas

**COLUMBIA, Mo. – August 14, 2020** – Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever has partnered with the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation, the Missouri Department of Conservation and the University of Missouri College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources on a research project that will improve knowledge of bumble bee distribution throughout the state and provide a better understanding of their habitat requirements.

Following in the steps of states like Nebraska and Washington where surveying has already begun, this collaboration will fund a two-year Bumble Bee Atlas pilot project in Missouri resulting in a citizen science website focused on native bees.

“We know relatively little about the distribution, abundance and population trends of many of our native bee species,” said Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever Missouri State Coordinator Casey Bergthold. “Thanks to our partners and dedicated citizen scientists across Missouri we now have the opportunity to gather this important information in a way that was not possible just a few years ago.”

Driven by citizen science, this project will depend on volunteers to gather information about bumble bee species distribution, host plants and surrounding habitat. Anyone is welcome to participate as a volunteer. A two-part virtual training event will be held on the evenings of Aug. 18 and 19 to equip volunteers with the knowledge and skills to perform surveys throughout the state.

Reported sightings will be placed on a map and available for viewing on the Bumble Bee Atlas website. The map will also show which portions of the state need “adopting” or are of high interest, so volunteers can see where their help is needed most.

The interest in Missouri stems from the Midwest playing home to some of the most endangered bumble bee species in North America. Roughly 25 percent of the approximately 50 bumble bee





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species on the continent face extinction. Pollinators, including bumble bees, are responsible for about one-third of all crops produced and are critical to the health of our environment

"We're expanding the Bumble Bee Atlas project into Missouri so that we can continue to collect needed baseline information on bumble bee populations at a regional scale. Most people don't appreciate how far behind, for example birds and mammals, the invertebrate world is in understanding basic population ecology," said Xerces Society's Senior Endangered Species Conservation Biologist Rich Hatfield. "But, as conservation practitioners, we can't work to protect these essential animals unless we know basic information about them: where they are living and what kinds of habitats they need. Only then can we work as a community to protect, conserve, and restore the land to help them recover."

If you would like to learn more or to volunteer, visit [www.mobumblebeeatlas.org](http://www.mobumblebeeatlas.org).

### About Pheasants Forever & Quail Forever

[Pheasants Forever](#), including its quail conservation division — [Quail Forever](#) — is the nation's largest nonprofit organization dedicated to upland habitat conservation. Pheasants Forever & Quail Forever have more than 138,000 members and 760 local chapters across the United States and Canada. Since creation in 1982, Pheasants Forever has spent over \$900 million on 550,000 habitat projects benefiting 19 million acres nationwide. Visit the [Pheasants Forever & Quail Forever in Missouri website](#) or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#).

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