



# Mike Connor

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- Owner, Honeytree Nursery, ISA Certified Arborist, Nursery Grower, and experienced Beekeeper
- Provides arborist services, IPM for trees, and workshops on beekeeping and pollinator trees
- Co-founder, Grand Rapids (MI) Area Bee Club and former Municipal Arborist and Park Superintendent
- Graduate, Cornerstone University; Post-graduate studies, Michigan State University

# Trees for Bees

**Michael Connor**

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# Arborist

A Tree Physician, Not a Tree Mortician



# Nursery Grower





# Beekeeper

- First 4-H hive in 1966. Grew to 200 hives
- Dadant Bee Supply Branch Manager
- Co-Sponsor, Grand Rapids Bee Club





***“Bees are the preeminent pollinators in North America. Pollinators are a keystone species group; the survival of a large number of other species depends upon them.”***

Attracting Native Pollinators, The Xerces Society Guide, p11





# What Are Major Problems Facing Pollinators?





# Pests and Diseases

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# Pesticides

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Plants:  
*Forage and Nutrition*





While native bees are often superior pollinators compared to honeybees for many plants, low populations of natives and large commercial requirements make honeybees the most vital pollinators in the world.



One-third of our food supply is directly dependent on honey bee pollination.







It is vitally important to agriculture that large populations of pollinators be available when needed.

The honey bee provides the bulk of this service.







Only honey bees overwinter in substantial numbers and can increase populations quickly ***if pollen and nectar resources are available.***



A typical colony of honey bees in the Midwest perform more than a billion flower visits annually, gathering 600 pounds of honey and 55 pounds of pollen.





“Floral resource competition can be virtually eliminated if we improve habitat for pollinators.”

Becky Masterman & Bridget Mendel

Bee Culture, February 2024, p39





This is great habitat and food source for native bees.

It's a pollinator meadow.

- Native plants
- Continuous, consecutive blooms
- Nesting habitat





Unfortunately, this beautiful meadow will not support even one hive of honey bees!

- How much nectar is here?
- How many pounds of pollen?





This is a better meadow!





Trees are Meadows in the Sky!



**Trees**, not wildflowers,  
provide the first significant  
food of the spring.

They beat dandelions by 6  
weeks.





February















Red Maple





# Red Maple

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In the midwest, the two most important plants for spring colony build-up are:

Maples,  
especially red maples  
(*Acer rubrum*)

>25% of all pollen collected in April

Willows,  
especially pussy willow  
(*Salix discolor*)

>33% of all pollen collected in April

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Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*)





Pussy Willow  
(*Salix discolor*)