

## Conference on March 30th: “Understanding Native Pollinators and Their Needs”

Spence Restoration Nursery and Ecologic LLC are once again teaming up to present an educational conference for restoration professionals. This year’s conference will focus on managing for native pollinators and will feature two regionally well-known speakers and authors.

[Heather Holm](#) is the author of [Bees: An Identification and Native Plant Forage Guide](#) and [Pollinators of Native Plants](#). As a horticulturalist, biologist, and researcher, she brings a wealth of knowledge about the relationships between plants and their pollinators. She will speak on the pollination of plants and common native bees.

[Jim McCormac](#) is a well-known naturalist who has called Ohio home for many years. Jim is knowledgeable on an incredible range of topics including plants, insects and birds. He is author of the [Great Lakes Nature Guide](#), the [Birds of Ohio](#), and [Wild Ohio](#). He has a keen interest in Lepidoptera and will be speaking about butterflies, moths and their larval food plants.

Local speakers will round out the day. Jeff Kiefer, State Coordinator for Private Lands with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will speak about funding sources for pollinator projects. Eco Logic Botanist Natalie Marinova will review native plant nectar sources to include in restoration plantings. Spence Nursery Restoration Ecologist Kevin Tungesvick will speak about the establishment of forb-rich low stature prairie plantings with high pollinator value.

The day will close with a roundtable discussion of establishment and maintenance of pollinator habitat. Please join us for this outstanding educational opportunity to learn about our native pollinators and network with other restoration professionals. Registration is available online [here](#).

## Plant Feature : Blue False Indigo (*Baptisia australis*)

Few native perennials have better landscape attributes than [Blue False Indigo](#). This long-lived perennial has beautiful flowers, excellent form, and great adaptability in the landscape. Like other Baptisias, Blue Wild Indigo is a deeply-rooted plant that takes a few years to establish. It typically begins to bloom heavily in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year from installation via plugs. At that time, several to numerous long racemes of beautiful blue flowers will develop in the month of May. The flowers mature into ornamental black seedpods by autumn. The lush compound foliage itself is enough reason to grow this plant. The sturdy upright form gives the appearance of a shrub in the summer landscape.

As a native plant, Blue False Indigo is rare in Indiana, occurring only in a few of our Ohio River Counties. It thrives in cultivation however, and is recommended for both naturalized and formal landscapes. The flowers are very attractive to bumblebees, making it an excellent addition to a pollinator garden.

