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Weather



TODAY:
SHOWERS,
T-STORMS

HIGH OF 26
LOW OF 12



TUESDAY:
SUNNY

HIGH OF 22
LOW OF 11



WEDNESDAY:
MIX OF SUN
AND CLOUDS

HIGH OF 24
LOW OF 8



THURSDAY:
SUNNY

HIGH OF 20
LOW OF 8



FRIDAY:
MIX OF SUN
AND CLOUDS

HIGH OF 23
LOW OF 11

Bees, butterflies and bats...missing our summer visitors



THE SCOOP

MABLE HASTINGS

As I look around our garden I note the decline in butterflies as I have for a few years now. Added to the list of rare visitors these days are the bees and in the night sky, just before darkness drapes her blanket, I can't help but search in the grey dusk for one bat let alone the swarm that once existed. Climate change continues to bully our ecosystems and rob us of those common things once taken for granted that now are viewed as rare treasures.

The extreme weather has made the decline in Monarch butterflies migrating to Canadian gardens a reality. Monarchs emerging from hibernation in Mexico that once made the 5000 kilometer migration journey to North America are often dying due to weather conditions before nearing their destination. Monarchs are a critical element in the ecosystem in our regions as they pollinate many wild flowers and are a food source for insects and birds.

Bats too are in large decline and their demise is due to illness, a loss of habitat, the use of pesticides and disturbance by humans (Fenton 2001). Bats contribute to the biodiversity, help to eliminate insects that are considered harmful in agriculture and this therefore diminishes the need for the use of pesticides. According to research, a mushroom



PHOTO BY TOM HASTINGS

from Europe made its way to North America and to Quebec and began attacking bats, in particular, cave dwellers, attacking them while in hibernation and infecting them leaving many too weak to survive the winter months.

While the debate on bees is still up for discussion, scientists say that, bees are affected by "the four P's," poor nutrition, pesticides, pathogens and parasites. While I have minimal knowledge on all of these things and fully admit to it, it is my observations in my own garden that stir up the sadness and concern in the absence of what I refer to as "normal summer guests in our garden."

In 1955, folk legend, Pete Seeger penned, "Where Have All the Flowers Gone," and while most of the flowers in our garden remain, without these insects, drifting and hovering from flower to flower while pollinating as they go, I can't help but wonder how long it will be before we are saying good-bye to certain flowers and crops. Bees, butterflies, birds...play a vital role in the crops consumed by humans and animals.

On this summer day, I find myself reflecting on things that I may have sadly taken for granted and wonder if the flowers in our garden are missing our summer visitors as much as I am?

Help us.

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Association for children with cancer

Ben by Daniel Shelton

Panel 1: Ben is holding a bag of chips and talking to a man.

Panel 2: Ben says, "THE THING ABOUT CHIPS IS, YOU CAN'T HAVE JUST ONE... YOU HAVE TO KEEP GOING!"

Panel 3: Ben says, "I WONDER WHY THAT IS ..."

Panel 4: Ben says, "PROBABLY THE SAME REASON WE CAN'T STOP AFTER ONE EPISODE ON NETFLIX..."

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